

Lessons from Christianity in Korea

1. Past church growth or revival is no guarantee of future spiritual growth
2. Our missionaries must be well-equipped and taught good missiology
3. Not all “growth” is good growth
4. Material prosperity can often become a major snare for the church
5. The church must focus on the fundamentals: prayer, the Bible, evangelism
6. Integrity and holiness are critical to Christian witness

What about Christianity in North Korea?

- Church has been quenched since Kim Il Sung came to power (1948)
- Bible is banned, Christians are imprisoned and tortured



Questions? Send me an email at kev.js.kim@gmail.com

CHBC Core Seminars **Global Christianity**

Week 6 - November 13th, 2022



Christianity in the Korean Peninsula

Intro to Korea

South Korea

- 12th largest global GDP, 52 million people
- 20% of the population is Protestant Christian

North Korea

- One of the most oppressive communist regimes of all time, estimated 26 million people
- Estimated ~1% of the population is Christian

1800-1900: The Arrival of Early Presbyterian Missionaries

John Ross (1842-1915)

- Completes first translation of the Bible into Korean (1882)

- Ross's theological and missionary foresight

- 1) Get people God's Word
- 2) Native evangelism

Horace Allen (1858 - 1932) and Horace Underwood (1859 - 1916)

- First truly resident Protestant missionaries
- Establish important institutions: churches, schools, and hospitals

John Nevius (1829 - 1893) and the Three-Self Plan

- In 1890 is invited to speak on Nevius Method: How to establish self-propagating, self-governing, and self-supporting churches
 - 1) Converts continue living their lives in neighborhoods
 - 2) Missionaries only help establish programs and institutions that the native church wanted and could support
 - 3) The native church identifies and supports its own pastors
 - 4) Churches should be built in the local style with money and materials largely from its own members
 - 5) Intensive theological instruction for church leaders each year

1900-1910: Rapid Christian Growth and the Korean Pentecost (the Pyongyang Revival of 1907)

Japanese occupation (1894) and annexation (1910)

- Gospel hope in the midst of hardship

Pyongyang Revival (1907)

- Uniqueness of this revival:
 - 1) East Asian xenophobia
 - 2) Short time of Christian witness

1910-1950: Japanese Occupation and Soviet Communism

Persecution of Christians

- 1) Political conspirators
- 2) Shinto Shrine Controversy (1925)
 - Patriotism and idolatry

1950-2022: The Modern Era

The Korean War (1950-1953 Armistice)

- Massive destruction and casualties

Rapid Church Growth

- Doubles in size from 3% to 6% by late 1960s during recovery
- 20% of the population claims to be Protestant by 1995
- Huge increase of social and evangelistic programs in 1960s

Korean Missionary Movement

- One of the world's largest exporters of the Gospel
- 20,000 missionaries in over 180 countries (2012)

The Church in South Korea Today

- Wheat: True Gospel witness and church growth
- Tares: Prosperity Gospel and Pentecostalism
- Current trends: Secularism and young people leaving the church