

The GlobalChurch Project

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## Grace Kim

### College and University Class Resource

This resource is designed to help your classroom discussion. It has specific application questions appropriate to local church ministry contexts. Questions are organized in themes. They are ideal for paired discussions, group-forum style discussions, and personal reflective responses. Consider using a discussion method most suitable to your classroom setting. Select questions most appropriate to your group. Consider isolating particular themes.

Materials:

1. Video: Grace Kim, 27 minutes.
  - **Grace's personal ministry.**
  - **Diverse Theology; language and terminology.**
  - **Colonialization and decolonialization.**
  - **Culture and the church; issues of patriarchy and racism.**
  - The **Missional Church conversation.**
2. Scripture references: Matthew 5:1-12, Revelations 5:9 and 7:9

## Preliminary discussion

1. What were the major themes in Grace Kim's responses?
2. Describe her ministry with immigrants and immigrant communities. How does she appreciate culture in the church? Describe Grace's theology of culture.
3. Discuss the difficulties of the content. What was difficult to understand? Was there anything you would like to clarify with the group?
4. How does Grace describe the mission of the church in diverse cultures?
5. Theological method: What informs Grace's view of scripture? What approaches does she take as she shapes her theology?

## Explore and analyze

Consider isolating a particular theme of interest for your classroom discussion. You might allocate topics to particular groups or pairs. Or, raise particular questions in a forum style for group responses.

1. **Grace's personal ministry:** How does Grace's experience with Korean women immigrants in America inform her passions for theology and mission? Describe Grace's teachings. What understandings of God are derived from her ministry experiences with women?
2. **Grace's personal ministry:** How does Matthew 5:1-12 shape and reflect on Grace's ministry to immigrants? How does God communicate His care for the immigrant through Grace's ministry?
3. **Diverse Theology:** "When we hear the many voices and perspectives, we understand God better". What does Grace mean? How does she demonstrate this in her commitment to intercultural dialogue?
4. **Diverse Theology:** How does focusing on the "different experiences" of individuals and communities "enrich theologies"? Describe the examples that Grace uses for this.
5. **Diverse Theology:** How does Grace incorporate Asian-American feminist theology into her own? Describe Asian-American feminist theology. What perspectives does it draw on? How does this perspective encourage Grace in her life, faith, and ministry to immigrant women?
6. **Diverse Theology:** How is feminist theology a creative example of "exploring theology which is alternate to the typical human western theological stream"?
7. **Diverse Theology:** How does Grace understand the term "Eurocentric theology"? How does she encourage the church to move beyond Eurocentrism, and "broaden their perspectives"?
8. **Diverse Theology:** Describe what Grace means by a "global perspective" for theology. How does "people joining in", "help us to understand God"? What does she mean by this phrase?
9. **Diverse Theology - language and terminology:** How does Grace use Asian cultural terms to explain biblical concepts doctrines? What is the usefulness and viability of this, according to Grace?
10. **Diverse Theology - language and terminology:** How do Grace's cultural terms "help us expand the human mind so that we can talk about God as deeply and as creatively as possible"? Describe the possibilities of language for the "global perspective" in Grace's theology. How does she use language?
11. **Colonialization and decolonialization:** Describe the term "Colonialization". How has Colonialization shaped the way westerners "do theology and relate to others"? What is Grace referring to?
12. **Colonialization and decolonialization:** How have those in power "colonialized every part of the world"? Describe the various forms of Colonialization and decolonialization, and the different ways that Grace describes that people and cultures have become decolonialized. How are various doctrines "centralized", according to Grace?
13. **Colonialization and decolonialization:** Discuss the examples of doctrines you might attempt to decolonize. What is the process of this? How does Grace "decolonialize" pneumatology? What is the value of this process?
14. **Colonialization and decolonialization:** How does Grace explain that "culture enriches theology" in terms of decentralizing doctrines? Discuss this quote from her discussion of pneumatology: "We have to have a global perspective of the spirit where it is found in all cultures and contexts."
15. **Colonialization and decolonialization:** Describe the instances of connections between eastern understandings of Chi and Han and the western understandings of the spirit. How are these terms more accessible for Asian cultures where these terms are apart of everyday life?
16. **Colonialization and decolonialization:** "I am always interested in inter religious dialogue. The spirit is not a limiting concept. It is a gateway to interfaith dialogue. It is important to build relationships not fearing one another". How does Grace encourage interfaith conversation?
17. **Culture and the church - the issues of patriarchy:** Discuss the suffering of Korean American women. How does Grace describe that patriarchy is working in the church today? How does Grace suggest that patriarchy is expressed in ways that are damaging and destructive?

18. **Culture and the church** - the issues of patriarchy: How does Grace encourage the church “to move beyond the patriarchal” and “communicate with the ideas of today”? What does she mean by this? What are some of the associated challenges she refers to in overcoming patriarchy?
19. **Culture and the church** - the issues of patriarchy: How is patriarchy expressed through language? How is the church slower at adopting inclusive language? How does Grace suggest this to be reflected in congregations who “won’t ordain women as leaders”?
20. **Culture and the church** - racism: How does Grace describe racism to be systemic in culture, society, and the church?
21. **Culture and the church** - racism: How does “the feeling of being afraid lead to racism”? Why are people in the church “always afraid of those who are not like them”? What are the implications of this fear?
22. **Culture and the church** - racism: How does Grace suggest that the systemic cultural problems in the west are reflected in environmental injustice and in the uneven distribution of resources?
23. **Culture and the church** - hyphenated identities: “Once we are able to bring in different concepts, cultures and theological understanding from those who live in between spaces, it really enriches how we understand God and how we can be engaged in theological discourse.” How does Grace suggest that hybridity and hyphenated identities enrich the church?
24. **Culture and the church** - hyphenated identities: How does “cultural embrace” affect the life of the church, in community and prayer? How does culture and hybridity enliven the church with new perspectives and traditions?
25. The **Missional Church conversation**: What does the “missional church conversation in the West” look like, according to Grace? How does she describe the mission of the church in terms of the “command to love”? “This should be the priority, how are we to love?”
26. The **Missional Church conversation**: “There is a lot for the church to be engaged in, and we need to work together. We need to keep talking about major issues”. How does a cross-cultural faith help to “fight global problems with those of other faiths”? How does Grace encourage “learning together”? Why does she describe this to be so important?
27. The **Missional Church conversation**: Why are churches afraid of the terms: hybridity and syncretism? What are the challenges and what is a biblical understanding of these terms, as described by Grace?
28. The **Missional Church conversation**: How does Grace describe the “spirituality” that “lives up to the task of today”? How are cross-cultural theology and the missional church connected?
29. The **Missional Church conversation**: “Moving forward, we ask: how do we engage with the world in a loving way? We embrace those who are different.” How is this an important and critical task according to Grace?

## Application

Discuss the various ways in which the content of the video influences life and ministry.

1. **Grace’s personal ministry**: How does Grace draw on the experiences of immigrant women in her theology? How does Grace view “cultural identities” to shape and inform theologies?
2. **Grace’s personal ministry**: How does Matthew 5:1-12 recognize the struggles of immigrants and immigrant communities? How does this scripture speak to you?
3. **Diverse Theology**: What are the “different voices” that contribute to your theology? How do these voices “enrich theologies”? How do they encourage the church in faith and ministry?

4. **Diverse Theology:** How does Grace's diverse theologies encourage you to think more broadly, differently, or from a new perspective? How does your class' perspectives encourage faith and community? How does Grace's theology present challenges for you and your class?
5. **Diverse Theology:** What aspects of Asian American feminist theology ought to be incorporated in your class' theology? How can the church learn from this interpretive lens? How does this perspective encourage Grace in her life and ministry, and how might this be relevant to your class' ministry and local church contexts?
6. **Diverse Theology:** "We can't just have this Eurocentric center providing the only way to understand God." How can the church move beyond Eurocentrism? How is this issue reflected in various contexts?
7. **Diverse Theology:** What is your understanding of a "global perspective"? How is your theology "global"?
8. **Diverse Theology:** How do your theologies encourage a "joining in" from all people in your community, including immigrants? How are your classes, ministries, and churches involving immigrant persons and communities?
9. **Diverse Theology - language and terminology:** What cultural terms can you draw from to explain biblical concepts, from those within your class and in your own contexts? Discuss the possibilities of language. How can language help the world to know God in ways that are more profound? Discuss the implications for theology.
10. **Diverse Theology - language and terminology:** How can the church use language to express a diverse understanding of God? How can the church draw on one another's "languages"?
11. **Colonialization and decolonialization:** How is Grace's discussion of Colonialization and decolonialization pertinent to various contexts? What doctrines do you recognize are colonialized? What should the church work towards to decolonialize? What are the challenges of decolonializing certain doctrines, and what is the value of this?
12. **Colonialization and decolonialization:** How do decentralized and decolonialize doctrines "celebrate culture" and enrich theologies? How does Grace's discussion challenge your theological ideas? What do you ask that God would decentralize and decolonialize. How can your theology become more enriched?
13. **Colonialization and decolonialization:** Why does Grace encourage the church to engage in interfaith dialogue? How does decentralization open up opportunities for inter religious conversations and relationships? How does this cultivate new ideas?
14. **Colonialization and decolonialization:** "We have to have a global perspective of the spirit where it is found in all cultures and contexts." Describe the value of cultures decentralizing doctrines in your class' ministry contexts. Describe the opportunities in your ministries and churches for culture to enrich theology. How can the church celebrate these opportunities?
15. **Culture and the church - the issues of patriarchalism:** "Patriarchy is so embedded that people don't really think about it. They don't think it is alive, but it is." How is patriarchy expressed in various contexts? What are some of the associated challenges for sharing the gospel?
16. **Culture and the church - the issues of patriarchalism:** "In a patriarchal culture, we must hear women's voices. It is way overdue that we listen to these voices. Theology should not be so narrow". How is this prevalent in various contexts? How can the church work to overcome patriarchalism? How can churches avoid "detering women from leadership" and encourage the giftedness of women in the church?
17. **Culture and the church - the issues of patriarchalism:** How do churches "become more open to different languages" of inclusiveness and culture? What is the benefit of broadening the vocabulary of the church?

18. **Culture and the church** - racism: How can the church work to “love all people” with gospel sincerity?
19. **Culture and the church** - racism: What is the importance of the church resisting systemic racism?
20. **Culture and the church** - hyphenated identities: How does hybridity and hyphenated identities provide a liberative theology, an openness and deeply cultured identity?
21. **Culture and the church** - hyphenated identities: How and why should the church celebrate hybridity? Describe the image of Revelations 5:9 and 7:9. How does “many perspectives and cultures” celebrate God?
22. The **Missional Church conversation**: How does Grace encourage the church to involve immigrants and immigrant communities into the life of the church? How are your ministries and churches actively doing this?
23. The **Missional Church conversation**: How are your churches and communities “loving” the neighbour, and caring in a reflection of those valued in Matthew 5:1-12? How might you encourage your churches and church ministries in this calling?
21. The **Missional Church conversation**: How does Grace’s discussion of the missional church encourage you and your ministries? How might you recommit yourself to loving others in your ministries and churches?

## Classroom ministry

Facilitate an opportunity for students to respond to the video in light of the classroom discussion. Consider inviting students to write their responses to the following questions.

1. What is God encouraging our class and me, to do?
2. In responses to the issues raised in the video, what are areas I want to ask for God’s forgiveness in and to change my response towards? What do I ask that God would correct in my understanding of Him, and our churches?
3. How do I need God to minister to me and my community for us to better engage?
4. Celebrate culture: what aspects of culture do I thank and praise God for in others and myself?

## Prayer

Spend time in prayer over what you’ve learnt. You may encourage your class to pray for one another. Or, in light of your discussion, you may choose to pray over your class.

## References

**Book:** Grace Ji-Sun Kim, *Embracing the Other: The Transformative Spirit of Love* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2015)

## Links

**Website:** [www.theglobalchurchproject.com](http://www.theglobalchurchproject.com)

**Book:** Graham Hill, *GlobalChurch: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches* (IVP Academic, 2015)