

July 2017

Dear Friends,

Every time I go to China, I am amazed by the progress of technology. For example, with the wide use of smartphones, people no longer use a credit card, they use mobile apps for payments. I am not exaggerating -- even the beggars on the street carry a sign with a big QR code on it so people can give them money! During my trip to China in June, I saw that the Ubike sharing system was developed in big cities (similar to the Divvy bicycle sharing system in Chicago). It took a few short months to go from nothing, to implementing, to overstocking.

This trend applies to Christian spiritual resources in China, as well. In the past when the country was closed to the Gospel, there was almost no way to hear the Good News. Short wave radio served as the vital channel for the Gospel message. When the internet era arrived, resources were gradually accessible. Now, as China has entered into the "New Media" age, Christian resources overflow. This development has made a trusting relationship between the suppliers and users more crucial than ever. That creates an urgency for BTGMI Chinese language ministry to be accomplished through indigenous people.

In fact, the main goal of my recent trip to China was to attend a retreat with our local ministry team. Our entire editing team in China is indigenous. They are young and motivated, and more importantly, they feel the pulse of China directly.

After arriving back in the States, I visited Life Church in Oklahoma. Life Church developed the famous [YouVersion Bible](#) that has about 300 million app downloads. It was remarkable to see such a Google-like, cutting-edge Christian ministry developed in a remote area of Oklahoma. I was very impressed by their mission statement as stated by Senior Pastor of Life Church, Craig Groeschel, "Our mission is to lead people to become fully devoted to Christ. That's it." What a testimony for the Kingdom of God! I was greatly inspired and encouraged.

Looking back on these two trips, I am especially thankful that God has put BTGMI-Chinese language ministry in a unique position. Being in China and in North America, we have a strategic advantage. I always think, 'If we were only in China, the development of our ministry would be so restricted.' And, 'if we were only in the North America, our sensitivity towards China culturally and politically would be lessened.' But now with this dual identity, we can achieve both. We can do ministry closer to home, and we can galvanize cooperation among international Christian partners to do an effective and healthy media ministry in China, for His Kingdom.

Please continue to pray for safety of the staff in China, and the wisdom to develop the ministry.

If you are interested in knowing more about "New Media" and the development of the church in China, please read my recent article published in China Source. <https://backtogod.net/stories/urban-public-space-and-new-media-ministry>

Blessings,



Pastor Jerry An
BTGMI Chinese ministry leader

