

1. STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT

“Reaching out to students from Mainland China is simply the most strategically important Christian missionary endeavor anywhere in the world.” – Dr. David Aikman, a Christ-follower who served as bureau chief for Time magazine in Beijing, Moscow and other major cities.

Though stated more than 20 years ago, these words from a top-ranking journalist are as true today as ever. What makes the Chinese who study on America’s campuses so influential in their nation and the world?

- They are **numerous** – the largest foreign nationality on U.S. campuses. One in three international students is from Mainland China. Chinese can be found at virtually every institution of higher learning in America.
- They are **prestigious** – the best and brightest of Chinese society. They represent the top 1% of students from their country. (Although some are less gifted in their academics, those individuals come from families with wealth and influence.)
- They are **estranged** – often lonely and isolated. Many Chinese students struggle to integrate into American campus life and often retreat to their own little circles.
- They are **intrigued** – interested in learning more about Jesus. Although most Chinese students have not been contacted by Christians in their home country, they are curious about the gospel and few are “resistant.”
- They are **strategic** – potential ambassadors for Jesus throughout the world. Chinese can travel to certain places where Americans are not welcome, and they are not perceived as “Western imperialists” when they share their faith.
- They are **isolated, and often lonely**

A Recent History

Chinese students are proud of their nation’s glorious past. Their ancient dynasties were marked by literary masterpieces, scientific discoveries and technological achievements. Unfortunately, earlier generations also experienced great suffering through war, civil strife and natural disasters.

Fast forward to the mid-1980s and you will observe massive changes in Chinese society. In the ‘80s, China opened itself to the world and laid the foundation for its current status as a major

economic force. Widespread discontent with national policies was also voiced in the '80s and is still heard at times.

Spurred by the growth of their nation's economy, today's Chinese students are focused on material success as they pursue the "China Dream." At the same time, many feel an inner hopelessness that drives a search for meaning and love.