

Lough on Mission

Lough Ah Fook (pronounced LOW-Ah-FOOK) was born in China in 1841. Lough heard about Jesus from a Southern Baptist missionary in China. Lough worked in a barbershop. He was so excited about Jesus that he shared his faith with his customers. He also asked the owner of the shop to cut his pay so he could take Sundays off to go to church. The owner refused and fired him.

Lough was adopted by his aunt. She was very angry when she learned that he had become a Christian. She did everything she could to make him turn away from his faith. She even hid his clothes and shoes to keep him from leaving her house!

After a few years, Lough believed God was opening a door for him to reach Chinese people living in other countries. This meant he must leave China. At that time, the British and others were recruiting many Chinese to work as contract laborers in other parts of the world. They signed contracts for terms lasting five to seven years. They slowly paid back the costs of their travel and could keep their remaining wages, which were very low. The lives of these workers were very difficult.

Lough became a contract laborer because he believed it would give him a chance to share the gospel with other Chinese laborers. He boarded a ship to Guyana, a country in South America. He shared his faith with other passengers. Several passengers decided to follow Jesus. After they arrived, Lough stayed in contact with his new friends. Together, they began worshipping Jesus together on Sundays.

Lough made other Christian friends in Guyana. His friends bought his contract so he could devote himself to sharing his faith and starting new churches. He worked with other missionaries sent out from England through the ministry of a man named George Müller. Lough and his new friends started the first Baptist Church in Guyana. It was the first Baptist church in all of South America.



Lough Fook died in 1884. Sadly, by 1932, all the Chinese Baptist churches in Guyana had closed. Still, God had a plan. Years later in 1963, IMB missionary Otis Brady could start Southern Baptist churches in Guyana because Lough's Baptist church was already registered there. Even after Lough died, the work he did helped spread the gospel in Guyana.

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