Lutheran

Mission Matters

Quincentennial Celebration: The Paradigm Shift from Martin Luther Then to Ours Now—Part Two

Enoch Wan

Editor's Note: Dr. Wan served as the keynote speaker at the 2017 Multiethnic Symposium at Concordia Seminary, Jan. 24–25, 2017. He has graciously consented to the publication of his presentation, which is here presented in two parts. The first installment (in the May 2017 issue of *LMM*) focused on his analysis of the contextual paradigm shifts of both the Reformation era and our contemporary age. This second installment deals with his "personal proposal to the leadership of Lutheran church bodies in North America in the twenty-first century," based on the three global trends identified in this first segment: the shifting landscape of Christendom, the phenomenon of diaspora, the rise of socio-cultural relativism. It is the third trend that is the major focus of his proposal.

 Abstract: Based on significant global trends that affect the mission of the kingdom of God, the Lutheran Church is encouraged, first, to be engaged in a shift from traditional missiology to a multilinear, multidirectional missiology and multiethnic ecclesiology. Further, in light of diaspora communities literally "at our doorstep," a "diaspora missiology" understands not only missions "to" the diaspora, but also "through," "by and beyond," and especially "with" such communities as full partners in mission. Finally, Dr. Wan articulates a "relative realism" paradigm that counteracts the cultural relativism and mistrust of institutions that dominate the mission context and that restores an authentic Christianity based on our relationship with God and then with one another as human creatures. This leads to practical implications for Gospel-driven mission within the realities of a changing social-cultural and technological context.

In reviewing the paradigm shift that formed the social context of the Reformation now five hundred years ago, I highlighted three global trends in our contemporary social climate. (*Ed. note*: See previous article and its summaries in

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Figures 1A and 1B and 2.) These should prompt us toward a paradigm shift in missiological approaches, and I will offer a modest proposal for specific action points consistent with Lutheran theology and its insights and contributions.

Global Trend 1—The Shifting Landscape of Christendom and the Rise of the Global South

Action: A Paradigm Shift to Multiethnic Ecclesiology and Missiology

The first global trend already identified and briefly discussed is the shifting landscape of Christendom and the rise of the global south. Practical implications of the demise of the West in a post-Christian mode and the surge of mission forces in the global south in Christian missions should be considered by the leadership of the Lutheran churches here and now. First is the need to address and replace the Euro-centric and paternalistic paradigm of traditional missiology with a multilinear and multidirectional paradigm.[1] Further, we must embrace a multiethnic ecclesiology that should reflect the reality of the population all around us and promote multiethnic leadership and adjust to Kingdom-orientation by being actively involved in contextualization. By contextualization I mean "the efforts of formulating, presenting and practicing the Christian faith in such a way that is relevant to the cultural context of the target group in terms of conceptualization, expression and application; yet maintaining theological coherence, biblical integrity and theoretical consistency."[2] Following from this is the need to engage in multilevel strategic partnership with churches in the global South.[3]

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While multiethnic issues and ecclesiology need to be a major focus of any denomination, especially those who are highly Anglo-dominant, let me move on to the second and, most specifically, the third global trends, as these tend to be less developed and thus worthy of more detailed discussion and more challenging responses: (2) the phenomenon of diaspora and diaspora missions and (3) the failure of traditional institutions and the rise of socio-cultural relativism.

Global Trend 2—The Phenomenon of Diaspora and Diaspora Missions

Action: A Paradigm Shift from "Traditional Missiology" to "Diaspora Missiology"

I have previously defined "diaspora missions" as "Christians' participation in God's redemptive mission to evangelize their kinsmen on the move, and through

them to reach out to natives in their homelands and beyond." I have also highlighted four types of diaspora missions:

- Missions *to* the diaspora—reaching the diaspora groups in forms of evangelism or pre-evangelistic social services, then discipling them to become worshiping communities and congregations.

- Missions *through* the diaspora—diaspora Christians reaching out to their kinsmen through networks of friendship and kinship in host countries, their homelands, and abroad.

- Missions *by* and *beyond* the diaspora—motivating and mobilizing diaspora Christians for cross-cultural missions to other ethnic groups in their host countries, homelands, and abroad.

- Missions *with* the diaspora—mobilizing non-diasporic Christians individually and institutionally to partner with diasporic groups and congregations.[4]

"Diaspora missiology" is "a missiological framework for understanding and participating in God's redemptive mission among diaspora groups"[5] and is an emerging new paradigm,[6] different from "traditional missiology." The following charts (Figures 3 & 4) highlight key contrasts.

Figure 3–"Traditional missiology" vis-à-vis "Diaspora missiology"—4 elements[7]

#	ASPECTS	TRADITIONAL MISSIOLOGY ←→ DISPORA MISSIOLOGY	
1	FOCUS	Polarized/dichotomized • "Great commission" ←→ "great commandment" • Saving soul ←→ social Gospel • Church planting ←→ Christian charity • Paternalism ←→ indigenization	Holistic Christianity with strong integration of evangelism with Christian charity • Contextualization
2	CONCEPTUAL IZATION	• Territorial: here ←→ there • "Local" ←→ "global" • Lineal: "sending" ←→ "receiving" • "Assimilation" ←→ "amalgamation" • "Specialization"	• "De-territorialization"[8] • "Glocal" • "Mutuality" & "reciprocity" • "Hybridity" • "Interdisciplinary"
3	PERSPECTIVE	• Geographically divided: foreign mission ←→ local, urban ←→ rural • Geo-political boundary: state/nation ←→ state/nation • Disciplinary compartmentalization: e.g. theology of missions/strategy of missions	• Non-spatial, • "Borderless," no boundary to worry, transnational & global • New approach: integrated & interdisciplinary

#	ASPECTS	TRADITIONAL MISSIOLOGY ←→	DISPORA MISSIOLOGY
4	PARADIGM	• OT: missions = gentile-proselyte / "coming" • NT: missions = the Great Commission / "going" • Modern missions: E-1, E-2, E-3 or M-1, M-2. M-3, etc.	• New reality in the 21st Century—viewing & following God's way of providentially moving people spatially & spiritually. • Moving targets & move with the targets

Figure 4–Comparing Traditional Missiology &
Diaspora Missiology in Ministry[9]

#	ASPECTS	TRADITIONAL MISSIOLOGY ←→	DISPORA MISSIOLOGY
1	MINISTRY PATTERN	OT: calling of Gentiles to the God of Zion (drawing in, "centripetal") NT: sending out disciples by Jesus in the four Gospels & by the H.S. in Acts (going out, "centrifugal") Modern missions: • Sending missionary & money • Self-sufficient of mission entity	New way of doing Christian missions: "mission at our doorstep" • "Ministry without border" • "Networking & partnership" for the Kingdom • "Borderless church,"[10] "liquid church"[11] • "Church on the oceans"[12]
2	MINISTRY STYLE	• Cultural-linguistic barrier: E-1, E-2, etc. Thus various types M-1, M-2, etc. • "People group" identity • Evangelistic scale: reached→←unreached • "Competitive spirit" "self-sufficient"	• No barrier to worry • Mobile and fluid, • Hyphenated identity & ethnicity • No unreached people • "Partnership,"[13] "networking" & synergy

Let me highlight only a few key features from the details of these figures. First, the paradigm shift in diaspora missiology in terms of "perspective" (see Figure 3, no. 3) includes non-spatial deployment of missionaries, borderless/transnational and global movements of people, and an integrated and interdisciplinary "perspective." Thus the "orientation" of diaspora missiology is characterized by "the Gospel from everywhere

> Thus the "orientation" of diaspora missiology is characterized by "the Gospel from everywhere to everyone."

to everyone," viewing and following God's way of providentially moving people spatially and spiritually, "moving mission fields" of diaspora everywhere, and mobile/flexible missions and strategic kingdom partnership. All these items can be considered by Lutheran leadership as action points. For example, due to the phenomenon of diaspora movement internationally to G7 countries and internally to urban centers, leadership of the Lutheran churches in the United States is encouraged to practice the four types of diaspora missions: missions *to* the diaspora, missions *through* the diaspora, missions *by* and *beyond* the diaspora, and missions *with* the diaspora.[14]

> The diaspora phenomenon offers many advantages in the practice of missions to the diaspora. Diaspora missions: (1) is economically sustainable; (2) is geographically accessible in reaching the target groups; (3) has fewer political and legal restrictions; (4) involves partnership among people and organizations committed to the Great Commission; (5) is not carried out by just a few "experts" or "international workers"; (6) is a way to encourage self-supported diaspora Christians to be "kingdom workers," especially those working in limited access contexts; (7) is putting the "priesthood of believers" into mission practice—a heritage from the Reformation.[15]

Second, I will expand specifically some of the practical applications of the "with" approach in diaspora missions.[16]

Figure 5–The Concept and Practice of "*With*" Approach in Diaspora Missions[17]

CONCEPTUAL	PRACTICAL	
	Relational Pattern	Practical Way
Bridging & Bonding	Networking: • Bridging by regional proximity or linguistic/racial affinity • Bonding: kinship/friendship/mutual interest	• Hospitality • Reciprocity • Connectivity & complexity • Solidarity • Unity
	Partnership: • National & transnational individual • Local congregations or institutional entities of multiple variety	

The best way to explain the **"*with*"** approach is by way of illustrations. It can be an ex-missionary returning home (due to retirement, health or family reason) from Japan but continue to work with diaspora Japanese or Chinese. He/she has the language facility to evangelize (or partner with) Japanese

diaspora and the cultural sensitivity to work with Chinese diaspora. A missionary return[s] to the U. S. from South America but continue[s] to work with all kinds of Hispanic Americans. . . .

Networking and partnership in the "with" approach of diaspora mission may vary in form, size, shape and flavor because our Lord is creative and impressively surprising in His miraculous ways of building His Kingdom. We stand in awe when observing how He orchestrated things to His glory and our astonishment.

The key concepts of the "with" approach are **"bridging and bonding"** and the practice may take the relational pattern of networking or partnership. "Bridging" may be based on regional proximity (e.g., same continent such as south Asian or South America), linguistic affinity (e.g., Portuguese from Portugal, Brazil, Mozambique and Angola), racial [cultural] affinity (e.g., Hispanic from South America and Spain). Bonding may be based on kinship, friendship or mutual interest. Partnership may occur among national, expatriate and transnational at congregational or institutional entities of multiple variety (e.g., charity or faith-base).[18]

Another practical suggestion for the leadership of Lutheran churches in the U. S. is the employment of a "missions at our doorstep" approach. In light of the trend of the emerging phenomenon of diaspora, new immigrants from the so-called "unreached people-groups" are now at our door own doorstep. This means that we can now seize the golden opportunity to practice "the Great Commandment" of loving this new neighbors pre-evangelistically first, then fulfilling "the Great Commission" to make disciples out of them. The presence among us has created an opportunity for us to engage in cross-cultural missions without crossing the ocean. Some key features of this new strategy are noted below (Figure 6):

Figure 6–"Mission at Our Doorstep"[19]

NO	YES
No visa required	Yes, door opened
No closed door	Yes, people accessible
No international travel required	Yes, missions at our doorstep
No political/legal restrictions	Yes, ample opportunities
No dichotomized approach	Yes, holistic ministries
No sense of self-sufficiency or unhealthy competition	Yes, powerful partnership

Practical applications of "diaspora missiology" will need to be discussed and implemented within a Lutheran framework, but the opportunity for "missions at our door step" is a key factor. May God open our eyes to see the unprecedented opportunity, stretch out our hands to reach these new people groups, open our hearts/homes/sanctuaries to embrace/host them, and share with them our lives and hearts enlivened by the Gospel! Helpful references with practical guides are: *The World at Your Door: Reaching International Students in Your Home, Church, and School,*[20] *Missions Have Come Home to America: The Church's Cross-Cultural Ministry to Ethnic,*[21] *Missions within Reach,*[22] *Reaching the World Next Door,*[23] *Strangers Next Door: Immigration, Migration and Mission,*[24] etc.

Global Trend 3—The Failure of Traditional Institutions and the Rise of Socio-cultural Relativism

Action: Paradigm shift to a "relational realism paradigm"

A. Definition and Description

Due to the failure of traditional institutions (marriage, family, institutional church, etc.) and the rise of socio-cultural relativism (postmodernism, relaxed regulation on marijuana, extramarital sex, same-sex/gender marriage, etc.), a paradigm shift is proposed that embraces a "relational realism paradigm." By this I mean "a conceptual framework for understanding reality based on the interactive connections between personal beings/Beings."[25] The philosophical element of the relational paradigm is based on "relational realism"[26] and the methodological element is based on "relational theologizing."[27] In a "relational paradigm," there is the emphasis on "being" over "doing," "essence" above but not without "existence," "relationship" above "function," "vertical relationship with God" above "horizontal relationship with others within the created order." The insistence of a God-centered relationship and Christian epistemology grounded in the Word is an excellent response to the trend characterized by the "failure of traditional institutions and the rise of socio-cultural relativism."[28]

Theologically, the relational paradigm is grounded on the fact that man was created in the image of God and his existence (ontologically) is solely dependent on God at all times (Gn 1:26–27; Rom 11:36; Heb 1:3). His ability to know (epistemologically) and his undertaking in missions (*missio Dei*) are all dependent on God, who is the great "I AM" (Ex 3), as I have sought to summarize in the following three statements[29]:

- "'I AM' therefore i am" ontologically[30]

- "'I AM' therefore 'i know'" epistemologically

- "'I AM' (*missio Dei*) therefore 'i am'" missiologically[31]

These three statements are in contrast to the rationalist's maxim of Descartes—"I think therefore I am."[32] The motto, "I think therefore I am" provided an impetus for the rationalist orientation ("I think") and existential element ("I am") with its individualistic and humanistic tendency based on the capital "I" in the entire undertaking.

The relational paradigm is based on "relational realism," which is different from the "critical realism" of Paul Hiebert.[33] Both assert realism, but in different ways. As shown in the table below, critical realism is too closely aligned with science epistemologically and empirically. The "umpire's response" in critical realism is too man-centered, too dependent on human perception and human objectivity, i.e., "I call it the way I see it." In contrast to critical realism, "relational realism" is God-centered both ontologically, epistemologically, and existentially.

Figure 7–Hiebert's "Critical Realism" vis-a-vis Wan's "Relational Realism"[34]

REALISM X 2	NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE	THE UMPIRE'S RESPONSE
Critical Realism (Hiebert)	"The external world is real. Our knowledge of it is partial but can be true. Science is a map or model. It is made up of successive paradigms that bring us to closer approximations of reality and absolute truth."	"Each field in science presents a different blue-print of reality. These are complementary to one another. Integration is achieved, not by reducing them all to one model, but by seeing their interrelationship. Each gives us partial insights into reality."	"I call it the way I see it, but there is a real pitch and an objective standard against which I must judge it. I can be shown to be right or wrong."
Relational Realism (Wan)	The external world is real, but that reality is based primarily on the vertical relationship—on God and His created order (Acts 14:14–17, 17:24–31)— and secondarily on horizontal relationships within the created order, i.e., spirit world, human world, and natural order.	God is the Truth: His Word (incarnate with personhood, inscripturated, and revealed in written form) is truth; His work (creation, redemption, transformation, etc.) is truthful. Therefore, truth and reality are multidimensional, multilevel and multicontextual.	Man without God and His revelation (incarnate and inscripturated Word) and illumination (H.S.) can be blinded to truth and reality. Therefore, he is not the umpire to make the final call of being: real or illusion, truth or untruth, right or wrong, good or bad.

Relational Realism (Wan) continued	God is the absolute Truth. Science is a road map and may provide a human-based paradigm that cannot exclusively claim to be the only way to closer approximations of reality and absolute truth. A scientist with a modernist orientation has neither a monopoly on truth nor can dogmatically/conclusively/exhaustively make pronouncements on reality.	All human efforts and disciplines (science, theology, philosophy, etc.) without a vertical relationship to God (the Absolute Reality) at best are defective ways to approximate truth and reality (for being unidimensional = horizontal; single-level= human playing field; unicontextual = shutting out the spirit world of God & angels (Satan & fallen angels included). Truth and reality are best to be comprehended and experienced in relational networks of God and the created 3 orders, i.e., angels, humanity, and nature.	No human judgment is final, nor can it be dogmatic/conclusive without the vertical relationship to God— the absolute Truth and the most Real.

B. Factors for the proposed contextual paradigm shift of embracing a "relational realism paradigm"

In Western society today, a lack of "relational reality" can be observed in the following socio-cultural phenomena: (a) a high mobility in general and a high density of population in urban centers; (b) the prevalence of failed marriages and broken/dysfunctional families; (c) the prevalence of virtual relationships over actual personal interaction, e.g., the popularity of social networks such as Facebook and Twitter; (d) the Christian church's obsession with programmatic and managerial aspects of ministry for quantitative growth instead of "body life" of genuine Christianity and "personal touch"; (e) the increasing popularity of the "gospel of health and wealth" without relational intensity.

In the face of postmodernist epistemology and socio-cultural pluralism in the twenty-first-century United States context, the relational paradigm is the most appropriate contextual response to the challenges for several reasons:

(1) The rediscovery of "relationship" in Christian faith and practice is desperately needed in order to revitalize Christian faith and practice to form a counter-cultural force.

(2) It is an excellent Christian response to the cry for relationships from people of the twenty-first century who are starving for genuine face-to-face relationships.

(3) It is a practical way to rediscover "relationship," which is the essence of Christian faith and practice.

(4) It has been proven to be effective in ministering to diaspora communities and individuals in need of Christian charity.

(5) It is a paradigm that enables the synthesizing of diaspora missiology and diaspora missions.

(6) It is transculturally relevant to societies in the majority world, which are highly relational.

(7) It nurtures a Kingdom orientation and strategically fulfills the Great Commission (a vertical relationship with God), and a working relationship with fellow "kingdom workers" (horizontally with one another).

(8) It enables the practice of "strategic stewardship" and "relational accountability."

(9) It is in line with the various approaches in diaspora missions, e.g., *to, through, by/beyond* and *with*, which are "relational" in nature.

(10) In light of the shift of Christendom's center from the West to the majority world, strategic partnership and synergy require the practice of the relational paradigm rather than the popular managerial tendency and entrepreneurship of the West.

The relational paradigm is a timely Christian response to the general cry for relationship in the twenty-first century (see 1–4 above). Factors contributing to the relational deprivation in the twenty-first century include: failed marriages, broken families, and a growing sense of alienation resulting from urbanization and globalization. Communication technology and social media have enabled people to be connected in real time virtually, but not with face-to-face human interaction. The growing acceptance of digital relationships via the vast and various social media in virtual reality is an indication of the relational deprivation of contemporary society in our time. In this socio-cultural context, the relational paradigm is offered as a timely approach to rediscover the fundamental relational nature of the Christian faith and practice when reaching out to individuals and communities in diaspora.

> In light of the shift of Christendom's center from the West to the majority world, strategic partnership and synergy require the practice of the relational paradigm rather than the popular managerial tendency and entrepreneurship of the West.

Furthermore, the relational paradigm provides a way to rediscover relationship in Christianity—the essence of Christian faith and practice that can foster a counter-cultural force against postmodernist epistemology and socio-cultural relativism. If Christianity is likened to "chicken soup" and "relationship" is the genuine chicken (with flesh and bones), then the contemporary Christian church and individual believers have often settled for canned chicken soup that only has the flavor of the chicken but lacks the substance and nutrition of a real chicken.[35]

A personal touch and relational intimacy are part of the uniqueness of Christianity. Individually, every human being is known by God before birth and every Christian is intimately called by God before the foundation of the world. He/she is God's beloved, chosen in Christ by the Father (Eph 1:4), destined to be a joint heir with Christ the Son (Rom 8:17), known to the Good Shepherd by name (Jn 10:3), transformed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:3; Rom 12:1–4), and indwelled by the Spirit as His temple, both individually and collectively (1 Cor 3:16–17; 6:19).

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Collectively, the Church is the bride and body of Christ (Eph 5:22–33), who purchased it by His precious blood (Acts 20:28), interceded for it as the High Priest before His crucifixion (John 17), and now reigns at the right hand of the Father (Rom 8:34). However, over the course of time, as the church bodies have focused on quantitative growth, relied on programs and management skills, and became steeped in the secularization process, the relational distinctiveness of Christianity was gradually lost; yet it is an excellent alternative to revitalize Christian faith and to withstand the onslaught of socio-cultural relativism.

C. Effective ministry and mission in light of a relational realism paradigm

The figure below presents a synthesis of the relational paradigm (left side) and diaspora missiology and diaspora missions (right side). If the relational paradigm is likened to the skeleton (as in biology) or syntax (as in linguistics), then diaspora missiology and diaspora missions is the flesh/face (as in biology) or word/sound (as in linguistics).[36]

**Figure 8–Relational Paradigm: Synthesizing Diaspora Missiology
& Diaspora Missions**

RELATONAL PARADIGM		DIASPORA MISSIOLOGY & DIASPORA MISSIONS
5 ELEMENTS	**5 RELATIONAL ASPECTS**	
PARTICIPANTS • Triune God & Christians carry out the Great Commission • Resistant: Satan, fallen angels	**RELATIONAL NETWORK** • Triune God is the originator of relationship; the center and foundation of all networks • Two camps: God, obedient angels & Christians ⬅ ➡ Satan	• Not programmatic, not entrepreneurial, not outcome-based • Strong emphasis on relational dimensions between person Being (the triune God) and beings (of humanity and angelic reality) • Recognizing the dimension of spiritual warfare
PATTERN (➡sending) • Father ➡ the Son & together ➡ H. S. • Father ➡ the Son ➡ Christians (Jn 17:18), Christians obeying • H. S. sending (Acts 10:19; 13:2) Christians empowered	**RELATIONAL DIMENSIONS/ CONTEXT** • Vertical dimension to God • Horizontal dimensions within the Church & beyond • Multi-context: divine, angelic, human; changing human contexts due to globalization, diaspora movement, etc.	• Vertical dimensions, e.g. "relational accountability" • "Glocal" missions in the globalized context • Non-spatial, "borderless," no boundary to worry, transnational • Different approach: integrated ministry & interdisciplinary study of missiology • Learning of new demographic reality of the 21st century & strategize accordingly with good stewardship
PRACTICE • Christians participating in God's mission, carrying out the "Great Commission"	**RELATIONAL REALITY** • God: reconciling the world to Himself in Christ through Christians • Satan & fallen angels at enmity with God and His followers	• New reality in the 21st century • Viewing & following God's way of providentially moving people spatially & spiritually. • Moving targets & move with the targets (diaspora)
POWER • God's love transforms Christians & compels them carrying out His mission	**RELATIONAL DYNAMICS** • Doing missions out of love for God & compassion for the lost • empowered by the Holy Spirit	• Micro: love, compassion, Christian hospitality • Macro: partnership & networking • Holistic Christianity with strong integration of evangelism with Christian compassion & charity

PROCESS	RELATIONAL INTERACTION	
• God: plan of salvation provided & the Church carrying out God's mission	• God's calling, Christ's commissioning, H.S. empowering • Christians obedient to God; Satan resisting God's mission	• "Great commission" + "great commandment" • Diaspora mission: ministering *to*, *through*, *by/beyond*, and *with* the diaspora • Relational accountability • Strategic stewardship and partnership

In light of this synthesis of the insights of both diaspora missiology and a relational realism, let me conclude by offering some specific practical implications that can impact our approach to mission and outreach, whether at the denominational, local, or even personal level.

1. Kingdom orientation

A person with kingdom orientation is someone who embraces the perspective, sentiment, and motivation of the kingdom at heart and in action. Kingdom orientation enables practitioners of Christian missions to overcome denominationalism, parochialism, and territorialism. It will remove relational barriers in communication and reduce the tendency of being managerial and paternalistic, which tend to be impersonal. The relational paradigm will aid the cultivation of relationship among all parties. It will nurture partnership between the dwindling church in the West and the thriving church in the global south.

With kingdom orientation, diaspora Christians and congregations can be motivated and mobilized to become kingdom workers and kingdom partners.[37] With the exception of refugees, most diaspora people are gainfully employed. As kingdom workers, their kingdom orientation will help to multiply mission forces without draining the scarce resources of mission agencies, while at the same time fulfilling the Great Commission. This is an effective and economical way of engaging the "priesthood of believers" in the twenty-first century.

2. Partnerships that mimic the Trinity

"The relational reality of the Triune God figures prominently in both the Old and New Testaments scriptures."[38] The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit relate to one another in perfect unity, though distinct from one another with diverse roles and operating interdependently. This theological understanding of the Trinity has implications for the practice of strategic partnership in Christian mission, including diaspora missions. The figure below offers seven principles derived from the model of the Trinity for the practice of ministerial partnership.

Figure 9–Partnership in Light of the Trinity[39]

PRINCIPLES	PRACTICE OF MINISTERIAL PARTNERSHIP
1. relationship	know, confer, plan with one another
2. unity	spiritual unity leading to unity of goal
3. diversity	difference in gifts and distinct roles
4. interdependence	not self-sufficient
5. love	self-sacrificial love within the Trinity and beyond
6. peace	harmony; freedom from anxiety and inner turmoil
7. joy	Christians are to be joyfully serving God and others

3. Strategic stewardship

According to Jenkins,[40] places where Christianity is thriving and mutating are also places where population is shifting. He projects that this demographic trend will continue throughout the next century. Given this global demographic trend, the church must strategically minister to receptive people in developing nations where population and church are growing at a higher rate than the post-Christian West. This strategy also applies to ministries to diaspora groups, who are usually more receptive to the Gospel while on the move from the security of their homeland.

Christian stewardship has two dimensions: endowment by God **vertically** and entrustment by others **horizontally**. Strategic stewardship (Lk 12:32–48) and relational accountability (Lk 15:1–16:13) also have vertical and horizontal aspects. Resources, spiritual gifts, and ministry opportunities all originate from God; thus, those who are custodians of various measures of grace from the Father (Jas 1:16–18), the Son (Eph 4:7–11), and the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:1–11) are to be good stewards. Therefore, Christian individuals and institutions are accountable to the Triune God for their stewardship of endowments and entrustments vertically and strategically.

Likewise, resources and ministry opportunities oftentimes come from other Christian individuals and institutions by means of contribution, donation, and entrustment. There is to be strategic stewardship on the part of recipients who are accountable horizontally to the contributors and donors.

4. Biblical basis of relational accountability[41]

Relational accountability is the understanding and practice of accountability within the relational paradigm. It consists of two dimensions: vertical and horizontal. The relational paradigm is contextually more relevant within the context of "Missions in the Majority World"[42] than in modernist, postmodernist, or rationalist paradigms. The reason is that in the socio-cultural context of the majority world, social structure is primarily the interweaving of myriads of networks at multiple levels.

Traditionally, mission agencies in the West were accountable to donors but not necessarily to those among whom they were establishing missions. When Western mission organizations became hard pressed by dwindling resources in finance and personnel, accountability was no longer based solely on finance from the West. A new pattern of relational accountability between partnering entities in the West and the majority world is to replace the pattern of Western paternalism and dominance. When the relational paradigm is being practiced in diaspora missions, mutual "relational accountability" is to replace the traditionally "unilateral accountability" by entities of the majority world to those of the West.

For example, historically, Western-based mission agencies had always funded mission operations in the majority world. They, as the dominant force, often ignored issues and concerns raised by the local people. The only relational accountability for these missionaries from the West was to their own sending agencies in the West. The relational paradigm and relational accountability proposed in this paper is to counter such "one-way" relationships. The same principle applies to Christian ministry in general.

5. Strategic partnership and "reverse missions"[43]

"Partnership" is a "unique opportunity" to work with the Triune God and the Body of Christ to accomplish the *missio Dei* under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit.[44] "Strategic partnership" is partnership characterized by wise use of God-endowed resources and God-given opportunity to His glory and for kingdom extension.

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Strategic partnership is a fitting replacement for Western paternalism and Euro-centric style missions. Members of thriving diaspora churches in host countries must be challenged to practice "reverse missions." It is the carrying out of mission work in the post-Christian West by diaspora Christians or Christians of the global south. It is also the sending of diaspora groups back to their homelands and to other countries for mission work. Success of these mission endeavors depends on the collaboration and partnership among parties concerned, i.e., mission entities from the West, maturing congregations in the global south, and diaspora churches. The synergy from such partnership will enhance Christian stewardship and advance kingdom ministry.

A good case of "reverse missions" is the trend of church planting by Africans in Europe that began in the latter part of the last century with momentum:

The 1990s witnessed the rise of New Pentecostal Churches (NPC) with African origins. For example, one of the largest Churches in Western Europe is Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) founded in 1992 by Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo (Nigerian); also one of the largest Churches in Eastern Europe was founded in 1994 by an African, Sunday Adelaja pastor of Embassy of God in Kiev, Ukraine. African Churches in Europe are making many contributions and are bringing renewal to a continent that is fast losing its Christian roots and values. The contributions of African Churches can be seen in the following areas: Church growth, social cohesion among ethnic minorities, community development, women's ministries and discourses, immigration services, *diaspora* studies, revival, missions and a host of others.[45]

It is, therefore, critically important for church bodies in Europe and North America to practice strategic partnership with the vibrant diaspora churches in the context of post-Christian West and for the fulfillment of the Great Commission globally.

Summary

The Reformation era was a time of significant paradigm shifts in cultural landscape, with a parallel in the changing landscape of Christianity in the twenty-first century. Five hundred years ago, Martin Luther exercised his theological leadership in light of such socio-cultural changes. This paper (in two parts) has been written to inspire Christian leaders today, especially those who are direct heirs of Luther and the Reformation, to do likewise.

Three global trends have been identified in Part One: the shifting landscape of Christendom, the phenomenon of diaspora, the rise of socio-cultural relativism. In Part Two, a personal proposal to the leadership of Lutheran church bodies in North America has been presented in response to the these three trends: a paradigm shift to multiethnic ecclesiology and missiology, a paradigm shift from "traditional missiology" to "diaspora missiology," and a paradigm shift to a "relational realism paradigm." I have offered some practical implications as a starting point for further discussion within a Lutheran framework of mission, building on the model of the Reformation to embrace Gospel-centered and Gospel-driven mission within the realities of a changing social-cultural and technological context.

Endnotes

[1] Samuel Escobar, *The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2003).
[2] Enoch Wan, "Jesus Christ for the Chinese: A Contextual Reflection," *Global Missiology* (Oct. 2003), www.globalmissiology.net. Sample works on "contextualization" and Sino-

theology by Enoch Wan are listed below:
- "Liberating Paradigm Shift: Theologizing from the East" (unpublished paper presented at the EMS SE Regional Meeting, March 7–8, 1997).
- *Banishing the Old and Building the New: An Exploration of Sino-theology* (in Chinese) (Ontario, Canada: Christian Communication Inc. of Canada, 1997).
- *Sino-theology: A Survey Study* (in Chinese) (Ontario, Canada: Christian Communication Inc. of Canada, 1999).
- "Christianity in the Eye of Traditional Chinese," *Chinese Around the World* (July 1999): 20–24.
- "Critiquing the Method of Traditional Western Theology and Calling for Sino-theology," *Chinese Around the World* (November 1999): 12–17.
- "Practical Contextualization: A Case Study of Evangelizing Contemporary Chinese," *Chinese Around the World* (March 2000): 18–24.
- "Theological Contribution of Sino-theology to the Global Christian Community," *Chinese Around the World.* (July 2000): 17–21.

[3] Enoch Wan and Michael Pocock, eds., *Missions from the Majority World: Progress, Challenges, and Case Studies*, Evangelical Missiological Society Series Book 17 (William Carey Library, 2009).

[4] Enoch Wan, *Diaspora Missiology: Theory, Methodology, and Practice*, rev. ed. (Portland, OR: Institute of Diaspora Studies, 2014), 7–8.

[5] See "The Seoul Declaration on Diaspora Missiology," accessed March 25, 2010, http://www.lausanne.org/documents/seoul-declaration-on-diaspora-missiology.html.

[6] There is the IDS-USA Series (Institute of Diaspora Studies) edited by Enoch Wan as listed below:
- Enoch Wan, ed., *Diaspora Missiology: Theory, Methodology, and Practice*, rev. ed. (Portland, OR: Institute of Diaspora Studies, 2014).
- Yaw Attah Edu-Bekoe and Enoch Wan, *Scattered Africans Keep Coming* (Spring 2013).
- Enoch Wan and Thanh Trung Le, *Mobilizing Vietnamese Diaspora for the Kingdom* (Spring 2014).
- Enoch Wan and Ted Rubesh, *Wandering Jews and Scattered Sri Lankans: Understanding Sri Lankan Diaspora in the GCC Region Through the Lens of OT Jewish Diaspora* (Spring 2014).
- Enoch Wan and Elton S. L. Law, *The 2011 Triple Disaster in Japan and the Diaspora: Lessons Learned and Ways Forward* (Summer 2014).
- Enoch Wan and Anthony Francis Casey, *Church Planting Among Immigrants in US Urban Centers: The Where, Why, and How of Diaspora Missiology in Action* (Summer 2014). A more recent publication is Michael Pocock and Enoch Wan, *Diaspora Missiology: Reflections on Reaching the Scattered Peoples of the World*, EMS, vol. 23 (2015).

[7] Enoch Wan, "Diaspora Missiology," originally published in *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS (Spring 2007): 8; posted in "Featured Article" of www.globalmissiology.org in July 2007.

[8] "Deterritorialization" is the "loss of social and cultural boundaries" due to the large scale diaspora.

[9] Enoch Wan, "Diaspora Missiology," originally published in *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS (Spring 2007): 9.

[10] David Lundy, *Borderless Church* (Authentic, 2005).

[11] Peter Ward, *Liquid Church* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002).

[12] A church was founded by the chief cook, brother Bong, on board of the container vessel Al Mutannabi in Nov. 2002 (see Martin Otto, *Church on the Oceans* [UK: Piquant, 2007], 65). From personal communication of March 29, 2007, a staff worker reported that "Last week I met the second cook on another ship and I was very happy to see that the second cook already started planting a church. . ."

[13] "Partnership" is defined as "entities that are separate and autonomous but complementary, sharing with equality and mutuality." More discussion on "partnership" in another section later.

[14] See extensive discussion and explanation in Chapter 8, Enoch Wan, *Diaspora Missiology* (2014): 123–134.

[15] Enoch Wan, *Diaspora Missiology* (2014), 183.

[16] The "with" approach is a relatively new development, discussed in the second edition (2014) of my *Diaspora Missiology*.

[17] Enoch Wan, *Diaspora Missiology* (2014), 132.

[18] Ibid., 132–133. Bold emphasis was in original.

[19] Enoch Wan, "Diaspora Missiology." *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS, 20 no. 2 (Spring 2007a): 3–7.

[20] Tom Phillips and Bob Norsworthy, *The World at Your Door: Reaching International Students in Your Home, Church, and School* (Minnesota: Bethany House, 1997).

[21] Jerry L. Appleby, *Missions Have Come Home to America: The Church's Cross-Cultural Ministry to Ethnic* (Missouri: Beacon Hill, 1986).

[22] Enoch Wan, *Missions Within Reach: Intercultural Ministries in Canada* (Hong Kong: Alliance Press, 1995).

[23] Thom Hopler and Marcia Hopler, *Reaching the World Next Door* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1995).

[24] J. D. Payne, *Strangers Next Door: Immigration, Migration and Mission* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2012).

[25] Enoch Wan and Mark Hedinger, *Relational Missionary Training: Theology, Theory and Practice* (CA: Urban Loft Publishers, 2017).

[26] Enoch Wan, "The Paradigm of 'Relational Realism,'" *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS, vol. 19, no. 2 (Spring 2006):1–4.

[27] Enoch Wan, "Relational Theology and Relational Missiology," *Occasional Bulletin*, EMS, vol. 21, no 1 (Winter 2007): 1–7.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid., 2–5.

[30] The "I AM" is God's self-identification and "i am" (lowercase) is an intentional designation for man in contra-distinction to "I AM."

[31] Our Triune God is characterized by love, communion, commission (sending), and glory. Also see Kevin Daugherty, "*Missio Dei*: The Trinity and Christian Missions," Evangelical Review of Theology 31 (April 2007). John A. McIntosh, *All Things New: The Trinitarian Nature of the Human Calling in Maximus the Confessor and Jurgen Moltmann* (Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2014).

[32] Wan, "Relational Theology and Relational Missiology," 2.

[33] Paul Hiebert, *Missiological Implications of Epistemological Shifts: Affirming Truth in a Modern/Postmodern World* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999), 37–38.

[34] Wan, "The Paradigm of 'Relational Realism,'" 4.

[35] Chicken soup is valued in most majority world cultural traditions. The use of the "chicken soup" analogy was included in video presentations by Enoch Wan in presentations at Tokyo 2010 and Cape Town 2010:

- Tokyo 2010 – Plenary Session Video, video clip available at http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/6897559 and paper (pp. 92–100) available at http://www.tokyo2010.org/resources/Handbook.pdf.
- Cape Town 2010 – "Multiplex" Session Video, video clip available at http://www.enochwan.com/english/confvideos/index.html and paper available at http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/10540.

[36] For an explanation of this figure, refer to Enoch Wan, "Global People and Diaspora Missiology," in *Handbook of Global Mission: Consultation, Celebration, May 11–14, 2010*: 92–106. Video clip available at http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/6897559.

[37] See two publications for elaboration: Enoch Wan, "Korean Diaspora: From Hermit Kingdom to Kingdom Ministry," Korean Diaspora Forum, May 18–21, 2010 (Seoul, Korea); Sadiri Emmanuel Santiago B. Tira, "Filipino Kingdom Workers: An Ethnographic Study in Diaspora Missiology." EMS Dissertation Series (Western Seminary, 2008).

[38] Enoch Wan, "Partnerships Should Mimic the Trinity," *Faith Today* (July/August 2010): 27.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2002).

[41] The content of this section is adapted from "Global People and Diaspora Missiology" Tokyo 2010 Global Mission Consultation, Plenary Session, Tokyo, Japan, (May 11–14, 2010) p. 92–106.

[42] See Enoch Wan and Michael Pocock, eds., *Missions in the Majority World* (William Carey Library, 2009).

[43] Enoch Wan, "Diaspora Missiology and Missions in the Context of the 21st Century," *Torch Trinity Journal*, vol. 13, no.1 (May 30, 2010): 46–60. Also in *Global Missiology*, October, 2010; available at www.GlobalMissiology.com.

[44] For detailed discussion on "partnership," see the three articles below:
- Enoch Wan and Kevin P. Penman, "The 'Why,' 'How' and 'Who' of Partnership in Christian Missions," *Global Missiology* (April 1, 2010), available at www.GlobalMissiology.com;
- Enoch Wan and Johnny Yee-chong Wan, "Partnership—A Relational Study of the Trinity and the Epistle to the Philippines," *Global Missiology* (April 1, 2010a), available at www.GlobalMissiology.org;
- Enoch Wan and Geoff Baggett, "A Theology of Partnership: Implications for Christian Mission & Case Study of a Local Congregation," *Global Missiology* (April 2010), available at www.GlobalMissiology.org.

[45] "Reverse Missions: African Churches in Europe," (accessed Dec. 20, 2013), http://israelolofinjana.wordpress.com/2012/01/25/reverse-missions-african-churches-in-europe/.