**Chinese Returnee Workshop at NC2019** – Abel Lam, John Weidler, and Derrah Jackson

The situation in China is rapidly changing currently and reminiscent in many ways of the bad old days of the cultural revolution (1966-1976). The adherents of Islam and Christianity are being persecuted—hunted down, jailed, and/or sent to “re-education” camps for years. How do we prepare Chinese international students completing their studies here in the U.S. for life at home and especially life at home as a Christian? The issues are complex…and simple answers are inadequate. So, your presenters decided to organize this workshop around a series of questions that we want to interact with you about. Your thoughts and feelings are important to the discussion. Please speak up…and be polite, brief, and speak to the point at hand.

1. How do we prepare graduating Chinese students whom we love to return to such a turbulent atmosphere at home? How aware are the graduating students to what is going on back in China, and to what extent will current circumstances add to their reverse culture shock?
2. For Christian Chinese returnees, are our current ISI discipleship paradigms adequate? What “priorities” do you see for discipleship to prepare them to return to such persecution and difficulty practicing one’s faith—topics, skills, attitudes, perspectives, values, and commitments?
3. Fellowship is critical to Christian returnee’s experience upon returning, but what we hear from them is that loneliness is the norm because of small house churches in which there is no one like them in their church. What advice do you have for them? What might “MAWL” (model-assist-watch-launch) training here do to help their experience at home?
4. The Ripkens (IMB missionaries) in their book *The Insanity of God* survey similar situations around the world. They keep asking the question, “Is Jesus worth it?” How can we help prepare returning Christian students to answer that question in the face of government and cultural hostility to their faith, expectations of conformity by parents and employers, and normal spiritual attacks on their faith?
5. Now that there is a financial bounty on exposing house churches, what specific skills are needed by Christian returnees to facilitate small groups (versus teach), focus on life transformation in discipleship (versus just gaining knowledge), and evangelize in the context of not trusting your neighbor or work associate to turn you into the police if you share Christ with them?
6. The Chinese government is putting great pressure on Christians to contextualize Christianity into a more Chinese pattern—even re-writing the Bible (sinicizing it) to make it more Chinese. What do we need to be teaching returning Chinese Christian students to help them function in such a cultural situation and to contextualize/sinicize Christianity for nonbelievers? (Socialist core values? Confucian values? Honor/shame context?)
7. To apply much of what we have discussed today, what are you going to change about how you prepare Christian Chinese students to return home and to be Jesus’ disciples? How do YOU hear the Lord regarding changes in your local ministry (and how to teach the students to hear the Lord’s voice)?