



21-DAY CHALLENGE



by **Jonathan Lytle**

a daily challenge devo
to encourage outreach to
international students





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FOREWORD

by Severin Lwali,
XAI Director

As a former international student, I am a product of a very intentional, Spirit-filled Chi Alpha community on a secular campus that lived out in word and lifestyle their faith in Jesus to the extent that I couldn't help but duplicate what I had seen and heard everywhere I went. What Chi Alpha does is powerful and life-transforming!

I believe the international students on our campuses are eager to experience what Chi Alpha offers in their communities of fellowship, worship, discipleship, prayer, and mission! In fact, Scripture informs us in Acts 17:26-27 that the Lord strategically determines where people live, so they can perhaps reach out to God and find Him, though He is not far off.

Chi Alpha's vision for international students is to see every Chi Alpha ministry loving, serving, proclaiming Christ, and discipling international students. With every Chi Alpha ministry and student engaged in moving international students from friendship to leadership, we will reach a large number of the 1,043,839 international students on our campuses. In fact, Chi Alpha's ten-year goal is to reach 100,000 international students so powerfully, that like me, they will duplicate what they have experienced in the marketplace and the whole world.

Jonathan Lytle, an experienced XAI practitioner, creatively crafted this booklet because he believes so strongly that if people were to take this challenge, it would impact the lives of thousands of international students around the country.

FOREWORD

by Severin Lwali,
XAI Director

The purpose of this 21-day challenge is to help you engage internationals on your campus. God has strategically placed you to engage the nations through loving, serving, proclaiming Christ and discipling international students as they study on our campus. Simply put, God reaches the nations through you; thus the phrase “I am XAI.”

Read through and reflect on each day’s challenges, action steps, and testimonies to mobilize you and your friends to engage the nations on your campus! I am thrilled for what lies ahead for you during and after this 21-day I am XAI Challenge.



DAY 1

Join the Movement

Join the XAi Challenge Facebook group (www.facebook.com/groups/xaichallenge) and tell us why you are doing the XAi Challenge! Feel free to post any questions or exciting stories in this group throughout the next three weeks!

*May God be merciful and bless us.
May his face smile with favor on us. Interlude
May your ways be known throughout the earth,
your saving power among people everywhere.
May the nations praise you, O God.
Yes, may all the nations praise you.
Let the whole world sing for joy,
because you govern the nations with justice
and guide the people of the whole world. Interlude
May the nations praise you, O God.
Yes, may all the nations praise you.
Then the earth will yield its harvests,
and God, our God, will richly bless us.
Yes, God will bless us,
and people all over the world will fear him.*

PSALM 67 (NLT)

Please note some students' names have been changed to protect their identity.

DAY 2

Get Informed

Stop by the International Student Office and tell them you are researching information about international students on campus. Ask the question below.

*The whole earth will acknowledge the Lord and return to him.
All the families of the nations will bow down before him.
For royal power belongs to the Lord. He rules all the nations.*

PSALM 22:27-28 (NLT)

How many international students study on our campus?

How many countries are represented?

What countries are most represented?

How long do international students usually stay?

Where do most international students live - on or off campus?

Is there any way I can be helpful to your office or to international students to make them feel welcome in the U.S.?

WRITE YOUR ANSWERS HERE:

DAY 3

Lunchtime!

Find out where international students on your campus tend to eat lunch. Go there for lunch and try to sit with at least one international student. If you have a good conversation, ask them for their contact information so you can meet again!

Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.

1 JOHN 3:18 (NLT)

Rick's family practiced communication with the dead in their tradition. When Rick's mother was pregnant with him, she was the vessel through which a demonic prophecy was made: That Rick would bring division to the family someday. Rick loved his family, and this fact tormented him for years.

Karl was a shy American student who wanted to meet international students. One day, he decided he was going to sit with someone eating with chopsticks and ask them to teach him how to use them. Seems legit, right?

Meanwhile, Rick felt the intense loneliness that all students feel when they study abroad. He found himself praying to someone who felt like God every now and then, but he wasn't sure if it was real. He'd seen pictures of the crucifixion back in his home in Singapore, but didn't really know much about it.

One day, as he was sitting in the campus cafeteria, he said, "God, if you are real, make a new friend come sit with me." Karl walked up with a pair of chopsticks.

Rick joined Karl's small group, where he experienced deep, loving friendship, and finally got the courage to ask his leaders if God created him with a destiny of destruction as his family prophecy had accused. He was shown Jeremiah 29:11, and his face showed a relief that forever changed the way I think about the phrase "sharing the Good News." Rick has returned home to Singapore, where he witnesses to his friends about the Good News and feels in love with a God who has destined him for hope and love eternally.

-Erin (U.S.A.)

DAY 4

Breaking News

Go to news.google.com and search for the name of a country that sends a lot of international students to your campus. Read two to three articles. The next time you talk to someone from that country, ask them something you read in the news.

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After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:

“Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”

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REVELATION 7:9-10 (NIV)

WRITE A REFLECTION HERE:

DAY 5

Have Fun!

Find out if your university does any fun events for international students. If so, find one that you can join! If not, talk to your small group or your campus pastor about how you could host a fun event for international students.

In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

MATTHEW 5:16 (NLT)

When I came to campus, I wanted to invest in girls and see transformation happen in their lives. But internationals weren't even on my radar. Then I met two Chinese grad students at one of our fall kick-off events. I invited them to my small group, but didn't expect them to come. The first week, one of them came, but the other was too stressed out about school work, so I ended up going over to her apartment after our group meeting. I took over some muffins and offered to help her with some of the projects she was stressed about.

As the girls kept coming, I gave both of them Bibles. I really had to think about how to explain the gospel to someone who had no background. Sometimes I wasn't sure how to answer their questions, but each day I would pray about what should be the next step. Once they had the basics and said they believed it was real, I asked my Chi Alpha group to pray as I talked to them about committing their lives to Christ. To my delight, they prayed with me to give their lives to Jesus!

As God was changing their hearts, I realized he had been changing my heart as well. For the first time, I saw their coming to know Jesus just took me talking to them and offering them friendship and love. No one was more surprised than me that God wanted to use me to reach the nations, but I now hope to serve other internationals, knowing God will give me everything I need.

-Sami (U.S.A.)

DAY 6

Give What You Have

Reflect on how the Lord has made you. Ask Him to show you something about your personality, skills, or spiritual gifts that makes you uniquely gifted to reach international students.

In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

ROMANS 12:6-8 (NLT)

WRITE A REFLECTION HERE:

DAY 7

Unplug

When you have a break today, make it a goal to not look at any digital device. Instead, find an international student (pray the Lord would guide you to the right one) and buy him or her a cup of coffee (or tea if preferred). Sit down with the international student and enjoy the cup.

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

LUKE 6:38 (NIV)

Sitting in the student union building on our campus is a good way to meet international students, but you have to make sure you keep your eyes open. People won't sit with someone who's on their phone! Thankfully, I didn't have my phone out when a Saudi student, Abdullah, came up to me: "Mohammed told me you are a Christian and you work for a Christian group. So, is it your job to make everybody Christian?"

I was joyfully able to tell him: "I am a Christian because I love and follow Jesus - that's what that means. Because I follow and obey Jesus, it's my job to tell everyone about Jesus." He was very satisfied with that, and we had lunch.

At that lunch, when we got on the topic of "being religious," I told him how Jesus called the Pharisees "whitewashed tombs" - beautifully religious on the outside, but inside? Full of dead bones! Abdullah said, "I know exactly the kind of people he was talking about!"

Abdullah loved to hear about Jesus. I felt like I'd been transported to the first-century Judean countryside, as people watched and listened to Jesus and said, "What kind of man is this?" Over the years, I have been able to witness the amazement on so many Saudi faces as they hear the true stories about Jesus for the first time. That's a lot better than browsing Facebook!

-Jonathan (U.S.A.)

DAY 8

Sacrifice

The Apostle Paul was willing to make sacrifices for the sake of sharing the gospel cross-culturally. Write down something you might need to sacrifice in order to reach international students for Jesus. What might God call you to give up so someone else can know him?

Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-23 (NIV)

WRITE A REFLECTION HERE:

DAY 9

Global Faith

Ask a Christian international student in your Chi Alpha group if you can take him or her to coffee/lunch and ask about how his or her experience of Christianity is different here than it is at home.

*To answer before listening—
that is folly and shame.*

PROVERBS 18:13 (NIV)

As an international student, I have faced many mental challenges. I remember when I first came to the United States, speaking English was a struggle for me every morning I woke up. I was constantly afraid that people would not understand me. I was so swallowed in a fear that people would make fun of me because of my accent and my lack of communication in English. However, God is so good. He completely defeated my fear by bringing Chi Alpha to my life. There I found my heart melted down before the hospitality and genuine care of Chi Alpha members, and also by how they completely ignored the fact that English is my second language. Also, in Chi Alpha, I started to understand more about the concept of “family in Christ.” Chi Alpha helped me to come to a realization that being a Christian does not mean that I have to take up my cross and follow Jesus by myself. But being a Christian is following Christ by the strength God gives me and the support of other brothers and sisters in Him. Without Chi Alpha, I would never become who I am today: a son of God, a junior in a pretty cool university, and a fluent-English speaker!

- Tri (Vietnam)

DAY 10

Pray for a Nation

Go to www.prayercast.com and search for a nation that is well-represented on your campus. Use the information on that page to pray for international students today.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

EPHESIANS 6:18 (NIV)

WRITE A REFLECTION HERE:

DAY 11

Pray With Your Eyes Open

Prayer walk your campus for an hour, asking God to bring you into contact with an international student who needs a friend.

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And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you.

LUKE 11:9 (NLT)

I didn't have a religion before I came to the United States. But I always wanted to have a religion and something that I can believe. Two and a half years ago, when I first came here, two guys from Chi Alpha met me randomly on campus. Because of that coincidence, I got the opportunity to know about Jesus. I was in several small groups studying the Bible, and I made many friends. I liked to be in these groups, but at that time, I still didn't think I could believe in Jesus.

However, things changed at Winter Camp. Before I went to Winter Camp, I didn't expect anything to happen. Actually, I didn't want to go to Winter Camp at first, because I was very busy with my classes. But I finally decided to go because of my friends.

The second day, during the silent time, when I closed my eyes, I saw some pictures in my mind. In one of them, I stood in the church and many people surrounded me, and a light came to me from the top of the church.

Then...I felt God's power. It comes to every Christian's spirit. At that moment, God's power also came to my spirit...I was very excited, and I made the decision to follow Jesus.

I knew I was changed by God's power. Now I spend some time every week with my friend Zach to study and try to be closer with God. I hope you also can learn something from my experience and be closer with God.

-Hongwei (China)



DAY 12

Meeting Needs, Part 1

Visit reachinginternationals.com/international-students-5-primary-felt-needs/. Bookmark reachinginternationals.com for a great future resource.

For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.

LUKE 19:10 (NLT)

WRITE A REFLECTION HERE:

DAY 13

Meeting Needs, Part 2

Ask an international student what they needed the most when they first arrived. Together, make a plan for how you could meet that need for new international students at the beginning of the next quarter/semester.

If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?

JAMES 2:16 (NIV)

Imagine moving by yourself to a country on the other side of the world. After a long plane ride and a few more hours in a shuttle, you finally arrive. It's cold and wet and gloomy. You try to cheer yourself up by thinking about how you will meet your new roommates soon, but when you finally step in and look around at your dark, empty apartment, you figure out that your roommates aren't moving in for another day. You're completely alone.

You put your energy into unpacking, but when your stomach growls, you realize that you don't know how to get food. There isn't anyone you can ask, because you don't know anyone yet.

And then, suddenly, there's a knock on your door. You open it and find those nice girls who were passing out lemonade in the parking lot. They're making a trip to the grocery store, and ask if you want to come with them. Also, they say that they're going out to dinner afterwards, and they'd love to take you. Could there be any better timing than this?

This was the exact experience of Chia Chen, a Taiwanese student, who called us her "food angels" all year long. Chia Chen became a faithful member of our small group and also met with me for mentoring throughout the year. One day, when we were studying the parable of the lost coin, I asked her what she thought the coin represented. She said, "I think I'm that coin, and I'm in the process of being found."

-Becky (U.S.A.)



DAY 14

Do What You're Already Doing

What are you doing this weekend with your friends? Invite an international student to join.



Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory.

ROMANS 15:7 (NLT)



WRITE A REFLECTION HERE:

DAY 15

Share the Light

Download the YouVersion Bible app. Ask an international student to help you determine which translation in their language is the easiest to read.

*Your word is a lamp to guide my feet
and a light for my path.*

PSALM 119:105 (NLT)

Mo from Saudi Arabia had a huge heart and a warm smile that could flood a room. We quickly became friends. I invited him to our weekly conversation hours at our ministry house, and from there to our large group gatherings (which include worship, prayer and teaching from the Bible). Every time he came, he would bring three to four new international students along with him. We would often stay up with a group of guys until 2 a.m., drinking Saudi tea, laughing and eating kabsa chicken. Whenever we hung out, he would constantly encourage his Saudi friends to come to Chi Alpha events.

A few nights before Mo was returning home, he started asking questions about Jesus and His story in the Bible. He explained that he was interested, but had never read the Bible. We had an hour and a half conversation about Jesus, in which I got to share Jesus' life story (the Gospel) and what that means to me as a believer and follower of Christ. The next day Mo came to his final Chi Alpha meeting and took a video during worship. When I asked him why, he responded, "I want to capture these moments that are special to me, so I can always remember them." After the service, I gave him a Bible written in Arabic. He graciously thanked me and said goodbye to all the friends he had met at our fellowship.

Since Mo left, I have continued to be a part of the Saudi community, with guys coming to our conversation hours and Bible studies. I look forward to many more late night kabsa parties and am constantly amazed at what God can do with a simple friendship and His powerful love.

- Michael (U.S.A.)





DAY 16

Reconnect

Reconnect with an international student you have met during the XAi Challenge. Contact and invite him or her to a meal with you.

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For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home.

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MATTHEW 25:35 (NLT)

WRITE A REFLECTION HERE:

DAY 17

Connect to Jesus' People

Invite an international student to your small group, to Chi Alpha, or to church.

But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!"

ROMANS 10:14-15 (NLT)

Exploring Jesus is one of the most interesting, eye-opening and life-changing stories a human being can learn about. I wasn't born into a religious family, and I never got the chance to learn more about the Bible, Christianity or God with other people. It made me so happy when I met this large variety of wonderful people in Chi Alpha, who gave me the opportunity to grow in a totally new direction.

After only a few days here in the United States, my way led me to the club named Chi Alpha. A friend and I decided to go to one of their events, because we heard it is a really good way to find friends and meet new people, but that was only the beginning.

In these meetings, people from a lot of different countries, origins and with totally different religious backgrounds come together and learn more about Jesus and the Bible. A lot of them I can call friends now, and they help me a lot to learn and make my own thoughts. I hear stories from different perspectives, and it made me think about main questions in my life.

I am so happy and thankful I've got the chance for all of this. For me, that is only the beginning of a long and meaningful journey in believing and trusting. I hope that all those beautiful people never stop to give chances like they gave it to me.

-Franzi (Germany)



DAY 18

A Prayer of Faith

Ask an international student if there's anything you can pray for them about. Believe that God will answer you!

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*Look to the Lord and his strength;
seek his face always.*

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1 CHRONICLES 16:11 (NIV)

WRITE A REFLECTION HERE:

DAY 19

Pause & Talk to God

Pray for one person you've met so far.

Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord.

JAMES 5:13-14 (NLT)

Before I became a Christian, I had little knowledge about Christianity and the Bible. My family is not Christian except for my grandparents. My grandmother used to tell me Bible stories. I enjoyed those stories, but I was not really interested in being a Christian at that time. Since I came to the States, I met many Christian people. They are all very nice and wonderful people. I don't have my family here, but now I feel I have a new, big family.

I really needed proof that God was with me. I've heard many people's miracle stories, where God gave them what they asked for, but it had never happened to me. So, I prayed a lot about many things, but mostly about my Christian grandmother. My grandmother, who is in Japan, has cancer, and I was worried about her. She couldn't have surgery, because she is too old to have it.

Then a few months later, she got out from the hospital! She didn't recover, but she got much better than before. My mother said it was kind of a miracle.

I was really happy and surprised, because I was praying a lot for her to get better, and then it became real! That gave me proof that God is with me and he always listens to my voice. After that, I decided to be a Christian.

- Aomi (Japan)



DAY 20

Pray Together

Ask your small group leader if you can pray together for international students at your next small group meeting.



This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

1 JOHN 5:14-15 (NIV)



WRITE A REFLECTION HERE:

DAY 21

Pass it On!

Ask your campus pastor if you can share at your Chi Alpha meeting a brief testimony of what God has done through the I am XAi Challenge and encourage others to do it!

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*Come and see what our God has done,
what awesome miracles he performs for people!*

PSALM 66:5 (NLT)

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What is one thing you did during the I am XAi Challenge that you'd like to continue to do regularly?

WRITE IT HERE:



NOTES



Jonathan Lytle

Jonathan and Liz Lytle have met international students from 75 countries...and counting! They are Chi Alpha campus missionaries at Western Washington University, and are passionate about international students. Their favorite activity is telling an international student about Jesus for the very first time, preferably if that also involves a delicious meal (which it often does!).

Both Jonathan and Liz are from the Pacific Northwest, met each other in college, and discovered in Chi Alpha an incredible opportunity to influence the world. Their daughter Lucy and son Lukas are guaranteed to brighten your day.

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
U.S. MISSIONS



...that none perish



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