

Globalization and Postmodernism's Impact on Asian Emigration - Have Affluent Christians Lost their Way in The World?

Chai Kee Wong

Principal Corporate Psychologist, CPS Consultants Inc, Singapore

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Rise of Globalization and the Spiritual Implications of Emigration

Globalization in Collusion with Postmodernism in Re-Making Emigration

Globalized Emigration – the “Talent-Hunt” Driver

Globalized Emigration – the Postmodernized Christian's Dualistic Discipleship

Globalized Emigration – the “Lifestyle” Driver

Globalization and Postmodernism's Marginalization of Mission

Against the Tide: Three Cases

Endnotes

Bibliography

Rise of Globalization and the Spiritual Implications of Emigration

“Christian mission is about going to a poorer country. Christian migration is about going to a better country. Being called and being driven are sending affluent Christians in opposite directions.”

With this stern indictment by a Singapore church deacon on Singapore churches this article will expose the threat of globalization and postmodernism¹ to Christian calling – worldwide and particularly in Asian cities.

Yet we may wonder whether the deacon's charge is a tad too harsh. After all, emigration in itself is an age-old phenomenon – stretching as far back as the times of Abraham, and spreading for reasons as old as fleeing from oppression (Moses and company), fleeing from threat of certain death (Jacob), dreaming for the land of hope and glory (emigrants to America), and leaving then impoverished early-20th-Century China to start a new life as a cook in the thriving seaport of Singapore (my father). How can emigration be anything more than a matter of circumstance? How can it assume a spiritual dimension?

We posit that the rise of globalization has turned emigration into a serious spiritual issue - by changing its face and pace. Nowadays people are not leaving just because times and tide are bad in their country but also because fads and fashion are better elsewhere. Emigration now has as much to do with lifestyle as with economic choice. Even in the economic realm, people in today's globalized world emigrate not just to eke out a living; their feet also march to the hymn of the global battle for talent. In the lifestyle realm, people are being sucked into the postmodernized search for the elixir of life. The Christian implications of these two new developments must be reckoned with.

With the irreversible, if not irresistible, tide of globalization, 21st-century emigration confronts Christians with a devotional issue that has discomforting ramifications. The ease to emigrate raises soul-searching questions: Shouldn't and couldn't Christians rise above the global trend? Or have Christians abdicated and thoughtlessly let globalization push and pull them about like it does everyone else? This article probes these issues to Asian Christians – a global phenomenon seen in Asian emigration to the West, especially among the Christian middle-class and professionals in Asian cities (in particular, my talent-rich affluent city-state Singapore)².

This commentary goes beyond whether the Christian should savor or savage globalization. Both press and people are hot about it or hoot against it³. This is understandable - the growing wave of globalization has swept into everyone's life; while some countries have learnt to ride on it, others have felt the brunt of it. Even without taking sides, recognizing globalization's catalytic impact on emigration makes a Christian response imperative – since Christians are mandated to follow the biblical calling, “Do not be conformed to this world.”⁴

Globalization in Collusion with Postmodernism in Re-Making Emigration

As depicted by New York Times journalist Thomas Friedman (1999), globalization has produced a “world without walls.” So while we still cannot choose where we were born, we now have a smorgasbord of choices as to where we live and die. This is especially so for the professional and the prosperous. As contemporary Christians, we are far from the cloistered countryside of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, to whom the thought of leaving English shores probably never crossed their minds (though their minds had traveled long and far).

In our globalized world the Christian professional and middle class could go anywhere their talents lead them. My thesis is that professional and middle-class Christians have let the borderless world lure them to places everybody wants to go. This phenomenon balloons when we find globalization and postmodernism juxtaposed as mutual reinforcers.

In the case of emigration, postmodernism and globalization form an unholy alliance. We may call this combined potion globalized postmodernism, for the extended reach that globalization gives to postmodernism; or postmodernized globalization, for the hedonistic depth postmodernism extends to economic globalization⁵. This potent potion serves a double whammy for Christians – providing a convenient channel for effecting compromise with no compunction.

With globalization Christians may unwittingly or unashamedly slide into the cesspool of postmodernism. Globalization is an efficient server of postmodernistic longings – a Trojan-horse giving postmodernism entry into the Christian psyche still publicly chary of gaining the whole world and losing its own soul. Pandering to postmodernistic leanings makes Christians feel guilty. Giving in to globalization becomes acceptable because it is deemed inevitable - because it's not something the Christian, or for that matter anyone, can do anything about - so toots the conventional wisdom. With global talent migration mushrooming, Christians who emigrate can tell themselves and fellow-believers that they are merely doing the practical, if not inevitable, thing.

With the overarching reach of globalization in moving the prosperous and the professional across the borderless world, postmodernism has finally leeches into Christians in the openness of daylight. No longer is there a need for backdoor entry in the stealth of the night. Middle-class and professional Christians emigrating with no sense of calling can now do so with a diminished sense of guilt.

Affluent Christians' implicit acceptance of postmodernistic consumerism has led them to uncritically embrace the globalization of emigration. It becomes nothing more than another great economic opportunity with no grave spiritual consequences. This is an assumption that needs to be challenged. Christians who side-step the spiritual side of global emigration do so at their own peril.

We shall now examine how two key drivers of global emigration have seduced the highly mobile Christian middle-class professionals. The first is the global hunt for talents – a hunt that is leaving no stone unturned. The second key driver is the global postmodernistic craving after lifestyle choices – with emigration merely one, albeit a major one, of the countless lifestyle choices blasting the Christian in an omni-media world wired on postmodernistic current.

Globalized Emigration – the “Talent-Hunt” Driver

In dissecting the power the “talent-hunt” driver has over Christian professionals in today's globalized world, we need to trace how the talent factor has magnified over time. While the talent factor is not new, its past impact was confined to the visionary few.

At an anniversary dinner for McGill University in 1882, Professor William Osler, widely lauded as the greatest physician of his time and perhaps of all time, proposed a toast in global-speak about the need to hire the ablest men possible. Eventually enticed to John Hopkins Hospital as a Canadian transplant, Osler prophetically urged the university power kegs to seek and attract “not only the ablest men that the country possessed, but the best that money could get, the best talent they could get irrespective of nationality.” (Bliss 1999: 118)

The difference 120 years make is that globalization has taken this talent hunt beyond the uncommon foresight of a 19th-century don to the current frenetic heights worldwide. Top dollars and promise of endless adulation scramble after top talents and people with promise – be it in the field of sports, finance or stem-cell research.

The global frenzy for talent gives emigration a middle-class stamp since the lower classes' economic contribution is regarded as labor, not talent. Developed countries export low-end jobs to countries with cheap labor (the current emotive issue of global outsourcing), while importing talents for high-end jobs. With middle-class Christians being overly represented in the category of professionals, this contagious frenzy makes an incipient, if not already embedded, inroad into the very middle-class churches in Asian cities. Has this global valuation of talent made Christian professionals behave just like every other professional? And with globalization, are they becoming like everyone else in the marketplace of talents *faster*?

As a major hub in Asia, Singapore is a natural platform to evaluate these Christian implications. A country born out of and growing with immigration, Singapore has ironically churned out a sizeable chunk of would-be emigrants, many of whom are university-educated professionals. With Christians featuring strongly among such professionals, a review of the Singapore stage will show whether Christians are carefully responding or carelessly reacting to the globalized migratory trend.

Our review reveals ominous signs that migration is preceding mission – even though the Sunday-speak in Singapore churches is that mission must supercede all our moves, including migratory move. Instead of going where we ought to go, my baby-boomer Christian generation in Singapore may have allowed economic globalization to lead them by the nose. “Here am I, send me” and “All the way my Saviour leads me” are sacred lines meant to stir Christians to be conscientious about mission, and to disentangle themselves from the globalized web of pernicious postmodernism. They are not written for missionaries, who need no such reminders.

This postmodernistic danger for Christians is exemplified by Harold Geneen, the late all-powerful corporate builder of the once-behemoth ITT. Geneen called himself a “hired gun.” And he advised all to behave like hired guns (1997: 49) – if they want to be noticed and be taken seriously (as he himself was eminently recognized with a TIME magazine cover of September 8, 1967). Geneen’s hired guns fit smack-center in the postmodernistic world of seizing chances, and of moving from company to company to avoid being moved or being stuck.

According to Geneen, “the hired gun has an independent spirit, born of self-confidence. He disdains waiting games with uncertain outcomes. He insists on taking charge of his life, and he knows exactly where he wants to go...the hired gun can move from company to company” (1997: 49) Transported to the global stage, hired guns can now move from country to country. Christian professionals who become such a driven sharp-shooting hired gun will aim for the next great offer in the global hunt for hired guns – another instance of the unremitting potency of the globalization-postmodernism partnership.

What Geneen advocated has already reared its ugly head in Asian cities: young talents are posting premium prices as hired guns. A recent news feature in Singapore is a case in point. The price for surrendering Indonesian nationality for Singapore citizenship: a US\$2 million prize. That is what Indonesian Katherine Nusantara⁶, 28, said it would take. The two-million sum was the “barest minimum” to ensure a comfortable life in Singapore till age 65.

Ms Nusantara, a senior advertising accounts manager in Singapore, gave her economic take, “Things are going to be more expensive. Singapore is very small and I feel that opportunities are running out. No matter how hard I work, the returns won’t be as much as what our forefathers used to get.” The same economics behind her two million figure might well trigger citizens of my city-state of four million Singaporeans to emigrate.

To complete her global picture of economic emigration, her parents are in Indonesia, one sister lives with her in Singapore, and two sisters are working in the United States. Ms Nusantara’s family spread illustrates the global scale of emigration. Sentiments kept her momentarily true to her heritage (she still preferred to retain her Indonesian nationality – unless paid the US\$2

million) but economics determined where she would stay for now, and where she would move next. Her case shows that talent-linked emigration has as much to do with individuals' search for economic opportunities as with receiving countries' battle for the talent pool.

In a postmodernistic age characterized by the catch-phrases "every head has its price" and "we are all just a piece of meat," at what price would a Christian rent his prized head and sell his premium "meat"?

Ms Nusantara's brazen and impish self-promotion should make Christians *re-view* how careerism infects migratory motive: Are Christians merely another statistic in this global trend in emigration? Should Christians be merely a part, or marvelously apart from, this globalizing trend in emigration? Is mission the prime mover for leaving or staying? Or is mission merely a follow-up tag to migration?

Plainly, the crux of Christian emigration is whether God is marginalized. Instead of going (or staying) where the Lord wants us to serve, we choose the location, then ask God how He wants us to serve. The paradigm has shifted from "God sends, I go" to "Go for it." "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done" is displaced by "The world beckons, where's the highest bid for my talent?" This is a clear case of globalization creating the opportunity and postmodernism fueling the drive.

Globalized Emigration – the Postmodernized Christian's Dualistic Discipleship

It is disturbing if Christian professionals simply go where the economic pull is strongest. This tragedy is exacerbated when they then rationalize their decision by calling it a tent-making mission when mission is only an after-thought and a by-product.

Tom Sine sees this "after-thought and by-product" mode of decision-making as a consequence of our buying into what he calls "the dualistic discipleship model." (1999: 155) He posits that most Western Christians unquestioningly allow modern culture to arrange the furniture of their lives. First allegiance is reserved for "decisions about where we work, live, and rear our young; we permit modern culture, as part of the deal, to define our notions of the good life and better future." (1999: 156)

On the other side of this dualism, "following Christ is too often trivialized to "fifteen minutes in the morning and two hours on Sunday." (1999: 155) Postmodernistic choices are about what the marketplace of jobs, housing, financial security and children's education offers. When Christians allow such postmodernistic cherry-picking to prevail, they marginalize Christian mission. The main agenda for the western Christian is, in Sine's terms, "getting ahead in the job comes first, getting ahead in our living situations comes first, getting our economic security comes first, getting our kids off to their activities comes first,....*and* (italics mine) Jesus too." (1999: 156)

The main motivation of the Asian Christian professional to emigrate is about ensuring that getting into a better country comes first. For the financially secure Asian Christian, it's about ensuring that getting into a country with a better lifestyle comes first. And then Jesus comes into

the picture – as an after-thought, but perhaps even as an insurance booster. To paraphrase the words of Shakespeare, the Christian emigrant may then make assurance double-sure by asking God to prepare the migratory path before he treads.

Sine's dualistic discipleship model would indict Christians engaged in talent-driven or lifestyle-triggered emigration. As "talent" emigration is to the younger-set professional, so "lifestyle" emigration is to the retiring rich. If retirement-planning is a must-do in this era of longer life and better health for the well-heeled, then looking for the best options in the global stage makes good if not godly sense. It's not narcissistic choice, just economic sense. This conscience-soothing form of rationalizing releases the Christian from guilt that comes with pressing forth self-interest and putting aside Christian mission.

Globalized Emigration – the "Lifestyle" Driver

"You've just come back from Australia?" Jeremy Joon, a church friend from the seventies, exclaimed as he spotted me at Shenton Way, Singapore's Wall Street.

Thinking that I have migrated and surprised to see me back in Singapore, he volunteered that Kathy and Stephen Sim (all names changed) had migrated to Middle-Earth (New Zealand) three years ago, and that he had plans to do likewise. The Sims were senior corporate managers, the husband in a local bank and the wife in a government agency; and Jeremy is a loans vice-president in a European bank – all baby-boomers. In five short minutes of catch-up time, it transpired that he would be heading for Tolkien country for retirement.

"You won't get the same VP position in Auckland," I said.

"Who says I'm going there for another corporate climb. Once my property investments here, unfortunately made at the peak of the boom, break even, I'll head straight for the first country that greeted the new millennium. That's my dream retirement." He has done his geography homework.

Just when there is a graying of the West, middle-class and professional Asians are moving to gray in the West. The paradise found of the well-earned retirement is as tempting to Christians as to non-Christians. When the sought-after Eden is just as effectively tempting to both parties, it begs the question "Aren't Christians no different from everybody else?" We are just like the decent people who do what is best for themselves and their family. Except that radical Christian faith is about devotion, not decency.

Like the man Jesus reprimanded for being concerned about burying the dead (Lk. 9: 59-60), we have turned our eyes upon things other than the Cross - on making a bed of roses for ourselves before we are buried, or on securing the future bed our children would need after we are buried. And the things of earth have grown far from strangely dim, indeed becoming much too close for spiritual comfort.

When we subscribe to the hip line "Don't just make a living, have a life," we are not really seeking the essence of life, just the elixir of life – balm to soothe our stress, botox jabs to

smoothen the wrinkles, a preferred lifestyle to re-create paradise lost. It is postmodernistic culture of advanced consumer capitalism - presented as a full spectrum of choices open for us to cherry-pick as a consumer. Hence we end up enacting postmodernistic emigration, which is about what is “good for me” or “good for my family.” In computer language we are making “being driven” the default mode for decision-making on emigration and disabling the “being called” key.

John Piper (2003: 45-46) bemoans this manner of living out one’s final years as a tragedy:

“I will tell you what a tragedy is. I will show you how to waste your life. Consider a story from the February 1998 edition of Reader’s Digest, which tells about a couple who ‘took early retirement from their jobs in the Northeast five years ago when he was 59 and she was 51. Now they live in Punta Gorda, Florida, where they cruise on their 30-foot trawler, play softball and collect shells.’ At first, when I read it I thought it might be a joke. A spoof on the American Dream. But it wasn’t. Tragically, this was the dream: Come to the end of your life - your one and only precious, God-given life - and let the last great work of your life, before you give an account to your Creator, be this: playing softball and collecting shells. Picture them before Christ at the great day of judgment: ‘Look, Lord. See my shells.’ *That* is a tragedy. And people today are spending billions of dollars to persuade you to embrace that tragic dream.⁷ Over against that, I put my protest: Don’t buy it. Don’t waste your life.”

Switch from Punta Gorda, Florida to Perth, Australia, cruising on a 30-foot trawler to cruising in a Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren, playing softball to playing golf every Tuesday and Thursday, collecting shells to barbecuing on the famed Australian beach, and make the characters Singaporean – there you have the Singapore tragedy.

This global dilation of the American Dream is postmodernism globalized with no dilution.

Globalization and Postmodernism’s Marginalization of Mission

Emigration used to be about people leaving poverty and dire circumstances in their home country for the hope of a better life in foreign shores. Push factors compelled people to move abroad. Globalization has created a new axis to emigration. Pull factors are a new motivation for emigration. Emigration in a world without walls is now much more about the economics of talent (the pull of better job prospects and career paths) and about lifestyle choice (the much-hyped pull of having a life versus the much-harpooned push of having to make a living).

The globalization of emigration has changed the complexion of decision-making for Christians. The range of economic and lifestyle choices has widened phenomenally. The globe is up for grabs, the spoils are there for the taking. Unprecedented opportunism confronts Christians – especially middle-class Christian professionals, who are not merely upwardly but also outwardly mobile.

The change in complexion must not, however, be mistaken for any increased complexity in making a Christian choice. The heart of the matter remains the same: Does God feature centrally

or peripherally in our decision-making? Or do we allay our guilt of self-interest and take comfort that we bank only with God, only to end up handling all the transactions? We may say God signs the check, but we write the check and He may only be the second signatory.

The enticement to emigrate out of self-interest is a strong and sustained force. While jobs are increasingly outsourced to low-cost Asian countries, Asian talents are being globally sourced into developed countries. Christians, hugely represented in the professional classes, are a good catch.

Modern management avows, “Think global, act local.” The postmodernistic personal mantra has inverted it to “Think local, act global.” Local self-interest being the preloaded software, Christian professionals act globally – with their feet.

Abraham left the certain comfort of home for the yet-to-be verified prospect of true greatness. Abraham emigrated because he received a mission from God to go, and he obeyed. In a postmodernized world, Christians emigrate much like everyone else, in tandem with the global tide of opportunities.

We sing the hymn, “All the way my Saviour leads me...” but the migratory direction seems more westward-ho than global. It is somewhat strange that God’s leading has taken many Christians from the Asian metropolis to Canada, Australia and the United States, but rarely if ever to Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. To say we can serve anywhere because “I am a citizen of the world” is self-deception if this world citizenship confines us to the nicer parts of the globe.

Perhaps the second part of that hymnal line, “...what have I to ask besides?” is not so rhetorical after all. We need to ask whether it is really our Saviour or globalized postmodernism that is leading our lives and forming our choices. We need to decide to be launched on a life of mission or to pursue a preferred lifestyle.

We have seen an emigration set-up that is given new dimensions and pushed to new heights by globalization. In addition to desperate emigration for economic survival, the prosperous and the professional can emigrate for a preferred lifestyle or for a pristine career. In a pre-globalized world, Christian mission was almost synonymous with leaving creature comfort for tough terrains. In today’s globalized world, Christian mission may mean staying put or being sent, in order to serve God better; while postmodernistic migration is about going somewhere that’s better, so as we satisfy our craving to savor lifestyle comforts to the full.

Against the Tide: Three Cases

In contrast to the lifestyle of postmodernized dualistic-discipleship Christians, we have the sterlingly single-minded spirituality of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Ajith Fernando and a Singapore church pastor.

There is the larger-than-life example of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who chose to stay in Nazi-Germany to live out the cost of discipleship and to die a martyr. He could have left, and reasoned that he would be more effective fighting the German church’s cause as an exile than as an eventual

prisoner. But he obeyed what was to him the call to stay. He would have had written more tomes of theology outside Germany. He would have had a comfortable lifestyle had he left his homeland with his fiancée for marital bliss abroad.

Instead Bonhoeffer asked “whether it is possible to advance a more exact definition of the place, the *locus*, at which responsible life is realized. What is the place and what are the limits of my responsibility? (pages 221-222).....the calling is the place at which the call of Christ is answered, the place at which a man lives responsibly. Thus the task which is appointed for me in my calling is a limited one, but at the same time the responsibility to the call of Christ breaks through all limits? (1955: 223-224)” For Bonhoeffer the place was Hitler’s Germany, and his sense of responsibility continued unabated until he paid the cost of discipleship with his life.

For Christians in a globalized world, it must not be *any* place nor need it be *every* place.

There is the stellar steadfastness of Bible scholar Ajith Fernando, who found *the place* in his ethnically divided homeland of Sri Lanka. He exemplifies the title of his book, *Jesus Driven Ministry* (Fernando 2002) with his two-decade leadership of Youth for Christ work amongst people whom the law tend to find trouble with. He could have resided anywhere his talents open up for him. Instead he chooses strife-torn Sri Lanka as his base for local people ministry and international speaking ministry.

Fernando (2002: 26-27) sees his book and sermon preparations actually deepened by the day-to-day frustrations of identifying with the place and the people he serves. His preparation was once punctuated by six hours at a police station spent in securing the release of two volunteers mistaken for terrorists. His place was the police station, reviewing his draft on Galatians while awaiting the police’s review of his plea for the volunteers’ release. His *modus operandi* is to identify with people in one place, consistently and persistently for over 20 years - not popping in with soothing or challenging messages, only to hop out when trouble stokes. He is a remarkable example of a man who has stuck valiantly to his calling.

There is the contrarian exhortation by a Singapore church pastor to its members to re-locate from choice residential estates to the church neighborhood. So it’s not staying *per se* that is commendable. It’s about staying or moving out in obedience to calling. The church pastor (who himself set the example) challenged his members to penetrate a difficult heartland for Christ by moving in. This move is against the Singapore grain because middle-class Singaporeans, including Christians, choose their residential location for practical and sensible reasons like proximity to preferred schools and premium property prices.

In the old world, where you were born was where you would live and die. In the new world, increasing numbers will reach the cross-road of deciding where they want to live out the rest of their life. The question is whether the choice is seduced by postmodernistic nudges or prompted by Christian calling.

The fundamental flaw with talent and lifestyle-driven emigration is that other-directed narcissism has supplanted inner-directed calling. Postmodernistic careerism and consumerism have sanitized and sanctioned self-interest.

When driven by the talent hunt, emigration signals that career aborts calling: “I go where the head-hunters pay me – because it’s my life.” When driven by lifestyle-craving, emigration signals that retirement terminates calling: “I go where the pace and pleasures of life please me – because it’s the rest of *my* life.” John Piper’s warning how not to waste one’s life needs to be seriously heeded.

Another trenchant critic of postmodernism, Os Guinness (1998: 243) asserts that calling neither starts with self nor ends upon retirement: “As followers of Christ we are called to be before we are called to do and our calling both to be and to do is fulfilled only in being called to him.”

A renewed sense of Christian calling is vital to stem the rising tide of globalized postmodernism. We must not let postmodernism transmute our career and life decisions into the twin obsession with careerism and lifestyle. Christians need to guard against being transformed by postmodernistic thought-form: we could so easily become people who know “the price of everything” and “the value of nothing.” Transformed by God’s renewal of our mind, ceaselessly discerning the will of God will constantly keep us from the push and pull of globalization.

The Singapore church deacon who sees the frivolity and folly of mission-less migration wants to seize the demographic advantage for God. Noting the overwhelming supply of prosperous and professional Christians, he sees a special mission for Singapore churches, “We are placed with abundant resources to go down, as Christ came down, to serve the poorer classes.” Not to do so is to miss the mission at the Asian doorstep. Upwardly mobile Christians can choose to go downward to *serve anywhere* God calls or to go outward to have their self-interests *served everywhere*.

Affluent Christians in Asian cities will need to do a reality-check – on whether emigrating westward-ho shows that they have lost their way in the world.

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[Top of page](#)

Endnotes

1. Postmodernism takes on myriad meanings and forms. In this critique, we use the third of three definitions given by Crouch (2000) – “advanced consumer capitalism.” – elaborated as follows: “Third, *postmodernism* is also used to refer loosely to advanced consumer capitalism, in which the prevalence of choice has rendered everything level. Western consumers now find themselves in a sea of options and choices. Everything is *relativized* (my italics) in this setting—not so much by the claims of the marginalized or even by a rigorous epistemological process but by your ability to choose anything. Everything is open to you as a consumer.”

The “consumer is supreme” philosophy leads to the notion of “customer satisfaction,” which in turn spawns a lifestyle of self-gratification. Hence postmodernistic emigration is essentially self-gratification.

Similarly, according to Fernando (2002: 21), “The postmodern approach emphasizes the more subjective aspects of life – “my” feelings, “my” preferences, and “my” instincts...Postmodern people are uncomfortable with principles outside themselves governing their decisions and behavior.”

Postmodernism finds calling strange, preferring the appealing.

2. On Joseph Stiglitz’s point – see Endnote 3 below - about the extent of people moving across borders, I take the view that this global phenomenon is a picture-perfect portrayal of the professional and the prosperous – as evidenced in Asian cities such as Singapore. In this light my article focuses on middle-class and professional Asian Christians because emigration is an option open to them, with non-professionals and lower classes being less likely to gain entry on their own merits, especially to the West. Singapore churches, in particular, are characterized by a disproportionately high representation of the professional and middle classes. While my commentary is confined to Christian professionals and middle in Asian cities, globalized postmodernism would likely stretch the scope of its relevance.
3. This veneration-vilification divide – between sustained praise for globalization by “the treasury secretary of the United States, or the finance and trade ministers of most of the advanced industrial countries” and the “increasingly vehement worldwide reaction against the policies that drive globalization” – is highlighted by Joseph Stiglitz (2002: 8-9), the 2001 Nobel Prize Laureate for Economics. This article adopts Stiglitz’s definition of globalization as “the closer integration of the countries and peoples of the world which has been brought about by the enormous reduction of costs of transportation and communication, and the breaking down of artificial barriers to the flows of goods, services, capital, knowledge, and (to a lesser extent) people across borders.” (2002: 9).
4. Romans 12: 2 (English Standard Version): “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” This verse urges the Christian to pitch battle against globalized postmodernism.
5. The expression “globalized postmodernism” suggests that postmodernism is given a wider stage through globalization, which takes it across borders and makes inroads into countries near and far and societies modern and traditional, as epitomized by the global reach of Coca-Cola and in due time iPod. Much as “globalized postmodernism” is about the extended reach of postmodernism, “postmodernized globalization” is about the enhanced depth that postmodernism has given economic globalization through embedding it in the sinews of individual consumers. The global opportunities are thus

not merely attractive in themselves but become more subtly seductive because of postmodernistic motivations.

6. Reported under the headline “\$3.4m price tag for becoming a citizen” in The Sunday Times, Singapore, February 29, 2004, page 12. Reflecting the Singapore Government’s relentless drive to import talents, the newspaper has been featuring the talents born and bred at home, talents drifted offshore, emigrated talents returning home, and talents attracted from the borderless world.
7. Piper’s observation is easily verified through an internet search. Just type and click “Places to retire” on the Google search engine, and you’ll see web-pages upon web-pages of suggestions, including an article on “Deciding to retire abroad” posted on www.Bankrate.com by Jenny C. McCune on September 3, 2002. The website “CNNmoney” (www.money.cnn.com/best/bpretire) has a regular segment on the best places to retire in.

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