

An American Friend Handbook

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Rising to the Challenge.....	3
Establishing Contact.....	5
The First Meal Together.....	7
Reflect an Attitude of Love.....	10
Building Your Friendship.....	11
Subjects of Conversational Interest.....	13
Communication Guidelines.....	17
Strengthening Your Friendship.....	19
Sharing Your Faith.....	21
Meeting Your Friend's Needs.....	29
Helpful Cooking Hints and Recipes.....	31
For Further Information.....	37

An American Friend Handbook
Copyright © 1985, 1992, 1995, 2004
by International Students, Inc.
P.O. Box C, Colorado Springs, CO 80901
(719) 576-2700

All Scripture quotations in this publication are from the Holy Bible, New International Version.
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984
International Bible Society

Introduction

Hundreds of thousands of international students—from virtually every nation—now study at colleges and universities across America. The brightest and best from their countries, these students are destined to fill key leadership positions in their nations.

These future leaders come from every background imaginable, but virtually all have one thing in common—the need for friendship. Isolated from family and friends, often for the first time, these talented young men and women are eager to make new friends in the U.S. International students need our friendship.

What a tremendous opportunity God has given us to share Christ’s love with these students! We have a great challenge before us: to befriend each one of these men and women; to serve them, no strings attached (in compliance with the code of ethics adopted by NAFSA: Association of International Educators, formerly National Association of Foreign Student Affairs); and, as we earn the right, to share the hope of Christ within us (as Scripture says, with gentleness and respect).

We’re thankful that God continues to raise up caring Christians such as yourself to stand alongside International Students, Inc. (ISI), as we seek to serve international students and make disciples of the nations that have come to us.

At ISI our dream is that every international student in the U.S. will have an American Christian friend.

If you’re new to international student ministry, you probably have many questions about befriending an international student. Perhaps you’ve never experienced a cross-cultural friendship before. That’s okay.

That’s why we’ve produced *An American Friend Handbook*. This publication will answer many of your questions and give you an overview of what is involved in befriending an international student—from making the first contact to sharing the Gospel, and virtually everything in between.

Incidentally, in the back of this handbook, you’ll find information on booklets available from ISI covering various aspects of international student ministry. Each deals with a key facet of this strategic outreach—befriending, evangelizing, discipling, and re-entry.

An American Friend Handbook, however, features concepts unique to any of our other booklets. Inside you’ll find such helpful hints as favorite recipes for international students, a comprehensive list of conversation topics, and practical suggestions regarding your first meeting together.

This information, if taken as a whole and applied, will help you to become a trusted and valued friend and an effective Christian witness to an international student.

We're glad you've decided to get involved in this important and strategic ministry—as together we fulfill God's will to reach the world for Christ, right here in the U.S.

If you would like more information about international student ministry or other assistance, please refer to the contact information at the end of this booklet. We're here to serve you as you serve international students in Jesus' name.

International Students, Inc.

Rising to the Challenge

International students have been coming to the U.S. to study for many years. The first Chinese students, for instance, arrived here in 1872.

And Americans have been reaching out to international students for almost as long. The Committee on Friendly Relations among Foreign Students—an arm of the YMCA—was founded in 1911.

At the end of World War II, the U.S.—and to a lesser degree, Canada—opened their borders to students from all over the world. The idea was to train future leaders of less-developed countries so that these men and women could return to help their countries and move ahead more rapidly.

Soon, a flood of international students poured into the U.S. In the 1950s, there were close to 50,000 men and women from other nations studying here. Today, there are more than 720,000 international students and scholars representing almost 200 countries.

They come from diverse backgrounds—some from technologically advanced cultures, others from tribal groups; some from recently established nations, others from countries with rich cultural histories extending back thousands of years.

International students are usually sponsored by their governments, national industries, or families. They represent their countries' brightest and best, and most are committed to working hard to achieve their educational goals while here. Many international students are pursuing graduate studies in America.

Truly, they comprise a select group. A great number of them will become influential leaders in business, education, government, the military, and other key areas when they return home.

Although these students come from a vast array of cultural backgrounds, they all desire sincere friendship. An American friend can ease the feelings of loneliness, confusion, and fear that many students encounter while studying here.

Most international students are eager to see how Americans live and to learn more about our culture. Many also come with the understanding that America is a “Christian” nation, and they are often open to learning about Christianity.

In exchange, international students offer us new perspectives, the opportunity to expose our friends and families to a broader world view, and—most importantly—their friendship.

Now is the time for American Christians to rise to the challenge and take advantage of the strategic opportunity God has set before us as we reach out to these students in Jesus' name.

“We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us” (1 Thessalonians 2:8).

Establishing Contact

This publication, *An American Friend Handbook*, focuses on how to be a sensitive friend and effective Christian witness with an international student. It assumes, though, that you've begun such a friendship—perhaps through ISI, your local church, or through your own initiative.

If you haven't, you may wish to contact ISI's headquarters (P.O. Box C, Colorado Springs, CO 80901) for information about its student-matching programs. Or, if there's a college or university near you, an efficient way to actually come into contact with international students is to schedule a meeting with the Foreign Student Advisor (FSA) (or other administrator working with international students) from your nearby campus.

Make an appointment with the FSA. Introduce yourself and state your goal of befriending, hosting, and entertaining international students on a volunteer basis as a community resource.

In general, advisers welcome volunteers like you because of the cultural and educational enrichment you are able to provide to international students. However, they also have the task of watching over the students under their charge to ensure that they are not exploited.

Many advisers, therefore, are wary of "religious" groups. They suspect that volunteers from such organizations only want to convert the students and not to befriend them.

This is a valid concern. In fact, volunteers should offer friendship...and earn the right to share the Gospel. By no means should Christians be ashamed of the Gospel, but we must not "pressure" international students—or anyone, for that matter—to become a Christian.

Our confidence should be in the work of the Holy Spirit. As you befriend an international student, the person will develop the confidence and trust in his or her new relationship with you. Thus, the opportunity to share your faith in Christ will happen naturally.

During the meeting with the FSA, you should also convey what tasks you can and cannot perform. Do not take on assignments you do not feel comfortable with.

Your first meeting with the FSA should not be your last. Keep in contact with him or her. Don't hesitate to ask for advice should you encounter questions or problems with the international student assigned to you.

After you have obtained the student's name, it's up to you to make the first contact by phone. Before you call, find out how to pronounce the student's name. When making the call, clearly identify yourself to the student and explain how you received his or her name. Then suggest a first meeting, such as coffee at the student union or a meal at your home.

Following are some additional suggestions for making the first call:

- Pray before you call.
- If the student is not home when you call, try again later rather than leaving a message for him or her to call you back.
- If you are able to talk with the student, speak slowly, clearly, and carefully, and enunciate your words.
- Provide the student with information about yourself. Briefly describe your family, where you live, your occupation, and perhaps your interest.
- Consider inviting the student to bring a friend along to your first meeting. This may help him or her feel more at ease.
- Many Americans who become involved in cross-cultural friendship find it helpful to center the initial meeting around a meal. If your first meeting includes sharing a meal, find out if the student has any dietary restrictions. (See the chapter in this publication titled “Helpful Cooking Hints and Recipes.”)
- Make sure the student understands the date and time of your invitation and the means of transportation. (If the first meeting is off-campus, you may wish to offer to pick up your guest.)
- Follow-up the telephone call with a written invitation containing the date and time you will pick up him or her. Be sure to get the student’s address during the telephone conversation, and give the student yours.
- Let the student know you are looking forward to meeting him or her.

***“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”
(Philippians 4:6-7).***

The First Meal Together

Now that you've made the initial contact and followed that with a written invitation, you're ready for your first meeting. The following are suggestions to help you prepare for and enjoy that first meeting, whether it is a meal at your home or a cup of coffee in a restaurant.

Pray

Ask God to make your meeting special, a friendly and relaxing time for all involved. Ask Him also to guide you in your thoughts and actions. Perhaps you'll also want to ask a family member or close friend to pray about this first meeting, as well as your ongoing relationship, between you and your new international friend.

Keep Things Simple

Half the world's population eats with their hands, one-fourth uses chopsticks, and one-fourth uses silverware. So a simple meal and a less formal table setting are preferable.

Learn about the Student's Homeland

Taking the time to learn a few facts about your new friend's country communicates that you care about him or her. Helpful facts to know include:

- location and size;
- form of government;
- capital city and other major cities;
- people groups—ethnic and tribal groups;
- major religions;
- current economic, political, and social situation; and
- major industries, crops, and so forth.

International Students, Inc., publishes Country Profiles on the major student-sending nations to the U.S., which cover this information and more. Other excellent sources include *Operation World*, by Patrick Johnstone, and Background Notes available from the U.S. State Department.

Additional information about your international friend's country may be obtained from magazine articles, television documentaries, reference books, and people acquainted with the student's homeland.

Prepare Refreshments

You may wish to invite the student to your home. If you do, offering him or her refreshments at the outset may make him or her feel more at home, since serving refreshments is customary in many countries.

Remember, however, that in many countries it is considered impolite to accept the first or second offer, so you may have to extend several offers before your new friend accepts. Suggestions for refreshments include coffee, tea, fruit juice, crackers, or cookies.

Practice the Student's Name

When you and your new friend are relaxed, perhaps as you enjoy refreshments or wait for a waitress to take your order, ask the student to pronounce his or her full name. Then write it down phonetically in a way that will help you learn it.

Attempt to pronounce the name back to the student. If you don't say it correctly, practice until you at least come close to getting it right. Don't be embarrassed or self-conscious; your desire to learn his or her name right away will communicate the sincerity of your friendship.

Relax and Enjoy

Regardless of what you have scheduled for your first meeting, don't worry about every last detail. Instead, relax and be yourself. If something awkward happens, smile and don't react defensively. Your easygoing manner will, in turn, put the student at ease, helping to alleviate his or her fears of doing or saying the wrong thing.

Ask Sincere, Basic Questions

Questions such as how long the student has been in the country, his or her first impressions of the U.S., and what he or she has seen thus far will help you to get to know one another.

As the conversation progresses, you may want to offer assistance with shopping, banking, or similar activities. (The ISI publication *How to Survive in the U.S.—A Handbook for Internationals* may be an appropriate gift for your international friend at this point.)

Avoid asking questions that reflect a patronizing attitude. Examples of inappropriate questions might include, "Do you have refrigerators in your country?" or "Do you have cars back home?" A little homework beforehand will help educate you so you won't be tempted to ask the wrong type of question. But if you ask something that, judging from your friend's reaction, seems inappropriate, smile and gently apologize. He or she won't fault you for making a mistake.

Mealtime Conversation

In some countries, people generally don't converse while they eat. Don't necessarily take the student's silence as a sign of uneasiness.

Second Servings

Again, in some cultures it is considered impolite to accept a first or second offer. Carefully try to discern whether your friend is refusing your offer of a second serving at mealtime out of politeness or rather because he or she does not care for any more to eat.

Mealtime Prayer and Devotions

International students usually enjoy observing how Americans participate. But be discreet and limit your comments so that the student will not feel he or she is being “preached at.”

“They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts” (Acts 2:46).

Reflect an Attitude of Love

One reason to establish friendships with international students is because God asks us to love them as ourselves (Mark 12:31). We know that God created and loves every person, and that Christ died for all. So we love our international friends—not because they are potential “converts,” but because God loves them unconditionally and has called us to share His love with them.

The following are some principles that will help you to reflect this loving attitude toward your new international friend.

- Value the student as a person of great worth—as God does.
- Always treat him or her as your equal. Never be condescending.
- Be sensitive to the student as a person, realizing that—like you—he or she has hopes and ambitions, joys and sorrows, fears and concerns. Be particularly sensitive to the fact that he or she has, in most cases, left family and friends behind and may feel very alone in this “strange new world.”
- Respect your friend’s customs and culture, even though in some cases they are certain to differ from your own. Don’t try to pry information from your friend that he or she may consider personal.
- Don’t exhibit an attitude that “my way and my country are the best.” At the same time, don’t hesitate to reveal your loyalty to and appreciation for your country.

“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love” (Romans 12:9-10).

Building Your Friendship

Cross-cultural sensitivity is key to building a strong and lasting friendship with an international student. The following are cultural considerations to keep in mind as you establish your friendship.

Time Limitations

Remember that international students are in the U.S. first and foremost to study. Therefore, as American friends, we must be aware of their limitations.

When inviting your friend to a meal or event, be sure he or she knows how much time will be involved. Weekends are usually the best time for such activities. Even then, the student may need to reserve much of that time to study.

Cultural Concepts of Time

In some countries, the clock does not carry the same importance as it does in the U.S. Your friend may not come from a time-controlled culture. In some nations, for instance, it is considered proper to arrive an hour or more late to an event. In other cultures, an invitation must be extended several times before it is accepted.

At first, you may find your friend is late in keeping engagements. Patiently excuse him or her, but be sure with each subsequent activity that you sensitively communicate when your friend is expected to arrive and how long he or she is welcome to stay.

Culture Shock

Virtually all international students experience culture shock, some to a greater degree than others. The fast-paced lifestyle in this country may overwhelm your friend. American food and customs may seem very strange. Even getting used to a new climate may be a difficult adjustment.

To add to that frustration, the English the student hears being spoken here may be quite different from the classroom English he or she studied back home, or it may be spoken in an accent difficult for the student to understand.

Loneliness is another common problem, since the student has probably left behind family and friends, perhaps for the first time. (Family ties in other cultures are often much stronger than they are here.) International students frequently battle this homesickness and discouragement.

Your patience, love, and support at this time can be a strong foundation on which to build a friendship.

Depth of Friendship

Keep in mind that, in many cultures, friendships are much deeper and stronger than those most of us in this country experience. Thus, from your perspective, the friendship your student offers you may seem to be fairly demanding. Don't be apprehensive about this. The more you understand friendship from the student's perspective, the more rewarding your relationship with him or her will be.

Dating

The Western practice of dating is not customary in many countries, thus international students sometimes misinterpret it. If you are single, a good rule to follow is to develop friendships with students of the same gender.

Sleeping Arrangements

If you host more than one student in your home overnight, do not ask two male guests to share a double bed. This is contrary to customs in many countries.

Pets

Some international students are uneasy or may even be fearful around pets. Try to keep your pet or pets out of the way until you know how your friend responds to pets.

Children and Other Relatives

If you have children, they can be important in building your relationship with your international friend. Your children can become a very welcome substitute for the student's brothers, sisters, or other close relatives.

Since older people are revered in many cultures, an older parent or other relative can also contribute a great deal in helping the student to feel at home.

“Show proper respect to everyone...” (I Peter 2:17).

Subjects of Conversational Interest

As you and your friend become better acquainted, you'll be able to discuss various topics more freely than in the initial stages of your friendship. The following topics are proven "winners" and will help your conversations get started.

Geography

- Ask your friend to point out on a map where his or her home is located.
- Discuss the country's physical features, such as mountains, lakes, deserts, forests, rivers, and so forth. Ask your friend to describe the physical environment around his or her home.
- Find out about the climate in your friend's country.
- Discuss national parks, historic places, and recreational areas in his or her country.

Photographs/Family

- Ask to see any photographs your friend may have of his or her family, and from time to time share your own family photographs.
- Compare and contrast photographs of this country with photographs of your friend's country.
- Watch a video or a free film from the library on American life and culture, national parks, scenery, or other points of interest.
- Ask family-related questions, such as: How large is your family? What is your position of birth in the family? Which family members live at home? What kind of work does your father and/or mother do? What is your extended family like?

Language

- Ask your friend how to say various greetings and other common phrases in his or her language, such as: "hello, how are you?," "please," "thank you," and so forth. Write them down phonetically, and practice saying them with your friend.
- Offer to help your friend with any expressions or concepts in English with which he or she is having difficulty.
- Learn how to write words of greeting or other expressions in his or her language.

Money

- Ask your friend to show your currency used in his or her country
- Discuss how his or her money corresponds with U.S. currency according to the exchange rate.
- Inquire about the cost of food, gasoline, housing, and so forth in his or her country.

- Find out if your friend has had any difficulties getting money from home or getting money exchanged.
- Ask if your friend would be willing to trade corresponding coins as mementos of your friendship.

Courtship and Marriage

- At what age do boys and girls start courting?
- At what age are individuals allowed to marry?
- Are marriages arranged?
- Does the father (or both parents) need to give permission to marry?
- What are some wedding customs?

Family Life

- What roles or functions do the father or mother perform in the family in your culture?
- What influence do older people, such as grandparents, have on their adult children and grandchildren?
- What responsibilities do children have in the family?
- What kinds of discipline and training do parents use with their children?
- What are the holidays in your culture, and how do families celebrate them? Which holiday is your favorite?

Men's and Women's Roles

- What kinds of work do men traditionally do in your country? What kinds of work do women traditionally do?
- Do women hold political office in your country? Why or why not?
- Are women included in your country's armed forces? If so, in what capacities?
- Do married women work outside the home? If yes, do husbands assume additional responsibilities at home?
- Who is at the head of the family unit?
- How do you feel about the role women play in American culture?

Recreation

- What games do children play at home? At school?
- What games do junior high and high school youth play?
- What are favorite adult forms of recreation in your country?
- What are popular recreational activities for families?

Education

- What are some differences you've observed between schools in your country and schools here?
- Are teaching methods different here? If so, how?
- Do you have difficulty understanding your professors here?
- Are professors here sensitive to your problems? If so, in what ways?
- How are students chosen for high schools and colleges or universities in your country?
- How much does it cost to attend high school or a college or university in your country?
- How would you evaluate the education you are receiving here?
- In what ways do you hope to apply the education you are receiving here when you return home?
- Is it possible for students in your country to transfer educational credits from your country to here?

Transportation

- Do you have an international driver's license? How does a person obtain one?
- What experiences have you had in getting your driver's license? (Note: Many international students do not possess driver's licenses; some have never learned to drive.)
- What differences are there between driving here and driving in your country? (You might discuss rules and regulations, driving habits, customs, and so forth.)
- How do automobiles in your country differ from those here?
- Does a pedestrian have more or less consideration in your country? Please explain.
- What other modes of transportation are common in your country?
- How do bus and train travel in this country compare with that which is available in your homeland?

Food

- What was your first reaction to American food? What has surprised you about American food?
- What are the staple foods in your country? Which of these are grown locally and which are imported? What foods does your country export?
- Are your foods seasoned? If so, which seasonings do you use?
- What is your favorite food in your country? What is your favorite American food?
- Do you cook your own meals here? If so, are you able to buy the ingredients you need? Which ones are hard to find?
- What beverages do people in your country drink?

Religious Background and Beliefs

Religion can be a sensitive discussion topic. Make sure that you have first established a foundation of mutual respect and trust. (It should be mentioned, however, that many cultures are less sensitive about discussing religion than people in the U.S.) Feel free to develop your own questions, but be careful about when and how you ask them.

Remember not to press your friend—be especially prayerful and sensitive to the Lord’s leading. We’ll examine this subject in greater depth in the chapter “Sharing Your Faith.”

- I’d like to learn more about your religious beliefs. Would you be willing to share something about them with me? (If yes, listen attentively. If no, politely move on with another topic.)
- What do you believe is the meaning of life?
- What is your concept of God? Would you like to know about mine?
- What did you know about Christianity before you came here? Has anything you learned about the Christian faith while you’ve been here surprised you? If so, what?
- How do people in your culture worship? What are some of their religious customs? (Be willing to share some American religious customs as well.)
- Would you like to attend church with me sometime? (Again, don’t pressure your friend.)

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone” (Colossians 4:6).

Communication Guidelines

Most international students enjoy the opportunity to speak with Americans. The sincerity, patience, and understanding with which you communicate, therefore, is very important in building your new friendship.

The following guidelines, though basic, have proven to be helpful to many Americans involved in international student ministry.

- *Listen attentively.* As you converse with your new friend, remember that listening is an art that must be worked at. By listening attentively to what the student is saying, you are paying him or her a high compliment and expressing your genuine interest or concern.
- *Speak carefully to be understood.* Remember that your new friend may not fully understand what you are saying. Articulate your words or speak clearly.
- *Avoid idioms or slang.* Your English may be quite different from the classroom English your friend learned in his or her homeland. Idioms and slang can be particularly perplexing. Imagine what mental images are stirred up in your friend's mind by phrases such as "play it by ear" or "shoot the breeze." If you do use idioms or slang, explain to your friend what these strange phrases mean. Encourage your friend to ask about expressions you use that he or she does not understand.
- *Use jokes and humor sparingly.* Lacking the cultural context and immersion in the English language that we have as Americans, international students have difficulty understanding jokes or humor. If you do use jokes or humor after your friendship is well established, make sure you explain them to your friend whenever necessary. Avoid teasing.
- *Explain words or phrases patiently.* Invite your friend to ask you about words or phrases he or she does not understand. As you speak, carefully and patiently explain anything you think he or she may have not understood. A puzzled look, an inappropriate response, or a hesitancy to answer can be your cue that the student did not understand. When this happens, repeat yourself using different—perhaps similar—words. Do not raise your voice in order to make your point understood. The student may interpret this as impatience or possibly a condescending attitude.
- *Respect differences of opinion.* Obviously, you and your friend will have differences of opinion from time to time. It's important that you share what you think—honestly, but with sensitivity—and that you respect the student's ideas and opinions. Try, however, to avoid controversial subjects that may create tensions or arguments.

Most international students enter this country with preconceived ideas about American life. These ideas can be traced to movies, magazines, the news media, propaganda, and observation of Americans abroad (some of whom may have been poor examples).

Some international students arrive here already suspicious and envious of the prosperity enjoyed in the U.S. Other students have a difficult time separating our government's political and military practices abroad from Americans in general.

The nation your friend comes from may be either pro- or anti-America. The country may be old, with an established culture and history dating back thousands of years; or it may be new, struggling to establish its identity. These factors will certainly influence how your new friend responds to certain issues.

As your friendship with the international student deepens, so will your mutual trust. He or she will become more willing to talk about personal or controversial subjects. Conversely, you'll become more aware if and when the time is right to ask appropriate questions. This mutual sharing can lead naturally into an opportunity for you to share your faith in Christ.

“Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing...An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up” (Proverbs 12:18, 25).

Strengthening Your Friendship

It's important for you and your international friend to share activities that will afford natural opportunities to get to know one another. After all, what better way to get acquainted than to laugh, learn, work, play, and visit together!

You will share excitement and joy, but also frustrations and sorrows, all the while building a sturdier foundation for your friendship. The following are several suggestions designed to enhance your relationship.

Communications-Related Activities

- Pray daily for your friend and his or her specific needs.
- Get together once a week, if possible, but be sensitive to the student's desires.
- If a weekly visit is not always possible, stay in touch by phone. Inquire about the student's health, school activities, family, friends, studies, and so forth.
- Every so often, send a handwritten note on stationery or a thoughtful greeting card. Some international students receive very little mail, so your kind gesture will be especially appreciated.
- Find out your friend's birthday and send him or her a birthday card.

Family Activities

- Invite your friend over for meals. Remember, if you have children, they can add greatly to your friend's visit and help him or her feel more at home.
- Celebrate holidays from his or her country together. Invite the student's friends to join in your celebration.
- Bring your friend to family outings such as picnics, short excursions, visiting friends or family, and perhaps even family vacations. Other fun activities might include visiting museums, zoos, parks, monuments, or scenic areas, or attending the theater or concerts.
- Invite him or her for an overnight or weekend stay at your home.
- Include your friend in family traditions, such as celebrating American holidays. Since most American students go home during holiday breaks, those times can be especially lonely for international students remaining on campus. If your friend has no place to go, consider inviting him or her to stay with you.
- Take him or her shopping.
- Invite your friend to cook a favorite meal or dish from his or her country for you, and provide the necessary ingredients.
- Take him or her to a sporting event, and explain the basic rules of the contest if the student is unfamiliar with them.
- Invite the student to a community or cultural program. International students are usually eager to experience as much as they can of American culture while they are here.
- Let him or her help out with responsibilities in the home.

- Visit the student’s home and meet his or her friends.
- Introduce the student to your friends. (Be careful not to show him or her off as a novelty.)
- Invite your friend to luncheons and banquets (professional groups, church or community functions—but not fund raisers.)
- Make your home a place where the student can relax—truly a “home away from home.”

Friendship-Building Activities

- Take photographs of one another and your activities together. Give copies to your friend to send home.
- Discover your friend’s favorite sport or activity, then learn how to do it and participate in it together.
- Teach him or her how to drive (if appropriate) and obtain a driver’s license, shop for food, clothing, and so forth.
- Help your friend improve his or her English. Teach new vocabulary and English expressions. (One fun way is to use billboards and road signs as you drive along.) Gently correct the student when he or she makes a mistake using the language.
- Help the student with themes or theses for school, if appropriate.
- Interpret aspects of American culture for the student—how and why certain things are done.
- Write to the student’s spouse or parents (with his or her permission), telling them about your friend and the activities you have enjoyed together. (Do not mention religious activities without your friend’s permission.)
- If you are married and have children, your children could write to your friend’s brothers, sisters, relatives, or friends back home—if someone is available to read English. (Again, check with your friend before doing this.)
- If allowed, sit in on one of your friend’s classes or labs.
- Share in his or her problems or needs; be a good listener.

“Practice hospitality...Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people...” (Romans 12:13, Galatians 6:10).

Sharing Your Faith

Perhaps your international friend arrived in the U.S. with strong preconceived ideas regarding Christianity. Or maybe he or she knows little or nothing about the Christian faith. Either way, it's important that you be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading as you determine how and when to share the biblical message of salvation with your friend, if he or she is not already a Christian.

Many international students come to the U.S. believing it is a "Christian nation" and assume that most or all Americans are Christians. As a result, internationals may attribute all they see, hear and experience to Christianity and its influence on this culture. This conclusion creates great tensions.

For example, many international students are offended by the low moral standards and what is viewed as inconsiderate behavior sometimes displayed in this country.

Your friend may also shy away from exploring Christianity or asking questions about it because friends, authorities, family members, or religious leaders back home have warned him or her to avoid Christians.

Perhaps he or she has a strong Christian background, coming from a country where the church is strong and growing and having been grounded in the teachings of the Bible. Or the student may be a "nominal Christian," not having experienced salvation through Christ but possessing a "second-generation" faith.

Your friend may come from another religious background—such as Hindu, Muslim, or Buddhist—and be intent on maintaining established religious convictions and practices. Or he or she may not be orthodox or serious about practicing a faith, be disillusioned with religion altogether, or follow religious practices only because of political or social benefits or to avoid outside pressures.

As your friendship deepens, no doubt the student will see God's love manifested through you and other Christians. Maybe your friend has asked questions about your beliefs or even gone to church with you already. Perhaps you've engaged in stimulating discussions about both of your religious convictions. You may have the opportunity to explain that only a minority of people in this country are true followers of Jesus Christ.

One underlying principle is absolutely critical to remember here: It is imperative that you establish a sustained, sincere relationship with your friend before sharing what Christ means to you. This means "going the extra mile" and may at times try every sinew of faith you possess. Your friend may test you to determine the **real reason** for your friendship.

Once he or she is convinced of your sincerity and a true friendship has been established, then you have earned the right to share the reality of Christ and God's Word in your life.

The following guidelines and principles are designed to help you relate your faith effectively.

Prepare for Discussion

In order to effectively share the fundamentals of Christianity with your friend, you should be able to answer basic questions about what Christians believe, including:

- What do Christians believe about God, the Bible, the meaning of life, humankind, sin, and so forth?
- How do people come into a relationship with God?
- How do people communicate with God? How does God communicate with people?
- Who is Christ? Why do you believe He rose from the dead?
- If Christianity is the only way, what about my family and friends back home?
- What is the way to salvation?
- How do we know God wants a personal relationship with us?

Learn about Other Religions

In order to communicate your faith in a context your friend will understand, learn some basic teachings of other world religions—particularly those of your friend’s religion. This knowledge will enable you to explain the ways in which Christianity differs from other religions.

(ISI publishes a Religion Profile series. Contact ISI to request information on specific profiles available.)

Avoid Negative Approaches

- Don’t attack your friend’s religion with critical or negative remarks or questions. Instead, always show respect for his or her beliefs and traditions.
- Don’t force or manipulate the conversation in order to create an opportunity to speak about Jesus Christ.
- Don’t preach. Instead, share in a loving, tactful way, and listen to what your friend shares in return.
- Don’t present Christianity negatively as a set of “do’s and don’ts.” Remember that Christ came to bring salvation, not condemnation.
- Don’t use theological terms your friend may not know or understand, and carefully define in simple English the terms you do use. Otherwise, your words may be misunderstood or misinterpreted. For instance, the term “born again” to a Hindu may indicate reincarnation.
- Don’t pressure your friend to make a decision for Christ. You might receive an affirmative response to this type of approach, but perhaps only because he or she does not want to offend you. Or you might make your friend angry and damage your relationship.

- Don't be dogmatic or argumentative, even though you are secure in Christ and your beliefs.
- Don't allow your relationship to imply, "I'll be your friend if you become a Christian," or "I'll tell you about Christianity, but I'm really not interested in hearing about your religion." This kind of "strings-attached" friendship can leave a lasting negative impression with your friend about Christianity.

Positive Approaches

- Cultivate your friend's interest in spiritual matters by asking appropriate questions regarding his or her religion and beliefs. Seek to build even greater understanding of his or her religion. This way, you'll not only learn what your friend believes, but it will also open the way for your friend to ask about your faith and beliefs.
- Always be careful to show respect for the student's cultural values and religious heritage. Don't impose Christianity on him or her.
- Ask your friend if he or she is acquainted with the Bible and to what extent. Be willing to listen—without interruption—to your friend's impressions, even if you disagree with certain comments. Building your friendship is, at this point, more important than correcting biblical knowledge.
- Ask if the student would like to have a Bible to read (perhaps one in his or her native language) or if he or she would like to study the Bible.
- Ask your friend what he or she knows about Christianity.

Again, welcome honest impressions. Be prepared for either a negative or positive response.

- Discuss such basic questions as:
 What do you think is the meaning of life?
 Do you know what the Bible says about God, or what God says about Himself in the Bible?
 In your opinion, can we know God? Why or why not?
 Has God revealed Himself to us? If so, how? If not, why not?
 What do you believe is the nature of humankind?
 What is sin? How can people overcome sin?
 Is there life after death? Why or why not?
- At an appropriate time, share with your friend what Christ means to you personally. Point out the uniqueness of a Christian's relationship with God through Christ. (God sent His Son to earth to make it possible for people to have a relationship with Him, rather than demanding that people do whatever they can to reach God.)
- Answer your friend's questions honestly and tactfully. If he or she poses a question for which you do not have a ready answer, admit that you don't know the answer, but also tell him or her that you will research the question before your next meeting. Carefully discern between sincere questions and "smoke-screen" or "roadblock" questions. Avoid being drawn into tangents.

- Many international students want to learn the essence of Christianity, but for some their interest is limited to cultural curiosity. Others will have a genuine concern for spiritual matters and a thirst for spiritual truth.
- Encourage your friend to investigate Christianity and the Bible, at least on an intellectual level. It is reasonable to expect that a well-educated person should have a basic knowledge of this major religion and of Jesus, one of history's greatest spiritual leaders. You may also point out that the Bible is the best-selling book of all time.
- As you communicate, keep Christ central in your decisions. His life and teachings are known around the world. Build on this. Talk about who Jesus is, what He claimed about Himself, and what God said about Jesus through the Bible. Jesus often told stories and used illustrations to teach truth. Don't hesitate to use some of His parables and other stories. In many cultures, this approach is appreciated and easily understood.
- Concentrate on Jesus' death and resurrection. The evidence for His death and resurrection is powerful. (*Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, by Josh McDowell, lists supporting sources.)
- Invite—but don't pressure—your friend to attend church with you. If he or she chooses to attend, make your friend feel welcome and carefully explain the activities that take place.

Involve Your Christian Friends

Introduce your friend to other Christians. Your international friend's contact with these individuals will provide more exposure to the reality of Christ. God often uses more than one person to draw an individual to Himself.

Make Literature Available

Be prepared to offer your friend literature relevant to his or her situation. You might want to confer with others involved locally in international student ministry to help you select appropriate literature.

Portions of Scripture in a modern English translation or in your friend's primary language may be a good place to start. (Begin with the Gospel of Luke, followed by the Gospel of John.) A bilingual version in both English and his or her native tongue might be especially helpful. Later on, you may wish to give your friend a complete New Testament or Bible in easy-to-read English or in his or her language.

Reasons for Hesitancy

Many factors may make it difficult for your international friend to openly profess faith in Jesus Christ. Try to understand his or her situation, and recognize there could be a variety of reasons keeping the student from making a public commitment to Christ, including:

- If your friend forsakes his or her family’s traditional religion, he or she may face family pressure, possible loss of job or financial support, and perhaps even disinheritance.
- Your friend may face severe persecution, even death, if he or she returns home as a Christian to a country that prohibits Christianity.
- If your friend becomes a Christian and returns to a country where Christianity is held in low regard, he or she may have to discard political or other leadership ambitions.
- Your friend may be preoccupied with his or her own goals and academic achievements and not want to consider spiritual needs.
- International students often view Christianity as a Western religion.
- He or she may find it difficult to discern the difference between Christianity and democracy.
- Your friend may be disillusioned by prior contact with either nominal or overly aggressive Christians.
- Friends or nationals who studied in the United States previously may have “warned” him or her about Christianity.

Continue Your Friendship

Your friendship with an international student must not be based on his or her response to the Gospel. Therefore, if your friend should indicate that he or she is not interested in Christianity, that should have no bearing on your relationship. Your unconditional friendship will demonstrate your genuine interest in him or her as a person, and may affect your friend’s life in ways you’ll never know. It’s your responsibility to be an example as you continue to live out biblical principles in your daily life—let God do the rest.

Remember, even if your friend does not accept Christ before returning home, he or she may:

- act as a bridge to other international students who need Christian friends and are open to hearing the Gospel.
- accept Christ at a future date.
- have a more positive view of Christianity upon returning to his or her homeland.

Pray, and Trust God

Pray daily for your friend. Trust fully in the Holy Spirit’s ability to bless your friendship. In His own time and manner, God will draw the student to Himself.

If Your Friend Becomes a Christian

If your friend does become a Christian, it will certainly be a day of rejoicing, praise, and thanksgiving to God. In your joy, enthusiasm, and desire to help him or her grow in Christ, you should observe some important guidelines.

- Don't push your friend to learn too fast! Regardless of whether or not your friend comes from a Christian background, he or she will need to learn a great deal. Be willing to help in the discipleship process, allowing God to work in his or her heart while you provide encouragement, advice, and/or training. Pray for your friend frequently, as Paul did for his converts.
- Do not advertise that your friend has become a Christian. Allow him or her to choose the time and manner in which to announce the news to friends and others. This is crucial, and especially necessary if your friend is from a country where Christianity is illegal!
- Don't exploit your friend's conversion by "showing off" him or her to friends, church groups, and so forth. Remember, such exploitation can do great harm to his or her spiritual development. If you hold your friend up as a "trophy," he or she may interpret it to mean that your friendship was only a means to an end. It may also communicate pride on your part ("Look at what God did through me!"). These negative perceptions could permanently damage your friendship and hinder the student's Christian walk.

Discipling Your Friend

When an international student becomes a Christian, it's important that he or she be equipped to become spiritually mature and thus share the Gospel with others—here in America and after returning home.

In order to be equipped, your friend needs to receive in-depth training. You may have the privilege and joy of sharing in this important responsibility, or someone else may be in a better position to do so.

The following are some specific ways you can encourage your international friend to build a vital relationship with God.

- *Provide a Bible or New Testament.* As mentioned before, if your friend does not own one, getting him or her a Bible or New Testament can be a great encouragement. It's best if the student has Scripture in his or her own language and in a modern translation that can easily be understood. Bilingual Scriptures are ideal.
- *Bible study.* Begin a simple Bible study with your friend. You might, for instance, read through one of the Gospels together—such as the Gospel of John, to begin with—and help the student understand it. Encourage him or her to ask questions.
- *Prayer.* Help your friend learn to pray by praying with him or her. Encourage the student to pray in his or own language. Also, provide suggestions for topics he or she can pray for during private prayer times, perhaps sharing about your own prayer life. Invite your friend to write down the topics, and in this way begin the habit of making and using a prayer list.
- *Encourage daily Bible reading.* Suggest that your friend spend some time each day reading and studying the Bible and praying. If possible, join together for a

time of Bible reading and prayer. Your encouragement and positive example will mean a lot.

- *Scripture memory.* Encourage your friend to join you in memorizing individual Bible verses or short passages of Scripture. As you do, help the student apply the verses to his or her life.
- *Family devotions.* If you have a family and conduct family devotions, consider including your friend, who will enjoy interaction and will pick up some practical and important principles as well.
- *Offer discernment.* It's important that you help your friend learn to be discerning as regards Christian teaching, churches, and literature. Also, be available to answer questions he or she may have concerning cultural Christianity—such as why there are so many different denominations.

Your Friend and the Local Church

About your friend's relationship to a local church or body of believers, consider these important points:

- Whenever possible, encourage your friend to express his or her walk with God in his or her native language and among his or her own ethnic group. Such interaction now will help your friend to communicate Christ with others in his or her homeland and assume responsibilities in an existing church, or perhaps start a new one, when he or she returns home.
- Help your friend locate an established fellowship group of people who speak his or her primary language, if such a group exists locally. If so, be sensitive to the part you should continue to play in his or her own life, and what part fellowship should play. Remember, God uses us in different ways and at different times in the lives of new believers. Even if someone else becomes more active in discipling your friend, don't abandon the relationship. Instead, continue to be an encourager to him or her.
- If there is no such group in your area for your friend to take part in, consult with others who could assist your friend in finding a culturally sensitive group of people with whom to worship.

Cooperating with Others

Rather than trying to do everything for your friend yourself, work in partnering with friends, church members, your Sunday school class, and other Christians whenever possible. The following are a few suggestions:

- Help your friend attend a Christian conference or camp.
- Provide your friend a subscription to a Christian magazine (such as *Discipleship Journal*, available through the Navigators, P.O. Box 35004, Colorado Springs, CO 80935).

- Give your friend helpful Christian books—*Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis, *The Holiness of God* by R.C. Sproul, and so forth—in his or her own language, if possible.
- Help your friend attend a discipleship and growth conference or one where he or she can receive re-entry training before returning home. This is a vital aspect of preparing your friend to return as an effective Christian witness.

Keep in Touch with Your Friend

Pray for your friend daily after he or she returns home or moves to another part of the country. Correspond frequently, unless doing so could create difficulties for your friend.

Inform a local staff member of International Students, Inc., or ISI's national office of your friend's name. ISI will attempt to link your friend with a Christian friend or evangelical group in his or her new location. (To contact ISI, write or call: International Students, Inc., P.O. Box C, Colorado Springs, CO 80901; 719-576-2700).

“We proclaim him [Christ], admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me” (Colossians 1:28-29).

Meeting Your Friend's Needs

One of your friend's deepest, most pressing needs is to have a sincere friend. For many international students, coming to America is a time of deep loneliness and isolation, since they are separated from their support systems back home. Never forget that you are meeting a crucial need in the student's life.

As your friendship grows, listen carefully, patiently, and compassionately as he or she shares experiences and needs that may cause concern or anxiety.

Special Needs

In certain areas of need, we recommend that you do not assume responsibility for your friend or even become actively involved in remedying the situation. In areas such as the following, special knowledge, skill, and/or authority are required to handle the situation properly. You can, however, always remember your friend's needs in prayer asking God to work out the situation in the best way possible.

- *Financial.* We strongly recommend, as a matter of principle, that American friends do not loan money to international students because of the possible entanglements it may cause.
- *Immigration papers/visas.* If a problem of this sort arises, put your friend in touch with his or her foreign student adviser or university official responsible to assist in this area. This person, then, will direct your friend to the proper governmental authorities.
- *Serious medical problems.* Again, refer your friend to the local foreign student adviser or another appropriate person who can handle the necessary details of treatment, insurance, and so forth. By all means, though, be available to drive your friend to the doctor or help out in other practical ways.
- *Legal disputes.* If your friend becomes involved in a legal dispute or situation with legal ramifications—such as a car accident, contract purchase, housing dispute—refer him or her to the foreign student adviser or university official who can recommend legal counsel.
- *Severe emotional/adjustment problems.* The word to note here is “severe.” Obviously, you may, as a sincere friend, be able to help your friend adjust to American culture and deal with the normal emotional hurts international students experience. But in severe cases, refer your friend to a more qualified person, such as a trained counselor, or the foreign student adviser. Don't allow yourself to be drawn into severe emotional/adjustment situations.

Helping Spouses/Families

Some international students bring their spouse and family members with them to the United States. Without the day-to-day interaction with peers and instructors at the university that the student enjoys, often spouses have a tremendous need for friendship.

The vast majority of spouses in this situation are wives of international students. A Christian American friend can greatly assist the international wife by helping in some of the following ways, as applicable:

- Teaching her how and where to shop for the best values in food, clothing, household items, and so forth.
- Helping her learn how to use and care for household appliances.
- Providing guidance in locating a suitable doctor and dentist.
- Teaching her how to use public transportation.
- Helping her enroll her children in school.
- Offering to take care of her children when a need arises.
- Visiting her during the day.
- Taking her and her children on outings—to the zoo, park, museum, and so forth.
- Instructing her in conversational English or helping her find a suitable English class.
- Showing her the location of the post office, pharmacy, hardware store, grocery store, and so forth.
- Helping her find a hairdresser.
- Providing emergency phone numbers.
- Inviting her to women's functions.

“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5).

Helpful Cooking Hints and Recipes

Inviting your friend over for a meal can be a great way to strengthen your friendship. As you become better acquainted, you'll learn the types of foods your friend likes and dislikes and also his or her favorites. You'll also want to discover right away any dietary restrictions he or she may have.

The following information is designed to help you approach these meals with confidence.

Dietary Restrictions

Dietary restrictions may be religious, cultural, or individual. The following recommendations are generalizations, and therefore will not pertain to all individuals in a certain group. Religious dietary restrictions, for instance, depend on the strictness with which your friend adheres to his or her faith. A good rule of thumb is: If in doubt, ask!

- Hindus and some Buddhists generally do not eat beef. Some Hindus and Buddhists are strict vegetarians who eat no meat, fish, poultry, eggs, or dishes containing any of these ingredients.
- Muslims and most Jews do not eat pork—including salads with ham or bacon.
- Some devout Muslims may not eat any form of beef, lamb, or poultry unless it has been killed in a specific manner. Fish is usually acceptable.
- Many international students will not eat chopped and/or processed meats that contain unknown ingredients.
- Many Asians and Africans do not care for cheese or canned tuna.
- Some international students avoid dairy products out of unfamiliarity with them.

Serving Suggestions

- Rice is a staple food in many cultures.
- Vegetables and fruit—fresh, canned, or frozen—are generally appreciated.
- Chicken is a favorite. In many countries, it is served with rice.
- Fish, seafood, lamb, and cheese may be acceptable alternatives to international students who don't eat beef or pork.
- Many international students prefer simple fruit desserts or ice cream to rich and heavy pastries.

Recipes

The following are a dozen tried-and-true recipes we've found to be winners with international students across the spectrum. The first six are easy-to-make dishes that should go over well with most international students. Again, keep in mind that individual preferences will vary.

The last six recipes, courtesy of International Students, Inc., staff member Jan Smith, in Portland, Oregon, are cultural favorites from specific regions. Jan says that international students often enjoy a meal of their native food. She assures us, however, that these recipes are popular with international students from around the world.

Tried-and-True

Lazy Lasagna (Serves 4-6)

1 lb. ground beef or Italian sausage
1 8-oz. package shredded mozzarella cheese
1 8-oz. package mini lasagna noodles
1 28-oz. jar spaghetti sauce

Brown meat. Cook noodles as directed on package. Set aside some cheese for topping and mix remaining ingredients together in a large casserole dish. Top with extra cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes, or until cheese is completely melted. (*Note: You can leave out the ground beef or sausage for a delicious vegetarian main course.*)

Quick Turkey Curry (Serves 4)

¼ c chopped onions
1 T. butter
1 can condensed cream of mushroom soup
¼ c. milk
1 c. dairy sour cream
½ tsp. curry powder
1 c. cubed turkey
Snipped parsley
Optional condiments: chestnuts, raisins, toasted slivered almonds, sliced green onion, or minced pickles.

Cook chopped onion in tablespoon of butter. Add cream of mushroom soup and milk; heat and stir until smooth. Stir in sour cream and curry powder. Add cubed turkey; heat. Garnish with snipped parsley. Serve over hot cooked rice. May offer optional curry condiments listed above.

Ten-Minute Chicken Dinner (Serves 6)

2 whole chicken breasts
2 T. salad oil
1 green pepper, cut into strips
1 small onion, sliced
1 c. diagonally sliced celery
1 can (5 oz.) water chestnuts, strained and sliced
1 c. chicken stock, divided

1 tsp. Accent (optional)
1T. sugar
½ tsp. ginger
2 tsp. cornstarch
2 T. soy sauce
1 can (1 lb.) bean sprouts
1 pkg. (6 oz.) chicken-flavored rice, cooked according to package directions.

Cut meat from bone; cut into small shreds. Cook chicken in hot oil in skillet until white (about three minutes). Add green pepper, onion, celery, water chestnuts ½ cup chicken stock, Accent, salt, and ginger. Cover; cook until vegetables are crisp-tender (about five minutes). Mix cornstarch with soy sauce in remaining ½ cup stock. Add to skillet with bean sprouts, stirring until thickened (about 2 minutes). Serve with hot cooked chicken-flavored rice.

Five-Minute Skillet Dinner (Serves 4-6)

2 cans (7 oz. each) tuna in vegetable oil
1 c. diced celery
1/3 c. chopped onion
1 medium green pepper, diced
1 pkg. (6 oz.) herb rice, cooked according to package directions
1/3 c. diced pimento
1 can (3 or 4 oz.) sliced mushroom
1 tsp. each: salt, pepper, rosemary, marjoram
1/3 c. slivered almonds

Drain tuna oil into skillet; heat. Add celery, onion, and green pepper; cook until vegetables are crisp-tender (about three minutes). Add tuna, hot cooked herbed rice, pimento, mushrooms, and seasonings. Heat to serving temperature. To serve, sprinkle with slivered almonds.

Meatless Vegetable Curry (Serves 4-6)

1 can (1 lb.) small white potatoes
1 T. flour
1 can (8 oz.) small green peas
1 can (16 oz.) cut green beans
1 can (20 oz.) chick peas
½ tsp. each: chili powder, tumeric, Tabasco, Accent (optional)
¼ tsp. coriander powder
1/8 tsp. ground cumin

Drain liquid from potatoes, reserving 1/3 cup. Combine reserved liquid with flour to make a smooth paste; set aside. Drain liquid from remaining vegetables into a skillet. Boil rapidly until liquid is reduced to 1 cup. Stir in spices and Tabasco. Blend in flour

paste and stir until slightly thickened. Add vegetables and Accent; heat to serving temperature. (*Note:* 2-3 tsp. curry powder may be used instead of the spices listed.)

Fruit Salad (Serves 8-10)

2 red delicious apples
2 green pears
2-3 bananas
2 T. lemon juice
2 cans mandarin oranges
2-3 c. seasonal fruit (fresh peaches, grapes, melon, etc.)

Cut fruit into bite-size pieces. Mix together with lemon juice. Add or omit fruit according to your personal taste, but pay attention to the color combination you are creating. Prepare close to serving time and refrigerate.

Jan's Regional Favorites

Nanbanni (Japan)

4 lb. daikon radishes
½ lb. carrots
1 lb. pork, boneless, sliced thin
½ T. oil
1 cayenne pepper (optional)
1 c. water
2 T. cooking sake
2 ½ T. soy sauce

Slice cayenne pepper into very small pieces. Peel radishes; cut into 1 1/2-inch-square chunks. Peel and slice carrots. Heat oil in a pot. Sear and cook pork and cayenne pepper until brown. Add radishes and carrots. Stir and cook about two-three minutes. Add water, cooking sake, and soy sauce; boil. Reduce heat to medium and remove ingredients floating on top with a spoon. Stir and cook until sauce is almost absorbed. Serve with rice.

Chinese Stir Fry

In a large pot, or wok, brown:

2 T. stir fry sauce
2 T. oil
1 inch. fresh ginger, peeled and minced
3 cloves garlic, minced, or garlic powder
1 lb. ground or thin-sliced boneless meat (turkey, chicken, pork, or beef)

Add your choice of any of the following: broccoli tops; green onion pieces; bok choy, sliced thin; nappa cabbage, sliced thin; sliced mushrooms; bean sprouts; carrots, very thinly sliced; snow peas; water chestnuts; bamboo shoots; green cabbage; green or red peppers; cauliflower; yellow onion wedges; tiny pickled corn cobs; Add slower cooking vegetables first. Stir fry until vegetables are cooked but still crunchy. Thicken with cornstarch and water, if desired. Serve over rice.

Peanut Chicken (Ivory Coast)

3 lb. chicken, skin removed and cut into pieces, or 1 lb. ground chicken
1 T. oil
1 onion, chopped
1 tomato, diced
3 green onions, sliced
3 tsp. tomato paste
7 c. water
1 c. smooth peanut butter (natural is best)
1 bay leaf
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. cayenne pepper

Heat oil in large pan. Brown chicken, stirring occasionally, for five minutes. Add onion, tomato, green onions, and tomato paste. Cook one minute. Add water; bring to a boil. Cover and boil eight minutes. Reduce heat. Mix peanut butter in a deep bowl with enough of the warm mixture to make it soft and creamy. Add to chicken. Add bay leaf, salt, and cayenne pepper. Simmer 30 minutes. Serve over rice. (*Note:* If sauce is too thin, turn up the heat and boil, stirring, for a few minutes.)

Hummus (Middle East)

Puree:
1 c. cooked or canned chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
1/3 c. tahini (sesame seed paste)
1 large garlic clove, crushed
6 T. lemon
½ tsp. salt

Garnish with:

1 T. olive oil
1 T. minced parsley

Serve with pita bread, sesame crackers, or American flat bread.

Spicy Baked Chicken (India)

Mix in a bowl:

- 1 T. ground cumin seeds
- 1 T. paprika
- 1 ½ tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1 T. ground turmeric
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 2 ½ tsp. salt
- 3 cloves garlic, mashed
- 6 T. lemon juice

Rub this paste over 3 ½ lbs. chicken pieces. Place chicken in a shallow baking pan. Cover and refrigerate for at least three hours. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Brush chicken with 3 T. vegetable oil. Bake 20 minutes. Turn chicken and bake 25 more minutes. Baste 3-4 times with drippings in pan. Serve with rice and lentils, if desired.

Hungarian Goulash Soup

- 3 medium onions
- 2 T. butter
- 1 lb. beef brisket, fat trimmed and meat cubed into bite-size pieces
- 1 large tomato, diced
- 2 tsp., or more, paprika
- 2 c. water
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed (optional)
- salt to taste

Sauté onions in butter until deep golden brown. Add beef and sauté until browned. Stir in tomato, paprika, and water. Bring to a boil, then lower temperature and simmer 2 hours. Add potatoes. Continue simmering until meat and potatoes are tender (about ½ hour). Season to taste. (*Note:* Soup is best if made a day in advance.)

For Further Information

The following resources and materials may prove helpful as you seek to befriend and share the Good News of Jesus Christ with your international friend.

Materials to Enhance the Christian Witness

Aldrich, Joseph C. *Life-Style Evangelism*. Portland, OR. Multnomah Press, 1981. (See also audiotape package by the same name.)

Dryness, William. *Christian Apologetics in a World Community*. Downers Grove, IL. InterVarsity Press, 1983.

Little, Paul E. *How to Give Away Your Faith*. Madison, WI. InterVarsity Press

McDowell, Josh. *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*. San Bernardino, CA. Campus Crusade for Christ, Inc., 1972.

Obien, Frank. *Building Bridges of Love*. San Bernardino, CA. Campus Crusade for Christ, Inc.

Petersen, Jim. *Evangelism as a Lifestyle*. Colorado Springs, CO. NavPress.

Seamands, John T. *Tell It Well: Communicating the Gospel Across Cultures*. Kansas City, MO. Beacon Hill Press, 1981.

Shelley, Bruce L. *Christian Theology in Plain Language*. Waco, TX. Word Books, 1985.

Vos, Howard (editor). *Religions in a Changing World*. Chicago, IL Moody Press.

Materials Available from ISI

Bible Studies (Student's/Leader's):

I AM Bible Study Series

Jesus the Liberator

Discovering God

Walking with God

Putting God First

Sharing God with Others

Meeting God

Growing Strong to Serve

Handbooks:

How to Survive in the U.S.: A Handbook for Internationals

Think Home

Booklets:

Becoming a Friend with an International Student
How to Share the Good News with Your African Friend
How to Share the Good News with Your International Friend
How to Share the Good News with Your Japanese Friend
How to Share the Good News with Your Muslim Friend
Reaching Students from the People's Republic of China
How to Study the Bible with Your International Friend

Country Profiles:

People's Republic of China
Japan
Taiwan
India
South Korea
Malaysia
Hong Kong
Thailand
Indonesia
Pakistan

Religion Profiles:

Animism
Islam
Marxism
Hinduism
Shinto
Buddhism
Secularism
Is Jesus the Only Way to God?
How Can I Know the Bible Is the Word of God?
World Religions Overview

Videos:

Getting Started with ISI (15 minutes) tells you how to begin your own ministry to international students.

New Beginnings, (15 minutes per program), a series of seven lessons designed for small-group study with new Christians. Discussion guide also available.

Sharing Your Faith through ISI (44 minutes) provides awareness of and practical help for addressing the variety of issues that arise when sharing your faith with international students.

The Church and ISI (4 minute or 7.5 minute format) is designed for use in churches to share the vision and recruit volunteers for your ministry. It also includes a segment with leaders from ISI and partnering organizations challenging viewers to become personally involved in the task.

Welcome Home (18 minutes) shares the stories of several returnees and the difficulties they experienced when going back home. Practical awareness and advice for returnees.

You Have a Friend in ISI (6.5 minutes) is designed for a student audience, sharing how ISI can help students when they first come to the U.S.

Friendship Partner Training is for the person who wants to train a group to be Friendship Partners. This package includes a 55 minute video, a complete trainer's manual, and a powerpoint presentation.

Friendship Partner Individual Training DVD is for the person who can't attend a Friendship Partner Training in a live format. You will receive the training needed to be an effective friend to an international student in your area.

About International Students, Inc.

The strategic mission of International Students, Inc. (ISI), is to serve international students and visiting scholars here in the United States. Founded in 1953, ISI is a nonprofit, nondenominational Christian ministry working in cooperation with local churches to enlist, educate, and coordinate the ministry efforts of evangelical Christians to befriend international students and scholars and their families and, through friendship evangelism, share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

ISI's ministry team of more than 100 field staff members and thousands of volunteers meets regularly with international students and visiting scholars, equipping them to become effective Christian witnesses to their home countries, ISI-sponsored evangelistic Bible studies, discipleship meetings, discussion groups, and a variety of other activities take place daily across America.

The dream and goal of ISI is that international students in the United States will have an American Christian friend.

If you would like more information or assistance, please contact:

International Students, Inc.
PO Box C
Colorado Springs, CO 80901
Phone: (719) 576-2700
Fax: (719) 576-5363
Web site: www.isionline.org