

CALLING CHINESE DIASPORA CHURCHES FOR GLOCAL MISSIONS TO ALL

Juno Wang

INTRODUCTION

As our life and ministry gradually returns to normal after being locked down for over two years, have you given thought to the meaning of being a church on missions in a diverse community in the new normal? Globalization provides us with opportunities to evangelize and disciple global diasporas who live in our community. Some diasporas become permanent residents or even citizens in their host country. Some are temporary diasporas such as international students, business people, contract workers, and travelers, while others are displaced people who are refugees or asylum seekers. In fact, it is God who controls movements of people and uses them for His purposes,¹ and it is He who brings them in our countries and communities. He has turned the magnitude of the diaspora population into a mission opportunity,² and it is a foremost part of God's mission and redemptive purposes.³ We need to rely on our relationship with God to manifest his nature of love, glory, and concerns for our engagement with global diasporas.⁴

God gave the vision of Back to Jerusalem (BTJ) to a group of Chinese Christians in the 1940s. However, the Movement of bringing the Gospel to all from China, westward to Jerusalem, was disrupted in 1949, when Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong declared the creation of People's Republic of China. Since then, the Chinese exodus began and dispersed Chinese people globally from their homeland. Along the process of their migration and settling down, many Chinese immigrants have heard the Gospel and accepted the Lord in their newfound homes.

Why would God give such a vision right before the Chinese mass dispersion? God must have orchestrated the movement because the BTJ vision

and missions are not only for Christians in China, but also for Chinese diaspora Christians who would be settling down in their host countries around the world. Our God had paved the way to bring salvation to the Chinese diaspora outside of China. The BTJ Movement will thrive through glocal missions to all.

As the world has become glocal, so must our missions. Will our local missions to diverse communities around us have a rippling effect on global missions? The purpose of this paper is to present how a church in the Chinese diaspora can be involved in glocal missions and to partake in the BTJ Movement when the opportunity presents itself.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Diaspora: Diaspora means "a scattering," used to describe the large-scale movement of people from their homeland to settle permanently or temporarily in other countries.⁵

Glocal Missions: Global in scope but local in action and in sequence⁶ because of the seamless integration between the local and the global,⁷ which means local evangelistic outreaches have global ripple effects.⁸

Missions: Ways and means of accomplishing "the mission" which has been entrusted by the Triune God to the Church and to Christians.⁹

GLOBAL MIGRATION SITUATION

According to the World Migration Report 2022, the estimated all international migrants worldwide in 2020 were around 281 million. That means 1 in 30 people in the world is a migrant, and more than 40% of them were born in Asia. The largest country of origin was India followed by Mexico, the Russian Federation, China, and Syria. Asia and Europe experienced the most remarkable growth from 2000 to 2020 and comprised 61% of the global international migrant stock, and North America, with the United States as

5. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization Issue Group No. 26 A and B, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 55."

6. Enoch Wan, written comments on my first proposal draft, Portland, OR, December, 2017.

7. Bob Roberts Jr., *Glocalization: How Followers of Jesus Engage a Flat World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 24.

8. Sadiri Joy Tira, "Glocal Evangelism: Jesus Christ, Magdalena, and Damascus in Greater Toronto Area,"

Lausanne World Pulse, (June 2010), <http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/perspectives-php/1291/06-2010> (accessed October 27, 2021).

9. Enoch Wan, "Rethinking Missiological Research Methodology: Exploring a New Direction," *Global Missiology*, (October 2003), <http://www.enochwan.com/english/articles/pdf/Rethinking%20Missiological%20Research%20Methodology.pdf> (accessed October 27, 2021).

1. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization Issue Group No. 26 A and B: *Diasporas and International Students*. "Lausanne Occasional Paper 55: The New People Next Door." In 2004 *Forum Occasional Papers*, (September 29-October 5, 2004), under "missional content," edited by David Clayton, 2005, <https://lausanne.org/content/lop/diasporas-and-international-students-the-new-people-next-door-lop-55> (accessed October 27, 2021).

2. Sam George, "Is God Reviving Europe Through Refugees: Turning the Greatest Humanitarian Crisis of Our Times into One of the Greatest Mission Opportunities," *Lausanne Global Analysis* 6, no. 3 (April 28, 2017), under "Missional Content," <https://www.lausanne.org/content/lga/2017-05/god-reviving-europe-refugees> (accessed October 27, 2021).

3. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, "The Seoul Declaration on Diaspora Missiology," (November 14, 2009), LCWE Diaspora Educators Consultation 2009, under "Missional Content," <https://www.lausanne.org/content/statement/the-seoul-declaration-on-diaspora-missiology> (accessed October 27, 2021).

4. Enoch Wan, "Relational Theology and Relational Missiology," *Occasional Bulletin* 21, no. 1(Fall 2007), https://www.westernseminary.edu/files/documents/faculty/wan/Relat_theol_missio_OB_21_1.pdf (accessed October 27, 2021).

the primary migration destination, comprising 21%.¹⁰ According to Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, editors of *World Christian*, only 18.2% of non-Christians around the world knew a Christian in mid-2021.¹¹ We could be the first Christian friend to our global diaspora neighbors. As such, the need is for us to re-orientate our missional eyes to see the world from a global to a glocal perspective, and mobilize Chinese diaspora Christians with the BTJ vision for glocal missions to all, to expand God's Kingdom wherever we go.

GLOCALIZATION, CHURCH, AND MISSIONS

Nowadays, the world has blurred the boundaries between the local and the global. Glocalization means the interconnection of the local, contextual, and homogenous with the global, universal, and heterogenous. The global and local enable each other, and reciprocally form each other. They are deeply and inextricably connected, are interdependent, and are not opposing forces.¹² Glocalization is the interdependent relationship between the local and the global. It is global realities that shape local contexts;¹³ therefore, local missions to a diverse community have a rippling effect on global missions.

Since the impact of our mission task are glocal, the church needs to have a glocal vision. The Church must see and understand the interconnection of the local and global aspects of church and missions. They are both to be considered equally important.¹⁴ What is global is our universal faith, and what is local is contextualization. People live locally, not globally; therefore, the global mission strategies must focus on local realities and local methods.¹⁵ Glocalization is about discourse, learning, and partnership,¹⁶ and so is our glocal missions.

The Lausanne Diaspora issue network affirms the growing reality and implications of hybridity for the mission of God. It also recognizes hybridity as the process by and through which God mixes culture, ethnicity, and identity.¹⁷ However, hybrids often

struggle over identity to reconcile two very different sets of values, norms, worldviews, and lifestyles, and some have multi-cultural identities.¹⁸ It is particularly important to know about our identity in intercultural interactions as we express our identity to others through communication.¹⁹

A church that does not reflect hybridity in her new mission context and live out her distinctiveness and exclusivity of Christian life, faces the challenge of proclaiming the Gospel in this fluid and fast-changing world. She has to truly love her neighbors and build an authentic body of Christ that reflects the community. The Cape Town Commitment calls church and mission leaders in host countries to recognize and respond to the diaspora missional opportunities in strategic planning, training and resourcing of workers among them, and to witness in word and deed.²⁰

THEOLOGY

Our God is a missional God, and mission is "*missio Dei* within the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." The foundation of missions begins with sending among the Trinity, where the Father sends the Son to all peoples (Rom 10) who are created in His image, and the Spirit He sends in Christ's name (John 14) to all believers. That mission is now extended to us (John 17:4). We need to see diasporas from God's perspective, recognizing that it is He who has moved our diaspora neighbors within our communities, so that they might know him.

Glocalization is the interdependent relationship between the local and the global. It is global realities that shape local contexts;²¹ therefore, local missions to a diverse community have a rippling effect on global missions.

The Great Commission clearly includes Church mission to win people into the Kingdom everywhere in the world. And the work is beyond Church and missions, to see that God's will is done on earth outside the Church and declare his glory among all peoples.²² The promise of the presence of the Holy

18. Judith N. Martin and Thomas K. Nakayama, eds., *Experiencing Intercultural Communication*. 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2011), 119.

19. Martin and Nakayama, *Experiencing Intercultural Communication*, 91.

20. The Cape Town Commitment, Part II, "For the World We Serve: The Cape Town Call to Action," in Cameron, 142-3.

21. Hill, *Global Church*, 27.

22. Ralph D. Winter, "Three Mission Eras: And the Loss and Recovery of Kingdom Mission, 1800-2000," in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, 4th ed. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 264.

10. International Organization for Migration, "World Migration Report 2022," <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/> (accessed December 16, 2021).

11. Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds. *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2021).

12. Graham Hill, *Global Church: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 26.

13. Hill, *Global Church*, 27.

14. Hans Aage Gravaas, "Mission and Globalisation: Some Lessons to be Learned—A Brief Summary," in *The Church Going Global: Mission and Globalisation*, eds. Tormod Engelsen, Erling Lundebj, and Dagfinne Solheim (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011), 208.

15. Eckhard J. Schnabel, "Global Strategies and Local Methods of Missionary Work in the Early Church: Jesus, Peter and Paul (Brandtzaeg Memorial Lecture)," in Tormod Engelsen, Erling Lundebj, and Dagfinne Solheim, 30.

16. Hill, *Global Church*, 26.

17. Global Diaspora Network, "The Manila Statement on Hybridity in Diaspora Mission," in *A Hybrid World: Diaspora, Hybridity, and Missio Dei*, eds. Sadiri Joy Tira and Juliet Lee Uytanlet (Littleton, CO: William Carey Publishing, 2020), 232.

Spirit after the Great Commission is to obey his commandments (Matt. 28:18-20). Jesus models his life to the disciples, but they were not transformed to be his witnesses until the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2) after they have obeyed his command (Acts 1:4). God gives us a spirit of love, of power, and of self-discipline (2 Tim. 1:7) to extend his Kingdom. The Church in a hybrid community is to become hybrid with acts of love, compassion, and reconciliation like Jesus to engage, invite, and love our friends and neighbors.

We need to see diasporas in the full scope of their humanity, more than as targets of our religious marketing.²³ God invites us into His fellowship life,²⁴ as humans are created to be in a unique relationship with the Creator.²⁵ The horizontal reconciliation in Ephesians of age, class, gender, and race comprises the 'love your neighbor' commandment which is merely a reflection of the greatest commandment of the vertical reconciliation of sinners to God (Eph. 2:1-10).²⁶ A Christian does not truly believe until he obeys; he is still being born again because his faith is still dead (James 2:14-17).²⁷

The greatest commandments that Jesus spoke of is to love God and to love our neighbors. In addition, we are sent to invite all peoples to enter His diverse Kingdom. Once we understand that our identity in the Kingdom transcends beyond any worldly identities, we will be transformed into disciples and missionaries.

God has sent us among diasporas, empowered by his Spirit to bring the Gospel to them through our witness for Him (Isaiah 43:10-12; Acts 1:8). A Spirit-filled church is a mission-minded church that evangelism should arise spontaneously.²⁸ Evangelism is the daily witness of every church member in their regular contacts.²⁹ In the New Testament, another word for

23. Jared Looney, *Crossroads of the Nations: Diaspora, Globalization, and Evangelism*, ed. Kendi Howells Douglas and Stephen Burris (Portland: Urban Loft Publishers, 2015), 87.

24. Hill, *Global Church*, 414.

25. Arthur F. Glasser et al., *Announcing the Kingdom: The Story of God's Mission in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 35.

26. Allen Yeh, *Polycentric Missiology: Twenty-First-Century Mission From Everyone to Everywhere* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 26.

27. George Patterson, *Church Planting Through Obedience Oriented Teaching* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1981), 10.

28. The Lausanne Covenant, *The Lausanne Legacy: Landmarks in Global Mission*, ed. Judith E. M. Cameron (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2016), 48.

29. Patterson, *Church Planting Through Obedience Oriented*

witness is martyr, showing the ultimate form of witness is to lay down our life as a witness for Christ.

³⁰The fundamental characteristic of Apostolic mission that made them witnesses of Jesus is that Christ will come again as King of His Kingdom.³¹

Furthermore, the eschatological home keeps us from becoming too comfortable in this world and too institutionalized in the Church.³² Our first calling is to worship God,³³ and Church's mission is to proclaim the Gospel across all of the creation that He is the Lord.³⁴ We need to think theologically, that is, to relate all our thinking to God, who is behind everything.³⁵

DIASPORA MISSIOLOGY IN BRIEF

As creatures in the image of God, our existence, ability to know and undertaking in missions are all dependent on God (Acts 17:28) who is the great I AM (Exod. 3), and it is God-centered.³⁶ What people most desperately need is peace with God,³⁷ and what can be powerful enough to carry us far away from our comfort zones to be his witnesses is a deep sense of divine calling.³⁸ When we know who God is, and who Jesus is, we would want to witness for our God.³⁹ Our Triune God is relational, and we are created as relational beings. His salvation is for all peoples, and it is the Good News. It is good because He has covered our shame of unholiness and unrighteousness through His unmerited grace; we are reconciled with Him; and, we have a personal relationship with Him. Dr. Enoch Wan calls for action to engage in diaspora (glocal) missions and to integrate the Great Commission with the great commandment relationally.⁴⁰

Teaching, 31.

30. Walter A. Elwell, et al., *Encyclopedia of the Bible*, no. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), 2155.

31. David J. Cho, "Kingdom Mission: DNA of the Missionary Task" (plenary paper presented at Tokyo 2010 Global Mission Conference, Tokyo, Japan, May 11-14, 2010), under "Conference Details," http://www.tokyo2010.org/resources/Tokyo2010_Plenary_David_Cho.pdf (accessed November 11, 2017).

32. Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 279.

33. The Lausanne Covenant, *The Lausanne Legacy*, 15.

34. Bruce Riley Ashford, "The Gospel and Culture," in *Theology and Practice of Mission: God, the Church, and the Nations*, ed. Bruce Riley Ashford, rev. ed. (Nashville: Academic, 2011), 125-7.

35. The Lausanne Covenant, *The Lausanne Legacy*, 14.

36. Enoch Wan, "Relational Paradigm for Practicing Diaspora Missions in the 21st Century," in *Diaspora Missiology: Theory, Methodology, and Practice*, ed. Enoch Wan, 2nd ed. (Portland: IDS-USA, 2014), 192-3.

37. Cody C. Lorange, "Case Study 4: Reflections of a Church Planter Among Diaspora Groups in Metro-Chicago: Pursuing Cruciformity in Diaspora Missions," in *Diaspora Missiology: Reflections on Reaching the Scattered Peoples of the World*, eds. Michael Pocock and Enoch Wan, Evangelical Missiological Society Series no 23 (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2015), 260.

38. Lorange, "Reflections of a Church Planter Among Diaspora Groups in Metro-Chicago," in Pocock and Wan, 277.

39. Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 66-7.

40. Enoch Wan, "Global People and Diaspora Missiology" (plenary paper presented at Tokyo 2010 Global Mission Conference,

The greatest commandments that Jesus spoke of is to love God and to love our neighbors. In addition, we are sent to invite all peoples to enter His diverse Kingdom. Once we understand that our identity in the Kingdom transcends beyond any worldly identities, we will be transformed into disciples and missionaries.⁴¹ When we do that in obedience, we glorify him who sends us through the allegiance to his lordship. Diaspora missions requires us to practice strategic stewardship for our relational accountability to God and the unsaved.⁴² It is missions to every person outside his Kingdom everywhere, and supplements the traditional missiology.⁴³ Dr. Wan calls for rethinking missiology in the context of glocalization.⁴⁴

Traditional mission is polarized or dichotomized in focus and territorial with a sharp distinction between here and there; and movement is lineal, meaning goes one way. It is geographically divided and compartmentalized as a discipline.⁴⁵ Diaspora missions focuses on holistic missions and contextualization integrating evangelism and social concern. It is de-territorialized and simultaneously local and global conceptually. In perspective, it is not geographically divided but borderless, and it is transnational and global.⁴⁶

Transnationalism is liminal, in between, and not bi-cultural in the assimilation model.⁴⁷ It is acculturation of selection and integration of traits in the host culture.⁴⁸ The apostle Paul used his bi-cultural diasporic roots to be sensitive both to the ministry and message contexts.⁴⁹ Moreover, the shared memory of the diaspora experience can give all diasporas a shared unity of identity and experience.⁵⁰ Chinese diaspora Christians need to be like the apostle to embrace and

use our bi-culturalism for today's diaspora missions.⁵¹ Missions must be at the full time missionary career level and personal level of all believers, and it is not a matter of either-or.⁵² When Chinese diasporic individuals and congregations are to be mobilized and empowered to fulfill the Great Commission in our homeland and elsewhere, it is "missions through the diaspora."⁵³ When Chinese diaspora Christians have acquired the language and are adjusted to the host culture with the shared migrant experience, we are the natural bridge for "missions by and beyond the diaspora" to reach out to other ethnic groups in host country and beyond.⁵⁴ As the majority of refugees who came to the United States in 2016 were Christians, and the majority of global migrants are Christians, the Chinese diaspora Christian communities have the opportunities to be involved in missions.⁵⁵ Through partnership between Chinese diaspora and those focusing beyond Chinese diaspora to serve other people from diaspora or non-diaspora communities, is "missions with the diaspora" in Kingdom ministry.⁵⁶ Diaspora missions begins at a local level and proceeds to be global in perspective.⁵⁷

Living in a diverse community adds a missional perspective⁵⁸ and a new dimension to our Chinese Christian identity as World Christian, which means to have a global perspective with local and cultural awareness.⁵⁹ However, a church doing missions with outward orientation to others is conceived as an ingrown, complacent, and ethnocentric church.⁶⁰ Being a missional Chinese church is an obedience issue because we will get out of our comfort and safety zones and engage the world as Jesus did if we love like Jesus.⁶¹

THE MISSIONAL MINDSET OF CHINESE DIASPORA CHURCHES

Chinese churches have been applying Romans 9:1-3 to incite the Chinese kinsmen spirit to evangelize the massive number of non-believing Chinese. As a

Japan, May 11-14, 2010), under "Conference Details,"

41. Stan Nussbaum, *A Reader's Guide to Transforming Mission: A Concise, Accessible Companion to David Bosch's Classic Book* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 23.

42. Enoch Wan, "Rethinking Missiology in the Context of the 21st Century: Global Demographic Trends and Diaspora Missiology," *Great Commission Research Journal*, 2 no. 1 (Summer 2010), under "Journal Publications," <http://journals.biola.edu/gcr/volumes/2/issues/1/articles/7> (accessed November 11, 2017).

43. Enoch Wan and Sadiri Joy Tira, "Diaspora Missiology and Mission in the Context of the 21st Century," *Global Missiology English* 1, no. 8 (October 2010), 5, under "Diaspora Studies," <http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/article/viewFile/383/994> (accessed October 27, 2021).

44. Wan, "Rethinking Missiology in the Context of the 21st Century."

45. David J. Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict: 10 Key Questions in Christian Missions Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2005), 348.

46. Wan and Tira, "Diaspora Missiology and Mission in the Context of the 21st Century," 4.

47. Enoch Wan, "Theorizing Diaspora," in Wan, 32.

48. David Scott, "That Event, This Memory: Notes on the Anthropology of African Diasporas in the New World," *Diaspora* 1:3 (1991), 275-6.

49. Larry W. Caldwell, "Diaspora Ministry in the Book of Acts: Insights From Two Speeches of the Apostle Paul to Help Guide Diaspora Ministry Today," in Pocock and Wan, 93-4.

50. Ted Rubesh, "Diaspora Distinctives: The Jewish Diaspora Experience in the Old Testament," *Torch Trinity Journal* 13, no. 2 (November 30, 2010), 136.

51. Caldwell, "Diaspora Ministry in the Book of Acts," 103.

52. Enoch Wan, "'Mission' and 'Missio Dei': Response to Charles Van Engen's 'Mission Defined and Described,'" in *MissionShift: Global Mission Issues in the Third Millennium*, ed. David J. Hesselgrave and Ed Stetzer (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010), 45.

53. Wan and Tira, "Diaspora Missiology and Mission in the Context of the 21st Century," 11.

54. Stan Downes, "Mission by and Beyond the Diaspora: Partnering With Diaspora Believers to Reach Other Immigrants and the Local People," in Pocock and Wan, 83.

55. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 55."

56. Enoch Wan, "Introduction," in Wan, 8.

57. Wan, "Rethinking Missiology in the Context of the 21st Century."

58. Hyung Jin Park, "The Journey of the Gospel and Being a World Christian," in *Torch Trinity Journal* 13, no. 1 (May 30, 2010), 94.

59. Park, "The Journey of the Gospel and Being a World Christian," 92.

60. Lianne Roembke, *Building Credible Multicultural Teams* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2000), 1.

61. Roberts, *Glocalization*, 146.

matter of fact, when the apostle Paul evangelized the Jews of his time, it was not merely a matter of kinsman spirit. There are theological and missiological reasons behind his statement in the passage through his understanding and conviction. When Chinese Churches wrongly apply the passage, they may have cultural, emotional, ethnic and/or pragmatic factors only.⁶²

Nevertheless, the other meaning of the Church is the Whole Church, which is the body of Christ, the Kingdom of the Lord, including all churches that truly believe in the Lord Jesus in his family. Without a Kingdom mindset, Chinese churches are egocentric and ethnocentric and difficult in partnership with others; leaders are narrow-minded, self-exalted, and pursuing power.

The Chinese have inherited a culture of family which is centered on their own, a culture of inward-looking and mediocrity. Churches generally teach members to love their church, and at most extend it to love their denomination. Hence, Christians also center on their church as their spiritual family without much interest or connection with other churches and denominations. Nevertheless, the other meaning of the Church is the Whole Church, which is the body of Christ, the Kingdom of the Lord, including all churches that truly believe in the Lord Jesus in his family. Without a Kingdom mindset, Chinese churches are egocentric and ethnocentric and difficult in partnership with others; leaders are narrow-minded, self-exalted, and pursuing power.⁶³ It is a challenge to mobilize Chinese churches for glocal missions to all, and Christians could continue to stay in their comfort zones because of a mindset barrier about the calling, spiritual gifts, and being a witness.

The two key points for glocal missions mobilization are: that the calling is for every believer to love our neighbors; and to our obedience in doing His will for the Kingdom out of our close relationship with God. The Spirit will bear witness about Jesus when we witness of truth and love from the Scriptures (John 15:26).

Besides, under the possible influence of functionalism

62. Enoch Wan, "Chinese Christian Missions," *Great Commission Quarterly* 26 (February 2000), 30-1,

http://www.globalmissiology.org/gcci/Chinese/b5_publications/GCB/2000/GCB_26.pdf (accessed December 17, 2021).

63. Thomas Wang, 中華民族最後的轉捩點 [The Last Turning Point of the Chinese Race] (Mountain View, CA: Great Commission Center International, 2004), 16-7.

that all aspects of a ministry practically serve as functional acts for the survival of that ministry. Evangelistic efforts are to function for the purpose of evangelism. Conversion is always at the center of evangelism, and the number of converts at any evangelistic meetings determines its success;⁶⁴ therefore, missional approach is pragmatic and managerial. Yet the Gospel we witness is the oneness we are in Christ, and the evangelistic method of the HUP of exclusive ethnic groups is unacceptable in our context. We are all aliens in this world, and we are to stick together. With the connecting links with homeland, the Gospel can be the part of the communication traffic between those at home and those in exile.⁶⁵ Our mission is holistic because we cannot just start a local church among diasporas, such as refugees, without also addressing their physical needs and becoming their advocate.⁶⁶ We should be bold like the early church, and not let the pandemic or anything to keep us away from missions.

WHAT CAN CHINESE DIASPORA CHURCHES DO

Chinese diaspora churches need to have a breakthrough from our egocentric, ethnocentric, and mediocre thinking to a Kingdom mindset, be obedient, transformed, and empowered by the Spirit, adjust our missional vision and directions, and be bold like the early church for our glocal missions. This is the time for Chinese diaspora churches to grow from missions to and through Chinese diaspora to missions by and beyond and with the diverse diasporas to all for the BTJ Movement. When we practice missions by and beyond and with the diverse diasporas to all including the Jews, these diasporas would be a channel to bring the Gospel back to Jerusalem. Our first concern is to see our neighbors with a Kingdom mindset through God's lenses.

Diaspora missions must be intentional because cross cultural missions is almost always against our human nature. He has given us his Holy Spirit as a powerful resource to help us overcome any obstacles and challenges. By the empowerment of the Spirit, we tear down the barriers of egocentrism of my people, my place, my plan, and my comfort and pleasure to serve the people in our diverse neighborhood with a Kingdom mindset. We need to submit ourselves to the Lord and get down from our Tower of Babel of self-centeredness because the biggest barrier we face is ourselves. When we focus on the Kingdom, the Church becomes less cultural, and missions goes glocal because the world has gone

64. Enoch Wan and Tin V. Nguyen, "Towards a Theology of Relational Mission Training: An Application of the Relational Paradigm," *Global Missiology* 2, no. 11 (January 2014), 2, <http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/article/view/1626/3600> (accessed October 22, 2018).

65. Jonathan Ingleby, "Postcolonialism, Globalization, Migration and Diaspora: Some Implications for Mission," *Encounters Mission Ezine*, no. 20 (October 2007), 3.

66. Wan and Tira, "Diaspora Missiology and Mission in the Context of the 21st Century."

glocal.⁶⁷ Once we open our missional eyes and see our diaspora neighbors from God's perspective, we see opportunities.

Living in a diverse community, we see people from the mission fields living among us right at our front door. Consequently, the Chinese diaspora church is an army of missionaries sitting in the pews,⁶⁸ particularly when it has a Chinese or multi-ethnic diaspora congregation with culture-crossing experiences. In some ways, the early church was in a similar environment. It was set in a diverse and commercial center context with a dominant language, and they used these as tools for missions.⁶⁹ The believers were multi-ethnic diasporas who identified with both homelands and were bi-cultural.

The first- and second- generation Chinese diaspora Christians are in a unique position with the skillsets to reach other ethnic diasporas than mono-cultural Christians. We know the importance of honor and shame, ingroup and outgroup factors, hospitality, and building trust and relationships as we are from a group culture which is the majority culture of the world. With real time communication, diasporas connect with family and friends back home on a regular basis. Therefore, as a friend of a diaspora, we could become a family friend locally and globally. The shared migrant experience helps Chinese diaspora Christians not only to empathize and understand our diaspora neighbors, but also to help them find their new identity in Christ and the Kingdom. Once diasporas see, hear, and experience the Gospel from Chinese diaspora Christians here locally, it will be shared within their networks globally. Our Christian witness then, is local and global all at the same time.

To live out the Gospel, the body of Christ needs to actively engage the surrounding culture. In general, group cultural people learn through observation and experience. They need to have opportunities to see the transforming power of the Gospel and the outflow of God's love in action within their community before they enter a church building. Let the Gospel flow naturally along relationship lines while we live out a missional lifestyle to be a good steward of our time, talents, and treasures.⁷⁰ The lost needs to meet Jesus in flesh and blood, through us.⁷¹

Our church diaspora missions begin with training and equipping the Kingdom people to live God-glorifying lives in every aspect of our life.⁷² We need to develop the ability to understand cultural differences and similarities; otherwise, we may become suspicious

and isolated when we do not have the skills to relate to one another, and reach out with confidence to the diverse community people outside our church building. Above all, our motive must be genuine because no one likes to be coerced into making a decision for Jesus or be treated as a project or a number. Our outreach style and strategy also need to be adaptable and flexible since every context and the people we reach are different.

With people coming from a group cultural background, we reach out to them with a group and relational approach to provide acceptance, a sense of belonging, emotional security, identity, and mutual support. In this, we create groups that have a combination of Christians and non-Christians. We take a cue from the St. Patrick's group approach model in the 5th Century.⁷³ The first- and second-generation Chinese diaspora Christians witness in such an approach focuses first on our being and then our doing through the common migrant experiences and intercultural skills to build trust and relationships. It takes time to form cross-cultural relationships, and it cannot be agenda driven.⁷⁴ Our mission work is more than learning a national culture and identifying the cultural attributes, but it is to get to know a person within the discourse communities where he lives, works, and worships. It is to build relationships in the local network at a personal and remarkable level where people relate to each other within their communities. This is the focus of mission work from a relational paradigm perspective.⁷⁵ As we have limited resources, we can partner with other churches and mission organizations to be a faithful and obedient steward to our King. Furthermore, we pray and trust the Spirit to bear fruits in his time.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM MY MULTI-ETHNIC DIASPORA MISSIONS

I came to the U.S. from Taiwan having never heard the Gospel. I met Jesus two years later, and was called to full time service. It takes time for a diaspora to believe in Jesus. God brings diasporas to our community so they would be like me: being away from my family was a way to sanctify me, and to set me apart from my family religion that is deeply rooted in our daily way of life. I am engaging in a spiritual warfare and very much in need of the work and protection from the Spirit. The power of Jesus' death and resurrection will set people free from fear, such as fear of not doing enough good works to go to heaven, fear of reincarnation, and fear of possible revenge from the

67. Roberts, *Glocalization*, 29.

68. Mark Galli, "Glocal Church Ministry: Bob Roberts has an Idea that may Change American Congregations, if not the World," *Christianity Today* (July 2007), 45.

69. Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003), 318.

70. Alan and Katherine Carter, "The Gospel and Life Style," in Ashford, 130-1.

71. Charles A. Davis, *Making Disciples Across Cultures: Missional Principles for a Diverse World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 102-3.

72. Jedidiah Coppenger, "The Community of Mission: The Church," in Ashford, 71-3.

73. Frances S. Adeney and Terry Much, *Christianity Encountering World Religions: The Practice of Mission in the Twenty-first Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 94.

74. Mark DeYmaz and Harry Li, *Ethnic Blends: Mixing Diversity Into Your Local Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 47.

75. Enoch Wan and Mark Hedinger, *Relational Missionary Training: Theology, Theory and Practice*, ed. Kendi Howells Douglas and Stephen Burris, (Skyforest: Urban Loft Publishers, 2017), 181-3.

evil spirits and so on. All I need to do is to rely on the Spirit and grab the opportunities God has put in front of me, learn from mistakes, and be a sower, most likely the first sower.

The intercultural seminary trainings I received have helped me to grow my intercultural mind from being egocentric and ethnocentric to ethno-relative. After all, the most important training is to be the right person as a witness. It is about being transformed by the Spirit through my willingness to grow and change, and through my obedience to Jesus' commands and the Lordship of Jesus.⁷⁶

CONCLUSION

Is God trying to tell us that glocalization is the time for us to reach the people in our diverse neighborhoods connecting local missions with global missions for his Kingdom and his glory? The Chinese diaspora churches need to recognize that it is God himself who brings the global diasporas to us (Acts 17:25). Everyone at church needs to understand what God is doing at the global level and involve themselves at the local level. From the Biblical, church, missions, and world histories, we know that nothing, even the pandemic, can stop the mission of our Triune God. We need to have a breakthrough in our egocentric, ethnocentric, and mediocre thinking, and adjust our missional vision and directions for glocal missions to all. We must overcome the temptations of using our calling as an excuse for not reaching out to all, but to think of it as an opportunity to draw closer to the Lord.⁷⁷ We need to seize the glocal missions opportunities by mobilizing the congregation, particularly the first- and second- generation Chinese diaspora Christians, for the BTJ mission task that is in front of us. It is equally important to equip them to live out and share the Gospel in a culturally acceptable way.

Our mission is to invite global diasporas into the present Kingdom, and to enjoy the Messianic banquet with us in the future Kingdom. Missions begins from the Jerusalem church to the diverse diaspora of the Antioch church to the world, and we are in a similar environment as the early church. May Chinese diaspora churches be like the apostle Paul who laid down his life daily, and the early church that was known by its love for missions to, through, by and beyond, and with the diverse diasporas to bring the Gospel back to Jerusalem.

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Juno Wang
juno4isf@gmail.com

Juno Wang (DIS, Western Seminary) is focusing her ministry on glocal missions, relational intercultural training, and publication upon completion of her doctoral study. She has also started a blog of Relational Realism for Christian Ministry at relationalrealism.net.