

Religious Education Association Annual Meeting 2015
Outline of Poster Presentation

Are you interested to know how to teach Christian Religious Education to Asians
with Confucian minds and hearts?

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Presentation Outline

Are you a scholar, educator, teacher, church minister who involves in the teaching of Christian Religious Education? Are there any Asians in your contact group? Are those Asians mostly influenced by Confucian teachings in their background? Are you interested to know how to teach Christian Religious Education to those who are influenced by Confucian minds and thoughts?

Yet with the migration of people of various ethnicities, the post-modern world is breaking down the barriers between different traditions, cultures, and interreligious communities. People are becoming more aware that neglecting other faiths can bring misunderstandings, and that could lead to hostility, war and destruction. On the contrary, to understand another faith can not only help to promote peace and harmony, but to construct further development as well. To balance the gain and loss, people acknowledge that initiating dialogue between different faiths can be the best way to prevent confrontation and to build up opportunities for benefits. Interreligious education therefore fosters a quest for a wider understanding of others, and promotes communication for building up good human and global relations.

Confucianism has influenced the East as Christianity did in the West. Evolving from the ancient times throughout ages, Confucianism has aroused the interest of scholars in the West, and has become one of the significant subjects of interfaith research. Weiming Tu emphasizes that the integrity of interfaith dialogue in the West and the East is promoting global peace in this contemporary era. Judith Berling perceives that Confucianism is not only for Asians, but can also for the West. She claims that under the impact of globalization, the differences between East and West become narrow. Persons, ideas, products, practices, and religions of the East are present throughout the West, and vice versa. With the trend of immigrants studying abroad, or married persons of East Asian heritage, the classrooms of Christian colleges and seminaries are well populated with Asian Americans and international students from East Asia. The intermixing of East and West enhances the dialogue between Confucianism and Christianity, and it is better to learn the faith of “others” than simply talking about respect without real understanding.

The comparative study of two faiths is not subjected to superiority; on the contrary, it is to investigate their resemblances and differences, so as to foster a complementary notion on both distinctive concerns. Regarding Christianity and Confucianism both concern on divine power and human transcendence, this presentation puts the focus on one of their common areas, the teaching of love, so as to investigate how both perspectives can work together as complementary learning. Through the methodology of historical research, theological and conceptual analysis, it is to examine how both institutes perceive human love and develop their teachings. Since it is very popular to find people from the West or from the East integrating in one community, this presentation takes Christianity and Confucianism as an exemplar for complementary learning which

is significant at fostering a wider horizon on religious education, of which it meets the needs of learning in this postmodern world.

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