

# The Johnson Family

China

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The Johnsons live in Beijing, China—a vast metropolis of over 20 million people, home to both a rich tapestry of local Chinese cultures and a diverse expatriate community. Since moving to China, their ministry has evolved significantly. Initially focused on reaching the Han Chinese majority, they soon expanded to include local minorities. In the past seven years, their primary focus has shifted toward serving the expatriate community in Beijing. Through gospel-centered discipleship and training, they equip both expats and locals to become effective witnesses for Christ in their spheres of influence.



## Ministry Approach

Due to Chinese laws prohibiting evangelism to locals, they practice wisdom and discretion in sharing the gospel. They do not engage in public evangelism, such as street preaching or distributing tracts. Instead, they prioritize organic, relational evangelism. One of their key initiatives, “1,000 Gospel Conversations,” encourages believers to share their faith with friends, family, and colleagues. Participants document these conversations, allowing them to pray, provide accountability, and follow up when possible. Their philosophy is simple: “We can’t create conversion, but we can start a conversation.” To further equip believers, they also offer evangelism classes, including training on how to share the gospel in Chinese.

## Mission and Goals

Their ultimate goal is to reach the nations for Christ. Living in a highly transient city presents a unique opportunity for global missions. Every year, they witness individuals from various countries—Brazil, Canada, China, Ghana, South Africa, Spain, and more—come to faith and be baptized. Most of these believers will eventually return to their home countries. Their vision is to disciple them so that they leave Beijing equipped to share the gospel wherever they go.

They have already seen this mission bear fruit. On a micro level, individuals like Markus from South Africa, who left a same-sex relationship after encountering Christ, now actively shares the gospel with others in his home country. On a macro level, they have sent out believers to plant churches in their native lands, including Kosei in Tokyo, Paul in Boulder, and Brett in Melbourne. They also anticipate launching a new church plant on the Westside of Beijing soon.

## The Community They Serve

Their community is a beautiful representation of the global church. With individuals from over 60 nations and all walks of life, their gatherings provide a glimpse of heaven’s diversity. The people they serve generally fall into three categories:

1. Those who were running from God but encountered Jesus in Beijing and now have powerful testimonies.
2. Those who grew up in church but never took their faith seriously until they found a passion for God in Beijing.
3. Those who intentionally came to China to be missional, whom they support, encourage, and equip.

## Challenges

Legal restrictions remain their greatest challenge. They have experienced police raids, arrests, deportations, and difficulties securing consistent meeting spaces. Though conditions have been relatively stable since January 2024, they remain vigilant, knowing that government policies can change abruptly. These challenges, however, serve to strengthen their faith and compel believers to count the cost of following Jesus.

## Religious Landscape

China officially recognizes five religions: Buddhism, Catholicism, Daoism, Islam, and Protestantism. Survey data suggests that China is 74% atheist, with the remaining population comprising Buddhists (15%), Daoists (8%), Christians (2%), and Muslims (1%). Due to the underground nature of many churches, exact numbers for Christians are difficult to determine, but despite the growing church, China remains largely unreached.

In Beijing, they help oversee 11 international churches, most of which are organized by language groups (Korean, Russian, French, Cantonese, Mandarin, etc.). Additionally, they maintain relationships with four or five other biblically sound international churches. However, they are cautious about certain churches that promote unbiblical teachings—such as excessive focus on generational curses or affirming ideologies contrary to Scripture.

## Common Belief Systems

Both locals and expatriates in China tend to embrace a secular, self-reliant worldview. The prevailing mindset is that success and happiness are achieved through personal effort, with little thought given to a higher power. This creates a unique challenge but also an incredible opportunity to introduce people to the truth of the gospel.

The Johnsons remain committed to making Christ known in Beijing and beyond, trusting in God’s sovereignty and the power of the gospel to transform lives.