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Discipleship Confusion

Rev. Dr. Victor W Chan¹

Abstract: this essay draws from the discussion of the pastoral studies course at Divinity of Chung Chi College "Transforming Discipleship: Life Directed Disciples-making". Discipleship has become a common term that has lost its meaning, especially in two areas in pastoral ministries. Church is often confused by what discipleship is about! Is discipleship necessarily led to leadership? Is discipleship and evangelism two different events? Part of the mishap may have to do with Un-scrutinized Gospel message and the separation of evangelism and discipleship.

Introduction

Yes, church is confused about discipleship.

Discipleship is a hot topic at every conference, church retreats and strategic planning sessions. If it is not the main subject, it is at least a tag word. However, as popular as the subject, what it means may be a garden varieties. Disciples-making is fashionable, but with no concise meaning. Programs are plenty but without a clear concept.

There are mountainous materials in the market under the subject of discipleship. But most materials are just duplicates from one program to another, like popular TV shows that each Network will just copy off from one another. Publishing companies are more interested in the profit margins than whether those materials are making a difference in the health of the church.

Michael Wilkins in *Following the Master: A Biblical Theology of Discipleship* is among a few books that raises question on current status of discipleship in the church. It is a worthwhile reading and study. About discipleship confusion, Wilkins said,

In the last twenty-plus years, a virtual flood of discipleship studies has swept over the church, yet people may be more confused now than ever. The reason? No consensus reigns in understanding what Jesus was doing and in what we should be doing in making disciples.²

1. Rev. Dr. Victor Chan, is a visiting adjunct assistant professor for pastoral studies at Divinity School of Chung Chi College since 2007. He has taught annually (second semester) and has offered courses on Transforming Ministries: spiritual renewal; Transforming Personality: building personhood and church conflict management. He is Pastor Emeritus of the East Bay Alliance Church since 2015.
2. Michael Wilkins, *Following the Master: A Biblical Theology of Discipleship*, Zondervan, 1992.

He questioned the current understanding about discipleship and found them short on Bible and Theological enquiry. He then outlines popular models by various celebrated pastors/teachers.³ But that is just an example to amplify the garden variety understanding about discipleship.

I want to tag on to what Wilkins has stated and speak on two confusions relating to discipleship: Discipleship and Leadership and Discipleship and Evangelism.

Discipleship and Leadership Confusion

Let me pick up the first confusion.

Is Discipleship the same as Leadership? If you are to take out recent books on Discipleship, the chances are that these books are leadership in disguise. The book cover may say Discipleship but the content is more about leadership training. Most of them lay out like a Sunday school classes, small group courses or simply trainings to become a successful church leaders. Using a cliché: “not that there is something wrong with leadership”, but we should not confuse leadership the same as discipleship.

Leadership is attractive. Leadership connote confidence, and success. Whether in the local YMCA or Teens club, leadership sells. Church needs confident people to lead. Committee needs capable people to serve. The mark of a successful Christian is the leadership quality and performance. Let me cite a few recent copies as examples:

1. *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time*
2. *Called to Lead: 26 Leadership Lessons from the Life of the Apostle Paul*
3. *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership are easy examples*

Since the 1980's, leadership model has replaced spiritual model in the realm of discipleship. Like we have said, leadership is tangible and easier to visualize. We know what a leader looks like. If we are going to have a successful discipleship model, then we tend to look to leadership training as our mode of operation. Thus, discipleship is in name but leadership is substance.

Instead of working with the Bible, church and denominational leaders look to the business world for leadership trainings. There are CEO, CFO, MBA like materials. Experts (Christian) from those fields are often speakers in Church conferences and training seminars.

With inserted Bible verses and theological tones, we come up with leadership training materials in the name of discipleship.

Since leadership talks about goal reaching, stages and level achievement, we soon create a group of higher end Christian. Not that church wants to rank their fellow members, naturally and inevitably we separate church folks into inside and outgroup, the former as discipleship groups. But all along, no one begs the difference. As I said on the outset that this is more of a confusion than an improvement in the realm of Discipleship. More confusion comes because after a little while, we notice that the state of the church is not getting better. What's the problem then? Should we be more training with the materials we have in hand? What does more training mean? Have we gotten to the core problem yet?

Before I move on, let's pause and consider a problem raised by Eddie Gibbs from Fuller Seminary. Eddie Gibbs said in *"In name only: tackling the problem of nominal Christianity"*⁴ that the nominal phenomenon in church was evidenced by the 80/20 index. Based on the Lausanne Committee⁵ report, churches across the globe are showing that 20% are supporting 80% of the church's works.

Let us draw an example by applying the Lausanne statistics. When a church has a 1000 on Sunday, the Lausanne report 80/20 index will estimate a group of 200 in leadership positions. For an average pastor, to have 200 leaders is a very successful story. He would be a well sought speaker in the church conference circuit. His church will develop training materials. Hundreds of pastors will flock to his church to learn about church growth.

However, the Lausanne index will also indicate that there are 800 who will be called "In Name Only"! That is the question begging our attention.

Coming back to my point about confusion on discipleship and leadership, I attribute this phenomenon to the lack of differentiation between the two. While all attention is giving to leadership, the actual works on Disciples-making are missing.

We ought to rewind and rethink about giving discipleship her own space. But consider Jesus' final saying in Matthew 28:19. The focus is on disciples-

3. *Ibid*, p.12 Charles Ryrie, Juan Carlos Ortiz, Paul Minear, Donald MacGavran, Dallas Willards.

4. Eddie Gibbs, *In Name Only:Tackling the Problem of Nominal Christianity*. Eerdmans, 1994.

making. But when people enjoy successful stories, becoming leader is an attractive slogan. People feel empowered if they are moving into leadership roles. We feel more at home when we deal with leadership than discipleship.

The connotation of Biblical discipleship shades with sacrifices, self-debating and cost. Not everyone wants to be so solemn. We want celebration and celebrities. Bonhoeffer's *Cost of Discipleship*⁶ is just for saints and the committed kind. Discipleship can be such an uneasy concept. We often qualify it with the word "radical". Leadership would be an easier substitute. Easier but we are left without a clear understanding about discipleship.

Discipleship and Evangelism Confusion

The second confusion is Discipleship and Evangelism. Modern day Evangelical Movement began with Billy Graham in the 1950's. What we experienced today are remnants of those high tides of preaching, revival and missions. There was strong emphasis on salvation, heaven and hell, zero soul perishing, 20/40 windows mission strategy, etc.

Common goal is reaching more people for the decision for Christ. Reports on how many saved souls are like sport score cards being glorified in Christian magazines and even local paper headlines.

Church in that span of 50 years has certainly enjoyed her hey days. But significant decline seemed to show up at the turn of the second millennium. Statistics, charts showed a clear decline pattern.⁷ Other than numbers decline, spiritual climate decline as well. Morale in church is at an all-time low.

These declined patterns seemed like a contradiction, especially for US churches. In the same period, there were more methods, tools and money for evangelism than ever before. There were inputs from sociology, psychology and anthropology giving to evangelism research. Yet, both the decline patterns and the 80/20 index are haunting.

My thought to the declination lies on the misconception of discipleship and evangelism. I give this in two counts.

Un-scrutinized Gospel message

Are we preaching a proper gospel message? So much efforts have been put into revival meetings, evangelistic events, personal evangelism training every year. However, there is no effort to scrutinize whether the

Gospel message is Biblical and relevant to the listener.

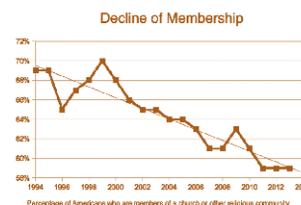
What kinds of evangelistic message or messages are there? I could count 4-kinds, which are most often used, being communicated in church, in evangelistic meetings or personal conversations. I did an informal survey with pastors and students. There are always these four kinds of messages.

1. Eternal life driven. A famous "pickup" line is "If You Died Tonight, Do You Know Where You'd Go?" This is sort of a heaven and hell choice of question. Despite criticism, this kind of training is still popular. This is most popular among the evangelicals.
2. Sin and repentance driven. This kind of message hammer the guilty conscience of people. At a time when moral value still has her say in society, the guilty conscience appeal worked well. However, in the relativized moral values world view, guilty conscience is easily explained away by other reasoning, we are losing the grip. This is most popular among the conservative evangelicals or fundamentalist.
3. Wealth and Health driven. "Poverty and illness are signs of spiritual malaise, for God wants us to be wealthy, healthy, and live to our full potential in victory here on earth."⁸ We hear such presentation from Charismatic evangelicals or simply Charismatic preachers. Since health and wealth are dominate themes in our modern society, folks are flocking to these messages.
4. Purpose driven gospel. This message hit home in the United States among the baby boomers (born between 1946–1964). Out of the counter cultures from the 60s, the boomers eventually were lost. In their middle-class status, finding purpose in personal

5. The Lausanne Movement grew out of the 1974 International Congress on World Evangelization (ICOWE) and promotes active worldwide evangelism.

6. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*. Macmillan, 1959

7.



8. Kate Bowler, *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel*. Oxford University Press; 1st edition. 2013

life, family life, friendship etc. was another good “trip”. Church has given them orders in a chaotic world.

Eternal life, Guilt free life, Wealth/health life and purposeful life became the four-basic evangelistic driven messages. I am not questioning that there may be a fifth and sixth kind but these four are mostly used today. More so, most of us are raised by the four-kind, one time or another. Therefore, we have accepted them as it is without questioning the validity or relevance.

However, a closer inquiry will yield two further questions. Are they proper evangelistic messages? Are they cultural and Biblical relevant? More importantly, what would such evangelistic messages do to the concept of discipleship?

Before I go further, let us ask what is the commonality from the four-kinds driven presentations! They share a common point. They are “needs or itches” driven messages. They sound so much like commercials. A pastor said, “if I find their needs and fill them, they will show up in my church.”

There is no doubt in that statement. Churches in the last 50 years are using this evangelistic philosophy to attract people to come to church. Find their needs and fill them! This is so mantra. One mega church would even compare the church like the mega mall in the neighborhood that whatever one needs they can find it in the church.

Corollary to that, pastoral ministries become need-filling ministries. Pastoral staff meeting’s priorities are set against the needs of the congregation. Pastoral cares took up most of the energy. Thus, Church has lost her focus on what are the priorities. We should be reminded what the apostles said when facing congregational needs, “we will turn this [needs problem] over to [the disciples] and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”⁹

“Find the needs and fill them” will produce a generation of Christians whose reasons for going to church is no different from going to a local Spa and Clubs. We emphasize so much of the sense of “belonging”. We find quick fix to whatever seems uncomfortable. Such environment creates a subconscious contentment mentality in the congregation.

9. Acts 6:4 (NIV)

10. Eureka in Greek means “I found it”. 1976: Campus Crusade launched a \$1 million advertising campaign that featured ads and bumper stickers saying “I Found It!”

Without dissecting too deep into the issue here, let me jump quickly to the meaning of this subconscious state of mind. Simply put: if their needs are filled then what is there to motivate them? Pick any of the four-kinds mentioned above, the “recipient or convert” came to faith is because their needs are filled.

The Lausanne task group which studied nominality identified five types or pattern of nominal Christian:

Attends church regularly and worships devoutly, but who has no personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Attends church regularly but for cultural reasons only.

Attends church only for major church festivals (Christmas, Easter, etc.) and ceremonies (weddings, baptisms, funerals).

Hardly ever attends church but maintains a church relationship for reasons of security, emotional or family ties, or tradition.

Has no relationship to any specific church and never attends but considers himself a believer in God (in a traditional Christian sense).

While on the surface, they look like a regular normal everyday Christian. However, the real problem lies at the subconscious level. Subconsciously, they feel fine with their faith standing. They have needs but now filled. What more is needed? There is really no point to go further in the Christian life. After all, church life is just another corner of their busy life.

This leads to the problem with discipleship. Why do they need discipleship anymore? When they are invited to think about discipleship, they are confused. Is there more to Eureka!¹⁰

Our un-scrutinized evangelistic message has led many to an un-scrutinized faith. Discipleship is being stifled. This leads me to the second count in this confusion.

Discipleship as post decision follow up

We have made discipleship training as a post evangelistic event, after a personal decision for Christ. Therefore, the congregation in general look at discipleship program as an “advanced degree” in Christian life. Most (80%) would think that these classes are only for the more committed, dedicated and loyal group of folks in Church.

Sometimes, new believers feel trapped and confused when they are asked to join classes after classes. They feel as if their decision for Christ is incomplete.

Let's look at the so called Great Commission passage in Matthew 28, "19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

Traditionally, we placed the emphasis on the word "Go". However, in proper English, it should be as "having gone", a form of participle, supporting the main verb. The main verb then is "disciple", which is a noun make into a verb form.

Proper way to put this verse goes like this

Make-disciples of all people. By going!
Supporting your effort with baptism, teaching
and lessons on obedience.

There should be no separation of Evangelism and disciple making. The actual word "Evangelism" is quite recent, first used in 1626.¹¹ It was during the time Christian churches were a dominant force in the Western world. Getting people to church is an honorable thing to do. Evangelism means getting people into the church. We want to see a pack church hall. Discipleship received less attention.

Lee Camp in his book, *Mere Discipleship: Radical Christianity in a Rebellious World*¹² traced the cause of this confusion as *Constantinian cataract*. As the term implies, it is a disease of vision impair. When the Roman emperor Constantine the Great gave Christianity and the Church the royal reception in the 3rd century, from that time onward, Christian history has entered the era of "Christendom". What has that to do with discipleship? Lee said,

"In such a way, Christianity becomes its own worst enemy: the triumph of Christianity actually inhibits discipleship."¹³

To spare the long discussion of church history, Lee Camp placed the timing on the decline of discipleship at the time when Christianity and Roman empire married each other. Since that time, Christianity may be in exact opposition to the call of discipleship from Jesus. Lee Camp's analysis is alarmed indeed. Unless we start to turn around quickly, the church's role in discipleship will drift afar in a haunting rate! Nominality will rule the days.

Conclusion

I hope that this short essay will awake the many of us who want to see genuine or radical discipleship. The decline of our Christian culture is not caused by secularism or materialism. The main cause is that we have move away from reading Jesus' way of disciples-making. We do not speak to people like Jesus spoken in his days. We are losing the *Kingdom* mindset. Instead we are onto Christendom. We are not viewing the world in the lens of Jesus. Lee Camp talks about *Radical Christianity in a Rebellious World*. Radical means to go back to the root of discipleship from the Lord Jesus.

The first words out of Jesus' mouth as far as preaching the good news or evangelism can be seen in his first act in Mark 1:

Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"¹⁴

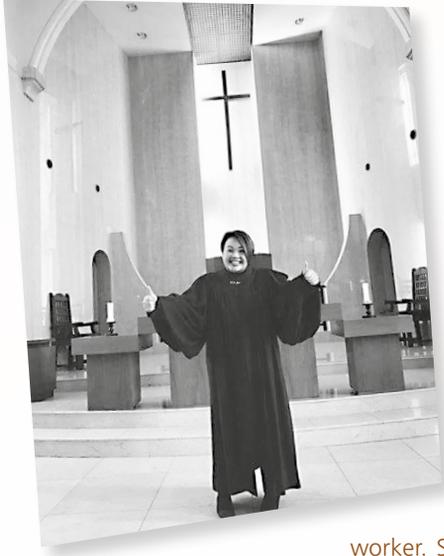
Let's imitate how our Lord has proclaimed the good news. We shall also do likewise for our culture and generation. Let's not confused discipleship for something else! To spare the confusion, shouldn't we simply just say a Jesus Driven discipleship!

11. Merriam-Webster Dictionary

12. Camp, Lee C. *Mere Discipleship: Radical Christianity in a Rebellious World*. Baker Publishing Group. 2003

13. *Ibid.*, p. 23

14. Mark 1:14-15



はじめまして、林美恩と申します [NICE TO MEET YOU! I AM KENNIS LAM!]

Kennis Lam, Master of Divinity, is missionary to Japan. She was commissioned in 2013, served in Nihonkirisuto Kyodan Okamoto Church until Feb. 2017 when she was transferred to Kobesiai Church. Currently, she is based in Fukushima and engaged in the church's anti-nuclear campaign in a team ministry of several nationalities.

Kennis had been trained in occupational therapy at university and served the Shatin Methodist Church as a ministerial worker. She later studied theology at Divinity School of Chung Chi College, with practicum in Macao, Taiwan, Japan and Korea.



Ministering in Japan

Kennis's father is a member of Shauiwan Baptist Church and her mother is Methodist. She was baptised at a young age. But she found no satisfaction in church life and dropped out in her secondary years. But things changed. By 1997, she had found her way back, confirmed her faith in Epworth Methodist Church, joined the youth fellowship and became actively involved in serving God. Soon, she was entertaining the call to full-time ministry.

The Nail which Sticks Out

At Shatin Methodist Church, Kennis learned of Christian ministries in Japan. Studies show that more than 20% of the Japanese population shows interest in Christianity, but less than 1% end up Christian. Kennis explains, "Japanese people are team players. They seldom act different from others. They want to avoid being the nail which sticks out."

I could not forget the needs of the Japanese community." Kennis befriended a church worker who had served in Japan for a year. She joined a short mission trip. While in Japan, she started to ask questions with the aid of a questionnaire. In the process, she encountered first hand Japanese boundaries which one should or should not attempt to cross. She saw few teenagers and adults in church. She sensed the powerlessness and loneliness of youth. She would like to be their companion one day.



A new comer

A new comer, Kennis is not knowledgeable about the language, culture and customs of Japan. "I could understand only half of what they say. I don't even know what I do not understand.

Eventually, Kennis became a local ministry worker. She was no longer guest. The transition requires a tough make-over. "The Japanese is friendly when you are guest. They are polite and they keep quiet even when they do not agree with you. Now that I am a local new comer, I am no longer guest, the Japanese would keep a distance until they feel secure enough to let you step into their circle. This might take 2 or 3 years, even more. But I am patient."

Facing Loneliness

Loneliness is the most difficult Kennis had to deal with. "I know the difference between boredom and loneliness. When I am bored, I read books, watch tv, do exercise and cook. Loneliness is when I fail to find someone to share in times of boredom. This is loneliness." To cope with loneliness, Kennis would meditate, pray, go to bed early.

Kennis loves to reflect on the little Jesus who fled to Egypt, away from the murderous Herod. Sometimes she sees herself as the helpless little Jesus. "Tasks I regard as easy in Hong Kong I would find very difficult in Japan. Jesus encountered difficulties too, but he had Joseph and Mary. What of me? Sometimes I could not feel the love and presence of the Lord. Why is He so silent? Is it that I am just not sensitive enough to see and feel Him?" Kennis reflected.

私は林美恩と申します。

我是林美恩



Japanese style of making decision

"We like to hope God's answers to our prayers agree with our expectations. We are disappointed if it turns out to be not the case." In Japan, Kennis often felt bad that her input seldom marched the outcome she had hoped for. She learned to adjust

her expectations, and this proves to be the first step in her appreciation of Japanese culture. "It seems I am beginning to understand the underlying words and sounds."

"In Hong Kong, it is easy to make group decisions on date, time and venue. Not so with the Japanese. They have so many factors to consider."

Kennis is deeply appreciative of many aspects of Japanese decision-making. They prepare for the worst. They have contingency plans. Their analysis is detailed and the calculation precise. "A giant sinkhole swallowed up a chunk of road in the southwestern city of Fukuoka. But there were no injuries and all damaged utilities were restored within 48 hours." Kennis also noted the relative slow decision-making process at the aftermath of the tsunami disaster.

And a burning light is not put under a vessel, but on its table; so that its rays may be shining on all who are in the house. Even so let your light be shining before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father in heaven. Matthew 5:15-16. This instruction makes obvious sense to Kennis in Hong Kong. But not quite with her experience in Japan. Public testimonies are not considered quite proper in some Japanese churches. "I hope my ministry there could help some teenagers share their testimonies in their own ways."

In the foreseeable future, there is likely to be a generation gap in Japanese churches. Among the young, the sense of belonging is not strong. "Adults should make available an environment where young people can practice what they believe." And Kennis would love to be there in their company.

I came from Chung Chi

"Mission trips are often supposed to take place where there are few Christians, say in predominantly Buddhist or Muslim communities. But for me, it is mission when during the summer vacation, I took care of young people who had been affected by the nuclear disaster in Fukushima. And here in Hong Kong, when we in Chung Chi show our concern for social issues and anti-nuclear issues, we are also engaging in some kind of missionary work. I studied Asian Theology. Chung Chi taught me to care for the weak, the poor and the oppressed." The study of biblical interpretation and historical analysis has been very useful to Kennis. She found her mind broadened and her heart drawn closer to society. The Rev. Prof Tobias Brandner is Kennis' role model. He comes from Switzerland, has learned Cantonese in order to serve prisoners in Hong Kong and teach theology in Chung Chi.

Kennis spent much time and effort seeking to understand Japan and feel its heartbeat. In the past few years, she went through tests and trials, and has gradually come to a closer identification with Japanese people. "God is able to use me in His own ways. I am open to every form of ministry."



私は林美恩と申します。

我是林美恩

A Sharing from Mr. Timothy Andrew Gaura Exchange Student from Yale Divinity School

An exchange student, Mr. Timothy Andrew Gaura, from Yale Divinity School is admitted to the Master of Divinity programme in the second semester of 2016-17 academic year.

Although I was asked to write this section longer ago than I would care to admit, I procrastinated — something I know most of the students and professors are very familiar with now as we come to the end of the semester.

Who am I behind this beard? Well, I grew up in a conservative Christian family in rural New York and also in a rough neighborhood in urban South Florida. I am the middle child of six — all of us to the same two parents. I was homeschooled throughout my primary and secondary education; took care of my grandmother for a few years after high school and began college when I was 23.

I started at Monroe Community College where I received a two-year degree in Humanities and Social Science, then I continued my education specializing in Anthropology at Amherst College under a full scholarship. After receiving my four-year degree from Amherst, I began my Masters of Divinity at Yale Divinity School (YDS) — through which I am studying on exchange here at CU.

After my first semester at YDS, I took a one year personal leave of absence to teach English in Malaysia under the US Fulbright program which I applied for as I was applying to YDS, and, after several negotiations, was able to arrange both programs to be able to do so. I am also dual-enrolled at the University of Connecticut for a Masters of Social Work under a joint program between our schools.

My goal of these studies is to become a University Chaplain specializing in Interfaith and Multicultural work while advocating for the marginalized student identities to the University administration.

I believe every atrocity humans have ever done was first accomplished in the mind. Before Pol Pot, Stalin, Hitler and Andrew Jackson committed genocide, they turned humans into objects. The Jews were insects to Hitler as the Native Americans were beasts to Andrew Jackson. When I divide “us” vs. “them” I allow myself to do any evil I can imagine; whereas, if I think of the Jew or Native America as myself, when I love them as the great commandment tells me to, I find I can nothing but good.

This is how I view the world. In my current time and place, I would say that even though Yale and CU are different institutions in different countries with different languages, we are united in our quest to learn and grow in our relationship with God and with others; to embrace “them” into “us” and to speak out against those who seek wealth and power at the cost of relationships and the dignity of humanity.

Thank you to the Chung Chi Divinity community! You have warmly embraced me and toiled through hours and days of translation in order for me to be a part of the “us” at CU. I hope that the relationship between our institutions will be strengthened in the years to come and I stand among you in admiration of your love, hospitality and your desire for truth and social justice.



School Activity

Fund-raising Walkathon 2017



The fund-raising walkathon for "Optimisation of Theology Building" was held on March 5, 2017. The fund-raising target this year was \$500,000. 100 participants including lecturers, students and family members, alumni and church workers took part in the walkathon which started at 3:30 p.m. at Lingnan Stadium of Chung Chi College. With more than 905 donors' support, all participants finished the walkathon and gathered at the front yard of Theology Building for joining a Mini Music Concert and a charity bazaar organized by our students and staff. After that, all participants gathered at the Chapel for thanksgiving service. We had big-bowl feast afterwards. More than \$780,000 has been raised.



Institute for Advanced Study in Asian Cultures and Theologies (IASACT):

IASACT, the Institute for Advanced Study in Asian Cultures and Theologies is a four-week residential program that provides space and time for scholars to deepen their understanding of theologies, religions and cultural traditions in Asia. Participants undertake research and writing in the broad area of Asian cultures, theologies and religions and complete a working paper while in residence. The IASACT aims to strengthen theological education in Asian Christian universities and colleges, encourage cross-disciplinary as well as inter-religious discussions and enable scholars from different countries or of different nationalities to work together toward an intra-Asian theological and cultural understanding. Since 2004, over 218 IASACT scholars from 124 institutions in 18 Asian regions have benefited from the program.



Funded by the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, IASACT has been administered by the Divinity School of Chung Chi College since 2015. IASACT 2017 consisted of 16 scholars from Asian universities and seminaries in 11 countries including Germany, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, China, Philippines, Taiwan, United Kingdom and Vietnam. There are three scholars who respectively come from Hong Kong, Taiwan and India but are now doing research and studying a PhD program in Taiwan, United Kingdom and Indonesia. IASACT was successfully held from June 11 to July 8 this year and was kicked off by an Opening Worship on June 12, 2017 and accomplished with a Farewell Dinner while various cultural performances were given. Scholars also had chances to visit Tao Fong Shan and Institute of Sino-Christian Studies during their stay and have actively engaged in cultural movie nights and meal gatherings.



PASTORAL PROGRAMME

Theology Sunday 2017

Teachers and students of the Divinity School attended the "Theology Sunday 2017" which took place at Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China (HKCCCC) and Methodist Church Hong Kong in March and June 2017 respectively. Our School was invited by 20 churches to conduct "Theology Sunday 2017".

Monday Cheer Up

A programme "Monday Cheer Up" was held on April 24 and May 22, 2017 at Chapel of Chung Chi College and President Chi-tung Yung Memorial Building.



Other News

- A Christian Conference for Teenagers organized by Fellowship Of Evangelical Students, Hong Kong Christian Council, Mission Citizens and our school was held on January 20, 2017 at Chapel of Chung Chi College and President Chi-tung Yung Memorial Building which attracted 220 participants.
- Over 100 teachers and students visited Lock Tao Christian Association Shamshuipo Church, HKSXH St. Joseph's Church, Assembly of God Yuen Long Gospel Centre, Epworth Village Methodist Church and Kowloon Pentecostal Holiness Church on February 26, 2017.
- Ching Ying Program farewell party was held on December 12, 2016 for Rev. Lam Wing Shui with 20 participants.

The 21st Chuen King Memorial Lecture

The lecture was held on 17 and 19 March 2017 at Crystal Ballroom, The Cityview, YMCA. Prof. Adela Collins, Buckingham Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation, Yale Divinity School will deliver lectures on the theme "Paul's Instructions about the Role of Women in the Church". 203 participants joined the event.



Karios Academy for Theology and Life Formation (Karios):

A course on Diploma Programme in Biblical Studies was started on November 14, 2016.

A course on Advanced Diploma Programme in Biblical Studies was started on November 16, 2016.



170th Anniversary of Tsung Tsin Mission

In order to celebrate 170th Anniversary of Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong, Divinity School and TTMHK co-organized a Conference on History of Tsung Tsin Mission in CUHK. Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang, Director of Divinity School was invited to deliver a keynote speech on "Though Death Still Alive: Story Behind the Grave of Basel Mission in Hong Kong". Prof. Fong Wing-ping, Head of Chung Chi College, Rev. Claudia Bandixen, President of Mission 21 and Elderly Siu Sau Ching, Vice president of TTMHK were the officiating Guests in Opening Ceremony. Over 100 people joined the event.



消失的檔案 Vanished archives

"Vanished Archives" is an image record of the 1967 riots, an important historic event in contemporary Hong Kong. Divinity School, Alumni Association of Divinity School and Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture co-organized the Documentary Films Screening on March 27, 2017 in CUHK. Director Connie Lo, Rev. Kwok Nai-wang and Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang were invited to give sharing, feedback and reflections to Hong Kong nowadays.

The production team interviewed people who have directly involved and witnessed the riots. They are leaders from the leftist camp and trade unions, former police officers, senior government servants, members of the explosives team, journalists and students. Large amount of newspaper clippings and declassified National Archives

of the British Government were also reviewed in the process. Among all others, the "Notes on 1967" written by Ng Tik-chow, deputy head of the HK & Macao Group of the Foreign Affairs Office under the State Council, revealed that the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party was well informed of details of the riots and issued orders from time to time.

For over 4 years, film director Connie Lo Yan-wai persevered in tracking down, consolidation and analysis of the massive amount of information to reconstruct the historic segments of profound and far-reaching impacts on the territory. "Respect the facts, and learn from the lessons." This is the vision of the director.



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Professors in News

Prof. Ying Fuk Tsang, Dr. Marina Wang, Dr. Yam Chi Keung and Rev. Wong Ka Fai led 29 students, 6 alumni and spouse in a study tour to Taipei and Hualien, Taiwan during May 12-19, 2017.

Prof. Kung Lap Yan

Prof. Kung was invited to give a keynote speech on "The priesthood of all believers and gender: a concern of enchantment" at Yushan Theological Seminary, Taiwan, on May 15, 2017.

He presented a paper entitled "The church in captivity: Reformation, house churches in China and ecumenicity" at the East-West Theological Forum held in Seoul, South Korea, from June 15-17, 2017.

He presented a paper entitled "Dialogue between political localism and theological ecumenism in Hong Kong post-umbrella movement" at the First International Congress of the Chilean Society for the Sciences of Religions held in Concepcion, Chile, from May 23-26, 2017.

Prof. Nancy N.H. Tan

She was invited to present a paper entitled "Toward a Feminist Hermeneutics of Gen 1:26-28 for People with Social Communication Disorder" at the Research Event of the Theology and Religious Studies, University of Leeds on November 3, 2016.

Prof. Francis C.W. Yip

He went to Shantou, China on March 22, 2017 to interview mainland applicants of MACS from Shantou University.

Prof. Alex H.H. Ip

He was invited to Jeju Island, Korea from May 29 to June 2, 2017 to attend the "2017 Christian Forum for Reconciliation Northeast Asia" organized by Centre for Reconciliation, Duke University.

Dr. Christina W.Y. Wong

She joined the first consultation meeting for Journal of Asian Christianity which took place during November 2-3, 2016 in Chennai, India.

Director in News

Prof. Ying Fuk Tsang

He was invited by the Institute of World Religions, CASS and Society of Chinese Religious Studies, to attend the High-level Forum of "Sinicization of Christianity and Construction of Community of Common Destiny for Chinese Nation" on November 25, 2016. He presented a paper entitled "The Reflection of Y. T. Wu on Sinicization of Christianity in Early PRC". He was invited by the Taiwan Theological School and Seminary to deliver the Keynote speech for the 11st Annual Theological Conference on December 16-17, 2016.

He visited Wenzhou to conduct fieldwork for his research project from January 4 to 7, 2017. He was invited by the Chinese Church in Finland to deliver three speeches for the Annual Winter Camp with the theme of "500 Years After the Reformation" during January 13-15, 2017. He was invited by the Christian Church in Wenzhou, to attend the Academic Conference in Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Spreading of Protestant Christianity in Wenzhou. He presented the paper "Continuity and Discontinuity: Revisiting the China's Jerusalem and the Wenzhou Model of Chinese Christianity" on February 27, 2017.

He attended the "The 10th International Symposium on the History of Christianity in Modern China" held by the Hong Kong Baptist University and Alliance Bible Seminary from June 16-17, 2017. He presented a paper "Working Underground: Communist Christian in the KMT-CCP Civil War". He conducted a research trip to the Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton College, USA from June 26 to July 1, 2017 for his GRF project.

She attended a program of "Encouraging to Advancement: Promoting Ecumenical Theological Leadership Development and Mentoring for Women" which organized by the Ecumenical Theological Education Program, World Council of Churches in Bangkok from April 20-22, 2017.

She gave a biblical reflection and keynote presentation in the East Asia Gender Justice and Social Transformation Workshop which conducted by Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs in Hong Kong from June 7-11, 2017.

Dr. Marina X. J. Wang

She attended the "The 10th International Symposium on the History of Christianity in Modern China" held by the Hong Kong Baptist University and Alliance Bible Seminary from June 16-17, 2017. She presented a paper "Reunion During the Period of Demobilisation? The Postwar Development of the Church of Christ in China (1945-1947)."

Office News

Miss Jennifer Cheung has been employed as Project Coordinator II since June 12, 2017.

Prof. Simon Kwan has been appointed by the Theological Council as the Acting Director for ten months beginning September 1, 2017, during the sabbatical leave of Prof. Ying Fuk Tsang.

Dr. Lam Chi Yeung was appointed as the Research Officer of Pastoral Programme since May 2, 2017. He is responsible for the research project of "Religious Education in Hong Kong Christian Church". The project is supervised by the members of the Supervisory Committee including Prof. Francis C.W. Yip, Prof. Simon S.M. Kwan, Dr. Christina W.Y. Wong and Rev. Wong Ka-fai.

Congratulations

The Very Revd Samson Fan (08 M.Theol), Dean of All Saints' Cathedral (Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui), was appointed to be Canon Theologian of Southwark Cathedral (Southwark).

Ms. Lung Ngan Ling was ordained to be pastor in the First Congregational Church of Winter Park of Florida on June 4, 2017.

Baby Vera Harper Woo, Caleb Woo (07 MACS) and Elaine Choy's daughter, was given birth on May 23, 2017. May God bless the little baby.

Ms. Chiu Man-ching, the daughter of Ms Ho Sum-yi (09 BD) and Mr Chiu Wai-lok (07 MACS) was given birth on April 26, 2017.

Obituary

Dr. James Chuck, (FCBC) First Chinese Baptist Church San Francisco(Pastor Emeritus, passed away on July 20, 2017. James is one of the founders of the Asian American Baptist Caucus. He taught in Chung Chi College before. We mourned for his passing.

Rev. Lau Wing-kai's (07 M.Theol.; 14 D.Theol.) mother Ms. Yip Fung-or, passed away on April 9, 2017. Her funeral service will be held on April 29, 2017 at Sheng Kung Hui Calvary Church.

Mr. Zaw Latt Aung's (15 D.Theol) father, Mr. U Salai Chit Aung passed away on April 17, 2017 at the age of 71. The funeral service was held on April 18, 2017.

Mr. Lam Lap-chung, our student Ms. Lam Yuen Yee's beloved father, passed away on March 25, 2017. The funeral service will be held at The Ward Memorial Methodist Church on April 15.

Mr. Tse Kam-shing, Rev. Tse Chi-wang's (BD; MTheol) father passed away at his age of 82 on March 22, 2017. The funeral service will be held at Kowloon Funeral Home on April 21.

News from the Centres

1

Dr. Samuel Ho, Art Director of Milk and Honey Arts (MaHA) delivered a Public Lecture on “The intensification of Art in Theological Education” on 24 March 2017. About 30 people joined us. Many participants were senior Music and Art workers. They shared how important and difficult art being added into Theological Education especially in Chinese community.

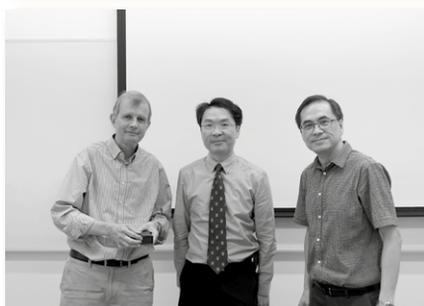


Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Koeppling, Honorary Fellow, School of Divinity, The University of Edinburgh share a Public lecture on “Wife-beating among Christians: a Historical, Contextual and Theological silence” on March 28, 2017 in HSKH Ming Hua Theological College. It was co-organized with Centre on Christian Studies. Dr. Koeppling also discussed on “Culture and Power in Ministry and Mission” in Divinity School Student Seminar. About 40 people joined us.

2

3

Prof. Chin Ken-pa, Professor of Philosophy Department, Fu Jen Catholic University delivered a Public lecture on “The Political and Religious Relations of Chiang Kai-shek and Taiwan Christianity” in Institute of Chinese Studies, CUHK on April 5, 2017. About 50 people joined us. Prof. Chin published a new book: *Joseph and His Brothers: Anti-communist Apologetics, Nationalist Party Christians, and the Formation of Taiwan*. It was co-organized by Centre for Christian Studies and Resources Centre for Contemporary Chinese Culture, Institute of Chinese Studies.



Rev. Canon Prof. Vernon White, Sub-Dean & Canon Theologian, Westminster Abbey delivered a Public lecture on “Uncovering the Spirit in public life: an experiment in a secular age” on April 19, 2017 in CUHK. About 20 people joined the event.

4

5

A public lecture co-organized by Institute of Sino-Christian Studies, The Society for the Study of History of Christianity in China and Centre for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society - “The Trends of Development of Protestant Christianity in Mainland China in the Coming Years” was held on May 25, 2017. Professor Tang Xiaofeng (Professor, Institute of World Religions, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) delivered the lecture.

A series of Films Screening on Director Gan Xiao'er “Raised from the Dust” (2007) and “Waiting for God” (2012) were co-organized by Centre for Christian Studies, Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture and Christian Times on May 22 and 25, 2017 in CUHK. Director Gan, Prof. Ying (Director, Divinity School), Dr. Yam Chi Keung (Director, Christian Times) and Mr. Lai Yung Hang (Film Critics, Christian Times) shared their opinions and reflections on Gan’s Film. About 90 and 60 people joined the event respectively.

6