

MECO reaches out through business

Jason Chapman* moved to the Middle East and founded a manufacturing business - but he had another motive too, as he tells MECO Magazine ...



Sharing Christ's love through daily interactions

Jason* is a MECO worker who runs a business in the Middle East. Read about how God is opening doors for him to share Christ's love.

"I was moved by the fact that there are so few Christians in this part of the world," says Jason. "Most countries in the Middle East don't welcome foreign missionaries, but they do need expertise in 'secular' fields like business. So you can't be a 'missionary', but you can still be a witness in the way you live your life."

Doing business in a foreign culture can be challenging. "I still miss many cultural cues," admits Jason. "For example, saving face is very important in this culture. One time, I unintentionally made a supplier look bad by disagreeing with him publicly.

"He may have felt I was questioning his expertise. When I later picked up the order, about half of it was useless. They usually do high quality work for me, so I think he

intentionally did poor work as a way of indirectly telling me - again, saving face - not to make him look bad in front of other people.

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"But overall, I think that by God's grace and His Spirit in me, I do business differently and that is noticed by the people I work with. I demand high standards, but at the same time I'm patient with employees and suppliers, even if their poor work causes me to lose money.

"With one supplier, I spent six months going back to him 18 times before I was finally satisfied with what he was producing. I could tell he got frustrated, but in the end we became friends. I asked him to write a testimonial about working with me. He wrote: 'We wish all our

customers were like him. As we worked with him we saw his genuine reactions and sincere kindness. He seeks what is best for everyone he meets. We love him and desire the very best for him.'


"It's exciting to show the love of Christ to people who are not expecting it. I'm a foreigner, from the West, and in the minds of many people here this means I am hostile to Muslims. They are shocked when I show them respect. Even if the conversation never comes around to faith, since I am a Westerner they generally assume I am a Christian, so Christ is glorified.

Using Jesus' example for mission

The key to mission, is simple, according to Jason. "If you want to reach someone

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with the love of Christ, start where they are at. That's how Jesus started his ministry - with the miracle of turning water into wine. He met a need. He didn't do the things we tend to mean by 'evangelism', but he showed God's love. When it comes to sharing the love of Christ with people, the best place to start may be by giving them what they are asking for.

"I want God to use me to spread the love of Christ in my day-to-day business dealings with the people around me. Frequently young people ask me for work, and as my business grows, I can touch more people's lives. Please do pray for what I do, and for all those serving Christ through working here in the Middle East." 

Are you being called to serve in the Middle East in business?

For more information about being involved in mission visit www.aboutmeco.org

If you are thinking about working in the Middle East, a useful resource is www.businessasmissionnetwork.com