

Robert Glover Zoom Interview

Dr. Rick: [00:00:00] All right, welcome again to the Think Orphan Podcast. I'm your cohost, Rick Morton, along with Phil Darke. Phil, we've got an exciting show today with one of our favorite people in the world. So I'm going to get to you so we can get right to it.

Phil: [00:00:12] Yeah. I'm super, super excited for this as well. So as you said, we're going to get to this because we've got a lot to cover. We have Robert Glover with us this morning. It's morning for me anyway.

It's actually afternoon for him cause he's coming, coming at us from England. And, he is the Executive Director for Care for Children has an amazing story that we're going to get a chance to hear. He's also got a book coming out, documentary coming out here pretty soon. So we're going to talk about all that in the interview.

So without more, we're going to bring Robert in and I'm just, I'm just really excited. So I hope you guys get as much out of this as I have just even preparing for the interview. I've been so encouraged by this and I hope you are too. So here we go with Robert Glover.

Robert, welcome to the Think Orphan Podcast.

Robert Glover: [00:00:58] Oh, thank you very much.

Phil: [00:01:00] We're, as, as I just said in the intro, which you didn't get to hear, we're very excited to be able to have a chance to just talk with you about and hear your story, introduce you to people who may not know your story and, and, what God has done in and through you over the last couple of decades in China and some other countries.

So, you know, while, you know, before we get into kind of a lot of the details of that, can you just briefly share your story and how you as an English man, leading a family of eight ended up in China working to transform the child welfare system.

Robert Glover: [00:01:32] Yeah, sure. I think my journey well started at school when I'm living in England, I'm not very multicultural at all the area. I lived a young Chinese boy he came to my school and, what I noticed was that, at being very different, he got bullied quite a bit. So, the other thing I noticed, he was a very good artist. So, we came up with a bit of a deal.

I said, I'm being a bit, oh, you know, I was a bit taller than most of the children at school. So my deal was, you know, you helped me with my, art exam and I'll, keep an eye out for you. And, so that, that was great. And I just, I remember being absolutely fascinated. Most, most children and young people in UK growing up in the seventies were totally gravitated to the United States and Hollywood and everything came from America. But for some reason, God had sort of switched my gaze to this mysterious culture and nation of China. And through this young man, I thought I could find out more. I remember asking him, could he teach me some Chinese?

And he was very reluctant, and eventually he told me a word. And what I didn't know it meant was shut up in Chinese. So I was going around mumbling this word in front of all the teachers. And he found it hilarious that I was telling all the teachers to shut up in Chinese. So that's where my journey sort of started.

And I think always from there, I'd always been fascinated and want to go to China. I, my other passion was, football, or you would say soccer and I did manage to have a glimmer, a small time playing with some professional clubs. And when that failed, I decided, well, how, how else could I get to China, but to join the British Royal Navy, because they sail all the seas.

And, unfortunately when I was drafted, I was drafted into a diesel submarine, patrolling the Baltic, which wasn't really my intention, but, coming out of the Royal Navy after serving my time, I, I decided to go into social work and, Very quickly, learned about, children and what was in the best interest of children.

I got a social work degree. I moved very quickly into management and got involved in managing change at the time. Around the eighties and nineties, the UK was going through a total structural change from residential institutional care into family placement. And so it became very aware of adoption and alongside my faith, you know?

The faith, you know, in John 8:36, it said, if the son, therefore shall make you free, free indeed you will be. And very much understand gaining an understanding and insight to that around us as people, how God adopts us into his family. And so, I think we, you know, I got married, had four girls and then guns.

We moved to Guernsey small Island in the Channel Islands. Fantastic church, which was our springboard, really. That was our preparation. Our twin sons were born and, we very quickly then, found ourselves on a journey into China. and initially that was me going and spending time with, friends in, that I'd met in Shanghai and talking to them about family, which wasn't really far from, from their own set of values and beliefs.

You know, the Chinese are very pragmatic and practical and they love the family. Family is the core of society in, in China. And so it was quite an easy sell really, you know, to say, These children should be growing up in, in families. So that was a bit of the journey.

Phil: [00:05:31] Yeah. Well,

we'll get more into the rest of the journey in a, Rick has some questions, but one of the things I want to before we get into that, one of the. I didn't mention in your intro, but I wanted to, to bring it up, you know, you are, you have been named, I don't know exactly how it works in England.

But, Officer of the Order of the British Empire, you have a cool OBE at the end of your, your title. It's kind of, you know, it's, it's probably a much better and more exclusive than the PhD collection. But, but I was just curious if you got to have that cool sword thing done with the, Did the queen do the sword on your shoulder or is that, is that a different thing that you get to do that?

Robert Glover: [00:06:05] Okay. That's a, that's what we might call a knighthood. I did get to meet the queen though. The fascinating thing about her is I think that day she was honoring about 114 people and, she knew that I'd got six children. She knew we lived in China. And she knew that I'd gone to China to serve Jesus. And she recognized that in saying, God bless you.

So, she is, is a truly, you know, a faithful servant of Jesus Christ.

Phil: [00:06:37] That's fantastic. That's

Dr. Rick: [00:06:39] fantastic. That's a great story, Robert and I, and you know, apparently Phil is now going to start the lobbying for you to be knighted. So right here this morning, you heard it, you know, you heard it here first. You know, Robert I in, in, in listening to your story, and, and just knowing a little bit about you.

I think one of the things that, is significant to me, I grew up with a father who, who grew up without a father in his home and, and who was a, who was a wonderful father. And I know that's, that's common to your experience and. But now you've, you've raised six children. You, you have, worked in, in helping orphan and vulnerable children to find places and homes, and I just would be interested to hear you talk a little bit about kind of your understanding of, of fatherlessness and how, how we as the body of Christ can work to overcome fatherlessness. and what our, what our role is in that.

Robert Glover: [00:07:39] Yeah, sure. I think one is always aware that something is different. I think it took me a bit of time, probably into my adolescence. 'Cause having good mother and sisters and grandparents, you know, you're very aware of the love and, attachment and nurture that you had. But they were always aware as you got in closer to that time of significance in your adolescence when you look at it. Who am I? You know, it's all about identity. and you you're aware that, you know, you've got something missing. And I think that merges into your faith as well as, so, you know, as Christians, we want to self reflect. We want to look at the areas that you know, where our weaknesses are.

And I think, you know, it was always very conscious of that when I got married and when I had children, that I wanted to, you know, check self-reflect and look at how that could change. And, I think what we, what I see as well, what I saw as a social worker, as generational sin that came through where, you know, this, this reflected from one generation to another.

And so I was very conscious that, you know, when I got married, that was it. And that was my wife and life. And my one love, and I was very conscious that, you know, Parenthood is about sacrifice and marriage is tough. You've got to work at it and, and, and raising children are tough, you know, no one said it was easy.

And so there is self reflection and sacrifice in those areas to make sure that, you know, what you felt growing up, that you had something missing that your children weren't going to. And, you know, I think there may be a positive adjustment in that respect. But you know, what I would say to people is that the children need mothers and fathers.

We know that God made the family for children. I remember going onto CCTV. In China. And I'm like, I was told I was live, which was quite scary. It was something like 500 million people listening in. And then the presenter saying, well, why do you do what you do? And I just felt the wisdom of God or wisdom of the Holy spirit.

Saying God made the family for children and the studio went silent. You know, is that permissible? And then someone went, yes. Yes. And there was a full understanding, you know, amongst all the people in China that yes, there is a God and then, and family is the way that children need to be raised. So, I think that's a simple message that we need to hold onto. That family is important and it's significant for the children's healthy development.

Phil: [00:10:43] Yeah, absolutely. And you know, that's something that we talk a lot about with the different guests we've had on this show. Just the, the critical importance of family in children's lives. And, and it's something that obviously with Care for Children, you have, you have created the model that you have and, and have been able to do the work you've been doing in China with that premise, really underlying all that you're doing.

And with the, with the model I'd love for you to discuss just, you know, the last 22 years or so in China. also you've done work in Thailand, Vietnam over those over those years, really working to transition out of the institutional model to family care. And can you just share about the model, but also some of the, some of the reasons why, there is a difference between the two, as far as the upbringing of the children, even when they're in these institutions versus family. And why, how that, how that informed the work really that you're, you've been doing and we'll, we'll continue doing in these countries.

Robert Glover: [00:11:48] Sure. Well, I think, you know, something I learned very early on in, in, in working for the British social services is that institutions create dependency. So the children become dependent throughout their lives and beyond their time in, in, in, in residential care and, and often, it's, it, it creates dysfunction.

So, you know, there's a lot of dysfunction when a child gets to the age of 16, 17, 18, and leaves. And so this dependency and dysfunction continues throughout their life. And, so I think the system that we looked at was, you know, how do we, how do we manage change? Manage managing change is difficult.

Most people find it really odd because we're used to the things and the ways that we do things. And so what I learned very quickly is that if the system is not beneficial for the children, then we don't fit the children into the system. We change the system.

And I think that was very much what we were doing is looking at the, this dysfunction is not working for children and therefore we need to work at system change. So it starts at that level. And I think, you know, what we want to do is when we work with governments, whether it be China, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, is, to help them work within their system.

And so also using their resources. training, we want to be strategic and we want to be sustainable. So they are really important to be strategic. You've got to look at a national

level of how to use work within the system to move children from institutions into families. And so what we tended to do it, what we did in China was in Shanghai

we had a pilot project, we moved 500 children from the Shanghai orphanage into local families in Shanghai. And guess what. We saw tremendous development, tremendous change. Unbelievable. In fact, even the Chinese media would use the word miraculous because these were miracles where children had lay on the floor of an orphanage and become alive.

And I'll talk about children of Shanghai, the documentary. Because that was showing some of these outcomes of these families, which were incredible. Not only that, did it bring life back into families. There were many families cause the one child policy that had almost died in their sense of community and the sense of love in the sense of wanting to have big families and children. And so it was working in all ways, in all directions. Here were the children thriving through the love and the stimulation and nurture. And here were the families that were coming back together again, and then enjoying Chinese New Year and all the festivals and flavors that families have.

And, and so what we saw was a tremendous success in in this pilot project. And I felt this was very key in the sense that in many countries, your governments are passing legislation and policy, but very rarely get to see outcomes. And what I wanted them to do is rather than read reports about family placement,

I wanted some see it for their, for themselves. So for me, one of the most beneficial seeing things, we're seeing a hardened communist government official with tears rolling down his eyes. Cause he'd seen something that didn't, just didn't collate with his, his thinking. How did that child go from there to there?

And I think quickly, what we saw is by using the resources. So a lot of the, the, the institutional workers, we retrain them. We took them and retrain them into being family placement workers. For me, a lot of these people working in institutions. For many years have had lots of experience and lots of understanding of children.

We have to deinstitutionalize them as we do this children. But it was almost like for them a breath of fresh air. This is a career development. You know, I was probably the lowest of the low care worker in an institution in Shanghai and now I'm becoming a family placement social worker. And so we went through this training process of training and investing in the people. Not, not fighting against them, not closing down the institution, but retraining and repurposing them to work in the community.

And it was so, so successful. And so these were the people that were doing the assessments on the family, making sure that these families were the right families and going through all the assessments. And then also these were the people that were visiting the children. They knew that they had worked with.

And so it really helped, develop very quickly with them resources, working with the resources internally. And of course, as we know, Shanghai then when, was so successful

that, I was asked with my family to move from Shanghai to Beijing and rollout to a national program right across China.

Yeah.

Phil: [00:17:15] And as you did that, and then how did you then decide to move to Thailand and Vietnam, you said Cambodia. And how did that look as far as learning those systems and, and as you said, working within the system. But did the model stay very similar or was it, was it transitioned or transformed a bit in those different countries as you, as you moved in there?

Robert Glover: [00:17:43] Yeah. So it was slightly different, Phil, in the sense that in, in China, everything is government. You know, the wonderful thing in, 20 years we went national. We rolled out to every province in China. Every province in China wanted to do because they could see what had happened in Shanghai. And then in 2018, we found out that 85% of the children in China now living in families.

Of course we had this vision. God has given us a vision for a million. And so I kept probing them and asking, How many children is that? They wouldn't tell me, and they said, well why do you want to know? And I said, Is it close to a million? Oh, no, it's much more than a million. And I just realized, you know, I didn't know I'd see it in my lifetime. But within 17 years, God had fulfilled that vision for a million. And, again from Thailand and Vietnam and Cambodia, they've all approached us and it's not been around us having to go there. They've seen what happened in China. There's a sense of respect for China. There's a sense of that culture. It's the same culture. It's the same family values.

There are differences. Obviously Thailand is less government run as Cambodia, much of the, the children's homes run in, in Cambodia are private. And so what we're seeing is quite different and, in those countries, but with the same attitude of wanting to make that transition from institutional care and to family based care, that's

Dr. Rick: [00:19:20] great.

Robert, I want to dig in a little bit to just, your, your journey into working in China. And, and I, I wanna, you know, there's a saying that I picked up along the way. An old missionary friend has reminded me often that that God doesn't waste anything. And, and one of the, one of the things I've benefited from personally is, some years ago, I remember coming to a session that you were part of leading at CAFO. Long before I knew I would ever have any involvement in China. Long before I knew I would have any involvement in foster care in China. And heard you share about how God had led you to China and about the relationship that you were able to have with people there and relationship that you were able to have with the government. And I was just, I was incredibly impressed and God just really made an imprint on my life about the thinking of, of how to relate to the Chinese people and about how to, how to really understand their, their heart, their, as you've already said, their, you know, they're bend toward family values and those places where we have have commonality. I'd love for you just to, to kind of elaborate a little bit on the experience of, kind of learning China, finding credibility in China and maintaining relationships there, and

maybe some things that you learned along the way that that might be helpful to our, our listeners.

Robert Glover: [00:20:50] Yeah sure. My wife say, I says, I'm more Chinese and I am an English in the way I think. Yeah., I'm not sure about that, but many Chinese official government officials, you know, call me an egg.

They, they, they, they see 'em, you're white on the outside and yellow on the inside. I think my purpose, you know, when, when God calls you somewhere, then you take it seriously and you want to give everything. And when I went to China, I. I always remember in the early days I went there and there were some other, Westerners and they're all wagging their fingers and telling them off.

And I thought, how rude? Yeah. You know, we're, we're, we're guests in your country. And I was just having fun with them. I love the food. I just tell them, I love your food. It's amazing. I've never tasted anything so. And, and, and you, you make beer, Ching Tao beer is really quite nice. And I think they quite enjoyed that in the early days.

And of course, little did I know that everything was done through Guānxì, you know, in relationships and friendships. And so I got invited back to another dinner, which I'm most pleased about. More lovely Chinese food. And, and over the years, I think, you know, I've always wanted to understand. I want to really go deep and understand how they feel and how they work and you know, how can you be effective with the gospel or anything else come to that, right,

if you don't understand how they're going to receive it. And I always remember, the initial, project in Shanghai was government to government. So the British government funded it, which was rather fortunate. And, and so there was a level of authority between the British government and the Chinese government.

But meanwhile, I was having to try and make friends with these people that I had an office in the orphanage. And, you know, I think a third of them probably didn't want me there. a third of them couldn't really care. They would just come for the money and there was probably some youngsters that were quite interested. But I wasn't allowed to eat with them and go in the canteen.

And, so at lunchtime I made good use of my time. I would go into the playground and teach some of the older boys soccer. And this became a regular thing and they got re rather keen. some of them were disabled and we decided that we would put a team together. And so I'd played for a team called Norwich City, which had yellow shirts and green shorts.

And, then their nickname Norwich City are called canaries, 'cause were a little Canary bird, the yellow Canary bird. And, and so we called ourselves the Shanghai Canaries and I got training them. And, and someone mentioned, well, why don't you put them into the Shanghai schools trophy? So we thought, well, that would be a good idea.

And we entered and we got all the way to the final, where we paid the American school. And, came out with a 5-3 win and the nice cup. And I never forget that the mayor of

Shanghai and it got such big news. The mayor of Shanghai came down and his address very pragmatic. Again, practical to these orphans was all your life you have been losers. Today you are winners. Which I thought was a bit harsh.

We had great fun. We won this cup and anyway, the next day I'm in my office and there's a knock on my door. This was about six months. It taken six months and there was, Madam Director who was a fiercesome woman stood outside my office with all the staff. And she had my bowl with my name on it, and that meant I could go into the canteen. And that meant they had accepted me.

it took some time and a, and a, and a football match and a trophy which gave them of course, face and honor. Shanghai orphanages not had anything like this previously. And, so it's just a lesson of patience and time. And, you know, we don't deserve the right to be respected. We have to win it. And we won that through some football. Soccer, sorry.

Phil: [00:24:55] No, that's all right. I've told Rick the power of football, the real football is I'm trying to inform Rick and let him know, that, that fact that. It's something that's taken Rick a bit of time to understand the importance of football in the global, in the global scheme of things. But, you know, we'll get them there.

We'll get him there one day.

Dr. Rick: [00:25:14] I see. I'm just glad to see that God is using sports other than American football. And so it just proves the power of the Holy spirit. I, I think, you know, Robert, I, it just, it occurs to me just in, you know, in, in hearing that about, the, the fact that, that you were in, you were in a setting where, It was slanted against face saving, right?

Like you're coming into, to, to, to change the system that, that people are very invested in. Hmm. And, and this idea that, you know, that you were able to sort of earn the right to be heard and, and earn the right through friendship, to be able to, you know, to, to say those things, but how did, how did attitudes transform with regard to the work. With regard to the attitude toward children and how did, how did you sort of see that break down over time?

Robert Glover: [00:26:05] Well, I always believe in outcomes and, you know, I think the importance is that we work hard and we have a lot of fun. But at the end of the day, it's the outcomes. And when you see, you, we start to see some of the outcomes of the children.

That's undeniable, you know, And I think, I always remember, in Chendu, when we go on into another city, there was a little girl who they came to me and she was a tiny little held her in her hands like this. And she'd, she'd got a hole in her heart and they, they were convinced that she was going to die, but could she possibly just have a last few months in a, in a family. And we said, of course, you know, and we placed her with a good, actually a Christian family. And, I went back. It was probably two. Oh, just over two years. And here maybe a little longer. There was this little girl with chubby cheeks and she'd got a ballerina kit on and she'd been to ballet and she was in the hospital.

We met in the hospital and mum was so pleased and she held on to mum and dad was you know, saying, come on and show some moves. And she was doing her dancing, ballerina

dancing, and it was phenomenal. And, and was this picture of health? And so the doctor came and they were going to do some tests on her heart, you know, cause now she's fit and well, we could probably do a heart operation. And so he went in and did all the tests and we were waiting and. I never forget he had big thick, I don't know why a surgeon would have big thick glasses, but, he, he raised his glasses and wiped tears and he said, I don't understand it, but there's nothing wrong with a heart.

And it made again news. I think there's one of the times I used the word miraculous, healed by the. Healed by the love of a mother. And it was absolutely phenomenal. And this, that, those sort of story just speak very clearly to people that, you know, families do make a difference for sure.

Dr. Rick: [00:28:06] You know, and, and obviously the, with placing a million children, through, you know, through Care for Children, you have so many great stories of transformation.

And now, you know, a generation of adults that have been, have been raised through family and, and their lives have been changed, but, but it can't all be easy and it, and it can't all, you know, always, you know, Turn out with, with those, you know, fairy tale kind of stories. What about, talk to us a little bit about some of the, some of the setbacks or, or maybe some of the disruptions along the way.

How, where, where did you find the difficult and then how did, how did God help you negotiate through the difficult to, to carry on and, and to reach this goal of placing more than a million children?

Robert Glover: [00:28:57] You know what I think, you know, most of the difficulties came from. I found it incredibly easy to work with the Chinese.

And I know that, you know, that's not a great message at the moment in the world. The Chinese people are, some of the humblest, you know, we're not talking about politics, we're talking about living and eating and breathing with the children and the. Families and the people that do the work on the ground.

And I, you know, I honestly did not come across massive difficulties. I think the biggest things were for me were always around people seeing that success and saying, right, we want to jump on this bandwagon of success and come and do it. And the fear of that is if something we're doing at the moment at Care for Children, we're developing a safeguarding video that we can share through our experiences of 20 years with other small organizations. Cause the biggest danger, the biggest fear for me is that if you get, organizations coming in, that don't go through the safeguarding procedures. That don't go through the right processes. Then you know, children get hurt and get damaged.

And. you know, I was very aware in China that people would always ask us, can we have your training material? Can we have your, you know, recipe for success? And I said well if you can speak Chinese, yes. Because it's all in Chinese. And, and of course they always wanted it translated into English, which we didn't have time for.

So I think the, the important message here is as we collaborate and work together, it's important that as Christians, we do this well, That, you know, I came, I'm a Christian that came through a social work background. Worked in management, worked in system change. And I think it's really important that we're going to work with governments

that we must come up with the very best standards. And so that's why at the moment, we're, we're trying to research a donor that can help us put together a really good, you know, safeguarding video, which will help the small organizations when they go into this work understand that institutions are very different to families.

And if you don't transfer them, we don't make that transition properly then, you know, they're going to mess children's lines up. So, you know, there are a lot of good people out there that have that professional, but they're also a big space of really good Christians that really want to do a lot of good

but maybe don't have the full, you know, capacity of professional standards and, you know, safeguarding. So, you know, that's something that I, we feel very impassioned now to transfer and to share with people so that we can see this work grow right across the world.

Phil: [00:31:51] Yeah. With that, you know, I think to, to just piggyback on that.

You've done your work in, in Asia to date. Right. But do you feel as you're creating these materials, this, this video, helping to share this, hoping to share this with other organizations, knowing that people are, people are starting to see more and more of the, the negatives of the institutions and wanting to transition, but not really knowing how, with the tremendous success you've had in China and these other countries.

Do you feel that it's, it is transferable and replicable outside of Asia? cause we obviously have a global audience here. and, and what, you know, what might you think, what, what might be different if you think there are any differences?

Robert Glover: [00:32:36] No. Absolutely. I think the system change is very transferable. Of course there'll be different challenges.

We recently, we're very good close to actually doing some studies in, in Africa. Interestingly, we were invited by the government of Israel, to, to go and have a look there. So. another Eastern European and, Mediterranean country. So, I think the system, when we're talking about system change is transferable.

I think the challenges are very different and, and of course, what I always say is right, well God called me to China. So we want someone who, you know, we feel, you know, we had a couple that was called to Thailand and Vietnam and, and, and, Cambodia. so that they, they have to then go in deep and find out what the culture is and how the changes and the differences are.

And I think that's the most important thing that, that, that, you know, we're not, it we're, there is something that you have to understand culturally, before you can start looking at system change to make it work. And I think we, we did this with Thailand when we first went

to Thailand from China. And after a year, we had to stop everything and rewrite that whole program, because there's not a lot, not a great difference, but there is a difference. And I think that's really important. What we're doing now is we're putting all our training materials up on line. We're putting all digital. we have a, in China, we have a, an online, called My Family. Which, you know, we'll go beyond, substitute families. We'll go into other fam, you know, families in China, but it's putting in those values that we all believe in and know.

So I think that's the investment. That's our legacy and legacy is to, to put these information online and make them available for, for others. But to answer your question, system change is possible, but you do have to. You know, understand the cultural differences to make them work.

Phil: [00:34:40] Yeah, I think that's, that's so true.

Pretty much in all this work that you're doing. I think that's great wisdom for the different work that we have is that we might have these great things that work in one country. And while a lot of the pieces of the puzzle can be transferred, you definitely need to make those, those adjustments based on those specifics of the place that you're going.

And that could be even within countries. It was, you know, presumably that. Within countries with different communities within people, groups, different tribes, whatnot. that's something that we can see. So, the last, the last question, the last question, before we get into the questions that we always ask, all our guests, This is a, this is something that, you know, I'm excited about because we can just scratch the surface on a lot of these conversations in a lot of these questions, a lot of these topics that we're talking about today, there's so much more as you, obviously can figure with, with a couple of decades of work. We can't really cover it all in a half hour or 40 minutes or so, but the good news is folks out there. If this is something that's a piquing your interest and exciting you and getting you very, interested in learning more, there are opportunities coming out in, in a few weeks actually.

it might actually even be out by the time we release this episode, but you have a book coming out called, As Many as the Stars and a documentary called Children of Shanghai. that's coming out like I said, and if in a few weeks from when we're recording. Both them go into much greater detail about different parts of the story, different things that we've talked about today, through this interview. But what prompted you to, to create those resources and, and how do you hope the readers and viewers will be impacted by them?

Robert Glover: [00:36:20] So what prompted me was my friends in America. And it's taken four years for me to agree to it. I spent many, many months under my bed because I didn't want to see it. The, the book is, is, is a spiritual story. it's a spiritual story of my family, you know, of eight of us moving to China and, why we did that. It was a sacrifice. And my wife and my children were amazing. My, my daughter Lois had read Lily Amongst Thorns, which is a book about persecution in China, and often people are dying. And, and, and of course, when she was going to China, she, she cried a lot and we thought she was going to miss her friends.

But actually, later she told us she thought she was going to China to die at 8. So it's not surprising that she is, has a very strong, passionate, faith. So the book is an interesting one and the, the, the story behind the name, As Many as the Stars, many years ago, I had a very strange, prophecy given to me that, And at the time I hadn't got a clue, you know, this chap came up and wanted to pray for me and he said, I just sense God is saying, you'll be father to as many children as there are stars. And I thought, wow, that's rather silly. You know, I've got six children and we're doing, you know, you could do Sunday school and youth work, but how are you going to manage that? and, what, when I went to China, I was sitting.

This is three years after going back and forth. And the Chinese wanted to give me a Chinese name and they want it to me to be their, their consultant. And, in a bit of time going around and go clear, I couldn't speak Chinese. You know what they were talking about. It didn't make any sense to me whatsoever.

And then one guy stood up and he said, we want to tell you a meaning of your name because it's really important in Chinese. And he said, as many stars are on the sky, you'll be father to children in China. And I remembered that man from years before I thought, wow, this is where God wants me to be. and so hence as many as the stars, just said, the book is very much, as I say, the spiritual story

of the journey and, there's a lot in there about my wife and about how she took people in off the streets. And we always had people living with lots of humor with the children coming home, wondering why a changed person got her clothes on and things like this. so that's the book and hotter, releasing the book on 15th of October.

and I'm just, I'm just really, really hope that this takes people on a journey to meet Jesus. Cause that's what it's about. you know, I think sometimes we, we, we, we can get, you know, full of books and things like that, but that's the purpose of it to take people on a journey. And then, I mean, really we exist to preach the good news, reach the poor, and set people free.

And we only do that with Jesus Christ. And so I think the book is very much about the spiritual story. The documentary is fantastic because the documentary, and I'm saying this, you forget the bits about me and my family, but it takes you on a journey. And what we do is we go back to Shanghai 20 years after we placed the first a hundred children.

And we find six of these children. And their stories are phenomenal and their parent's stories are phenomenal. There's one little girl I get very upset about. And, she was, she was, she had Cerebral Palsy. She lay on the floor of the orphanage and really, you know, I had a quite struggle to get her into a family 'cause no one thought that, you know, why would she couldn't manage in a family?

Well, this family sacrificed their lives for this little girl and this little girl goes on to win a gold medal metal in their Paralympic games, and you can sit in the Australia, it is a phenomenal story. And, and, and, and, and, you know, there's another guy who works for 10 cents, you know, the, the billion dollar company, which, we chat and all, and, and, and his story is phenomenal.

At six years of age, he was abandoned in a, in a building site in, in Shanghai. And he lived in a very humble, but he loves his mother and father. And now you see there's a reverse thing. I've tried one of the things I always say to my children, look, I took you to China, so you can take care of me in my old age.

And this is what he's doing. He, he is there and he just loves his mother and father. He just dotes on and does everything for them. So, you know, the documentary, which is, narrated by Bear Grylls, some of you may know Bear Grylls . It is phenomenal in showing people the difference, you know, families make in the children's lives.

And I've got to say, I did lose it at one point and, I just couldn't speak 'cause the tears were coming down my eyes, seeing the outcomes of these dear little precious children who had grown up into amazing young people.

Phil: [00:41:26] Yeah. You know, it was, I will echo what you said. It is an amazing documentary. We were able to watch a, kind of a sneak preview of it in preparation for this.

And I, I can't recommend it more, to, to you out there. And that's also coming out in October, correct?

Robert Glover: [00:41:41] That's right. Yeah. They're coming out together.

Phil: [00:41:44] Yeah. And then is it, is the, is the documentary when Bear took you out into the wild and for three days, is that coming out in November? When's that coming out?

Well, I think I'd be I probably a little bit too fit for him, you know?

Yeah. That's probably true.

Robert Glover: [00:41:59] He'd kill me.

Phil: [00:42:01] That's probably true. So I was thinking, I don't know,

He likes me enough that he doesn't want to kill me.

Dr. Rick: [00:42:09] Save save something for the next documentary. No, don't go all out there, you know, in the, in the first opportunity

Phil: [00:42:16] I will say. yeah, you know, it's, it's interesting because I I'm, I'm curious whether people will be more excited that you've got 1 million children into families or that Bear Grylls is, is doing the documentary narration. 'Cause you know, that will tell a lot about our audience. So I'm hoping it's the former, not the latter, but, but I will, one question I just I've thought about earlier in the, in I, you know, you reminded me of the question that was just lingered in my head and it's it's with the, you know, over the years, actually, technically my, my family and I are, are still in the adoption process from China. I say technically, because we started in 2006. And, we have, had since had, you know, more biological children. And so my wife and I don't feel that that call anymore at this point. But over the years that has become less and less of a, you know, it was back then it was massive. Right. I mean, how many were being adopted out, of China every month, right? And then you hear

about, well, then it just became the special needs because a lot of people in China weren't wanting to adopt special needs children. And now to hear that story that you just tell about the, that girl now woman who won the Paralympics, you won, they won the gold medals and. Has that in to.

see that the amount of people in China taking in these children now from the institution so that the adoption, the international side has, has gone to a standstill. Is that something that you've seen over the years as a, as a change and a shift in the mindset of the Chinese? Or was it, do you think it was just more opening up that door to them to be able to do so or a mix of the two?

Robert Glover: [00:43:57] Yeah, I mean, I think international adoption was, was great for its time and I've got lots of friends who have adopted from China and I've helped some of those. Interestingly, I have a good friend here in my local town who wanted a little girl and got given a little boy. It was interesting and I was able to, without affecting anything, you know, get their wishes.

So, you know, I've been part of that process and, that was very evident. I always remember. I worked, worked in Beijing for Yemming Foo who was the Vice Minister of Civil Affairs. quite a remarkable man. He's the man during Tiananmen Square that went onto the square and pleaded with the students to leave knowing what was going to happen.

And he was a man when then came back into some years later. and I worked with, I remember him saying, you know, for a long time as Chinese people, we watched our children, you know, getting on those airplanes and being shipped off to other countries. And then seeing his face change and smile.

Now we can have our children living in families in our own country. And I always imagine what it would be like, you know, to see if we saw, you know, our blonde haired little boys and girls say in Texas, getting on a plane, going to Japan or something. and what, and, and, and when you're a such an honor culture as well, how that must, must have felt.

And, so, you know, I think for me, the international adoption was right for its time. I think now that they, that China has developed and developed a good family placement system, then it is really good for everyone, including my friend, Yemming Foo, who I just saw him beaming when you know, now our children can stay in China and be in Chinese families.

And I think that is so key. you know, for, for, for that country. What I'm hearing now is many provinces. Actually, I have very well, I think it was one province. I know that doesn't have any institutions. Wow. Doesn't have any orphanages whatsoever. They put all their children into placement. So, you know, what we're seeing is, is something that, that you know, is changing greatly.

And of course we know this all came out of the one child policy, Care for Children helped rewrite that policy, in 2014 and we helped write the new legislation that family placement would be priority over institutional care. And so, you know, always go back to my old founding father, you know, where, they, they, they said that, you know, for children, the best place is to grow up in a family.

And, you know, I think that's really important for China, too.

Phil: [00:46:47] Absolutely. So back to back to the book real quick and the documentary, do you, do you have a website, for, also for Care for Children that we can go to, to be able to find that the information on the book, the documentary so that when it comes out, we'll be able to be able to pick it up?

Robert Glover: [00:47:04] Yeah. So the, the Care for Children is easiest one it's www.careforchildren.com. and then the documentary has its own and there's a trailer on the documentary is www.Childrenofshanghai.com. So, yeah, they will, at all be freely available. you know, what if, I'm going to do something extraordinary. now

Wow. Someone sponsored some of my books. So anybody who sends me an email with a postal address, I'll send them a free copy of the book. I'm hoping you don't have more than a thousand people listening.

Phil: [00:47:45] I hope we do have more than a thousand people listening to this, but, now do you, what, what's that email address that you'd want them to send it to you?

Robert Glover: [00:47:55] My email address is robert@careforchildren.com. All right, send me a postal address and I'll send you a free copy of the book.

Phil: [00:48:02] Wow, that's quite a, quite an offer. Thank you, Robert, for that.

Yeah.

Dr. Rick: [00:48:06] And that's going to be a great read for, you know, for a, for a lot of our listeners and our, our Watchers now that we're on, on video.

And so thank you so much for that. Robert, one of the questions that we like to ask guest is we want to get inside your head a little bit to think about some of the things that are influencing you. And so, what have you read or listened to, or watched recently that has impacted your thinking about how we can love orphan and vulnerable children with excellence?

Robert Glover: [00:48:35] Well, I mean, something I've watched recently, which is quite remarkable, is that the, the documentary, Free Burma Rangers. So, I mean, I guess everybody's looking at that at the moment. But if you want to go a little bit deeper, some someone who inspired me, I think it was inspirational. It was a lady called Jackie Pullinger.

I don't know if you've heard of her. she's very well known in the UK, but I'm not so well known in the USA. If you go to www.ststevensSociety.com, she's got a video on her front page and that's just a deal breaker. And Jackie has been a tremendous friend of Elizabeth and I, in fact, you know, she's more like a sister than I know.

And, she really does make a difference. So I don't know, she wrote a book called Chasing the Dragon. She was a woman in, I think early 1960s, went to Hong Kong and worked in the wall city. One of the most dreadful places in the world. Won the respect of all the triads, won the

respect of the government, and for decades have been bringing people off drugs, onto the Holy spirit and full of the love of Jesus.

Incredible. And if you ever get a chance to go and see her and see her ministry, it is the real deal.

Dr. Rick: [00:50:01] Thank you for that recommendation. That's that's that's and that's, that's a, that's a good one for our folks to go be encouraged, both in, in, in good work that can be done, but ultimately, in how the gospel can reshape, the world in which we

Phil: [00:50:16] know it.

Absolutely. And, this last question, maybe Jackie and maybe somebody else and maybe a group of people, but, you know, what, what person has most impacted your thinking on how we can love orphan and vulnerable children with excellence?

Robert Glover: [00:50:28] I mean, I think inspirationally, professionally, Herbert Laming, who is it sits in the house of Lords.

He was a minister in UK. He was my boss. Incredible humble man, who continues to this day in his late seventies to journey with me to places like Chiong Pen and the cause of, young people and children, incredible, mentor, I would say. And I would then go, yeah, my inspiration, Jackie Pullinger, you know, for those, that want to really reach down and set the captives free, then.

Yeah, check out and read the book, Chasing the Dragon. Amazing.

Phil: [00:51:11] Yeah, definitely.

Well, Robert, just thank you so much for your, I mean your, your inspiration just to, to so many, the work that, you've been doing, that God's been doing it in through you over the years. It's so evident. in just watching the documentary, having the conversation with you here today.

And I look forward to reading that book, as well. So I'm going to get ready to send you an email here in a couple of minutes. and, we'll, I, I really do hope you folks out there, you know, drop that email and be able to get this book and then, and then get it as a gift for, for many others to the, as Robert has written in an email I've seen recently that, it's a great Christmas gift for people, if you want to inspire people to love well, to, to, as you said, share the gospel in ways that are, that are real, that, it's man, I can't think of a better gift to give people. So Robert, just thank you so much for, for who you are and for sharing your wisdom with us this, this morning or today, I guess, for you this afternoon for you.

So very much appreciate you and, and what you're, what you've done.

Robert Glover: [00:52:10] Thank you. Thank you both

Dr. Rick: [00:52:11] Thank you Robert.

Phil: [00:52:15] Well, thanks again, Robert, for just sharing your life experiences and wisdom with us. What a, what an amazing, amazing life. Amazing story. As I said, Rick, when he said I'm about to do some extraordinary here, I was going well, how could it be more extraordinary than what you've already shared with us?

And I don't think it even compared, if you think it compared, then I think you got your priorities, a little messed up, but, w w what, you know, what you think of that, right. I already know what you're going to say, but what the heck, man, that was awesome.

Dr. Rick: [00:52:47] Yeah, well, I just, you know, I love Robert, I love his story.

His, you know, his heart for Christ and, and his, his outlook in kingdom building is, is always noteworthy worthy to me. You know, the, the fact is that Robert is a guy consistently who has remembered why he's doing what he's doing and, and definitely, there's, you know, and there's just such a humility.

Such a, you know, such a, kind of an appropriate sense of self. And, he, he really, you know, he's, he's a really enjoyable person to be around. I think because of that. And God's used that incredibly well and, allowing him to build authentic relationships with, you know, with folks in China and then to leverage those relationships for, you know, so for so much good.

And, and it's, it's, it's, it's fun. I, you know, I would definitely encourage our, our audience too. be on the lookout for the book. even if you, you know, even if you don't email Robert and get a free copy, go buy a copy. And, because it's, it's an incredible story. And, and for certain go check out the documentary, as you, you know, as you said, you and I have had a chance to preview that and we're able to screen it in advance of this interview.

And the stories are just so captivating.

And, and, and, you know, the fact is what we know is this is not a, they didn't just cherry pick a few stories. That these are, you know, that there is consistent, fruit that's being born from, you know, this idea of, of really honoring. God's ideal of placing children into, into families and, and, and working in that regard.

And, and it's really just been cool to see the way that you know, that he's been used. so terribly impactfully over a couple of generations in China.

Phil: [00:54:40] Yeah. I, you know, it's something that, is used as you just said that watching that documentary, it just brings it to life, you know, to see the, as you said that humility. He knows his source, right? Like, I mean, Robert knows his source when I remember Robert Murray or it was Robert Murray, right. Robert Murray, right.

His book, Humility. When it talks about that, that humility is not self-deprecation, it's not something that you just, that is. I'm not that good. I'm not that no. It's knowing your source. It's knowing that, you know, this isn't from me. This is from God and God has given me, as he said it, God's given me a call.

He didn't go to Vietnam and Cambodia and Thailand. He, he said, look, I got called to China. That's where God called me. And, you know, I help people in these different places, but this

is, this is where I'm supposed to be. And that is so refreshing. It was so real. And to see that documentary with the, just the it's so real.

To see his emotions. And as you said, he lost it a few times. You know, we won't get into all the details of that. You, we want you to watch it indie to, to experience that as, as we got to, over the last, you know, a couple of days, we were able to watch that documentary and, and I've, I'm very, much better for it.

and it's something that we've been Rick and I've been doing this work for a long time. But to see stories like that, it just rejuvenates that passion, rejuvenates that excitement for what doing what we're doing. And so folks, if you've been doing this for a minute, or if you've been doing this for 20, 30 years, this documentary, I imagine the book, we haven't been able to read it yet, but I know that it has a lot more.

It actually goes into more detail on some of the stuff on the, in the. And the documentary and it also goes into other things that aren't in there, the documentary. So just this man's story, as you heard, just a glimpse of it today in this interview is amazing. You heard a little glimpse into this man's heart today.

And as Rick said, he's the real deal. And I've just been very blessed to be able to get to know him a little bit over the last few, few weeks in preparation for this interview and, getting to know his, his son a little bit as well. And as I say, you know, oftentimes the kids have a of a dad, you know, show a lot about that dad.

So I've been really impressed. And so I, yeah, I I'm, I don't think there's much more to say about the interview itself. I think it speaks for itself more than anything. And I think anything we said would take away from it other than I'm just really honored to be able to, learn from this man. And even just hear how he responded to the order of the officer, of the order of the British empire.

You know, I mean, I kind of half joked about it, but I looked it up, man. It's pretty amazing.

It's a really big deal. And, and the way he responded was like, yeah, it was really neat because what did he bring it to? She saw that I worked, you know, for the Lord and she said, God bless you. Yeah,

Dr. Rick: [00:57:36] right. And that's, you know, that's one of the things that I, you know, I want to make sure that our, our listeners take away from this interview is, is part of what has really made Robert successful, I think is his, his, he, he definitely obviously values the fact that people are created in the image of God.

And there's a, there's a worship response in how he lives. And, and, and if he, he treats the way that, that he treats other people as, as an act of worship, as something that he's, you know, he's doing before God, you know, for the pleasure of God and, and it just, it exudes from him. And so he's a, he's a very humble, very low key kind of guy.

And we know that, but, but there is a, there is a deep abiding sense of. Just valuing people because God values people. And, and that, you know, that I, that first experience of hearing

him at CAFO and just being incredibly impressed in a world where people are quick to, you know, to point out political differences or political sameness, or are, you know, are, are looking at people as, as ways to accomplish goals.

I think the thing that's made him really successful in, in China is that God really cut him out as, as someone who, who sees people, the way that God sees people. Approaches them that way, treats them with that level of worth and dignity, down to, you know, the, the most vulnerable of children. And that people find that winsome.

And I think it's a good reminder for those of us that are, that are in this world to, to not get so caught up in the mechanics of the things we have to do and the goals that we're trying to reach and, and those kinds of things. Cause you hear, you hear a goal, like, you know, place in a million in children, into foster care and the Epic nature of that.

And, and yet, You know, truly you can, you can see that it was, it was more about dealing well with the one person that was right in front of him, time, after Time, after Time. So love him, love his story. love the way that he points glory to God. And, and, you know, it's just, it's a real gift for us to get an opportunity to spend a few minutes with him.

Phil: [00:59:58] Absolutely. So as we wrap up, another, what I think great episode, I, you know, I'm gonna, I'm going to call it great. I just want to remind you folks drop an email to Robert at Robert@careforchildren.com to be able to, to have him send you a copy. What a gift. I mean what a great gift. So go ahead, go and do that.

Also subscribe to the show if you haven't already done so, so it makes sure you don't miss an episode. And join the Facebook group. We have a Facebook page, but we've also started a group. And that group, if you're, if you love, you know, what you're hearing and love the conversation on this and want to be a part of it going deeper, even get opportunity to be able to get a sneak preview of the interviews we're going to be doing and, be able to

input, give input on questions we can ask the guests and be able to even get some, some content that may not otherwise be out there. join that Facebook group, where we have a handful of people already there, and I'm excited to go deeper there with you and to be able to engage a deeper conversation, at that place, which is a nice, a nice option for us to be able to have that.

And the one takeaway I want to, I just want to bring here is, is it's one of the things you talked with him about and just really the, to go into wherever you're doing work. And we've talked about this over the last few episodes. and don't think you have the answers. Don't think, you know, the culture, cause you've studied it in a book.

Don't think, you know, the people because, you know, while they're a child of God and I'm a child of God, You know, to a certain extent, you know, people are people, but culture is not cultured in the same everywhere. And, and people, or, there's, there's all kinds of, of things that we need to learn from each other and to go in into a new setting, whatever it is, and to be able to learn, to be able to understand, to be able to take that time and the patience.

I mean, what an amazing story. By the way soccer is, is the King of sports, by the way. So, I mean, just to just that story, he told what an amazing story. He didn't even get a bowl to be able to go in and eat with these people. Right. Like, and did not go, well, why not? I'm coming here to help you. Like some people would do, but to say, I'm gonna start a soccer team.

I'm gonna earn respect. I'm going to go and play cause that's, you know what, that's what I can do. That's what I know. And then what a bonus to win it, you know? But, but that's so cool. So humble. So patient and that patient, that long suffering as we often talk it, wasn't like a couple of weeks. Right. took time. So, and he didn't know he was going to be there for 20 years at that time.

So I folks just, I would take that as, as my takeaway. And, and I just get excited to think about what this interview is and, and, and really all the other things reviews we've had on this show are doing to help you understand yourself, better, understand the work you're doing better. Understand what God's teaching you better.

And I do pray. And Rick and I continually talk about this. We, we do hope and pray that what's what you're learning here on the show. What you're able to read, what, you know, if you can pick up that documentary and watch it, and you can use all that you're learning to help you to love orphaned and vulnerable children better and better each and every day.

Thanks a lot. Have a great week.