LIBERTY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

Master’s Thesis of

The Extent of The Christian Approach In Converting Chinese Buddhists Encountering Physical or Spiritual Difficulties In Life

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the completion of the degree

Master of Arts in Global Studies (MA-GLST)

by

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LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

April 11, 2017
Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank my thesis mentor, Dr. Jeff Brawner. He was always open whenever I had a question about my research or writing. He consistently allowed this paper to be my own work, but steered me in the right direction whenever he thought I needed it.

I would also like to acknowledge Dr. David Pederson, the second reader of this thesis, and I am gratefully indebted to him for his very valuable comments on this thesis.

I would also like to thank all the respondents who answered my questionnaire survey and participated in the in-depth interview for this research project. Without their passionate participation and input, the survey could not have been successfully conducted.

Furthermore, I am extremely thankful for Vicki Greer, Kelly Toole, Nathan Straub, Christina Hanegraaff, Dylan Branson, Stanley Yang, Laurie Smith, Sigrid Skaggs, Stephen Schelling, Nicholas Denenberg, Houng-Tzu Yang, David Chen, Huan-Jie Lin, Jack Smith, and other friends for proofreading my paper and helping me prepare for my oral defense.

In addition, I really appreciate Pastor Chao-Fan Xia, Pastor Vic Hu, Wen-Zai Tian, Chris Gu, and Irene Lee for sharing many helpful scholarly references.

Finally, I must express my very profound gratitude to my parents and my friends for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study and through the process of researching and writing this thesis. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them. Thank you!

我也由衷感激所有接受訪問的弟兄姊妹，無論您為我填寫問卷、轉發問卷，抑或接受深度訪談，我都從您們身上看見上帝奇妙的作為，若沒有您們樂意的分享，我不可能完成這份研究，更不可能看見上帝在華人非基督徒中豐豐富富的恩典！萬分感激您們的協助！願上帝大大賜福與您們！

Ann Liang-En Ge (葛良恩)

April 11, 2017
Abstract

This research paper presents the results of a quantitative and qualitative survey of Chinese Christians from Buddhist backgrounds, with a special focus on the Christian response to life trials, since, in Buddhism, any spiritual or physical adversity tends to be attributed to bad Karma from one’s past. The biggest aim of the research is to investigate more effective ways of leading Chinese people to Christ. The survey focuses mainly on three aspects of the respondents’ conversion stories: (1) their backgrounds, (2) their life changes after conversion, and (3) their inter-religious perspectives. In terms of background, most of the respondents had accepted Christ and been baptized at a relatively young age. Respondents’ life changes after conversion appear to show evidence of the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Finally, their inter-religious perspectives revealed several key differences between Christianity and traditional Chinese culture. The latter featured ancestor worship, the need to accumulate merit, and a belief in Karma, which brought a sense of shame when encountering trials in life because they were attributed to having not done enough good deeds. Christianity, on the other hand, replaces these with a message of hope, believing that God purifies his people through suffering and plans to bless them in the end. Based on the survey results, several directions for future cross-cultural Chinese ministry are suggested: (1) developing a biblical worldview toward trials in life, (2) biblical engagement with Chinese shame and honor culture, and (3) contextualizing the gospel appropriately within Chinese society.
# Contents

Acknowledgements..........................................................................................i
Abstract...........................................................................................................ii
INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................1
  Statement of the Problem.................................................................................1
  Statement of the Purpose................................................................................2
  Limitations.......................................................................................................9
  Methodology..................................................................................................9
  Qualitative Method.........................................................................................11
  Quantitative Method........................................................................................12
  Online Questionnaire....................................................................................12
  Chapter Summary..........................................................................................13
CONVERSION BACKGROUND INFORMATION ANALYSIS................................15
  Conversion Age..............................................................................................16
  Personal Religious Background before Conversion........................................18
  Baptism Condition Survey.............................................................................19
  Means of the Gospel Encounter.....................................................................20
  The Reason for Gospel Encounter ................................................................21
  The Most Influential Part of the Christian Message During Conversion........23
  Their Favorite Bible Verse of Message..........................................................26
SUMMARY OF CHANGES AFTER CONVERSION..............................................28
  The Participation in Christian Ministry.........................................................30
  The Frequency and Place of Religious Activity Participation.......................34
  The Difficulties after Conversion....................................................................35
INTER-RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE SURVEY ANALYSIS..................................41
  Perspectives toward Christian and Other Religious Beliefs..........................41
  Perspectives toward Traditional Chinese Rituals and Beliefs.........................42
  Perspectives toward Merit Accumulation.......................................................43
  Perspectives toward Karma and Difficulties in Life.......................................44
  Perspectives on Proper Contextualization in Gospel Sharing........................48
  Chapter Summary.........................................................................................55
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE........................................................................56
  Fundamental Outreach Principles for Chinese..............................................56
  Biblical Worldview Toward Trials in Life.....................................................58
  Biblical Engagement with Chinese Shame and Honor Culture......................59
  The Manner of Adopting Proper Contextualization....................................62
  Chapter Summary.......................................................................................65
CONCLUSION....................................................................................................66
Bibliography......................................................................................................71
Appendix............................................................................................................75
  Online Questionnaire....................................................................................75
  In-depth Interviewee Information..................................................................85
  Result Data Chart.........................................................................................86
INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Despite the religious persecution that has continued in China since the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s, Buddhism remains strongly influential in China amongst atheistic communism. During the course of the researcher’s involvement in East Asian missions, she has found that whenever Buddhists encounter spiritual or physical difficulties in life, they attribute these to Karma; that is, the result of their actions either in this life or in a past life. Many of the people around these sufferers treat them as Job’s three friends treated him, with Karma taking the place of the friends’ “retribution theology.” There have been many tragedies happening due to the impact of the belief of Karma in the shame-based Chinese culture. For example, some people would rather commit suicide than bear the shame from society. This happened in the case of the researcher’s great-grandmother who committed suicide under the humiliation of the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s. Unlike the guilt-based Western perspective, the concept of shame and honor appear to be related to the belief of Karma, for it emphasizes the actions observed by the community that reduces one’s status among the group as a kind of humiliation. On the other hand, overwhelmed by despair, some Buddhists realize that they need to seek real peace and happiness in life. Upon investigating cases like this, the researcher has found that their distress reveals a great opportunity for God’s mission to work in their lives. Hence, potential believers can be found among Chinese Buddhists even with their deeply rooted thoughts of Karma.

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2 Timothy C. Tennent, Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think About and Discuss Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 79.
Statement of the Purpose

Based on the researcher’s eyewitness observation of several incidents like the death of the researcher’s great-grandmother, she realized these tragedies were caused by the fact that people tend to ridicule or even blame the sufferers. People claim that the plight these sufferers encountered simply reflects the transgressions they have done either in this life or in the previous life. The researcher realized that Karma-based phenomena are the effect that the absence of the Gospel has on life calamities among Buddhists. Therefore, the researcher would like to investigate the effect that the absence of the Gospel has on life calamities among the Chinese Buddhists and how these calamities can be used in the process of Christian outreach to these afflicted Buddhists.

In correspondence to the Karma-influenced and shame-based phenomena of today, this paper is composed in an attempt to analyze the problem more closely as well as to present some humble solutions for the remaining problem. The researcher believes that potential believers can be found among Chinese Buddhists even with their deeply rooted thoughts of Karma. Thus, this research project will seek to determine whether the Christian approach to suffering, without the perspective of Karma, will encourage troubled Chinese Buddhists to convert to Christ only for temporary comfort or if they will seek a lifetime of devotion to Him. Likewise, the researcher would like to know if seeking to share the Gospel with people who are currently going through life trials can be possible. At the same time, the researcher would like to test if this kind of evangelism generally reaps only short-term or lifelong commitment to God.

The evidence of the impact of a Karma-driven belief system on people who are afflicted is a significant reason for Christians to acknowledge and be aware of this issue. The importance of this issue begins with the historical investigation, seconded by an analysis of Christian conversion in China. The introduction will be completed with the investigation of
mission outreach. Meanwhile, the investigation will seek to present the longevity, as well as the failure, of Christian mission simultaneously to indicate that this topic is worthwhile to be evaluated and solved with care. As the apostle Paul encouraged the believers in Phillippi to look to the interests of others with the application of the attitude of Christ (Phi. 2:4),³ God’s mission needs to be completed with the effort of realizing the needs of the Majority World. Hence, with careful analysis and discussion, the missionaries among this people group may be informed of the goodness of God in a more dynamic manner.

The results of this paper will not only be the fulfillment of this assignment, but also a preparation for potential service areas for the researcher in her goal of informing other believers that there are numerous people waiting for the Gospel. They are indeed a potential group to win for Christ in the mission of Christian conversion of Buddhists in East Asia. In correspondence to Swiss missiologist Walbert Buhlmann’s prediction of the center change of Christianity, Frans Wijsen addresses the shift to the southern hemisphere of Christianity and the percentage decrease of Christians are the reflection of the increasing population growth in non-Christian countries in Asia.⁴ Wijsen asserts that Majority World Christians will need to learn not only how to behave as a minority religion but also how to be a prophetic and positive voice within Asian societies.⁵ Likewise, the possible influence Christianity can make seems beyond what people can think of as the following analysis shows.

Historical Investigation

Even if Christianity has been preached in China during the Tang Dynasty since 635, during the 13th century under the regime of the Mongolians, and around the 16th century during the Europe’s maritime period, Christian doctrine has not fit into the majority religions

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³ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from English Standard Version (ESV).
⁴ Frans Wijsen and Robert Schreiter, eds., Global Christianity: Contested Claims. (Studies in World Christianity and Interreligious Relations) (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 8.
in China. Because of the differences between Christianity and Chinese culture such as the refusal of ancestor worship and people forbidden to worship man-made idols, the Gospel could not penetrate society easily. By the 19th century, Protestant Christianity arrived and somehow spread in modern China with the arrival of Protestant missionaries, as the Protestant Missionary Period in China began with Robert Morrison’s arrival in 1807 by the support of London Missionary Society. Afterward, Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff, Hudson Taylor, Charlotte Diggs “Lottie” Moon, Timothy Richard, Jonathan Goforth, The Cambridge Seven, Eric Henry Liddell, Gladys Aylward, and many other missionaries came to China in order to share the Gospel. Many of them still left a great impact in the mission of China; for example, Hudson Taylor founded the China Inland Mission (CIM), which is known as OMF International nowadays. Taylor inspired his descendants to serve in China continually, even 150 years after his arrival to China. The love of Christ and the devotion of these missionaries have revealed the importance of missions in China, as the researcher learned the specific mission history while listening to the sermons of James Hudson Taylor IV, the great-grandson of Hudson Taylor, in China.

Analysis of Christian Conversion in China

Currently, the registered Chinese Christians comprise 1.8% of the population, approximately 23,050,000 people, with 15,560,000 baptized as 67.5% among the believers. However, among these Christians, 70% are female while 30% are male. More than half of the Christians only received education through primary school, with only 2.6% graduated a

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6 David Cheung (Chen Yiqiang), Christianity in Modern China: the Making of the First Native Protestant Church (Boston, MA: Brill Academic Pub, 2004), 1-14.
7 Ibid., 87.
8 Ibid., 13-46.
university, which reflects Christianity as the belief of the laypeople. In addition, almost 73% of Christians today converted after 1993 and followed Buddhism or traditional beliefs,\textsuperscript{11} which indicates the possibility of Christian conversion among the Buddhists in the contemporary era.

Investigation of Outreach and Mission Efforts

The investigation of Christian outreach and mission efforts will mainly focus on the third stage of Christianity in China from 1840 to 1949 as well as contemporary, post 1993, Christianity. This period was considered to be a very fruitful time for both Catholic and Protestant missionaries due to several advantages such as the protection for foreign missionaries according to the stipulations of several war treaties. Admittedly, however, it was also a challenging time due to the inappropriate methods applied by many of those missionaries. The third stage of Christianity in China was a time for both opportunities and difficulties.\textsuperscript{12} The historical events of the third stage of Christianity in China indicate the potential methods and warnings for Gospel sharing in China. Therefore, the following parts will evaluate both the success and the failure of Christian missions respectively.

Success and Longevity

The “Golden Age” of Christian missions is considered to be the period of 1902-1927 for China seemed to be Christianizing and modernizing at the same time. In the Qing Dynasty, Protestant missionaries brought the Gospel along with medical care, scientific knowledge, and contemporary techniques of technology to China. Despite the Boxer Massacre in 1899, which was a violent movement in China to get rid of “foreign devils,” Christian missions quickly regained its strength and power afterward. By 1910, with the remaining 2,785 foreign Protestant missionaries from 1900, the number of Western

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.

missionaries had risen to 4,197 and the Chinese Christians who devoted themselves to serving God were 12,108.\textsuperscript{13} With the treaties proposed by the foreign powers, most of the Chinese Christians were actually legally protected before the abdication of the Qing Dynasty in 1912. After 1912, these Christians were allowed to build and own churches under the regime of the Republic of China.\textsuperscript{14}

\textit{Failure}

Regardless of the Boxer Massacres and rejection from the locals during the third stage of Christianity in China, the biggest challenge of the current day development of Christianity lies in two tensions. On the one hand, the deeply rooted traditional teachings of Buddhism and Confucianism have a great impact on the society as the majority religion. On the other hand, the persecution by Chinese Communists since their uprising in 1949 had led to the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s, which destroyed the buildings of Christian churches and began to forbid the people to have religious freedom.\textsuperscript{15} The Chinese Communist Party believes that religion could act as poisonous manipulation for the people; therefore, they accelerated the termination of religion more seriously with militant atheism policy during the Great Leap and the Cultural Revolution, which began in 1966.\textsuperscript{16} The Communist party was afraid that the faith in religion might be the spiritual opium for the people, so they started imitating Marxist atheism and have been trying to control their formidable forces by regulating the belief of Chinese people. In addition to the threats from the Cultural Revolution, the Three-Self Patriotic Movements have plagued some of the unregistered churches later in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century for they only acknowledge the legal existence of the


registered churches supervised by government authorities.\(^{17}\) Even today, the assembly of Christians cannot be fully allowed without the permission of the Chinese government. The researcher was also informed of restricted religious freedom by her pastor in Shanghai when he told her of being detained for jail two years, between 2010 and 2012, for allowing Chinese citizens to attend their overseas Christian congregation.

**Importance of the Research**

The body of Christ needs to be informed of the difficulties in Christian ministry among the Chinese. With the Protestant mission fruits lasting from the 18\(^{th}\) century, Christians in China had to, again, deal with the secular regime that had the tendency and ability to intervene in Christian missions in the contemporary era.\(^{18}\) The message from Chinese Christians to mission boards abroad once claimed that Christians in China should have felt the urgent necessity of re-examining their work and their relationship with the older churches abroad concerning the historical change. The foreshadowing path of Chinese Christians was stated, “The Chinese church will not emerge through this historical change unaffected. It will suffer a purge, and many of the withered branches will be amputated.”\(^{19}\) If the Christian ministry thrives, the family of God can welcome more hungry believers.

There will be many potential converts from the atheist cultural background of contemporary China. The mission of God may begin with foreigners and the underground Protestant Christian family churches because the foreigners have religious freedom in China with diplomatic immunity.\(^{20}\) With the strong influence of foreigners in China, who tend to appeal to the Chinese laypeople in the current trend, the society is being changed by the

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\(^{19}\) Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 158.

Western worldview as the Westerner’s media flows into the country. Foreigners in China have the right to establish their overseas churches, but they are not allowed to influence the Chinese citizens. Generally, the overseas churches can only let someone with a foreign passport join their congregations for security reasons. Furthermore, there are more and more people questioning atheism as they encounter affliction in life, so there are likely to be numerous people waiting for comfort from the Gospel as well. Thus, the potential of a great number of conversions may be expected if there is a properly contextualized approach being adopted.

Although there are registered Three-Self churches in China, they were founded by Chinese Communists in order to eliminate foreign influences. The Chinese government invented some cultural cults among the churches service to keep communist power over religion. They promote the registered three-self churches with the idea of self-support, self-government, and self-propagation.\textsuperscript{21} However, due to the supervision by the government, the teachings at the three-self churches have to follow the government policy. The teachings at the three-self churches are not deep enough according to the believers who have attended both the registered three-self churches and the unregistered underground churches. They believed that the teachings at the unregistered underground churches are more biblically sound.

During the researcher’s visit of both the overseas and the local churches in China, she witnessed the expedited growth of the local underground church even though Chinese Christians are being ruled by an atheist communist government and have been persecuted for almost a half-century. The Great Awakening inspired the modern Chinese Christians to propose the Back to Jerusalem Movement. The concept of pre-millennial eschatology, the emphasis of the conversion of the non-believers, the preparation for persecution, and the

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 160.
company of consistent prayer between eschatology and global missions are all similarities the believers found. Not only are Bible penetrating and Bible printing the major tasks for BTJM, disaster relief is another way the Chinese Christians provide a platform for God’s truth. The movement’s primary purpose is to send 100,000 missionaries to evangelize people. The reminder of the Great Commission and the hope of Christians for China indicate that China is, indeed, “experiencing a harvest of ingathering that in sheer numbers far surpasses anything Edwards saw during the Great Awakening.”23

Limitations

For lack of time and space, this paper cannot look at the entire number of Chinese Christians converted from the Buddhist background. The interview population was made up of Chinese individuals who identified as a Christian. The primary limitations of this research include the sample size. The selected respondents will be another limitation. For the safety concerns of the respondents, the researcher will use snowball sampling to generate the selected respondents. In addition, for lack of time to follow up the continuous devotion of each participant in the future, the plans of their future commitment to Christ and the described stages of their relationship with God cannot be specifically followed up after the research.

Methodology

Among the target group, Chinese Christians from Buddhist backgrounds, the researcher utilized mixed methods with both qualitative and quantitative research. The qualitative part featured interviews and discourse analysis of interviews to examine the causes and effects of the subjects’ conversions. The researcher sought to let the participants express their plans of their commitment to Christ and describe the stages of their relationship


23 Timothy C. Tennent, Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think About and Discuss Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 245.
with God during the in-depth interview. Although their future commitment to Christ cannot be definitely determined during the research period, the researcher made tentative conclusions based on subjects’ current answers. The quantitative research focused on the survey data to determine the percentage of Buddhist converts out of the sample population who were led to Christ due to the hardships they encountered, versus other reasons such as curiosity or unexpected persuasive encounters.

Target Research Group

This research focused on the Chinese Christian converts from the Buddhist background as the target research group. These respondents from the Buddhist background were intrinsically determined by their family beliefs. They were also known as the first generation Christians. Within these Chinese Christians, the Taiwanese Christians, domestic Chinese Christians, and overseas Chinese Christians were all considered as the population as long as they are from a Buddhist background. The length of their conversion may be varied, but the age, gender, marital status, and the related variables of these participants were selected in equal amounts.

Mix Methods Introduction

The researcher utilized mixed methods, with both qualitative and quantitative research. On the one hand, the qualitative part featured some interviews, discourse analysis, and in-depth interviews to analyze the causes and effects of the subjects’ conversions. On the other hand, the quantitative research used the survey data from the questionnaire and parts of quantitative questions in interviews to determine the percentage of Buddhist converts out of the sample population who were led to Christ due to the hardships they encountered. The questionnaire is in the appendix with the bilingual version for both academic use and survey process, and the questions were designed with several items other than basic personal

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24 Please refer to Appendix1 – Online Questionnaire.
information. The questionnaire was designed in English first, and then it was translated into Chinese in order to make it easier for Chinese speaking respondents to answer. After the respondents submitted the survey, the questionnaire results were translated back to English for thesis documentation.

**Qualitative Method**

After the interviews and in-depth interviews, the analysis was performed on data pertaining to Christians of Buddhist backgrounds concerning the length and depth of their devotion to God. The researcher concluded her research with a mixed methods approach to help explain the conversions of the subjects in light of their difficult circumstances. The results from interviews, discourse analysis, and in-depth interviews were considered as a parameter within the cases to examine the causes and effects of the conversions of participants. The interviews followed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approaches in order to collect impartial data from the participants without being influenced by the researcher. The appropriate steps were taken to protect the rights and welfare of humans participating as the respondents in the in-depth interviews.

The in-depth interviews consisted of questions of their conversion background, the changes after they accepted Christ, the perspectives they have toward religious issues, and their perspectives or future plans as the followers of Christ. The questions are as follows:

A1. Were you satisfied with your life before you accepted Christ? Why or why not?
A2. How did other people evaluate your circumstances before you accepted Christ?
B1. Could you share some of the differences you have noticed between your previous belief and Christian belief?
B2. Could you explain some differences you have experienced or have made in your life after you put your faith in God?
B3. Are you satisfied with your current situation? (e.g. interpersonal relationship) Why or why not?
C1. Is there anything you would like to share with those who are from the same cultural and religious background with you according to your experience from the previous belief and your new life in Christ? If so, please share what you would like to share with them.
C2. Is there anything you would like to do for Christ in the future?
The in-depth interviews were conducted in a neutral manner. The interviewer only used the above questions to encourage the respondents to share their testimony without bias. The process after the interviews included transcribing interviews, reading through data, translating data, coding data, generating a general description of the causes and effects of the conversions, and analyzing data. In the end, a thick and rich description of the result would be described in detail. All the information acquired was recorded in Mandarin first, and some of the significant parts were selected and translated into English to respond each quantitative section result respectively.

Quantitative Method

Along with the qualitative method, the researcher concluded her research with the quantitative method to help explain the conversions of the subjects in light of their difficult circumstances in life, along with possible ways that these results can be adapted when reaching out to Buddhists in the future. The quantitative approach borrowed the survey data to determine the percentage of figures and tables of Buddhist converts out of the sample population who were led to Christ due to the plights they encountered, versus other reasons such as curiosity or unexpected encounters. The other percentage of each question was presented as the correlation of the reasons and variables of Christians from Buddhism.

Online Questionnaire

The online questionnaires and in-depth interview questions were similar in focus. Only the limit of answer choices was different according to the length of the answer. The online questionnaire was shared on Google Document, We-Chat survey, and QQ Survey to collect the raw data as it allowed the participants to fill in the form at any time and at any place. The questionnaire began with basic information, including an analysis of how the subject converted. The second part of the questionnaire consisted the questions concerning their devotion and relationship with the body of Christ after their conversions. Afterward, the
results of the data were further analyzed and presented as different kinds of charts to indicate the research results in a quantitative manner. The related issues and event analysis from the in-depth interview results followed the reports of the online questionnaire analysis.

**Chapter Summary**

In short, the researcher has found that whenever Buddhists encounter spiritual or physical difficulties in life, they attribute these to Karma. That is, the result of their actions either in this life or in a past life. Overwhelmed by despair, some Buddhists realize that they need to seek real peace and happiness in life. Upon investigating cases like this, the researcher has found that their distress reveals a great opportunity for God’s mission to work in their lives. Building on this observation, the researcher would like to investigate the effect that the absence of the Gospel has on life calamities among these Buddhists, and how these calamities can be used in the process of Christian outreach to them. This research project will seek to determine whether the Christian approach to suffering, without the perspective of Karma, can encourage troubled Chinese Buddhists to convert to Christ only for temporary comfort or if they will seek a lifetime of devotion to Him. The researcher would like to know if seeking to share the Gospel with people who are currently going through life trials as a particular approach can bring people to Christ, and if this kind of evangelism reaps only short-term or lifelong commitment to God. Above all, the limitation of the research will be limited to the selected target group with an equal numbers of individuals from each age group as the tentative interview limits noted.

The researcher utilized mixed methods, with both qualitative and quantitative research to survey the Chinese Christians from the Buddhist background. The data were all generated, in a neutral manner, from the surveys and the in-depth interviews from these new believers in Christ. The research was completed in churches of Shanghai as well as a few other areas in China as the online questionnaire could be shared wherever the subjects were. The
quantitative research used survey data to determine the percentage of Buddhist converts out of the sample population who were led to Christ due to the hardships they encountered, versus other reasons such as curiosity or unexpected encounters. In addition, the relevant questions were addressed to seek the solution for Christian mission among the non-believers. The qualitative part consisted of some interviews from the in-depth interview analysis to examine the causes and effects of the participants’ conversions. In correspondence to the detailed analysis of the quantitative data summary, the researcher used the qualitative interviews and disclosures to explain the results of the summary. The mixed methods of the research were concluded as the discourse analysis of the results from interviews and in-depth interviews. The data of online questionnaires were analyzed and presented as different kinds of charts in explaining each of the percentages and correlations in a quantitative manner. Moreover, the possible ways of Christian approaches in correspondence to the results analysis were made in a humble suggestion for the outreach to the Chinese Buddhists in the future. Ultimately, other approaches to reading Chinese Buddhists were suggested.
CONVERSION BACKGROUND INFORMATION ANALYSIS

In this research about Christian mission among the first generation Chinese Christians from the Buddhist background, 200 respondents completed the valid quantitative surveys. Similarly, there were 20 respondents selected to finish the in-depth interviews though almost half of the total respondents volunteered to share more about their testimony and perspective in the interview. Ninety-five out of 200 respondents were willing to share more about their testimony. However, the researcher only chose twenty respondents, with the balance distribution of age and gender, to take the in-depth interviews. Every single believer goes on a unique journey related to his or her faith and spirituality, and every story matters in the Christian survey. Nevertheless, due to the length of the thesis, the researcher herein chose summaries of 20 in-depth interviews to close each questionnaire survey section. Thus, the information collected from the in-depth interviews would be presented in the qualitative interviews and disclosures to explain or strengthen the stance of the research results.

The samples from the population were chosen by the snowball sampling method while remaining age group balanced. Due to the fact that the current authorities in China still forbid their people to publicly reveal their religious beliefs, the snowball sampling method was meant to protect the respondents. Nonetheless, the researcher sought to make it a relevant balance research by sorting the samples with even generation groups. Among the 200 first generation Chinese Christians from the Buddhist background, candidates were selected according to an even amount of each age group from the age under 18, to the age between 18 and 29, the age between 30 and 39, the age between 40 and 49, and the age above 50 as the population in the survey. The gender of the respondents consisted of 125 females and 75 males. The surveys were completed by a similar gender percentage of the current Chinese Christians, for China Religion Report shows approximately 70% of Christians are

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25 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 1.
females while 30% are males. The majority of these Chinese respondents of this survey were raised in the big China Area (e.g. China, Taiwan, Hong Kong). 194 of the respondents grew up in the big China area, 4 respondents were from Southeast Asia (e.g. Thailand, Burma, Singapore), and only 2 of the respondents were from northern East Asia (e.g. Japan and Korea).

The quantitative questionnaire survey consists of three major parts: conversion and baptism background information, the changes after conversion, and the inter-religious perspective of respondents. The first part of the survey aimed to analyze the period of time these respondents converted and the different influence of years on the believers. The second part of the survey aimed to learn how much these believers have changed after their conversion. The third part of the survey aimed to discuss the correlations between these believers’ perspectives and the reasons for their conversion. While most of the questions were required to answer with the limited choices, there were some questions designed to get multiple answers.

**Conversion Age**

The respondents converted to Christianity at a relatively young age. The first part discussed in the survey indicated that 101 out of the 200 respondents accepted Christ as their Savior between the age of 18 and 29. The second and the rest of the majority respondents accepted Christ at a young age as 67 of the respondents converted to Christianity under the age of 18, 19 of them converted at the age between 30 and 39, 9 of them converted at the age between 40 and 49, and only 4 of them converted to Christianity at the age above 50. The majority age of the respondents accepted God between the ages of 18 and 29, while the

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27 See Appendix - Result Data Chart 2.

28 See Appendix - Result Data Chart 3.
second large conversion age group is when they were the age under 18. In terms, 84% (168) of the respondents accept Christ before 30 years old though the respondents were selected evenly according to the different generation.

The unknown challenges during the life transitional stage probably drew these Chinese to God. Most Chinese under the age of 22 list their occupation as “student” and many people step into professional work field around the age of 20s and before 30s. The characteristics of the youth group in China have been more open-minded with the higher education they received. 29 Such a young conversion age of these respondents has foreshadowed the reasons for their encounter of Gospel. When people encounter hardship, they tend to make efforts to find ways to solve the problem. After graduating from schools, these young people can no longer excuse themselves from difficulties with their student status. Instead, they must be responsible citizens. These twenty-something believers are most likely to reside their faith in God when they encounter the most complicated transitional time after merely being the students.

Another way to explain the young conversion is through the cultural background during the 1980s and 1990s in correspondence to the historical failure of the Chinese authorities. The growth of Christianity among educated Chinese posted a crisis of cultural incompatibility, which indicates the conflict between the modern cultural norms and traditional religious culture. Many young people chose to abandon Buddhism and embrace Christian truth. During the 1980s and 1990s, many foreign English teachers spread the Gospel on Chinese college campuses, and they later constituted a kind of urban congregation.30 This kind of similar congregation is still active in this century around the university campuses in China. Meanwhile, many Chinese students who had gone abroad to

study accepted Christian faith in correspondence to the Tiananmen demonstrations since 1976; thus, the elder respondents nowadays embraced Christian faith during their twenty-something back then as well.

**Personal Religious Background before Conversion**

Even if all of the respondents came from the Buddhist background, not all of them believed in Buddhism personally. The question regarding their personal religious background prior to Christianity showed the diversity of their personal beliefs. Sixty-two of the respondents claimed to be atheists while fifty-one of them claimed to be Taoists before they believed in God. Only thirty-nine claimed to be Buddhists personally, while fifty of them claimed to believe in other folklore beliefs and two of them claimed to be Catholics.\(^{31}\) Intrinsically, Buddhists, Taoists, and Chinese folklore believers are similar in their belief in manmade gods and the doctrines of rituals. They only differ in some minor details like the subjects and the place they worship. 140 of the respondents believed in the Chinese traditional beliefs before they accepted Christ.

Nevertheless, the diverse personal beliefs explained their willingness and interests in embracing other religious other than their family religious background. “As the community-level grows higher, the attachment of individuals to the larger community’s goals and norms tends to progressively weaken.”\(^{32}\) Only 39 of them chose the same belief with their family by keeping their Buddhist faith before they really accepted Christ as their Savior. The majority of the atheist group in China can explain the outcome of the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s, while they still remembered that they were from a Buddhist family background. The fact that these respondents used to believe something other than their family beliefs reflected their awareness of their personal free will. Through this free will, they opened their hearts to let the

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\(^{31}\) See Appendix – Result Data Chart 4.

Gospel seeds be planted in their hearts to grow.

**Baptism Condition Survey**

The baptism age of the respondents also indicated they became Christians at a relevantly young age. Out of 200, 172 respondents had already gotten baptized while only 28 had not yet gotten baptized.\(^{33}\) 59\% (102) of these 172 respondents were baptized between the age of 18 and 29. 22\% (38) of them were baptized under the age of 18. 12\% (22) were baptized at the age between 30 and 39. 4\% (7) were baptized at the age between 40 and 49 while only 2\% (3) of the baptized respondents were baptized at the age above 50.\(^{34}\) In short, 140 respondents were baptized before the age of 30, and only 32 of the respondents were baptized after the age of 30. All of the respondents were selected evenly according to different age group. The baptism age of the respondents showed a significant reflection of their conversion age. According to the total conversion age survey, 168 out of the 200 respondents accepted Christ before 30 years old. In this part of the survey, 140 out of the 172 baptized respondents were baptized before 30 years old. In terms, 84\% of the respondents were converted before 30 years old, and 81.4\% of the baptized respondents were baptized before 30 years old. 81.4\% of the 172 baptized respondents seconded the fact of the high percentage of the young conversion age of the total 84\% out of 200 respondents.

Most of the respondents were baptized in the 21\(^{st}\) century. The majority of the 172 baptized respondents were baptized between 2001 and 2015 as 70.9\% (122) of the baptized respondents in this research were baptized between these years. 36.6\% (59) of them were baptized between 2001 and 2010, and 34.3\% (63) were baptized between 2011 and 2015. 15.1\% (26) of the baptized respondents were baptized between 1990 and 2000. 9.3\% (16) respondents were baptized before 1990. 4.7\% (8) respondents were baptized after 2015.\(^{35}\)

\(^{33}\) See Appendix – Result Data Chart 5.

\(^{34}\) See Appendix – Result Data Chart 6.

\(^{35}\) See Appendix – Result Data Chart 7.
year of these respondents’ baptism revealed the number of believers in the 21st century. That is, 36.6% (63) of these 172 respondents were baptized in the first ten years of this century, and 39% (67) of them were baptized between these 6 years – four years before 2020. In conclusion, 75.6% (130) of the baptized respondents were baptized in the 21st century also indicate the fast pace of Gospel sharing and penetration along with the speed up life pattern in this century.

Means of the Gospel Encounter

The majority of the respondents encountered the Gospel by the influence of people. For these first generation Christians from the Buddhist background, knowing who God is has always been the biggest factor in their conversion. Had they not known the truth of God, they would not have had the chance to accept Christ as their Savior. According to the respondents, the biggest channel introduced Christianity to them is through the influence of other people. The evangelistic activity of others, the written words, the Internet, and the other means drew these respondents to God respectively. Out of 186 respondents encountered the Gospel by the influence of people. For example, the clergy, a relative, or other Christians reached them out to share the Gospel with them or attract them by the light of God. Sixty-nine of the respondents were reached through the Christian activity in schools, workplaces, clubs, or other conferences. Thirty-four of the respondents were reached through the Bible, Christian books, magazines, or any other written words. Twenty-one of the respondents were reached through the Internet and social media like some kinds of Christian websites, broadcast programs, and so on. Sixteen of the respondents were reached through other special means.36 They were driven to know more about God and ended up accepting Christ as their Savior by their personal interests, the attraction of foreign movies, school biblical curriculum, after school program at church, and so on.

36 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 8.
Interview: The Buddhist Villagers Started Sharing The Gospel

The relationship with the people greatly determines the outcome of Gospel sharing in a traditional Chinese village. Yunlin County has the highest Buddhist percentage among Taiwanese villages. Amazingly, a church in Yunlin baptized around 660 new believers in the past eight years. Astonishingly, among these converts, there were even two Buddhist mediums. Many villagers have encountered a serious problem in their family before they finally believed in Jesus Christ. Though the stronghold of the evil spirits would become fierce if someone accepts Christ in the traditional Buddhist village, eliminating the idols and believing in God made these believers strong again. Pastor Liu said that the relationship between the villagers matters the most when the believers are trying to share the Gospel. If the believers have a good relationship with the people, they may succeed; but if they do not have any relationship with the people, they will definitely fail. In the traditional agricultural area, people value the relationship the most. With the help of the church members, more and more villagers were brought to God by the strong relationship among the villagers.

The Reason for Gospel Encounter

Due to the limited exposure to Christianity, there must be some reasons for these new believers to step out and embrace the Gospel that is different from their religious background. Out of these 200 respondents, 100 of them encountered the Gospel out of unexpected opportunities or reasons. Then, 91 of the respondents encountered the Gospel because they encountered difficulties in life, 38 of them encountered the Gospel because of the other reasons, and only 35 of them encountered the Gospel simply out of curiosity. One hundred of the respondents encountered the Gospel because of unexpected reasons. Many of these respondents claimed to have no interest in Christianity or God and some even despised the

38 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
39 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 9.
ideology of Christianity before they encountered the Gospel. This kind of anti-Christian attitude and the opposite reaction upon knowing who God is can be explained by their sharing of favorite Bible verses often stating that God’s plan is higher than men’s. Some respondents claimed that, “Their thoughts were not the LORD’s, neither were their ways His (Isa. 55:8-11).” Initially, they were driven to know more about God due to their desire to fight against Christianity, but they were touched by the truth of God eventually.

The researcher’s hypothesis of life calamities turned out to be the second important reason for the Gospel encounter for these respondents. The second majority of the reasons for the Gospel encounter meant the respondents converted to Christianity because of the difficulties in their lives. They were more likely to accept all kinds of remedy for their problems when they were in despair. Among the other reasons for the respondents’ Gospel encounter, some of them claimed that the people surrounded them left great impacts on them and thus became the reasons for them to convert to Christianity. Some of the respondents who encountered the Gospel for other reasons were driven by their own desire to defend their former beliefs against Christian teachings. Still, others were simply pondering over questions concerning life and the universe, and they finally found the existence and the power of God are the ultimate truth. In doing so, they eventually discovered the existence and the power of God as the truth.

Interview: A 30 Years Experienced Buddhist Lama Became The Pastor

God touched the heart of a Tibetan Buddhist Lama through miracle healings. The unexpected reason for these Chinese Christians to convert could never be underestimated for the exciting news from Tibet proved God’s plan in good times and bad times. In the Western part of China, Tibet is famous for their Tibetan Buddhism. 78.5% of the population is Tibetan Buddhists, while only 0.02% of the population is Christians. Mr. Han shared that he met a

40 “62 Buddhist Monks Decide to Follow Jesus!,” Asian Access: Develop, Multiply, Transform, June
Tibetan Buddhist Lama who became a pastor after serving in the Buddhist temple for 30 years.\textsuperscript{41} The lama’s wife was seriously sick and none of the doctors could heal her. It was around that time the workers from Asian Access invited the lama’s daughter to church. Then the real joy from these Christians brought them to Christ. The miraculous recovery of the lama’s wife made their family surrendered to God on the same night they visited the church. The lama became a pastor and started sharing the Gospel desperately for he claimed that he had received the vision of building churches all over Mt. Himalayas.

Another factor for the increasing conversions among the Buddhists was due to the huge earthquake in 2015. The seeds of the Gospel were spread out along with many Christian medical emergency relief groups. There were 200,000 people estimated have chosen to follow Jesus, including 62 Buddhist monks, within one year since the disaster. The president of Asian Access, Joe Handley, believes that many of the refugees have witnessed the love of God in the midst of their collapsed homes and dream that they have seen in other religions.\textsuperscript{42} As long as the Christians spend time accompanying the target people groups, these people groups may have the potential to be godly leaders who put their faith in God. In correspondence to the vision of the lama, Mr. Han described the former lama who became an example of a shepherd seeing out his flock among the scattered sheep to rescue them (Ezek. 34:12). God’s steadfast love extends the deepest valley to the heavens, so does His faithfulness to the clouds (Ps. 36:5).

**The Most Influential Part of the Christian Message During Conversion**

In addition to the reasons for the Gospel encounter for these respondents, the influence of the Christian message during their conversion is another element that needs to be discussed. The choices of this part consisted of the message of the love of God, the salvation

\textsuperscript{41} Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
of God, the comfort of God, the encouragement of God, and others. One hundred and forty-three of the respondents considered the love of God as the Christian message that influenced them the most during their conversion. Eighty-six of them regarded the comfort of God as the Christian message that influenced them the most during their conversion. Eighty-one of them regarded the salvation of God as the Christian message that most influenced them, and sixty-five of them regarded the encouragement of God as the Christian message that influenced them the most during their conversion. Still, twenty-two of them considered some other passages as the Christian message that influenced them the most during their conversion. Some of the respondents were freed from the demonic possession or oppression; some of them were healed from illness; some were comforted by the faithfulness of God when they were in distress; some were uplifted by the strength of God when they were weak; some were convinced by the goodness of God when they could not find anyone being nice to them; and still some were convicted by the ultimate and scientifically proved truth of God.

Interview: The Love, The Comfort, And The Salvation Of God Brought People To Christ

The love and joy can change the life of those who encountered physical challenges. Mr. and Mrs. Tseng are a hearing and speech-impaired couple. They were brought together by God’s grace to let them communicate with each other. Mr. Tseng overcame the hardship through his learning process, and he has already invented at least 80 items with product patents. God healed both of them step-by-step. They happily shared testimonies that they were indeed created by God with all the help from Him as well. Another lady, Miss Hsu lost all of her eyesight at the age of 31, but God brought her back without any kind of manmade therapy. From trying both of the western and Chinese medical therapy, becoming a Buddhist nun to take ascetic practices, Miss Hsu was healed by God spiritually. She received

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43 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 10.
44 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
45 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
the joy from God to glorify His name in her life.

The comfort of God is also another factor that touched the lives of new believers the most. Mr. and Mrs. Chen were another couple that used to be Fung Shui specialists who converted to Christianity. They have two ADHD children and Mrs. Chen’s father was diagnosed with Type II colorectal cancer. Desperate and hopeless, Mrs. Chen chose to follow Jesus. The LORD answered her prayer by healing her father; afterward, both of her sons and her husband all accepted Christ as their Savior and were baptized to enjoy the joy from God. The comfort during their despair empowered the couple to face the difficulties within their family. They were immersed with biblical teaching and sought to apply it to their educational philosophy for their children. The love and the comfort of God made possible what was impossible.

The salvation of God could even draw the devout Buddhist believer to God. Miss Cheng was a promising Buddhist nun who had studied Buddhism for 23 years. On her way to take the position as the vice principal in the Buddhist school in the States, she met Jesus and became a Christian. She described herself as the prodigal daughter who came back to Christ. There is also a similar story in Buddhist teaching. In the Buddhist version, the father did not welcome the son but only made the son be one of the workers. The father in the Buddhist story required the son to complete his religious practices without telling him how long and how much he could do to make up the mistakes he had made. In the Christian version, the father in Jesus’ parable welcomed the prodigal son warmly without asking him to be the worker. The joy and love of God’s family is an appealing atmosphere that many Buddhists like Miss Cheng longed for. Most importantly, the salvation of God completely touched this former Buddhist nun and changed her life thoroughly.

46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
Each believer may have a favorite message that led them to God or touched them the most. Among these respondents’ favorite Bible verses of the message, they highly appreciated the message of God’s grace, salvation, love, guidance, comfort, blessings, and so on. The most popular favorite Bible verses these respondents shared was Psalm 23. The guidance, protection, comfort, and the blessings from Psalm 23 are the most appealing songs for those who need it. The power to renew one in Christ was another attractive promise for those who hoped for a new life (2 Cor. 5:17). The rest God promised to give was also a promise for those who were burdened (Matt. 11:28). Likewise, the renewed strength from God in quietness (Isa. 30:15) caught their attention.

The salvation and the grace that are freely given by God was another influential message that touched the respondents, “for by grace [they] have been saved through faith (Eph. 2:8-9).” The respondents indicated their despair under the belief of traditional merits accumulation and happily accepted Christ, for the gift from God did not require them to accumulate merits to get blessings (Matt. 20:28). “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son (John 3:16),” the respondents were also touched by the eternal life God has given them. With the love of Christ, who is the mediator between God and men, they were encouraged to love because God first loves His people. Thus, they could live without fear for “perfect love casts out fear (1Ti. 2:5, 1Jo. 4:18-19).”

Still, other respondents who used to hold an anti-Christian attitude were convinced that God’s plan is higher than men’s. Their thoughts were not the LORD’s, neither were their ways His. They were driven to know more about God due to their desire to fight against Christianity, but they were touched and awakened eventually by God’s mighty hands and truth. All things work for good for those who love the LORD (Rom. 8:28), so many respondents were happy to find the assurance of blessings as long as they love God rather
than permissively accumulate their merits without any credential promise. When some respondents were discouraged, they were lifted up to be courageous and strong, for God would be with them just as God was with Joshua wherever he went (Josh. 1:9).
SUMMARY OF CHANGES AFTER CONVERSION

This section consists of the state of mind the 200 respondents experienced after their conversion. As to the feeling of relief and comfort, 57% (114) of the respondents strongly felt more relieved and comforted after conversion. 34% (68) of them felt more relieved and comforted after conversion. 7.5% (15) of them did not feel any differences after their conversion; while only 1% (2) of them felt that they did not feel more relieved nor comforted after conversion, and 0.5% (1) of them strongly felt that they could hardly feel relieved and comforted after conversion. The majority of the respondents encountered a different state of mind of relief and comfort, while only 17 of the respondents could not feel any differences in their feelings or felt worse after their conversion.

Many of the respondents claimed that their feelings, personalities, perspectives, interpersonal relationships, lifestyles, actions, and other aspects of life have been changed either slightly or drastically after they accepted Christ and let the Holy Spirit work in their hearts. The respondents perceived the most significant changes were made after they converted to Christianity and before they got baptized. The changes were hardly instantaneous, but regularly, as they sought to keep their faith in God, the teachings of God made them feel more joyful, peaceful, optimistic, content, and confidant. Their personalities became affectionate, brave, bright, calm, compassionate, considerate, courageous, generous, kind, loving, patient, and selfless, among many other positive traits. Likewise, they received different perspectives toward success, wealth, love, trials, and other life. The changes of their perspectives and personalities helped them develop better outcomes for their interpersonal relationships with friends and family. Many of the respondents asserted that their lifestyles have changed to a healthy style as well. Some of them even quit smoking, drinking, and other thing deemed unhealthy such as unhealthy relationships or actions.

48 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 11.
Interview: A Famous Singer Who Felt Relieved After She Chose To Follow Jesus

Miss He, a famous singer in Taiwan, chose to follow Christ when she was in need of the relief of God during the days she suffered from depression. Growing up in an extremely wealthy family, Miss He was sent to take regular music training. She learned music from a Christian teacher, so she was immersed in a Christian atmosphere with the love of God. Though she was not from a Christian family background, she made up her mind to earn the love of God in her diary when she was 9 years old. With many awards acquired during her singing career, she never thought that her father’s business would go bankrupt. In addition, her family situation worsened, as her parents got seriously ill. Initially, she chose to believe in spiritism in seeking an even wealthier life during her college years. In doing so, her career and her relationship worsened afterward, causing her to suffer greatly from depression. Added to that the shadow of her mother’s afflicted marriage, she attempted to commit suicide.

Nevertheless, Miss He’s friend made an important call, which saved her from both physical and spiritual death, as the friend shared the Gospel with her. God spoke into her heart and saved her from the distress through her friend’s company and encouragement by Psalm 23. She also described herself as a prodigal son who came back to repent before God. She decided to keep her heart with all vigilance because of where flows the springs of life (Pro. 4:23). She felt relief from her hardships after putting her heart into God’s hands. She was thankful for what God has done in her life, and realized that she could depend on God’s love wherever she went and through whatever she encountered. She stopped doubting God’s plan, for she has completely experienced what a new creation in God could receive (1 Cor. 5:17). Hence, she realized how blessed she was both in spiritual growth and career success.

Meeting difficulties in life seems relatively common in the Christian worldview. The

49 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
plan of God and the definition of the wrath of God are related to the characteristics of righteousness, holiness, and justice, for God’s holiness is against the nature of human sin.
The plight people encountered is not completely due to their innocence; however, God shows His anger toward non-believers for seeking after false gods. The illustration of God’s justice and holiness are the wrath of God in punishing evil and honoring purity. In correspondence to the plight people encounter in life, this is an indication of the anger of a righteous God toward unreached peoples. The wrath that God shows people in life is merely a demonstration of the eternal wrath yet to come.\(^5\) The adversity God put in one’s life can be a reminder for one to come before Him. Miss He was brought back to Christ when she was encountering the difficulties after she realized the only way out was to seek God’s truth.

**The Participation in Christian Ministry**

The participation in Christian ministry evidenced by respondents shows to be quite a significant involvement in the ministry. Only 33 out of 200 respondents have never participated and/or are not currently involved in ministry now. One hundred and twenty of the respondents are currently taking part in the ministry. Though forty-seven of the respondents are not currently participating in any ministry, they used to help out in the ministry sometime in the past.\(^5\) The statistic reflects the passion of these first generation believers from a non-Christian background. The high percentage of their involvement in Christian ministry not only indicates the need for ministry workers but also their passion for serving the LORD.

The respondents, further, showed high participation rates in the ministries in both the past and the present. For those 120 respondents who currently take part in the ministry, there are 60 of them serve regularly as tentmakers or freelance missionaries, 34 of which are

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\(^5\) See Appendix – Result Data Chart 12.
serving occasionally without getting paid, and 26 of which work fulltime for the ministry.\textsuperscript{52} For those 120 respondents who answered that they participated in Christian ministry in the past, 66 of them served regularly as tentmakers, 42 of them served occasionally without getting paid in the past, and 12 of them served in fulltime ministry.\textsuperscript{53} For those 136 respondents who answered regarding their anticipation for Christian ministry participation in the future, 75 stated a desire to participate in the ministry in the future as tentmakers regularly. Though 35 of the respondents have no desire to participate in ministry, 26 of them would like to serve as fulltime workers in the future.\textsuperscript{54}

The respondents revealed that they were urged to stand out for God, as they perceived the needs of the younger generation in helping Christian ministry. Not all the believers from Christian backgrounds are willing to take part in Christian ministry nowadays, let alone such ministry in Asia. The respondents could tell the discrimination and the lack of financial support for Christian ministry in Asia has been quite common and severe. However, they were still inspired to get involved in various ministries. Some respondents said that they witnessed the loss of the elder pastors in rural areas and the indifference of the Christians who grew up from a Christian background, so they were challenged to take up the duty of Gospel sharing. In short, the circumstances within the contemporary Chinese Christians reflect the need of fellow workers; surprisingly, the majority of those who stand out to help are these new believers in Christ.

Interview: The Disappearance Of The Second Generation Christians

Pastor Lee, who has been working in an overseas church in the States, pointed out the problem of the loss of the second generation among Chinese Christians for numerous

\textsuperscript{52} See Appendix – Result Data Chart 13.
\textsuperscript{53} See Appendix – Result Data Chart 14.
\textsuperscript{54} See Appendix – Result Data Chart 15.
Among the younger generation of Christians, there were generally young people who were currently churched and those who were not, as well as those who called themselves Christians and some who once considered themselves as Christians but no longer do so. Pastor Lee concluded that, first of all, the Christian church is too conservative in regards to religious teachings. Second, the teachings of the church are not attractive for the younger generations, as well as are quite exclusive to others. For example, the church basically does not agree with having pre-marital sex nor does it support homosexuality. Though these reasons were stereotypes from the younger generation, they were also the complaints from second generation Christians. With worldly temptations made more obvious through social media, younger generations without a solid foundation tend to have a hard time standing firmly in Christ.

Similarly, the loss of second generation Christians is not only a rampant problem among Chinese believers but it is also an issue in other cultures. David Kinnaman has analyzed these circumstances among the Christians in America. He focused on research done by Barna Group in his book, *You Lost Me*, pointing out that 59 percent of the younger generation with a Christian background admitted that they had or have stopped attending church despite going to church regularly. The striking fact of the loss of these Christians is also described by Kinnaman as there are three kinds of these lost Christians: Nomads who leave church engagement but still believe that they are Christians; Prodigals who lose their faith and do not consider themselves as Christians anymore; and Exiles who still have faith in God yet feel caught between the culture and the church.

The loss of the second generation Christians not only indicated the loss of their faith but also indicated the lack of awareness of the faith journey for these young people. As the

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55 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
churches kept working on the children’s Sunday school and programs for the elder generation, many churches continued to neglect programs for the younger generations. In Chinese culture, getting a good grade for each subject and entering a good school is always considered to be the top priority. If Christian parents believe in the worldly concept too much and require their children to accept the worldviews of the other Chinese, the children will end up being intellectuals, but not passionate Christians as well. Worst of all, they might not attend any Christian congregation nor learn God’s word anymore. The researcher herself has witnessed the circumstances Pastor Lee and Kinnaman mentioned through her teenage years to adulthood. The majority of fellow workers only signed up for ministries related to their future academic application and they tended to serve only until they received enough credits for college requirements. Therefore, the scenario of the disappearance of these Christians oftentimes causes a strong need for fellow workers at church or congregational ministry.

Interview: The Need For Young Workers

In correspondence to the need of the fellow Christian workers in the ministry, a respondent explained his intention in entering a seminary for further equipment not long after he converted to Christianity. Pastor Wu, a minister in a bilingual church from a traditional Chinese family background, explained the reason he decided to take up the church as a young graduate. When he was attending a service one morning at a small local church, the only pastor who was delivering the sermon fell into a coma on the stage, for the pastor was advanced in years. The pastor was sent to the hospital in the middle of the service while there was no one else who could finish his sermon or the whole service, since he was the only Christian worker at that church. The majority population of the church consisted of senior citizens and younger children at the church, with only less than five young adults. Pastor Wu was shocked and decided that he should, as a young man, take up the ministry. After serving

58 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
for a few years at the local church, he received the opportunity to study in seminary and became a full-time pastor after he graduated.

The new believers who chose to follow Christ generally have the passion to know more about God and to serve more in different ministries. When they entered the church or fellowship with a sense of satisfaction from their devotion, they tended to enjoy the recognition. Many of the first generation Christians ended up becoming full-time workers in Christian ministries. As research evidence showed, 120 respondents currently take part in ministry, 60 of them serve regularly as tentmakers or freelance missionaries, 34 of them serve occasionally without getting paid, and 26 of them work fulltime in ministry. Basically, nearly half of the respondents, 94 of them serve regularly in Christian ministry.59 They have chosen to participate in the ministry, though they were from a non-Christian background. When it comes to the respondents’ anticipation for Christian ministry participation in the future, 75 out of 136 respondents who answered said they would like to participate in ministry in the future as tentmakers regularly. Such a strong willingness in ministry participation among these first generation Christians have not only shown the need for Christian workers in ministry but also displayed the passion of these new believers.

**The Frequency and Place of Religious Activity Participation**

The frequency of participation in the religious activity of these first generation Chinese Christians seems relatively high. The frequency of religious activity attendance includes the Sunday services, small groups, Bible studies, prayer meetings, as well as any gatherings in which they participate in the fellowship of Christ. The religious activities are considered as times of fellowship to let the believers know more about God and grow in Him with the support of other believers. According the survey, 162 out of these 200 respondents attended some kind of Christian activity every week, 17 attend all kinds of fellowship every

59 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 13.
other week, 8 attend the gathering once a month, 7 attend the meeting every season, and only 6 of them participate in any kind of small group less than one time half a year. Despite the circumstances of lacking religious freedom in China, these respondents still sought to attend some form of fellowship. If they were not living in China, they tried their best to set aside other things in order to worship God in some type of congregation.

The majority of respondents attended religious activities at legally registered churches or places. One hundred and ninety of the respondents claimed to listen to the sermon or have their small groups at a legally registered place, nineteen attend the activity at an unregistered place, seventeen attend the activity at the house of a friend, and only twelve attend the activity at their personal house. Though the biggest percentage of places of worship that respondents attended were legally registered, there are indeed more believers who gather at those that are unregistered. Those who dared not to fill in this survey were concerned about their safety in China, as they still have no religious freedom. Some respondents explained that the unregistered gathering place normally varies from time to time in order to avoid the persecution of authorities in the People’s Republic of China. The number of unregistered churches has grown rapidly, but it has also reminded the believers to be extra careful in avoiding the attention of the PRC authorities. Despite the remaining inconvenience for the Chinese believers who still live in China, they still seek to continue their fellowship in Christ. If the respondents happened to live somewhere other than China, they could easily find a registered church. Therefore, the circumstance of the religious environment could explain that a majority of the respondents were intrinsically from a registered church congregation.

The Difficulties after Conversion

Being first generation Christians in a non-Christian family background is not always easy. Almost every respondent has encountered some kind of dilemma between their faith

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60 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 16.
61 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 17.
and their surroundings. After the conversion of these respondents, the most difficult issues they faced with non-Christians were conflicts with family members, coworkers or peers, the significant others, and other various conflicts not mentioned above. Specifically, among the respondents, 117 of them have encountered strong conflicts with family members, 71 have encountered disagreements with their coworkers and peers; only 19 have encountered problem dealing with their significant others. Still, other conflicts the respondents encountered are the prejudice and hatred of the public toward Christians, the failure of living out the life of Christ in life and the work field, the understanding of biblical truth, the discovery that an “even worse group” consists of Christians, struggling with traditional culture norms, difficulties of getting used to the life in a church, the unprofessional sermon delivered by the pastors, lack of faith, the difficulty of loving others with the love of God, disagreements about perspectives with the other Christians, loneliness in the family, or even a 43-week-long detention and abuse from family members.

The most common conflict these respondents encountered were generally due to the differences between biblical teaching and traditional Chinese cultures. One of the profound Chinese cultures is the shame and honor-based culture. The origins of the shame and honor-based culture are deeply influenced by the Confucianism within Chinese culture. The long-dominated shame and honor perspective in Chinese culture derives from Confucianism and its concepts. The Analects, Lunyu, is a basic knowledge of every Chinese that they either learn from written words or from oral transmission. The Analects is the composition of the early Chinese Confucian classic teachings of Kongzi (551-479 BCE) who is regarded as the founder of the Confucian tradition. Confucius (Kongzi) taught, “Guide them by edicts, keep them in line with punishments, and the common people will stay out of trouble but will have

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62 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 18.
no sense of shame. Guide them by virtue, keep them in line with the rites, and they will, besides having a sense of shame, reform themselves.”  

In short, Confucius contended that if one ruled the citizens by virtue, they would not only reform themselves but also have a sense of shame to keep good virtue. Despite the threat from the political environment in history, Confucianism remains popular and inseparable from Chinese culture.

Although the society can keep its harmony with the concepts of shame and honor norms, the beliefs have created barriers in sharing the Gospel. Over the years, one of the first well-known incidents against Christianity among Chinese milieu was the Boxer Massacre in 1899, which was a series of violent movements in China to get rid of “foreign devils,” as they consider Christianity is a shameful and evil belief among their Chinese honor-based culture. During the Boxer Massacre, around 240 Christian missionaries and more than 20,000 Chinese Christians were executed by local peasant groups while some other surviving missionaries were forced to leave China due to the Qing Dynasty’s policy.

Regardless of the incidents toward Christians that happened in China, one of the biggest challenges of the development of Christianity is the teaching of Buddhism and Confucianism. The main reasons for Christian persecution are the product of the pressure of collectivist values in China, for they consider accepting Christ means to abandon Chinese wisdom. Respect is a virtue one should have; however, persecuting those who believe in other beliefs (such as the murder of Christians and missionaries throughout history) does not show the benefit of following the shame-based culture. Likewise, the hatred toward

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Christians is unnecessary. Though shame and honor-based culture indeed provide a valuable contribution to society, it poses a threat for people who act or believe differently from the rest of society and family.

The disagreements with family could be solved as the respondents shared that they ended up living out their living testimony in Christ by being exceedingly respectful and thoughtful. Many of the respondents claimed that they were once cut off from the family financially, but God’s provision was enough to sustain them. In light of other kinds of conflicts these new believers encountered, they sought to make peace with their peers and the significant others. Even if the following interview shows the regrets of the respondents, they found peace in facing their difficulties after their conversion.

Interview: The Never-Ending Difficulties

Mr. Hsu, a fulltime worker in a Christian mission organization, has gone through various difficulties and found the truth in God.67 Before he met God, his mother was seriously ill to the point of near death while his family was completely broken financially and spiritually. Their relatives and friends believed that the plights his family encountered were indeed the previous transgressions according to seven of his aunts, and one of them was even a famous Taoist nun who strongly asserted the miserable family deserved the hardships. However, because Mr. Hsu had studied Buddhism carefully before, he realized how deceitful the religion and how meaningless the accountability is. Especially when it comes to the difficult moments that people are struggling with, the merciless remark of the other religions could be clearly revealed. In other words, Buddhism could not help them at all when Hsu’s mother was struggling to survive from the illness; instead, it made them far more miserable.

Mr. Hsu was satisfied with everything when he looked back to the previous experience for he realized the purpose of each trial in the past, but he encountered difficulties

67 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
with peers after he entered God’s Kingdom. As he studied further in Christianity, he compared the study of Buddhism and Christianity with life and grace. He learned that the Creator miraculously creates every life, so the other religion will be put to shame when it comes to the value of life. The theology of creationism and soteriology are two major aspects of Christianity that distinguish it from other religions. Hsu went through the time by continuous prayers for the family members. The mercy and the salvation of God were some key factors that led him to follow Jesus. However, Hsu felt really frustrated and sad after his conversion because he lost many friends, even if he realized that true friends are those who would stay and share in his learning rather than those who eat and drink to find satisfaction. Another problem is that he witnessed many Christians who did not live out their lives but drove people to despair so often. As a Christian ministry worker now, Hsu pointed out his dilemma in dealing with his coworkers and friends, as he stated out the biggest problem is that sometimes Christians become the stumbling stones of faith for others.

Interview: The Disagreement With The Other Half, The Blessing To Many Children

Miss Wang, a teacher at an international school, accepted Christ and then encountered many difficulties. Before she believed in God, she was looking for a religion or philosophy to rely on. Her personal problems could not be changed easily since she used to be very successful without any trials. She found comfort with the Indian folk beliefs, but she became a strange person due to the mediation in the former belief. She even met a kind of mentor in Hinduism, but she still found no peace and happiness. Then, she began to hear the Gospel from a Bible study. She felt that she became surrounded by the love and the peace of God. She realized that the former Indian folk faiths were meaningless. To her, it was the stark contrast and comparison between these two religions that helped her to move to embracing God’s love.

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68 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
However, after Miss Wang found the peace and love in Christ, she still had to deal with many trials in her life. She faced a heartbreaking moment with her soon to be ex-husband who went astray and cheated on her, and she even witnessed three of her relatives pass away in the same year. Her sister died of cancer after 19 days of diagnosis in the spring of 2005, and then both her biological father and adoptive father passed away the same year in October. The hard time of taking care of her relatives and seeing her ex-husband dating the other girl made her extremely bitter. The prayers of her coworkers and the official divorce procedure in 2008 eventually made her realize how God broke her and proceeded to mend her in the likeness of Christ’s followers. She finally met a friend who she can get along with her while giving her feedback for her interpersonal relationship problem. She began feeling that God has been constantly changing her.

Miss Wang became a huge blessing to many students. Her work in a reputable American school is another blessing and testimony for her family for no one can underestimate the power of the living life of Christ. Miss Wang felt that God is working on every individual with His perfect plan by trimming him or her to shine the light in the world, and she could feel that God has changed her. With her experience in facing life difficulties, Wang became a popular teacher who consults the students as if they were all the gifts from God. Wang has been a mentor for many children in need for years since she believes that the students are definitely the gifts from God who should be taught to walk on the godly path.
INTER-RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE SURVEY ANALYSIS

The viewpoint toward other religions and beliefs of these 200 respondents only reflects their perspective toward religions. Many of the respondents just converted to Christianity recently, as the previous data shows that 130 out of the 172 baptized respondents accepted Christ after the 21st century, so this part of the survey is used to analyze the reasons and the changes of their conversion further. This consists of the views on Christian and other religious beliefs, the views on some kinds of traditional Chinese beliefs, and the views on proper contextualization in Gospel sharing.

Perspectives toward Christian and Other Religious Beliefs

The perspective toward Christian and other religious beliefs is one of the key reasons for the respondents’ conversion. The data shows that 116 out of the 200 respondents considered the beliefs of Christianity better than the beliefs of the other religions, 24 respondents considered the beliefs of other religions as good as Christianity’s, 17 respondents considered none of the religious beliefs are good, while none of the respondents considered the beliefs of some other religions better than Christianity’s and 43 respondents had other perspectives toward this issue.69 For example, they respected other people who have the different religious view, though they believed the only true God is the Christian God according to the Bible. They believe that Jesus is the truth for Christians, but they tended to only share the goodness of Christ and allow the Holy Spirit to work on calling the person. The survey of their perspectives toward different viewpoints shows their reasons for converting to Christianity. Most of them complained about the troublesome rituals or beliefs from their non-Christian background. Thus, the perspective of the respondents showed that the supreme truth of Christ indeed played an important part in the respondents’ conversion.

69 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 19.
Perspectives toward Traditional Chinese Rituals and Beliefs

In Chinese Buddhist culture, ancestor worship is a vital element in each family in that they believe that it’s a way to remember their ancestors. Many of the Chinese Buddhists even consider it a way to keep the blessings for the family. One of the most controversial issues is whether or not people should keep worshipping their ancestors in the family after their conversion. The practice of ancestor worship needs paper money, temple incense, and delicious food. The ancestors are honored by a wooden tablet place on the domestic altar, next to the Buddhist, Taoist, or the other gods the family worships.\footnote{Susanne Brandstadter and Gonçalo D. Santos, eds., Chinese Kinship: Contemporary Anthropological Perspectives (Routledge Contemporary China Series) (London: Routledge, 2009), 146-148.} The ancestor worship additionally often involves idol worship. Buddhists burn incense sticks for purposes associated with Buddhist ritual and religious devotion. This kind of traditional ritual is one of the biggest incongruities between Christian teaching and Chinese practice. No matter how people worship their ancestors, they believe that they may be blessed with this kind of practice.

The respondents held different perspectives toward ancestor worship, but they sought to glorify God and honor their ancestors at the same time. Among these 200 respondents, 121 people believed that ancestor worship is a way of remembrance of the ancestors, 68 people believed that this ritual is a kind of superstition, 25 people believed that this ritual is a way to keep family blessings, and 23 people had some intriguing thoughts about ancestor worship.\footnote{See Appendix – Result Data Chart 20.} Many of them admitted they used to think ancestor worship is a way to keep the blessings for the family; however, they realized that this is actually a kind of ritual seeking out spirits after they became Christians. Many other people believed that this ritual made in remembrance of their ancestors was originally a good intention for the family, but many people only focused on the ritual itself rather than the meaning of remembering their ancestors as someone who
deserved the respect. The respondents believed that burning the incense and paper money on the holiday could not be a real way to respect the ancestors; only the genuine respect and appreciation toward the ancestors could be real. Many of these new believers ended up proving their heart for the ancestors by offering genuine prayer and flowers to remember the ancestors in a relevant peaceful way.

**Perspectives toward Merit Accumulation**

Another issue among Chinese beliefs is if the accumulation of merits can lead one to prosperity. Many respondents were touched by the grace and salvation of God since they were taught to accumulate merits all of their life to acquire blessings or whatever they need. When it comes to the idea of Buddhist accumulation of merit in acquiring blessings, 109 respondents out of 200 said that it is an unfair and unreasonable concept, 39 of them did not really care about this concept, 22 of them believed that it is a logical and valuable concept, and 30 of them had different thought or even used to consider it as a valuable idea before they knew God. Most of the respondents were indeed touched by the free grace given by God, and they would like to let the non-believers know the truth and mercy of God. The blessings from God cannot operate like a transaction, for God loves people without asking them to be perfect first. Some of them consider that the accumulation of merits could motivate people to do good work and would eventually turn out to be a positive impact on people. Intrinsically, many of the respondents admitted that the accumulation of merits is more like a fear driven manner in motivating people to be nice, while it does not directly show that it is true that people will definitely acquire the blessings even if they do something nice.

**Interview: False Intention, False Results**

General Liu in the PRC government is another Christian who disagreed with the

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72 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 21.
traditional Chinese beliefs in accumulating merits and idol worships. He pointed out the differences between those who go to the temples seeking for blessings and those who go to church kneeling before the cross. Generally, Chinese Buddhists or non-Christians tend to ask all kinds of deities to protect them and bless them. Even if, often times, Christians believe in God in a way like how Jacob prayed to God in hoping of being blessed with food to eat, clothes to wear, and protection to move on as a “quid pro quo” faith (Gen. 28:20-21). In Chinese culture, this kind of relationship is actually one of the most common thoughts in Buddhist belief. Buddhists burn incense sticks for purposes associated with ritual and religious devotion.

After the Cultural Revolution, though not many people turned to manmade idols, they still believed that ancestor worship could be a way to seek blessings. Non-Christians went to the temple to bribe the gods to bless them while Christians went to church to repent in front of God. The bribing culture has been a serious problem ever since ancient China; the attitude these non-believers held made the trend of accepting bribes and paying bribes a common scenario in society. General Liu concluded that lacking the hope of life made these non-Christians turn to ancestors, gods, or even idols for blessings. If these Chinese had known where they could find real hope, they would have chosen to believe in God and find eternal peace without bribing the deceitful idols.

**Perspectives toward Karma and Difficulties in Life**

Another key factor driving people to embrace the love of Christ is the negative impact of Karma from their previous background. Albeit the researcher hypothesized many of the respondents would consider it is unfair to relate people’s plight as the account for their transgression, the result turned out to be quite surprising. When it comes to the view on

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73 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.

Karma, which means the encountered plight is the account for the transgression one made, these respondents showed a relevant Chinese worldview. In correspondence to plight encounters; only 98 respondents believed that it is an unfair and unreasonable concept. Meanwhile, 45 respondents claimed that they did not really care about the idea of Karma, 28 of the respondents believed that Karma is a logical and valuable concept, and 29 of them had different thoughts toward this issue. In short, nearly half of the respondents did not agree with the idea of Karma, and several respondents shared that they converted to Christianity due to the discrepancies between traditional Chinese perspective and Christian perspective.

Despite that almost one-third of the respondents believed that Karma is often a reasonable idea, the view on human plight indicated their understanding of the ultimate sovereignty of God. When it comes to the view on plight in life as the punishment for one’s transgression, 44 of them strongly disagreed with the idea, 65 of them disagreed with the idea, and 75 of them neither agree nor disagree. In short, 184 respondents did not relate people’s plight in life as their punishment for their transgressions, for only 13 of them agree and 3 strongly agreed to this notion. Even if almost one-third of the respondents considered the idea of Karma reasonable, the majority of them still showed understanding toward others’ difficulties in life as a separate matter of their transgressions. Some people considered that Karma was a method that the authorities used to force the people to fear them and follow the regulations. Though it seems reasonable to see some natural disasters or pollution as the consequences of the mistakes human beings have caused, this concept cannot be applied to everything. The respondents seconded that in some ways, Karma makes sense, but the only one who judges and pardons is God. The biblical teaching helped them to abandon the common misunderstandings within Chinese culture toward those who encountered difficulties.

75 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 22.
76 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 23.
Many respondents mentioned that the Bible has similar teachings of people encountering punishments as the account for their transgression as well. Adam and Eve were cursed after they sinned, the Israelites were exiled and humiliated after they turned away from God, Jonah was thrown into the sea and swallowed by a big fish after he rebelled against God’s will, and even the apostle Paul reminded the believers that those who sow to their own flesh would from the flesh reap corruption (Gen. 14-19, Amos 2:6-8, Jonah 1:1-17, Gal. 6:8). When God punishes those who go astray, He shows justice and the precious mercy to those who receive it. God’s retributive justice punishment and God’s disciplinary purification for people lies in the purpose and the plan of God in the suffering.\textsuperscript{77} However, Karma is a basic theology from Buddhism and Hinduism, which emphasizes the actions from people’s previous life as it might leave a significant impact on their current life through the incarnation. If they accumulate merits, they would probably enter their next life in a pleasure form, and vice versa.\textsuperscript{78} In Christianity, people only have one life with judgment after death (Heb. 9:27) to walk on the path of God. People all reap the same even if they plow iniquity (Job 4:8), but those who sow in tears shall reap with joy (Ps. 126:5). The Bible does not teach people to ignore the goodwill of diligence; instead, it teaches people to have hope in the future.

One of the biggest discrepancies of the idea of Karma between the Buddhist and Christian teaching is that God is the sovereign God who has the power to forgive and show mercy to people. On the one hand, for the Buddhists, if they want to avoid being punished for their transgressions, they have to accumulate merits to earn grace. They have no assurance of the salvation, so they are driven to do the good work without ceasing. On the other hand, Christians have the assurance of God’s grace even if all men have fallen short of the glory of


\textsuperscript{78} Damien Keown, The Nature of Buddhist Ethics (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 1-8, 43-44.
God because of sin (Rom. 3:22-25). From the moment Adam and Eve sinned against God, God has foreshadowed the coming of the promised Messiah (Gen. 3:15). God’s tender mercy has been displayed clearly through the promise for the Israelites (Deut. 28:1-68). Therefore, comparing the differences between Buddhism and Christianity, many of the respondents were touched by the forgiveness, the mercy, and the grace of God.

Interview: The Traditional Oppression To The Healing Of Christ

Taking away the shadow of merit accumulation and Karma impression for the sick is another way God reached out to these Chinese Buddhists. One of the respondents of the in-depth interview, Mrs. Lee used to get involved in the work of the biggest Buddhist organization in Asia, claimed the healing of her rheumatoid arthritis from God made her life different.79 Before she converted, she used to believe in the accumulation of merits in earning blessings. However, despite her devotion in all kinds of good work for the Buddhist organization, her illness exacerbated continuously. After she accepted Christ as her Savior, many neighbors and friends still related her illness to her faith in God until she fully recovered from rheumatoid arthritis without the help of medicine. Mrs. Lee put her faith in God and received the joy and peace from God, and even experienced the changes of her personality and relationship with other people. She not only experienced healing but was also transformed by God. For her experience in the traditional beliefs and her hardships in the past, she became a strong Christian. She always remembered to “rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances” (1Thess 5:16-18). The resurrection of Jesus resurrected her health, so she always praised God happily after she converted to Christianity. Eventually, she became a pioneer in church expansion and building, and she lived out the aroma of Christ and the knowledge of God with triumphant procession (1 Cor. 2:14-15).

79 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
Perspectives on Proper Contextualization in Gospel Sharing

The importance of proper-contextualization impacts the cross-cultural ministry for the target people group significantly. The Chinese Buddhists do not share many similarities with Christian culture, so one of the biggest factors that influence the ministry greatly is whether or not the missionaries adopt the target people’s native language and culture to communicate with the people in a more impactful way. The dynamic human culture can be regarded as a design that should be comprehended within the nature of humans. Proper contextualization can be valued as the asset in cross-cultural communication in viewing the success of genuine ambassadors. Contextualization can be perceived easily in ministry and it can benefit cross-cultural mission as well. Albeit people argue that contextualizing Christianity is very risky in that “the risk of syncretism is always present when Christians attempt to acculturate Christianity, [but] it is a risk that needs to be taken in order that people experience New Testament Christianity.” However, understanding culture can actually empower the missionaries to generate legitimate contextualization and enable the ministry to function effectively within the cross-cultural circumstances.

When it comes to the view on proper contextualization methods for cross-cultural ministries, 126 respondents believed that this method is very important for cross-cultural ministry, 25 regarded this method as nothing influential, 30 regarded this method as harmful for cross-cultural ministry, and 19 had other thoughts about the usage of proper contextualization. In survey after survey, almost two-thirds of the respondents said that authentic contextualization is essential for cross-cultural ministry. People tend to listen to the properly contextualized sharing in that these Chinese believers could connect with them

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82 See Appendix – Result Data Chart 24.
easily. Kraidy introduces cultural combination as the “cultural logic” of globalization, for it “entails that traces of other cultures exist in every culture, thus offering foreign media and marketers’ transcultural wedges for forging effective links between their commodities and local communities.” Another advocator of this contextualized communication is Jan Nederveen Pieterse, who contends cultural hybridity as the essence of culture. The equality of each culture is also considered important in the deep heart of the Chinese. Therefore, “the ultimate goal of the missionary is to raise up effective sources of the Christian message from within the respondent culture.”

Cross-cultural Gospel communication always brings about the application of understanding culture and worldview. Worldview is the core element of a culture, and both of worldview and culture are critical for people in understanding a culture. Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers mention that culture is the label made by the anthropologist in the summary of the distinctive characteristics of people’s ways of life. Failing to comprehend the worldview of a culture may hinder one’s intercultural communication. There were many misunderstandings of the Gospel communication throughout history, and there are even more obvious problems revealed by expedited globalization today, with the impact of urbanization on the global church and overwhelming issues in the secular society. As a result, understanding worldview in Gospel communication is a crucial element within the globalized world. Charles H. Kraft describes, “Worldview is not separate from culture. It is included in the culture as the deepest level

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85 Winter and Hawthorne, Perspectives On the World Christian Movement, 428.
presuppositions upon which people base their lives.”

Even if the perspectives of the respondents varied, they all explained how important proper contextualization should be in cross-cultural ministries. Chinese is most of the Chinese people’s first language. The language and the culture play a crucial role in communication. However, those who were convinced that legitimate contextualization would be harmful to cross-cultural ministry still believed that the sound Gospel should be shared without translation and not be related to the target people, for they were afraid that the contextualization that ministers used would delude the Gospel, even if ministers adopted the language and culture properly. The other problem is that some respondents thought that there’s no relation between Christianity and Buddhism at all, so they consider proper contextualization impossible to accomplish. The other respondents realized that the circumstances might vary, but the absolute principle is to seek the help of the Holy Spirit and the teaching of the Bible. The apostle Paul approached his target people by mentioning the philosophers and the idol worship in Athens in order to engage with them and share the Gospel in a contextualized manner, but he did not twist the truth from the Bible in order to convert more people. Accordingly, proper contextualization can be a helpful method in cross-cultural ministry, especially among the people groups who have never heard the Gospel.

Interview: How To Share The Gospel With Others Back In Their Own Culture

From the Biblical worldview, the core mission’s vision has always been, and remains, as the task of bridging the gap between the Gospel and the world. Cross-cultural Gospel communication brings about the application of appropriate contextualization. Unfortunately, some of the respondents in the research claimed that they have difficulty sharing the Gospel with their own family or friends who only speak Chinese. Angel and Anny are two of the

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respondents who accepted Christ from an English-speaking context, and they have only attended the English service and learned the truth in English.90 When they got back to their hometown, they had no idea how to share the Message with their own families since they did not even know how to pray in their own language. When they tried to bring their family members to the church, they could not find any church service that could meet both of the needs of their family and themselves. Hence, sharing the Gospel with proper contextualization is a vital step in empowering the new believers to impact more people in their own cultural context.

Despite the fact that some of the respondents who accept Christ in other culture milieu, being incapable of passing the truth to other in their own background culture, there are plenty of successful mission fruits driven by the proper Gospel proclaiming approach. Hudson Taylor, George Leslie Mackay, Gladys Aylward, Jonathan Goforth, and many missionaries all sought to reach out the target people effectively with legitimate contextualization.91 These missionaries not only learned Chinese but also the local culture to engage with the target people group. Their willingness to understand the target culture helped their ministries among the people. They sought to connect with the locals by combining both a Christ-centered doctrine and the cultural-tailored manners. As the biblical references and scholarly research recognizes the function of cultural appreciation, many cross-cultural missionaries adopted it while accomplishing their ministries with fruitful converts in the target cultures. As a result, the role of decent contextualization in Gospel communication is a crucial element within the globalized world.

Among the missionaries to China, many of them achieved successful ministries cross-culturally. There are two well-known missionaries who have been brought up the most during

90 Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
the interviews, for they had both showed the greatest understanding of the target culture and conducted the mission of God effectively. The first significant figure is James Hudson Taylor, who founded the China Inland Mission in the 19th century. As a British Protestant Christian missionary to China, Hudson Taylor had demonstrated the model of appreciation toward the target culture in Gospel communication significantly in China. Another example is Gladys Aylward, who was a British evangelical Christian missionary to China in the 20th century and had lived out the living love of Christ in a cross-cultural manner as well. Aylward’s famous story was even told in the book *The Small Woman* in 1957 and was made into a motion picture *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness* in 1958.

Hudson Taylor is considered to be the first foreign missionary who ministered with a wholesome understanding of a culture’s worldview. Hudson’s strategy in China was quite unique at that time and is still influential nowadays for the proper contextualization upon learning the worldview of the Chinese. The tremendous impact he had left in China through the following members and his descendants who carry on his ministries in Asia has brought the ministry in China to maturity. Most of the Christian fellowship leaders or workers within Chinese culture are all familiar with his work as well as his descendants’ continual attitude of appreciating the Chinese worldview. Upon arriving Shanghai, China, J. H. Taylor started his Gospel sharing work immediately, though he faced several failures due to the cultural differences between ancient China and England. However, he then employed contextualization similar to the Jesuits before his time while opposing protestant missionary way of the 19th century.  

Hudson Taylor’s willingness to adapt and awareness of the worldview with Chinese culture made him accept a rather contextualized manner both in the communicational and the social patterns. On the one hand, he learned the language, including the varieties of Chinese

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language, including Mandarin, Chaozhou, Shanghai, and Ningbo dialects. On the other hand, he even followed the native dressing style with a pigtail on his head in order to look like the local Chinese as much as possible. Nevertheless, adapting to the culture really means one agrees with or accepts at least part of the target people’s worldview at that time. China has encountered great humiliation from foreign countries in Qing Dynasty. Therefore, many of the Chinese were touched by Hudson’s willingness in holistically appreciation of their culture. Taylor not only brought the light for the spiritual darkness in Asia but also inspired several great missionaries such as Eric Liddel (the 1924 Summer Olympic winner, though he refused to attend his favored distance on Sunday), Billy Graham, and so forth. Besides these great missionaries, all of his sons, grandsons, great-grandsons, sacrificed themselves for China’s missions, along with his great-great-grandson James Hudson Taylor IV, who spares no efforts to keep up the good work in Hong Kong and East Asia. Today, Hudson Taylor’s wholesome approach is still in use by James Hudson Taylor IV as he continues Hudson Taylor’s holistic understanding of Chinese culture in different spectrums.

Gladys was another missionary who perfectly fit into the Chinese majority with her appreciation and connection of the cultural worldview. She was born to a working-class family with insufficient academic learning. Though China Inland Mission rejected her, she went on the trip to as an independent missionary. Aylward worked with an elder missionary, Jeannie Lawson, once she arrived in Yangcheng to found *The Inn of the Eight happinesses*. Gladys, like Hudson Taylor, also realized the importance of the Chinese worldview and embraced the local language quickly in order to reach out to the locals. Realizing most of the travelers were illiterate, Gladys found a way to connect with them through the biblical stories, as the Chinese tend to regard stories as one of the most important elements of their

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93 Ibid., 4017.
94 Ibid., 6585.
95 Ibid., 6616.
culture. Many of the travelers found themselves enjoying hearing the Gospel stories told by Aylward with her understanding of the local worldview.

Moreover, Aylward showed her love toward China by providing what the society needed. With her many efforts in taking care of and adopting orphans, intervening in riots, risking her life to help those in need, Aylward became a Chinese citizen due to her unconditional sacrifices for China. Also, when she noticed that the Chinese worldview, which greatly emphasized harmony, Gladys worked as the mediator among the locals. She was invited to be the Chinese government assistant in liberating the foot binding of the young girls, as she was also known for her ability in calming the violent conflicts down. She did not avert from the social problems of her time, but she confronted them with the love of Christ, which the Chinese highly appreciated. By learning the desire of the Chinese from the turbulent and unsafe Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China, Gladys’ emphasis on the worldview of peace made her way to the hearts of the Chinese. Although she was forced to leave China due to the Japanese invasion and the following warfare in 1938, she continued her work in Taiwan with a peaceful and holistic outreach to the locals.96 Aylward’s love toward people had been revealed through meeting the need of the society, as she understood the Chinese worldview.

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Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the conversion background information, the changes after the conversion, and the inter-religious perspective of the respondents were analyzed in both qualitative and quantitative spectrums. Each discussion section begins with the questionnaire analysis and ends with interviews collected from the in-depth interviews. According to the age, the year, and the reason for the conversions, the respondents chose to follow Jesus at a relatively young age in the 21st century for various reasons. The changes after their conversion indicate the passion of these new believers both in truth seeking and ministry participation. Many of the respondents even became productive sowers of Gospel. As first generation Christians, these respondents have overcome many of the difficulties in life and remained faithful to God. In the last part of this chapter, some potential connections between Christianity and traditional Chinese beliefs are presented in viewing of challenges in life, blessing accumulations, and in cross-cultural ministry. Many of the Chinese cultural worldviews, including the view on Karma and merit accumulation, end up becoming the reasons these non-believers accepted Christ. The examples of missionaries who successfully engaged with the Chinese were introduced after the interview information collected. In short, the experience of these first generation Chinese would benefit those who seek to share the Gospel with the Chinese Buddhists.
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The research sources consisted of some previous investigations recorded in books and dissertations, while the majority of the research content consisted of experience from the respondents. As there are only a few kinds of resources investigating conversions among contemporary Chinese Buddhists, the researcher decided to investigate more about the Christian conversions from Buddhist backgrounds through personal interviews and questionnaire surveys. The research was not only experience-based but also knowledge-based. The main review of the literature will focus on proposed strategies for engagement with Chinese, for they are the potential believers who accepted Christ. In light of the survey responses, there are four general spectrums they valued and which encouraged them to embrace the love of God. First of all, the fundamental principles of the Bible of outreach are not only applicable to the Chinese people but also adaptable to any people group. Second, the biblical worldview toward life’s hardships may comfort those wounded living under the shadow of traditional stereotypes. Third, Chinese shame and honor-based culture presents the need of Gospel for this people group. Finally, for Chinese from a non-Christian background, proper contextualization of Gospel sharing should not be undervalued. The above four elements for effective ministry among Chinese will be addressed as follows.

Fundamental Outreach Principles for Chinese

There are several proposed strategies that might be useful in Chinese culture among other cultures. This part starts from the basic methods from the ten fundamental principles, addressed by Ralph Winter.97 For example, a believer must recognize the value of people, and respect the context of their local culture can open up the hearts of non-believers. Then, understand and respect local Chinese culture, as well as be alert to the orthodoxy of biblical teaching. In this way, the disciples may continually build up new believers, and yet discern

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that each person is intrinsically valuable, for every culture has both positive and negative aspects that may or may not be compatible with biblical teaching.

The Gospel penetrates the hearts of those who seek their daily basic life needs the best. Throughout the research, the respondents revealed that they were not only touched by the truth but also by the grace of God. Likewise, helping people meet their basic needs with dignity and self-respect among their distress may leave a lifelong impact on them. Since disciples should realize that poverty includes physical, material, spiritual, and social dimensions, ministry works the best when it is involved with the whole person – mind, body, and spirit – in any development effort. The researcher has interviewed many of the subjects sponsored by churches who finally devoted themselves to Christ, not only to get rid of public shame but also to acknowledge the church in honoring and representing the body of Christ. Linda, a young girl who was adopted by a female pastor during her teenage years, when her grandmother was too old and too weak to keep her, became a strong Christian disciple who has brought even more people to Christ.\textsuperscript{98} The pastor carefully brought honor to Linda, and warmly welcomed her as her own daughter. Thus, Linda’s basic life needs were met as she found the hope in Christ by being adopted.

An authentic Christ-like heart generates continuing ministry among the Chinese. To share the Gospel is not simply speaking among the people with a sophisticated tone; the premise of Christians and disciples is to live with misery and injustice together while having hope within their circumstances.\textsuperscript{99} The basic engagement with a disadvantaged people group may continue holistic development via supporting ministries. Current and future ministries among the Chinese include supporting the churches, the ministries, and the mission organizations. All kinds of ministries are springing up around China. These ministries are comprised of disaster-relief ministries, literature ministries, educational ministries,

\textsuperscript{98} Please refer to Appendix - In-depth Interviewee Information.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., 256.
disadvantaged people ministries, and drug or alcohol addicted people ministries. The ministries are carried on with the heart of Jesus; so many have been touched deeply in their distress.

**Biblical Worldview Toward Trials in Life**

The idea for this research came as a random thought after the researcher read the analysis of the Book of Job by Eugene Merrill when Job’s friends were debating whether he had committed any hidden transgressions before. Having a strong curiosity about Christian mission among non-believers, the researcher has found that whenever Buddhists encounter spiritual or physical difficulties in life, they attribute these to Karma, which emphasizes the result of their actions either in this life or in a past life. Many people from a shame-based culture treat sufferers like Job’s three friends treated him, with Karma standing in for the friends’ “retribution theology.”

Nevertheless, there is always hope found in the Bible for Christians who are afflicted from the biblical scope. Even during Jesus’s time, the majority considered those with physical problems and diseases as sinners being punished by God. Jesus healed the blind man and explained that the condition of the man was not a result of sin but rather a vessel to reveal the light of the world (John 9:1-5). Job was overwhelmed after losing his possessions, his health, and his family. Worse yet, although he worshipped God daily with a faithful manner, he felt that God was ignoring his pleas for help. At some point, Job thought that God seemed absent from his calamity, and he claimed that he could not see God wherever he looked (Job 23:2-9).

Nonetheless, Job learned something in the middle of his despair. His faith revived when he said, “[God] knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold (Job 23:10).” Oftentimes, Christians are tried when God uses difficulty to burn away the pride, but

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they will be purified. Though it seems God is silent during the process of purification, He may give His children an opportunity to grow stronger in Christian faith.

Stephen Tong also responded to the growing faith of the Chinese under the trials of the on-going religious persecution in China. Some Christian congregations in rural areas shared the Gospel to one another without any pastor delivering the sermon in front of them. The same and the simplest truth, “Jesus loves you,” being passed by each villager brought people to Christ. The unregistered 2,800,000 Christians before the Cultural Revolution restricted the religious freedom of the Chinese, since 1966, left a significant impact on the disciples. The trials of Christians in China, surprisingly, made 140,000,000 believers nowadays.\textsuperscript{102} The phenomenon of the fast spread of the Gospel even under the PRC regime was a reflection of how the Jewish prospered after the Holocaust. God manifested His almighty sovereignty over everything, especially over the difficulties the believers are going through. Therefore, the challenge God hands out to His believers is a precious jewel for them to see hope from God or to make His light shine through the scenario.

\textbf{Biblical Engagement with Chinese Shame and Honor Culture}

In order to clarify the position of Christianity in China today, a review of the history of Confucius, Buddha, and Christ in China is necessary. Ralph Covell argues that the failure of Christianity to become a locally relevant message is because of its foreign connections and message disconnected to the beliefs of Confucius and Buddha.\textsuperscript{103} In addition, Christian mission in contemporary studies is recorded deceptively because the historical overview excludes most of the possible methods for Christians to relate to Chinese wisely. Thus, thinking within the context and understanding it fully may strengthen the function of a


Western proposal of Gospel sharing strategy in China.

Long existing shame and honor-based concepts originate from the beliefs of Confucius, highly emphasizing human dignity and collectivism value, which values a sense of belonging and fitting into the society. Chinese Buddhism is highly interwoven with the teachings of Confucius and Buddha. People in this environment are taught to engage in appropriate action in order to fulfill social obligation. In addition, being indirect when interacting with people, keeping conflict hidden from the public, and promoting the goals of others are all necessary attitudes one should hold among this honor-based society. Philip J. Ivanhoe asserts that The Analects is as relevant and important today as it has proven to be over the course of its more than 2000 years history, not only for the people who live in East Asian societies but for all people worldwide.

Shame-and-honor culture actually deters people from embracing Christian belief even if it benefits the society on the surface. Basically, shame and honor culture plays roles within other social realms, including neighborhood, community, political policy, school of thought, etc. The belief of Chinese culture provides the opportunity for one to contact a larger network of acquaintances and guides people with ethical issues. Currently, the Chinese society has remained in harmony on the surface with the help of shame and honor-based beliefs in that people rejoice in getting the honor by keeping virtues, all the while fearing being humiliated in public. Children obey the elderly, students respect the teachers, and citizens support leaders in order to promote an ideal Chinese culture. Though disagreement indeed exists, conflict is hidden to keep one’s honorable dignity and great reputation. The society, as a result, believes itself to be in “peace.” Because of the shame and honor culture norms, the spread of the Gospel is challenged. The persecution of Christians and especially new converts

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has existed since ancient China. Likewise, hatred toward Christians over time is unnecessary. Although shame and honor-based culture indeed provides a valuable contribution to society, it hinders people from adopting different belief among this kind of traditional community.

Nevertheless, the Bible is the Message that speaks into the Chinese shame and honor culture, though many Chinese argue that Christian culture has no way to connect to theirs. The concepts of shame and honor saturate the Bible as David deSilva claims, “The culture of the first-century world was built on the foundational social values of honor and dishonor.”

Similarly, evidence can be found from the Old Testament as the LORD reminds His people, “Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed; do not be discouraged, for you will not suffer disgrace; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and the disgrace of your widowhood you will remember no more (Isa. 54:4).” King David also proclaimed, “My salvation and my honor depend on God (Ps. 62:7).” The shame and honor references from the Bible can achieve the same goal with different means in connecting to the Chinese worldview. Once a Chinese individual from shame and honor culture converts to Christ, he or she will no longer feel ashamed because those who believe in Him shall be honored (1 Pet. 2:6-7). The righteousness of God cleans His children and brings hope for the Chinese from a shame and honor-based culture. The Bible is actually a contextualized message for people of all nations and all cultures, fitting perfectly into Chinese honor-based culture. Hence, Bible study can equip one for cultural engagement in time of need as well.

In Chinese shame and honor-based culture, some of the fundamental truths about communication can be incorporated into one’s daily life. On the one hand, reaching out to Chinese Buddhists requires understanding of their culture norms since they do not share the same culture norms with most western cultures. The life of Christians who convert from

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shame and honor-based cultures reflects the conclusion of Moreau et al. relating to the cross-cultural communication that everything people do communicates powerfully, the purpose of communication is more than imparting information, the communication process is complicated, the communication action is dynamic, and the communication development is built on the trust of the target people.\textsuperscript{108} On the one hand, within Majority World Christians, there are many societal elitists who bring honor to God via recognition. On the other hand, Christians from predominately unbelieving families tend to show more respect to the elderly by sacrificing their time and energy to help the family.

\textbf{The Manner of Adopting Proper Contextualization}

With the biblical references and the research, appreciation of culture is essential in intercultural communication and Gospel proclamation. Research analysis shows that nearly two-thirds of the total respondents believed that this method is very important for cross-cultural ministry;\textsuperscript{109} the voice of these first generation Chinese Christians shall not be ignored. Along with the study cases of Anny and Angel’s who had problems sharing the Gospel with their families and friends from their cultural background, the need of contextualized approaches in ministry is important.\textsuperscript{110} The need of ministers who can speak into the majority of the Chinese is extremely crucial. The Scriptures indicate that men are called to love and serve others as the heart of God’s mission. The disciples are serving those who are also created in God’s image and can be called “saints” in God’s kingdom. They should identify with the target people at the deepest level.\textsuperscript{111}

As long as it springs from a biblical worldview, contextualization can benefit the


\textsuperscript{109} See Appendix – Result Data Chart 24.

\textsuperscript{110} Mikka Ruokanen and Paulos Huang, eds., \textit{Christianity and Chinese Culture} (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 201-203.

\textsuperscript{111} Paul G. Hiebert, \textit{The Gospel in Human Contexts}, 191.
cross-cultural ministry. Before the 21st century, the risk of syncretism used to be a problem when ministering with proper contextualization, for the lack of systematic theology training among the Christian workers made it difficult to bring people to Christ. Many Christians were willing to be pastors or missionaries, but they were struggling with the outreach teaching without a solid biblical foundation.\(^{112}\) After one recognizes the value of other cultures in the scope of God’s unanimous creation, a tailored communication can be facilitated. Timothy Tennent asserts, “Christians around the world face issues unique to their particular setting that require special theological reflection.”\(^{113}\) The needs for Christ-centered theology and diverse cultural expressions are both necessary in people-engagement.

In order to achieve a positive outcome, understanding the worldview of the target culture can benefit cross-cultural mission in a contextualized manner. Learning a culture and its worldview can actually aid missionaries, in generating legitimate contextualization, and enable the ministry to function effectively within cross-cultural circumstances. For example, Robert E. Coleman stresses oneness with Christ in claiming that the disciples were meant to be the real representatives of Christ as they went forward.\(^ {114}\) With the idea of similarities between human natures and human cultures, people should embrace another people group with genuine recognition and appreciation. In dealing with these issues, understanding the worldview of a culture can make important contributions to contextualizing theology because it always mitigates the tension between certain culture and the universal norms of human nature.\(^ {115}\) Using a metaphor, Charles H. Kraft contends, “The Gospel is to be planted as a seed that will sprout within and be nourished by the rain and nutrients in the cultural soil of


\(^{113}\) Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church Is Influencing the Way We Think About and Discuss Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 254-257.


\(^{115}\) Ott and Netland, eds., *Globalizing Theology*, 1220-1238.
the receiving peoples.” Likewise, the sprouted outcome from the Gospel seed could appear differently on the field from the way it is observed in the sending culture, yet the roots are the same and the life actually originates from the same source – the truth of God. In *Getting Saved in America*, Carolyn Chen also discussed the Chinese converts who were touched with proper context in the States.  

In summary, listening to the target people group may strengthen the relationship between the Gospel preachers and hearers. David Claydon suggests that Christians start from the perspective of the hearers. Ministers should be willing to listen and understand the hearers’ point of view and guard the work with prayer, incorporating a heart of humility. In other words, to be the real hearers of culture means to understand the language and cultural values of the target people group. If the missionary does not listen to the people, he or she cannot make valid communication because misunderstandings between people are likely to happen under such circumstances. With common language and shared norms, the missionary may have the potential to understand the hearers’ worldview and influence the target people. Understanding culture and language can be a good initiation of relationship building, affirming what Hudson and Gladys said, “Discipleship is built on relationships.”

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Chapter Summary

In short, the literature review of this research focuses on the discussion of fundamental outreach principles for Chinese, a biblical worldview toward trials in life, biblical engagement with a Chinese shame and honor culture, and adopting proper contextualization. First, the fundamental suggestions are based on a holistic development and caring for the target people; such suggestions may be applicable to other different cultures as well. Secondly, there is always hope for Christians who are afflicted in the biblical worldview though meeting difficulties in life seems relatively common to the Christian worldview. The Christian worldview toward adversity has been primarily analyzed by comparing and contrasting to the worldview of Buddhism. Then, in order to clarify the position of Christianity in China today, a review of the history of Confucius, Buddha, and Christ in China has been examined. Even if shame and honor culture hinders people from embracing Christian beliefs while benefiting society on the surface, the Word of God may speak into the Chinese. Lastly, it is suggested that the message of Christ be understood and interpreted from the recipient’s worldview with proper contextualization. Appreciation of culture is essential to intercultural and cross-cultural Gospel communication. With the research resource and biblical references, contextualization is proved to be one of the keys for appreciation of the target culture in that it empowers cross-cultural mission to yield fruit more easily.

120 Ibid.
CONCLUSION

This research paper was designed to reveal how ministries could prosper in seeking to share the Gospel with Chinese from those who are in a life crisis. The target research group was mainly selected from those who went through or are currently going through life trials, since the researcher has found that whenever Buddhists encounter spiritual or physical adversities in life, they attribute these to the result of their earlier mistakes. Nevertheless, their distress reveals a great opportunity for God’s mission to work in their lives. Thus, the researcher generated both the qualitative and quantitative research to survey Chinese Christians from a Buddhist background in order to see how Christians can lead more Chinese to Christ.

The main survey data analysis focused on conversion background information, the changes after the conversion, and the inter-religious perspective of the respondents. The first part, the conversion background of the respondents, provides a layout of general first generation Chinese Christians among an evenly selected sampling. The respondents converted to Christianity at a relatively young age, and the respondents’ baptisms also confirmed they became Christian at a relatively young age. The young conversion age of the respondents is either because of unknown challenges during their transitional life stages or the cultural background issues that brought them to Christ. Even if all of the respondents came from a Buddhist background, not all of them believed in Buddhism personally before they met Jesus. Hence, the diverse personal beliefs explained their likelihood to other religious.

Then, the changes after conversion have shown the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of these new converts. Many of the respondents claimed that their feelings, personalities, perspectives, interpersonal relationships, lifestyles, actions, and other aspects of life were changed after they accepted Christ. The frequency of participation in religious
activity of these first generation Chinese Christians seemed relatively high. Likewise, the participation in Christian ministry of the respondents shows a significant involvement in the ministry for the respondents not only highly participated in ministries in the past, but also in the present time. The passion of these new Christians passionately and eagerly devoted themselves to the ministry of God, and some of them were urged to get involved upon seeing the needs of the younger generation while serving.

The inter-religious perspectives of the respondents showed the reasons they accept Christ upon learning the discrepancies between Christianity and Buddhism. The biblical worldview toward life trials is one of the biggest impetus encouraged these Chinese to put their faith in God as they could see the hope in the future. The most common conflict these respondents encountered generally reflected the differences between biblical teaching and their traditional Chinese culture. Christian and other religious beliefs were the key reasons for the respondents’ conversions. For example, ancestor worship, the belief of Karma, the accumulation of merits are all key factors driving people to embrace the love of Christ instead of the previous negative beliefs from their background. Lastly, the survey also shows how proper contextualization impacts cross-cultural ministry for a target people group significantly. Despite various perspectives from the respondents, they all explained how important proper contextualization should be in cross-cultural ministries.

In correspondence with the research results, the literature review focused on the discussion of fundamental outreach principles for Chinese, biblical worldview toward trials in life, biblical engagement with Chinese shame and honor culture, and the manner of adopting proper contextualization. Regardless of the suggestions of holistic development to the target people, the biblical worldview of comforting people who are meeting difficulties in life is another element to engage with the Chinese. Adversity in life seems relatively common in the Christian worldview, yet there is always hope for Christians who are afflicted.
From the biblical worldview, the core mission’s vision has always been, and remains, the task of bridging the gap between the Gospel and the world.\textsuperscript{121} God loves people, and He is revealed to be a God willing to work among people’s varied cultures. If Christians would like to reach out to people with the Gospel, understanding the people’s culture and their worldview is necessary. Jesus knew the importance of appreciating people’s worldview as He used stories to aim deeply into the listeners’ perspective. The apostle Paul seconded Jesus’ appreciation of the Jews’ and the Gentiles’ worldview respectively (1 Col. 9:19-22). Likewise, a genuine understanding of the nature of people depends on a true understanding of God. The Lausanne Covenant concludes, “Because man is God’s creature, some of His culture is rich in beauty and goodness...The Gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any culture to another, but evaluates all cultures according to its own criteria of truth and righteousness, and insists on moral absolutes in every culture.”\textsuperscript{122} Hence, authentic engagement with the Chinese should be adopted when ministering to them for they are equally valuable to any other people groups.

There may be many different approaches in Gospel sharing and Christian conversion applied in certain circumstances, but the main point is sharing real access to the Father through the Son and the Spirit. People may be the means and the reasons for the Chinese to know and accept Christ as this research result shows. Although non-believers emphasized difficulties that impeded their conversion, they secretly noted the good character of the people who led them to Christ. One’s conversion cannot be arranged by people but has already been determined by the LORD. The Gospel penetrates people under pressure. Jesus bore both the guilt and shame of mankind, and He reversed the curse from the fall of man, so Christians should no longer waste their identity in Him nor miss the chance to share the

\textsuperscript{121} Paul G. Hiebert, \textit{The Gospel in Human Contexts}, 179.

\textsuperscript{122}“The Lausanne Covenant Introduction,” Lausanne Movement: Connecting influencers and ideas for global mission, accessed May 9, 2016, \url{https://www.lausanne.org/content/covenant/lausanne-covenant}.
Gospel and reveal His glory. Though the contextualization process is intriguing and complicated, potential believers can be found among non-believers who are controlled by deeply rooted thoughts of Karma, shame and honor, misplaced and even confidence in merit accumulation. Ministry to people who are currently going through life trials as a particular approach to the afflicted Chinese can lead them to Christ as long as the proper contextualization is applied. In addition, contextualized evangelism presents a great possibility of reaping genuine conversions with a lifelong commitment to God.

In the end, the development of current Christian ministry in China has been an exciting ongoing process. David Aikman asserts that, “China is in the process of becoming Christianized…Christians will constitute 20 to 30 percent of China’s population within three decades.” It does not mean the majority or all Chinese will become Christian. Instead, it means the current rate of Christians in rural areas, in cities, and especially within social and cultural circles is increasing rapidly. Majority World Christians are eagerly engaged in the ministry of God as the research shows, and the concurrent emergence of the Back to Jerusalem Movement is continuing in both the unregistered and the registered churches in China. The goal of the Chinese church to begin evangelism from the eastern part of China to the west and back to Jerusalem is already on the move. 90% of the unreached people groups in the world can be reached by this movement for the population distribution within the 10/40 Window along with the other Chinese between these people groups may be brought to Christ with the work of the Holy Spirit. Other than the BTJM project, the ministries among Chinese are reaching out to people through different social status and contexts.

In conclusion, this paper has briefly discussed the extent of the Christian approaches

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123 Tennent, Theology in the Context of World Christianity, 101.
in converting Chinese Buddhists experiencing difficulties in life. Despite the communist opposition of Gospel sharing from the Cultural Revolution era and the TSPM founded by the Chinese government, the Post-Cultural Revolution harvested much fruit with the faithful work of individuals and churches. Current Chinese Christian movements indicate a promising future for Christianity in China along with worldwide. Though Chinese Christians have been ruled and persecuted by the Chinese Communist government for decades, the registered three-self churches in China open the gate of the Gospel to officials and ordinary citizens regardless of patriotic elements. The unregistered house churches serve as a major impetus in Christian mission even under draconian interventions by the Communist authorities. Thanks to Christians who served and serve fearlessly, the Gospel has been spread in many ways. It is important to prepare for the day “when China relaxes all restrictions on religious activities and opens its door for missionaries to be received and sent to the rest of the world.”

The contemporary Chinese mission is even widely prospering with a pivotal role in establishing a harmonious society on a global scale. As for future participation in Christian evangelism, those who are outside of China can help with constant prayer and support for the Christian mission within China’s borders. Religious freedom of Chinese people living in other places may be able to bring the Message back to reach out to more Chinese. As to those who live or work in China, the professional outreach has proved for intellectuals, and local church involvement is also prominent among many communities with character building activities that mitigate the devastating results of human virtue eradication since the Cultural Revolution. Thus, with professional service approaches, official church approaches, and various underground church approaches, more Chinese will have access to the Truth. In short, the contemporary Christian mission in China has clearly illustrated the marvelous plan of God, as He can “make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert (Isa. 43:19).”

126 Winter and Hawthorne, Perspectives On the World Christian Movement, 585.
Bibliography


Appendix
Online Questionnaire

The following survey is designed to determine the possible ideas of the correlation of Christian approach and the non-Christian concept among Chinese conversions from this kind of background, especially with the Buddhist perspectives. The success of this paper will be an informative contribution to Christian mission among Chinese. Therefore, the researcher will greatly appreciate if you could kindly complete the following survey. All of your information will be kept under top academic confidentiality. Thank you for your understanding and participation!

May God bless you greatly!

- Ann Ge, Student of Masters of Arts in Global Studies
  Liberty University School of Divinity

Part A. Conversion Information Survey

The questions in this part will feature the time, age, and backgrounds of the conversion occasion in order to better analyze the correlation between different circumstances. The definition of conversion here means the adoption of Christian beliefs. Baptism means the sacrament of admission, with the invariable usages of water, into Christian Church.

A1) Age of conversion:
A. Under 18  B. 19-29  C. 30-39  E. 40-49  F. above 50

A2) Family religious background before conversion:
A. Buddhism  B. Taoism  C. Muslim  C. Catholicism  D. Atheism  E. Others

A3) Personal religious background before conversion:
A. Buddhism  B. Taoism  C. Muslim  C. Catholicism  D. Atheism  E. Others

A4) Baptism condition:
A. Baptized  B. Not yet baptized (You may move on to A7 upon choosing this option.)

A5) Age of baptism:
A. Under 18  B. 19-29  C. 30-39  E. 40-49  F. above 50

A6) Year of baptism:

A7) Means of Gospel encounter: (You may choose more than one answer if needed.)
A. From the channel of people (e.g. the clergy, relative, or other Christians)
B. From the channel of written words (e.g. the Bible, books, or magazines)
C. From the channel of Internet (e.g. Christian websites, broadcast programs, or others)
D. From the channel of activity (e.g. school, work field club, or other conference)
E. Others __________________________________________________________________

A8) The reason of conversion: (You may choose more than one answer if needed.)
A. It was because of the encounter of life difficulties
B. It was just out of curiosity
C. It was an unexpected encounter
D. Others __________________________________________________________________
A9) The most influential part of the Christian messages during conversion: (You may choose more than one answer if needed.)
A. The love of God
B. The salvation of God
C. The comfort of God
D. The encouragement of God
E. Others _________________________________________________________________

A10) Your favorite Bible verses or messages: (This is an optional question.)
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Part B. The Changes after Conversion

The questions in this part aim to survey the changes after your conversion. The range includes your feelings, participation in religious activity, and current dilemma in life.

B1) The degree you feel relieved and comforted after conversion:
A. Strongly agree
B. Agree
C. Neither agree nor disagree
D. Disagree
E. Strongly disagree

B2) In what ways did your life change after conversion?
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

B3) The devotion in Christian religious ministries:
A. Participate in religious ministries at present (You may move on to B3-1.)
B. Have participated in the ministries in the past (You may move on to B3-2)
C. Have never participated in any ministries (You may move on to B3-3)

B3-1) The current devotion in Christian ministries:
A. Serve as full-time workers
B. Serve as part-time workers regularly
C. Serve as part-time workers irregularly

B3-2) The devotion in Christian ministries in the past:
A. Served as full-time workers
B. Served as part-time workers regularly
C. Served as part-time workers irregularly

B3-3) The anticipation of future Christian ministries participation:
A. Hope to serve as full-time workers
B. Hope to serve as part-time workers either regularly or irregularly
C. Do not have specific anticipation of any participation

B4) The frequency of religious activity attendance:
A. Approximately 1 time a week
B. Approximately two times a month
C. Approximately 1 time a month
D. Approximately 2 months a time
E. Approximately 1 season a time
F. Less than 1 season a time
B5) The place that held the attended Christian activity:  
(You may choose more than one answer.)  
A. Registered place  B. Unregistered place  C. House of friend  D. Personal house  

B6) The most difficult issues in life with non-Christians after conversion:  
(You may choose more than one answer.)  
A. The conflicts with family members (e.g. ancestor worship)  
B. The conflicts with the significant others (e.g. against pre-marital sex)  
C. The conflicts with coworkers or peers (e.g. group idol worship, financial value)  
D. Others _________________________________________________________________  

Part C. Inter-Religious Perspective Survey  
The questions in this part are composed to survey the inter-religious perspectives you hold within your knowledge. The main focus will be some non-Christian, especially Buddhist, and Christian worldviews. Please feel free to choose any answer for each question with your instinct as well.  

C1) Worldview toward other religions:  
A. Regard the other religions are as good as yours  
B. Regard yours as better than other religions  
C. Regard some other religions are good  
D. Regard none of them are good  
E. Others _________________________________________________________________  

C2) View on ancestor worship: (You may choose more than one answer if needed.)  
A. Consider this practice a tradition in remembrance of ancestors  
B. Consider this practice a way to keep the blessings for family  
C. Consider this practice a superstition  
D. Others _________________________________________________________________  

C3) View on Buddhists accumulation of merit in order to acquire blessing:  
A. It is a logical and valuable concept  
B. It is a concept I don’t really care  
C. It is an unfair and unreasonable concept  
D. Others _________________________________________________________________  

C4) View on Buddhists Karma (the plight are the account for their transgression) in corresponding to plight encounters:  
A. It is a logical and valuable concept  
B. It is a concept I don’t really care  
C. It is an unfair and unreasonable concept  
D. Others _________________________________________________________________  

C5) View on plight in life as the punishment of one’s transgression:  
A. Strongly agree  
B. Agree  
C. Neither agree nor disagree  
D. Disagree  
E. Strongly disagree
C6) View on the importance of contextualization in cross-cultural Gospel sharing:
A. It is vital in cross-cultural Gospel sharing
B. It does not make a significant difference in cross-cultural Gospel sharing
C. It is harmful in cross-cultural Gospel sharing
D. Others _______________________________________________________________

Part D. Willingness of Taking In-depth Interview Survey
The researcher is especially looking for those from the Buddhist background who were impacted by the plight in life for the conversion. If you happen to have this kind of experience, this researcher would greatly appreciate it if you would love to share more about your testimony with me. If you would like to share more about your experience, please make sure you leave the contact information for me to arrange further details of the in-depth interview. Thank you!

D1) Are you willing to share more experience and blessings you encountered from conversion?  A. Yes.  B. No

D2) What are the manners you would like to take for the in-depth interview?
A. Through phone call  B. Web-camera  C. Face-to-face  D. Written words

D3) Contact information and name
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

D4) Feedback of this survey
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Part E. Basic Information
E1) Age:

E2) Gender:
F. Male  B. Female

E3) Growing background:
A. Europe or America
B. Northern East Asia (e.g. Japan, Korea, and so on)
C. Big China Area (e.g. China, Taiwan, Hong Kang)
D. Southern East Asia (e.g. Thailand, Burma, Singapore)
E. Others _______________________________________________________________
來自非基督徒背景之華人基督徒研究

親愛的主內弟兄姊妹您好：

我目前就讀於美國自由大學全球研究碩士班（Liberty University, MA in Global Studies），在碩論研究主題欲探討「來自非基督徒背景之華人接受基督成為救主之經歷與所得的福分」，特別針對生長於佛教背景國家的基督徒如何超越苦難，本研究乃秉持著提供針對華人非基督徒之宣教事工更實用的分析與建議，藉此鼓勵基督精兵把握機會為主贏得更多靈魂。若您願意協助我，懇請填寫以下問卷，若您有更多故事樂於與眾人分享，歡迎您在問卷留下姓名與聯絡資訊並表達願意接受深度訪談以俾我盡速聯繫您安排個案訪談事宜。您的回答僅作為學術研究使用，您的任何資料或意見絕對保密，敬請安心作答。

若您對此問卷有任何疑慮，亦歡迎與我聯繫。非常感謝您的協助與分享！

願上帝大大賜福與您！
敬祝
平安喜樂，事事順心！

末肢
良恩 敬上

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A. 決志與受洗資訊

該部分包含決志年紀、年分、以及長短。若您亦已受洗，煩請您一同填寫相關資訊以俾分析。決志乃指禱告接受主耶穌成為生命中之救主，受洗乃只在眾人見證下接受洗禮歸入主的名下。

A1) 決志年紀
A. 18 歲以下
B. 19-29 歲
C. 30-39 歲
D. 40-49 歲
E. 50 歲以上

A2) 決志前家族信仰背景
A. 佛教
B. 道教
C. 回教
D. 天主教
E. 其他民間信仰
F. 無神論

A3) 個人接觸福音前信仰背景
A. 佛教
B. 道教
C. 回教
D. 天主教
E. 其他民間信仰
F. 無神論

A4) 受洗狀況
A. 已受洗
B. 尚未受洗 (可直接跳至 B7 作答)

A5) 受洗年紀
A. 18 歲以下
B. 19-29 歲
C. 30-39 歲
D. 40-49 歲
E. 50 歲以上

A6) 受洗年分
A. 1990 年以前
B. 1991-2000
C. 2001-2010
D. 2011-2015
E. 2016 年以後

A7) 接觸福音的管道 (可複選)
A. 人 (包含牧者、親朋好友、其他基督徒)
B. 文字媒介 (聖經、書籍、報章雜誌等非人物之文字)
C. 網路媒介 (基督教網站、基督教廣播節目)
D. 活動媒介 (學校、職場社團活動、各式特會)
E. 其他, 請於下題表述

A7-1) 接觸福音的管道 (A7 選擇其他者請作答)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

A8) 接觸福音的原因 (可複選)
A. 生命中經歷困難
B. 純屬好奇
C. 意想不到的相遇
D. 其他, 請於下題表述

A8-1) 接觸福音的原因 (A8 選擇其他者請作答)

________________________________________________________________________

A9-1) 令你於信主過程中感觸最深的信息 (可複選)
A. 上帝的愛
B. 上帝的救恩
C. 上帝的安慰
D. 上帝的鼓勵
E. 其他

A10) 您最喜歡的聖經經節或信息:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. 信主後心境改變及聚會與服事狀況</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>信主後心境的改變、聚會參與服事的狀況可依照您過去或是現在的參與作答。</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B1) 信主後感覺到生命中的苦難得到安慰
A. 非常同意
B. 同意
C. 中立
D. 不同意
E. 非常不同意

B2) 信主後的轉變

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B3) 教會事工參與狀況</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>信主後對教會事工參與狀況的改變可依照您過去或是現在的參與作答。</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B3-1) 現今教會事工參與狀況
A. 全職服事
B. 規律參與帶職侍奉(本身有工作者義務性協助教會事工)
C. 較無特定規律參與服事

B3-2) 過去教會事工參與狀況
A. 全職服事
B. 規律參與帶職侍奉(本身有工作者義務性協助教會事工)
C. 較無特定規律參與服事

B3-3) 未來對於自身教會事工參與之期許
A. 期望能全職服事
B. 期望能規律參與帶職侍奉(本身有工作者義務性協助教會事工)
C. 較無特定期望參與服事

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B4) 聚會狀況</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>聚會的頻率方可依照您過去或是現在的參與作答。</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. 每週
B. 隔週
C. 每月
D. 隔月
E. 每季
F. 半年
G. 半年一次以下

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B5) 聚會場所 (可複選)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>聚會場所的選擇可依照您過去或是現在的參與作答。</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A. 已登記/公開教會
B. 非公開團契小組
C. 友人住宅
D. 個人住宅

B6) 信主後生命中最困擾之處(可複選)
A. 與家人之間信仰不同之衝突(例如:祭祖問題、年節習俗等)
B. 與伴侶之間信仰不同之衝突(例如:婚前守貞、婚姻忠誠等)
C. 與職場同事或學校同儕信仰不同之衝突(例如:集團拜拜、金錢價值觀等)
D. 其他，請於下題表述

B6-1) 信主後生命中最困擾之處(B6 選擇其他者請作答)

C. 宗教與宗教之間觀點
其中包含您對於基督教與其他宗教之比較、傳統民間信仰之觀點、及文化宣教的看法。

C1) 對於其他宗教之看法
A. 認為其他宗教與基督教一樣好
B. 認為基督教比其他宗教都好
C. 認為其他宗教比較好
D. 認為沒有任何宗教是好的
E. 其他，請於下題表述

C1-1) 對於其他宗教之看法(C1 選擇其他者請作答)

C2) 對於祖先祭拜之看法 (可複選)
A. 認為該儀式乃為紀念祖先
B. 認為該儀式是延續家中祝福之道
C. 認為該儀式為迷信
D. 其他，請於下題表述

C2-1) 對於祖先祭拜之看法(C2 選擇其他者請作答)

C3) 對於其他宗教(例如佛教)講究積功德就可以換福報之看法
A. 認為該想法為一具有邏輯性的寶貴觀念
B. 對於該想法無任何看法
C. 認為該想法為一不合理的觀念
D. 其他，請於下題表述

C3-1) 對於其他宗教(例如佛教)講究積功德就可以換福報之看法(C3 選擇其他者請作答)
C4) 對於其他宗教(例如佛教)因果報應之看法
A. 認為該想法為一具有邏輯性的寶貴觀念
B. 對於該想法無任何看法
C. 認為該想法為一不公平且不合理的觀念
D. 其他，請於下題表述
C4-1) 對於其他宗教(例如佛教)因果報應之看法(C3 選擇其他者請作答)

C5) 對於他人遭遇生命中苦難乃為其之罪惡所致的看法
A. 非常同意
B. 同意
C. 中立
D. 不同意
E. 非常不同意
C6) 針對跨文化中脈絡化宣教之看法 (乃指非以文化宣教手段強迫信徒接受宣教者全盤文化)
A. 認為此方法對於跨文化宣教很重要
B. 認為此方法不會對跨文化宣教有特別影響
C. 認為此方法對於跨文化宣教有害
D. 其他，請於下題表述
C6-1) 針對跨文化中脈絡化宣教之看法(C6 選擇其他者請作答)

D. 深度訪談意見調查
本論文期望能融入更多元之觀點加以探究，該部分將會成為論文個案研究主體，若您有更多願意分享的決志經歷與祝福，煩請留下您希望受訪的方式、時間、以及相關資訊(論文發表時會以匿名或假名方式呈現)，我會盡速與您聯絡並告知您相關訪談議題，再次感謝您的協助與參與！

若您想要先了解深度訪談議題，亦可直接點開連結(https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1CYlkCZEEQh985uJEINbAg0wH6latIEUeoIhzv7uufs/viewform?fbzx=7231569929260753000)進入了解，非常歡迎您在結束此份問卷後撥冗回覆！

D1) 愿意更多分享決志經歷與祝福
A. 願意
B. 不願意
D2) 愿意更多分享決志經歷與祝福之管道 (可複選)
A. 電話訪談
B. 視訊訪談
C. 當面訪談
D. 文字訪談(可直接點選連結進入上方連結回覆即可，可以先點開待完成本問卷後再作答。)

D3)方便訪談時間、姓名與聯絡方式(電話、電郵、任何通訊軟體帳號)

___________________________________________________________________________

D4)建議與感言

___________________________________________________________________________

恭喜您來到最後一部份，快完成了，煩請留下您的基本資料以俾分析參考，非常感謝您的協助！

年齡
A. 18 歲以下
B. 19-29 歲
C. 30-39 歲
D. 40-49 歲
E. 50 歲以上

性別
A. 男性
B. 女性

成長背景
A. 歐美地區
B. 東北亞區域(日本、韓國等地)
C. 大中華地區(包含中國、台灣、香港)
D. 東南亞地區(泰國、緬甸、新加坡等)
E. 其他，請於下題表述

成長背景(上題選擇其他者請作答)
## In-depth Interviewee Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym Mentioned in Paper</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Vocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Liu</td>
<td>Above 50</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Han</td>
<td>Above 50</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Church founder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. and Mrs. Tseng</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Male &amp; Female</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Product inventors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Hsu</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Former Buddhist nun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. and Mrs. Chen</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Male &amp; Female</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Former Fung Shui Specialists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Cheng</td>
<td>Above 50</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Former Buddhist nun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss He</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Singer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Lee</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>America</td>
<td>Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor Wu</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Hsu</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Worker at mission organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Wang</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Liu</td>
<td>Above 50</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Military General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Lee</td>
<td>Above 50</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Church founder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angel</td>
<td>19-29</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anny</td>
<td>19-29</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>19-29</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Noted with former vocation if the interviewee did not want to reveal their current vocation.*
Result Data Chart

Result Data Chart 1

**Respondent Gender 性別**

- (75) Male 男性 37%
- (125) Female 女性 63%

Result Data Chart 2

**Region Raised in as a Child 成長區域**

- (4) Southeast Asia (e.g. Thailand, Burma, Singapore) 東南亞區域（例：泰國、緬甸、新加坡） 2%
- (2) Northern East Asia (e.g. Japan and Korea) 東北亞區域（例：日本、韓國） 1%
- (194) Big China Area (e.g. China, Taiwan, Hong Kong) 亞洲大中華區域（例：中國、台灣、香港） 97%
Result Data Chart 3

Conversion Age 決志年紀

- (67) Under 18 十八歲以下 33%
- (101) 18-29 十八歲到二十九歲 50%
- (10) 30-39 三十到三十九歲 10%
- (9) 40-49 四十歲到四十九歲 5%
- (4) Above 50 五十歲以上 2%

Result Data Chart 4

Personal Religious Background before Conversion 決志前個⼈信仰

- (62) Atheism 無神論 30%
- (50) Folklore beliefs 民間信仰 25%
- (39) Buddhism 佛教 19%
- (51) Taoism 道教 25%
- (2) Catholicism 天主教 1%
Result Data Chart 5

**Baptism Condition**

- (28) Not yet baptized 未受洗 14%
- (172) Baptized 已受洗 86%

Result Data Chart 6

**Baptism Age**

- (3) Above 50 五十歳以上 2%
- (102) 18-29 十八歳到二十九歳 59%
- (22) 30-39 三十到三十九歲 13%
- (7) 40-49 四十歲到四十九歲 4%
- (38) Under 18 十八歲以下 22%
Result Data Chart 8

Channel of the Gospel Encounter
接觸福音的管道

(16) Other 其他

(69) Activity (e.g. school, work field club, or other conference)
活動媒介(學校、職場社團活動、各式特會)

(21) Internet (e.g. Christian websites, broadcast programs, or others)
網路媒介(基督教網站、基督教)

(34) Written words (e.g. the Bible, books, or magazines)
文字媒介(聖經、書籍、或報章雜誌等非人物之文字)

(186) People (e.g. the clergy, relative, or other Christians)
人(包含牧者、親朋好友、其他基督徒)
The Reason for Gospel Encounter
接觸福音的原因

- (38) Other 其他
- (100) It was an unexpected encounter. 意想不到的相遇
- (35) It was just out of curiosity. 純屬好奇
- (91) It was because of the encounter of life difficulties. 生命中經歷困難

Means by Which the Gospel Was Encountered
決志時影響您最深的福音信息

- (22) Other 其他
- (65) The encouragement of God 上帝的鼓勵
- (86) The comfort of God 上帝的安慰
- (81) The salvation of God 上帝的救恩
- (143) The love of God 上帝的愛
The Degree You Felt Relieved and Comforted after Conversion.
信主後感覺到生命中的苦難得到安慰

- Strongly agree 非常同意: 57%
- Agree 同意: 34%
- Neither agree nor disagree 中立: 7%
- Disagree 不同意: 1%
- Strongly disagree 非常不同意: 1%

Participation in Christian religious ministry 教會事工參與狀況

- Have never participated in any ministries 皆無參與服事: 17%
- Have participated in the ministries in the past 現無參與服事，但過去曾參與服事: 23%
- Participate in ministries at present 現有參與服事: 60%
Current participation in ministry
現今教會事工參與狀況

(26) Serve as a full-time worker
全職服事
22%

(60) Serve as a part-time worker
規律參與帶職侍奉(本身有工作者義務性協助教會事工)
50%

(34) Serve as a part-time workers
occasionally 較無特定規律參與服事
28%

Participation in Christian ministry in the past
過去教會事工參與狀況

Served as a full-time worker
全職服事
10%

Served as a part-time worker
occasionally 較無特定規律參與服事
35%

Served as a part-time worker
regularly 規律參與帶職侍奉(本身有工作者義務性協助教會事工)
55%
Anticipation of future ministry participation
未來對於自身教會事工參與之期許

(26) Hope to serve as a full-time worker 期望能全職服事 19%
(75) Hope to serve as a part-time worker either regularly or occasionally 期望能規律參與帶職侍奉(本身有工作者義務性協助教會事工) 55%
(35) Do not have specific anticipation for participation in ministry 較無特定期望參與服事 26%

The frequency of religious activity attendance 聚會狀況

(162) Approximately 1 time per week 每週 81%
(6) Less than 1 time per season 半年一次以下 3%
(7) Approximately 1 time per season 每季 4%
(8) Approximately 1 time per month 每月 4%
(17) Approximately 2 times per month 隔週 8%
Result Data Chart 17

Location of Christian Fellowship

- (12) Personal house 個人住宅
- (17) House of a friend 友人住宅
- (19) Unregistered place 非公開團契小組
- (190) Registered place 已登記/公開教會

Result Data Chart 18

After conversion, the most difficult issues faced with non-Christians

- Conflicts with coworkers or peers (e.g. group idol worship, financial value)
- Conflicts with your significant other (e.g. against pre-marital sex)
- Conflicts with family members (e.g. ancestor worship)

Other 其他
Result Data Chart 19

**Viewpoint toward Christian and Other Religious Beliefs**

(17) Regard none of the religious beliefs is good 認為沒有任何宗教是好的 8%

(24) Regard the other religious beliefs as good as yours 認為其他宗教觀念與基督教觀念一樣好 12%

(43) Other thoughts 其他 22%

(116) Regard Christian belief better than other religious beliefs 認為基督教比其他宗教好 58%

Viewpoint toward Christian and Other Religious Beliefs

Result Data Chart 20

**View of ancestor worship**

(23) Other 其他

(68) Regard this ritual as a kind of superstition 認為該儀式為迷信

(25) Regard this ritual as a way to keep family blessings 認為該儀式是延續家中祝福之道

(121) Regard this ritual as a way in remembrance of the ancestors 認為該儀式乃為紀念祖先

View of ancestor worship
View on Buddhist accumulation of merit in order to acquire blessings
對於其他宗教(例如佛教)講究積功德就可以換福報之看法

(22) It is a logical and valuable concept 認為該想法為一具有邏輯性的寶貴觀念 11%
(112) It is a concept I don't really care about 對於該想法無任何看法 19%
(109) It is an unfair and unreasonable concept 認為該想法為一不公平且不合理的觀念 55%
(30) Other 其他 15%

View of Karma (encountered plight is the account for transgression) in corresponding to plight encounters
對於其他宗教因果報應之看法

(28) It is a logical and valuable concept 認為該想法為一具有邏輯性的寶貴觀念 14%
(98) It is an unfair and unreasonable concept 認為該想法為一不公平且不合理的觀念 49%
(29) Other 其他 15%
(45) It is a concept I don't really care about 對於該想法無任何看法 22%
View on plight in life as the punishment for one's transgression 對於他人遭遇生命苦難乃為其之罪惡所致的看法

- (3) Strongly agree 非常同意 1%
- (13) Agree 同意 6%
- (44) Strongly disagree 非常不同意 22%
- (65) Disagree 不同意 33%
- (75) Neither agree nor disagree 中立 38%

View on contextualization methods in Gospel sharing 針對跨文化宣教中脈絡化宣教之看法

- (30) Regard this method as harmful for cross-cultural mission 認為此方法對於跨文化宣教有害 15%
- (19) Other 其他 10%
- (25) Regard this method as nothing influential 認為此方法並不會對跨文化宣教有特別影響 12%
- (126) Regard this method as important for cross-cultural mission 認為此方法對於跨文化宣教很重要 63%