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**Twelve Influential Early  
Korean Preachers**

Columbia Theological Seminary

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## Twelve Influential Early Korean Preachers

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## Foreword

"Twelve Influential Early Korean Preachers" represents a sample taste of Korean sermons and highlights the significant life of early preachers in the history and development of the Protestant churches in Korea. This is not a complete list by all means but a representation of denominationally recognized names of early Christian leaders in Korea. Over the past few years, Columbia Theological Seminary (CTS) experienced a gradual increase of Korean students studying M.Div. and other degree programs. In spite of the growing population of the Korean students in U.S. theological institutions, we do not know much about Korean context. Thus, there is much to be learned from these Korean students and what they are representing in the church growth and the challenges they are facing. And as a director of Korean American Ministries and first tenure-track professor in the history of CTS, I am facing a number of requests seeking inquiries about Koreans, Korean-Americans, and Korean Christianity from the community.

This issue is a fruit of the good works the Korean students demonstrated in the class that I taught "Korean Worship and Preaching" in Fall semester, 2013. In order to define the Korean worship and preaching, the students were assigned to research examples of historical sermons and learn from the pastors whom they respect and have influenced their lives. The choices were made crossing denominational differences upon the availability of printed sermons. We then realized immediately how little information is available in this subject matter, especially in English.

For this particular edition, I am most grateful to Dr. Jae Hyun Kim, founder and director of the Korea Institute of Advanced Theological Studies (KIATS). Because the KIATS series have introduced and translated primary Korean documents into English, the class was able to do their research in the English language. And Daniel Adams has read each paper carefully and made editorial corrections for all of the English grammar errors and also rewrote some phrases to make things more accurate and understandable. It was truly a learning experience for all and I am most grateful to each of the writers that this valuable information can be made known to a wider audience.

**Paul Junggap Huh, editor**  
**Columbia Theological Seminary**

## Yi, Gi Pung (1868–1942)

Myung Jin Chae<sup>1</sup>

*I have heard from many people that the first page in the book entitled, The History of the Korean Church, stored in The Library of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., records that a bully had struck the missionary Moffett in the jaw, but later repented, and became a missionary to Jeju Island. My father always told me this when he was alive: "It breaks my heart even now that I struck Moffett with a rock." (From Yi's daughter)<sup>2</sup>*

---

### Introduction

Yi was one of Korea's first pastors, and the first missionary sent by the Korean Church. He was led to repentance after assaulting Samuel A. Moffett, a missionary in *Pyeongyang*, in 1893, and was later baptized by W. L. Swallen.<sup>3</sup> In 1908, Yi set the cornerstone of Korean missions by going Jeju Island as the first missionary sent by the Korean Presbyterian Church to the outer provincial regions. He planted churches in *Jeju*, *Gwangju*, *Suncheon*, *Yeosu*, and other locations. In 1983, while strongly opposing the Japanese colonial government's imposition of Shinto worship, Yi was accused of spying for America and imprisoned. He was released on bail for health reasons on June 13, 1942, and died a week later in the *Wuhakli* Church.<sup>4</sup> As one of Korea's first pastors the issues and features of Gi Pung Yi's ministry and missionary efforts are very important.

### Historical background

On November 21, 1868, Gi Pung Yi was born. From childhood Gi Pung Yi was witty and wise. Many adults in the village called him a prodigy. When he was six, he readily recited from the four books and five classics of Chinese philosophy, and at the age of twelve he won first place in a writing contest with his calligraphy. He was also coarse and tough. As he grew older and more

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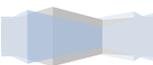
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<sup>2</sup> Sa-Rye Yi, *Missionary and Martyr: The Life and Faith of Rev. Yi Gi-Pung* (Seoul: Kiats, 2008), 73.

<sup>3</sup> *North American Presbyterian Missionary: One World Tree Ancestry* (Seoul: Kiats, 2008), 33.

<sup>4</sup> Yeosoosi Nam Myun Wuhak Li 223, Gi Pung Yi died at this church

[http://yexpo.kr/new/bbs/board.php?bo\\_table=skin&wr\\_id=45](http://yexpo.kr/new/bbs/board.php?bo_table=skin&wr_id=45)



vigorous, he began to show his ferocious side. During the *Pyeongyang* senior advisor's parade he turned around and glared at the parade leader. He ran to the advisor, grabbed him by his leg and pulled him off his horse and threw him onto the ground. Because of his vigor, he was called upon whenever stone fighting happened at his village. He hated western people, so he hurt the missionary Moffett's chin by throwing a stone. However this incident when he hurt the missionary Moffett's chin burdened to him in his life, and it caused him to turn to God's way.

In 1898, he spread the gospel around *HamKyungDo*, Northeastern province of Korea as a *gwonseo* and in 1907 he graduated from *Pyeongyang* Presbyterian Seminary in the first class. He was ordained by *Yasogyo* presbytery (Presbyterian Church of Korea)<sup>5</sup> on September 17 at *Pyeongyang Chang Dae Hyung* Church with 7 pastors.<sup>6</sup> In 1908, he was sent by the presbytery as the first missionary to Jeju Island. Working on Jeju Island until 1915, he founded 10 churches. After that he took care of *Chung Nam Kwang Ju* Church, *Soon Cheon* Church, *Go Heung* Church, and *Jeju Sung Nae* Church. In 1921, he served as the tenth moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Korea, and in 1983 he struggled to reject worship at the Japanese Shinto shrines, was arrested, and accused of being a spy for America. In 1942, since Japan tortured him intensely, his health grew weaker and he was released from prison. After a last communion service at the *Wuhakni* Church on June 20, 1942 he died.

### Relationship with Samuel A. Moffett

People called pastor Gi Pung Yi the Korean Apostle Paul. When he was a young man, he was a hot blooded man. Because of his strong character he was called upon whenever a stone fight happened with an outside village. One day he went to Missionary Moffett's house with his subordinates and damaged the house throwing the stones. And also he hit missionary Moffett's chin by throwing a stone. In addition to this, he damaged the Chang Dae Hyun church which was being built. However the incident in which he attacked missionary Moffett's chin pressed upon his consciousness and he had very hard time. One day he met missionary W. L. Swallen, and the missionary's similar appearance to Moffett made him to be very guilty. In a dream, Jesus came to him and asked, "Gi Pung, Gi Pung, Why do you persecute me? You will be the man who testifies of me." This incident made him to repent so deeply. After this incident, he went to visit missionary Swallen, apologized, and repented that he damaged missionary Moffett's house and hit his chin by throwing stones. He decided to live for God and to become a pastor in order to expiate his wrong behavior.

*Gi Pung Yi is the man who persecuted me on the Pyeong Yang Street throwing a stone to me. However, after he repent, he got baptism on 1896. When he started to be Jesus' person, he worked for sending Gospel going*

<sup>5</sup> KIATS ed., *Yi Gi Pung: Essential writing* (Seoul: Kiats, 2008), 88.

<sup>6</sup> Pastor Moffett established this church on 1893, the first church of Pyeong An Do.  
[http://kcm.kr/dic\\_view.php?nid=39594](http://kcm.kr/dic_view.php?nid=39594)

*around regions. Because he was hard worker, I ordained him such a colporteur. Now he is working as a leader. – Missionary Moffett<sup>7</sup>*

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### **Gwonseo, a Bible Seller**

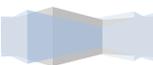
Before Gi Pung Yi entered the *Pyeong Yang* Theological Seminary, his very important achievement was that he was working as a colporteur, or Bible seller and Bible recommender (*Gwonseo*). Later after 1915, the term *gwonseo* became more popular. Under the control of Korean Bible Society, Bible sellers were in charge of the area of their work. They went into areas where the gospel had not been preached, distributed Bibles, and shared the gospel. Furthermore, traveling within the districts to which they were assigned, *gwonseos* distributed Bibles during the day and taught the scriptures and the gospel to those interested at their lodgings (either an inn or a reception room for male guests) in the evening. Therefore, the *gwonseos*' work of proclaiming the gospel made them forerunners to the missionaries. They were the advance guard for the missionaries. In the case that people showed interest in the gospel, they would set up a meeting place and establish a gospel gathering. Once the gathering grew, missionaries would come, baptize the people, and establish a church. Because the role of the *gwonseo* has never been mentioned in the history of the Korean Church, most historical books record that the establishment of the early Korean church was done by missionaries. As more people try to see the history of the Korean Church from a perspective independent from the missionaries, it is very encouraging that studies on *gwonseo* are becoming more thorough. *Gwonseo*'s activities were closely intertwined with the activities of the missionaries placed in the mission stations in each region. As shown earlier, the gospel began to penetrate Wonsan from 1892 through American Northern Presbyterian missionaries, such as Gale.<sup>8</sup> Around 1894, Swallen, another Northern Presbyterian missionary, also arrived in Wonsan and led Yi Gi Pung and others to repentance. Therefore, Yi Gi Pung moved to Pyeongyang from Wonsan around 1901 and carried out the office of a helper, assisting missionaries such as Swallen. Then he was admitted to the seminary in 1902. Although he had strong support from Swallen and Moffett for his admission, what was equally important was his experience as *gwonseo* from 1899 to 1901. *Gwonseos* did not simply sell and distribute Bibles, but because they also had to preach the gospel and lead Bible studies, it meant they had a thorough knowledge of the Bible. Because of their thorough knowledge of the Bible, experiences such as being a *gwonseo* became an important part of the qualifications for admission into the seminary.

### **Jeju Island Mission**

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<sup>7</sup> On April, 1889, ordained Korean missionary by North America presbytery. On 1890, came through Incheon Jemulpo, started his first mission at Mapo. [http://edu.ubf.or.kr/xe/?document\\_srl=494](http://edu.ubf.or.kr/xe/?document_srl=494)

<sup>8</sup> KIATS ed., *Yi Gi Pung: Essential Writing* (Seoul: Kiats, 2008), 89.



The most important achievement of Gi Pung Yi's mission is the Jeju Island mission. There were many problems to take the gospel to Jeju Island, especially island closure and the exclusive character of the island residents. Also people had strong doubts about foreign religion. These things made it difficult for Gi Pung Yi to spread the gospel on Jeju Island. The hardest thing was the ancestral rite. The ancestral rite is very important in understanding the family relationship of Jeju Island people. Usually in Korean culture, the first son has the responsibility for the ancestral rite. However, on Jeju Island, they have to have the ancestral rite called *Yoon Jae* for which not only the first son but all the sons have the responsibility. If they don't have sons, the brother-in-law should have the responsibility. This ritual meant to them that they could not make their parents as a ghost. Because Jeju Island has some special features and historical situations, shamanism and Buddhism have taken deep root. Also Jeju Island people thought that the popular beliefs are their way of salvation. Especially there were many shamans and gods of the snake, so that there were approximately 18,000 idols on the island. But Gi Pung Yi's volunteer mission that filled what the people needed was very helpful in spreading the gospel to the people. For example, he visited homes and helped with the male's role when the women went out to catch shellfish in the water, and he helped people recover from flood damage.

### The Martyr

As one may know, from 1936, the Japanese governor general's enforcement of Shinto shrine worship brought the Catholic Church and the Methodist Church onto their knees.<sup>9</sup> And also in September 1938, the Presbyterian general assembly succumbed to Shinto shrine worship by passing a resolution that Shinto is not a religion but a patriotic ritual that is not contrary to Christian doctrine. Although the Korean church had given in on an official level, from this time on, there arose a movement to oppose Shinto worship individually or in groups. The resistance movement of Rev. Yi and pastors in the *Suncheon* synod became active around 1940, and this made it impossible for them to attend the general assembly during 1940-1941. This absence was most likely due to their being arrested and detained by the police who discovered their resistance movement. As we can see from Yi Gi Pung's strife and suffering in prison, and as mentioned in his daughter's memories, it seems that the eighty year-old pastor was willing to be martyred even in this last battle. However, the Japanese colonial government did not allow him even the glory of martyrdom in jail. Released from prison because of sickness, he was taken to God in his pastoral residence of *Wuhakni* on June 20, 1942. Though he passed away quietly outside the prison, he had poured out his life before the cross, fighting righteously and alone in opposition to Shinto shrine worship to firmly uphold the integrity of his faith. By taking upon the suffering of the Korean people and the sin of the church, while choosing the thorny path of martyrdom, Rev. Yi became a living witness of the Korean Church.

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<sup>9</sup> Shintoism, also *kami-no-michi* is the indigenous spirituality of Japan and the people of Japan. It is a set of practices, to be carried out diligently, to establish a connection between present day Japan and its ancient past.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shinto>

## The Features of Mission

The Korean Church community started spreading gospel 28 years after first accepting it. This was amazing work unmatched in other countries. Even the missionaries who came to Korea to spread the gospel were surprised. Gi Pung Yi was sent to Jeju Island in 1907. While at sea, the boat was wrecked because of the strong ocean waves, and pastor Gi Pung Yi fell overboard into the water. But a female diver in Jeju found and saved him. Gi Pung Yi preached the gospel to her, and she was the first person who accepted the gospel on Jeju Island.

### *Volunteer Mission Supporting the Needs of the Islanders*

On Jeju Island usually women worked as sea divers, so there was a need for worker at the farming jobs. Pastor Gi Pung Yi helped the farming workers as volunteer so that he could be close with males on Jeju Island. Also Jeju Island's strong rainfall sometimes made serious problems. Sometimes people were in great danger because of floods, and it was really hard to save many people. However, whenever these situations arose, Gi Pung Yi jumped into the water and saved people, even though it was dangerous. His sacrifice volunteer mission opened peoples' hearts little by little to accept the gospel. Human relationship mission pastor Gi Pung Yi tried to meet and make a deep relationship with the people who were famous politically, but exiled. It endeared him to Jeju Island people as a special person. The representative person is Yung Hyo Park, who played the leading role of *GapSinJungByun*.<sup>10</sup>

When pastor Gi Pung Yi was in a very dangerous situation because of the *Hansung* newspaper incident, Park saved him from serious trouble. The *Hansung* Newspaper incident is when Gi Pung Yi left Jeju Island, he gave some information about Jeju Island people's customs to the *HanSung* Newspaper Company, and this information was printed in the newspaper. When the Jeju Island people read the article about Jeju Island by Gi Pung Yi, they were angry and tried to kill him by means of stones. Also in 1911 Yi made a deep relationship with Sung Hun Lee who was exiled because of the army school incident. Yi not only had a special relationship with high status people, but he also made deep relationships with Jeju Island people.

### *Healing Mission*

Because Jeju Island was very far from land, there were many people who struggled with diseases, and Gi Pung Yi was very troubled about it. In the beginning of his mission, he was called "half doctor" and his wife had professional medical skills. But these things were not enough for the Jeju Island people. However, his mission was settled down on Jeju Island, and support was continued from the Presbyterian Church. He could help people medically and it was very helpful for him in spreading the gospel to the people. Sometimes when there were diseases which he was

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<sup>10</sup> Park, Yeong-hyo (1861 - September 21, 1939) was a Korean *Joseon* Dynasty politician, enlightenment activist, diplomat and, during the Japanese Colonial Period in Korea a Pro- Japanese activist. See *GapShinJungByun* in [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Park\\_Yeong-hyo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Park_Yeong-hyo).

not able to treat through his limited medical skill, Gi Pung Yi healed them through prayer. Not only healing missions but he had spiritual war also. One day, he healed a crazy man who always stole people's belongings. After praying all night, he healed the person by prayer, and people thought Gi Pung Yi was the strongest spiritual person. Since that time people who were sick came to his church.

### **The Shortcomings of Gi Pung Yi's Mission**

Gi Pung Yi was prepared well spiritually, but he did not have the basic cultural knowledge of Jeju Island nor did he engage in deep exploration of the customs of the people. He started to learn by experience when he arrived on Jeju Island. In those days Yi was a pioneer missionary so it was not easy, but this shows us that such knowledge is necessary to spread gospel. Jeju Island was exempted from the Korean Churches' missionary attention and in-depth knowledge and study. Even though it belongs to same country, Korea, the language and culture were totally different, so Yi had to experience many difficult times.

An example is the understanding of the mission area. When a missionary is sent, the self-awareness of the missionary is changed in response to the reception received by the people. Because the outsider needs to approach to the receiver, the outsider missionary will encounter this problem. Therefore most missionaries did not think about how cultural knowledge influences theological knowledge. So they thought only in terms of an academic viewpoint. If they studied theology enough, they may know it is important culturally, but they do not know it practically. They learned theory about another culture, but it was not enough for them. Because they were not trained in cultural studies they experienced cultural shock. Gi Pung Yi is a case of one who was not trained well. Nevertheless, Gi Pung Yi succeeded in overcoming these cultural shocks. However, mission without enough training is seriously lacking.

### **Conclusion**

Gi Pung Yi is the minister, who was attached the modifier "first." He was one of the first Korean pastors, the first Korean missionary, and the first Korean missionary martyr. On Jeju Island where people are so exclusive and used strong dialects, he jumped into the situation of hardship with the passion of gospel. Finally the power of God's Holy Spirit appeared, and then he healed the mentally ill, sick patients, and took care of people who were poor. In the Japanese colonial era, he was tortured by Japanese officers because he did not worship at the Shinto shrines. However he did not surrender and eventually he died for his faith to God. In the face of persecution he rejected unfaithful behavior for the love of Jesus Christ. Because of Gi Pung Yi, Korean Christianity could stand, and be the strongest missionary making country the next to America. We should not forget about his passion, faith, and mind to live for God, and follow the narrow way of Jesus Christ.

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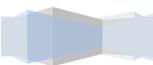
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## Gil, Seon-Ju (1869-1935)

Kwan Ho Jung<sup>1</sup>

*If we as individuals do not repent after committing sins, peace would not come into our hearts. Even when there is fighting in the family and it seems like we have chased the unrighteous person out because it did not seem that the righteous one could win, true peace will not come into the family. The reason there are fights between nations is because either side is unrighteous. If the world relies on justice and humanity but then does not behave that way, I do not think peace will come hereafter. But either way, I say it again: I sincerely hope and wish that you pray before God and seek him through these words in Psalm 85:10, "Righteousness and peace kiss each other." - From The Dawn of Peace.<sup>2</sup>*

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### Introduction

Reverend Gil Seon-Ju is a very important figure in the history of the Korean church. He played a leading role in the Pyeongyang Revival of 1907.<sup>3</sup> Through the effect of this revival, the Korean church could develop dramatically into the church to which world churches also pay attention. He started the early-morning daily prayer meetings that affected the Korean Christians dramatically. He pastored Pyeongyang's Jangdaehyeon Church for twenty years, and delivered over twenty thousand sermons.<sup>4</sup> His sermons that contain the theology of imminent eschatology played a crucial role that enabled the Korean Christians to keep their faith during the time of Japanese colonialism.

### Life journey

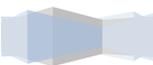
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<sup>2</sup> KIATS ed., *Gil Seon-Ju: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 201.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>4</sup> KIATS ed., *Gil Seon-Ju: Mansaseongchwi* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 15.



Reverend Gil Seon-Ju was born in 1869 in the city of Anju, Pyeong'an province.<sup>5</sup> The family was relatively well off, and he was able to study the classics. He was very intelligent, and when he was twelve years old, he wrote a sympathetic poem about a poverty-stricken woman. Until the age of 21, he was deeply interested in *seondo*<sup>6</sup> and other Eastern philosophies. However, as he met the missionary Samuel A. Moffett, he was introduced to Christianity. Inspired by John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* and other Christian books, he embraced the Christian faith and he was baptized at the age of 29.<sup>7</sup> When he was 30 years old, he became the *yeongsu*<sup>8</sup> of the Jangdaehyeon church. In 1901, at the age of 33 he was elected as an elder of the church. In 1903, he enrolled in the Pyeongyang Presbyterian Seminary and in 1907, became one among seven of Korea's first seminary graduates. In the following month, he became senior pastor of Jangdaehyeon Church.

### Reverend Gil Seon-Ju's Role in Korean church history

He was active from the 1890s to the 1930s, which were the founding years of the Korean church. As he planted six churches throughout the country and nurtured more than eight hundred pastors and elders, he helped develop the prototypes of today's Korean churches. He played a leading role in the Pyeongyang<sup>9</sup> Revival of 1907, a crucial event in the growth of the Korean church. And also he initiated the practice of early Morning Prayer services. It became one of the hallmarks of Korean Christianity. It is estimated that Rev. Gil delivered more than twenty thousand sermons, and his sermons were heard by over 380,000 people. He traveled about in Korea and China, leading revival meetings and Bible classes.<sup>10</sup>

He was not only a passionate leader and pastor, he was also deeply concerned about the fate of the Korean people and the circumstances of Japan's colonization of Korea at that time. His oldest son died from wounds sustained while being tortured under the Japanese regime, and he also acted as one of thirty-three peoples' representatives to initiate the Independence Proclamation of 1919. He was one of several good shepherds who proclaimed the hope and the comfort of a new age to his people in their time of oppression under the Japanese regime. He tried to give hope to a people sunk in despair through his lectures on the *Malsehak* (A Study of The End Times). He also had a passion for education. He started the neighborhood schools in Pandong, Pyeongyang in 1898, which grew into the Sungdeok and Sunghyeon Schools.

Reverend Gil Seon-Ju started the early Morning Prayer service in 1906 and developed the idea of praying aloud in one voice. He made Korean churches into a church of prayer. He also read through the Old Testament 30 times, the New Testament 100 times, 1 John more than

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<sup>5</sup> In what is now North Korea.

<sup>6</sup> *Seondo* is an Eastern mystical practice.

<sup>7</sup> KIATS ed., *Gil Seon-Ju: Mansaseongchwi* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 15.

<sup>8</sup> A leadership position in a church not yet officially institutionalized.

<sup>9</sup> In what is now North Korea.

<sup>10</sup> KIATS ed., *Gil Seon-Ju: Mansaseongchwi* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 15.



500 times and memorized the Revelation of John. In this way, the Bible was like a life force flowing in his body.

### **Dawn prayer**

Reverend Gil Seon-Ju started the early-morning daily prayer meetings in 1906.<sup>11</sup> In 1907, Rev. Gil Seon-Ju passed the law which approved the early-morning daily prayer meetings in his church. It is not exaggeration that Korean Christianity was able to establish due to this meeting.<sup>12</sup> Through this meeting, people were able to repent, and to pray for the personal moral change and for the Korean society. This meeting actually had an impact in changing the whole Korean society.

The early-morning daily prayer meetings in the early Korean churches had several important traits. Firstly, these meetings were never forced by missionaries. Secondly, Korean Christians attempted to pray for the country rather than for personal needs especially when they were facing difficult situations. Thirdly, regardless of their denominations, most Korean Christians participated in these early-morning daily prayer meetings. This was very helpful in uniting foreign missionaries and Korean Christians, and helped to unite different denominations among the Korean churches. Lastly, the early-morning daily prayer meetings helped Koreans to accept western Christianity in such a way that would best fit for Korean Christians. These days, the early-morning daily prayer meetings are one of the most particular and important practices of Korean Christianity.

### **The Great Revival of Pyeongyang**

The Great Revival of Pyeongyang is a very important event in the history of the Korean church. The most important man in this revival was the Reverend Gil Seon-Ju. The fire of the Holy Spirit fell upon the Jangdaehyeon Church on January 6, 1907. At that time, Rev. Gil Seon-Ju was leading a prayer. The entire congregation began to confessing their sins, and the dramatic movement of repentance took place on the spot. Headlines of prominent newspapers all over the world reported the great change of the Korean church and Korean people with the Holy Spirit. All newspapers praised the Korean church, declaring that the Korean church became a proper Christian church that could teach the churches of the world. At that time, the Korean church experienced such a manifestation of the Holy Spirit, and the Korean church became settled in its identity as “God’s church”.

### **Sermons and Theology**

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<sup>11</sup> KIATS ed., *Gil Seon-Ju: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 15.

<sup>12</sup> KIATS ed., *Gil Seon-Ju: Mansaseongchwi* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 15.

The first impression that is shown in Reverend Gil Seon-Ju's sermons is that he seemed to show the theory of "universal redemption". He preached that Jesus was crucified for the whole of humanity consistently.

*Jesus carried the totality of death and the total weight of sin on the cross, and through that universal pain of being forsaken by god due to death and sin, he uttered the song and prayer of great shout and... The cry of "lamasabachtani" that took the place of all humankind's sin shook the entire universe!*<sup>13</sup>

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This inclination of universal redemption is shown in the following sermon:

*Jesus' death was not a death of one individual but the total pain of experiencing the death of all generations and all sinners, the death of all humanity; by enduring the death of countless people in one body, it was a universal death that took the place of all the forces of death.*<sup>14</sup>

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As he used the expressions of 'universal,' 'all humanity,' and 'all generations,' he seemed to be against the "limited atonement" of Calvinism, but his thought is that the redemption is not for all humanity but for the people who believe in Jesus as shown by these expressions "knowing Jesus is the way to gain life" and "...believe the cross and gain the sure effect of salvation."

If so, why is this kind of contradiction found? The answer is that he had the fundamental tendency which interprets Bible literally. He preached surely that people can get salvation by believing in Jesus. His preaching that the redemption of Jesus reaches the whole of humanity means that every person can believe in Jesus without discrimination. That is, even though the contribution of Jesus' redemption is enough to atone for the sins of the of whole humanity, it doesn't mean that he supported universal redemption.<sup>15</sup>

### ***Confess hidden sins and pray***

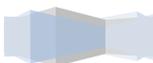
Reverend Gil Seon-Ju said that everything that is illegal in the Bible is a sin. He also preached that knowing how to behave in righteousness and not doing so is a sin, and not being obedient, and all conduct aside from faith are all sin. He thought that all people as well as Christians had a sinful nature which made sure that all people continued to sin actually. The feature of his opinion about sin is that he thought of two types of sins: general sins and hidden sins. In his opinion, general sins are small sins only superficially and hidden sins are the sins deep inside a back room. He said that the general sins can be forgiven by praying and repentance with human's free will,

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<sup>13</sup> KIATS ed., *Gil Seon-Ju: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 57.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.amennews.com/news/articlePrint.html?idxno=7856>



but the hidden sins can be forgiven only by activities of the Holy Spirit. Thus confession of these hidden sins in front of the church played very important roles in the Pyongyang Revival of 1907 in Korea. One problem in his opinion, however, is that activities of the Holy Spirit were limited to the hidden sins. It is from accepting the free will of human considerably.<sup>16</sup>

### *Imminent eschatology*

One of the important teachings in his sermons is imminent eschatology. He emphasized that the Lord's second coming must be imminent.

*The five wise virgins were prepared.... Even if you look simply at this parable, we see that his believers must always be prepared since Jesus will not come late.... It does not evangelize, nor does it even pray. Rather, evangelism or prayer is being disdained by the believers of Shinto. Who will go against it and say it does not apply to the prophecy in Isaiah 60 that.... That is why believers must look and carefully examine it biblically, or watch the omens of the times and hope in the Lord's second coming while being alert and praying.<sup>17</sup>*

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He warned that there are many believers who consider the second coming to be beyond their wildest dreams, and also criticized that many churches got involved in movements and business; as a result, they became secularized day by day.

His emphasis on imminent eschatology is from soteriological awareness to keep faith. This imminent eschatology that emphasizes Jesus' second coming encouraged movements of conservative belief and theology that focus on individual apocalyptic belief and a guiding principle in Christian's life. He emphasized individual salvation by private repentance and revival.<sup>18</sup> He also preached that people can get salvation by believing in Jesus as God and this salvation can confirm hope for next life, that is, heaven for Christians. Furthermore, he reached to the conclusion that Christians should live within Jesus Christ without compromise with the reality of everyday life. Thus because individual salvation that he insisted contains both mundane and apocalyptic dimension, it can be said that his individual salvation may play a role as the link between soteriology and eschatology in Korean church history. In the history of the Korean church, this imminent eschatology was also a significant aspect of faith. Especially in 1910, under the time of Japanese colonialism, it deeply influenced and motivated the Christians of the Korean church to overcome this challenge.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.amennews.com/news/articlePrint.html?idxno=7856>

<sup>17</sup> KIATS ed., *Gil Seon-Ju: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 80.

<sup>18</sup> <http://blog.chosun.com/blog.log.view.screen?logId=334600&userId=gogli>

<sup>19</sup> KIATS ed., *Gil Seon-Ju: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 81.

## Principle works

Reverend Gil Seon-Ju worked with unusual energy and left behind numerous works and sermons, offering a look into his theology and faith. Nineteen of these sermons were compiled and published by Choi In-Hwa in 1941 in a volume titled *The Sermons of Reverend Gil Seon-Ju*.<sup>20</sup> Many of his sermons and sermon outlines were compiled into *Gangdae Bogam (A Pulpit Handbook)*, which became the model of outline-based sermon creation for countless Korean pastors. *A Study of the End Times*, appropriate to the somber circumstances of Gil's era, has been an important work on eschatology throughout the Korean Protestant church's history. As if reflecting the role of John Bunyan's work in influencing the germination of the Korean church, Reverend Gil used his distinctive approach to the pilgrim's progress in his works *Sloth* and *Mansaseongchwi (The Attainment of All Things)*.<sup>21</sup> In particular, it demonstrates symbolically how Christianity and Korean sensibilities were combined to fit a context in which there were not yet many Christians. Rev. Gil Seon-Ju's work allows us to infer a likeness of the early Korean Church, the growth of which has been unparalleled in the twentieth century.

### *Mansaseongchwi (The Attainment of All Things)*

This work was based on a book, entitled *Sloth* which he wrote in 1901.<sup>22</sup> In *The Attainment of All Things*, he supplemented the content of *Sloth* with *sijo*, composed of five- and seven- syllable lines, revealing Rev. Gil's literary side.<sup>23</sup> This book is composed of twenty-eight chapters. In *The Attainment of All Things*, he might have an intention that the power of this book would eradicate the enemy sloth and create in our people the conception of hard work by stating clearly his hope that "the brothers and sisters who see this book will meditate on its meaning and avoid the evil of sloth, thereby achieving their lives' work during their lifetime on earth and eventually enjoying eternal bliss" in chapter one. In this book, he describes in story form from the progression from the city of Wishes to the Kingdom of Eternal Life. The story showed several characteristics particular to Rev. Gil's style. First, he presents simple explanations of Christian concepts as providing a clear representation of Jesus as God incarnate. Second, he takes Asian concepts familiar to his fellow Koreans of the time and links them to Bible verses that are unfamiliar to the people of the time. Third, using lots of symbols, he explains sloth and warns against its temptations and evils. Rev. Gil's *The Attainment of All Things* demonstrates the influence of *The Pilgrim's Progress* on the formation of the early Korean Protestant church. Particularly, he combined Christianity and Korean sensibilities symbolically to fit a context in which there were not yet many Christians in Korea.

## Conclusion

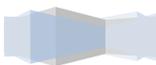
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<sup>20</sup> KIATS ed., *Gil Seon-Ju: Mansaseongchwi* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 16.

<sup>21</sup> <http://jbjoon63.blog.me/30096662769>

<sup>22</sup> The English title is *Indolence*.

<sup>23</sup> *Sijo* refers to a genre of Korean poetry.



As we have seen, Reverend Gil Seon-Ju was a foundation stone of the Korean church. He was deeply involved in the traditional Korean religious practice of *Seondo*, but he became a foundation stone in the history of Korean churches. He played an important role in the Pyeongyang Revival of 1907, a crucial event in the growth of the Korean church. He made the important framework of Korean faith and piety based on prayer and the Bible. He also participated in the foundation of the Independence Movement. He was truly a leading figure of the first generation of the Korean Protestant church. By his faith, his preaching, his orthodoxy, the Korean church could develop into a world church. He was the greatest pastor and theologian of his time. Through his works, Korean Christians could see clearly what Christianity is. He also showed that the Christian gospel is not merely a matter of heaven after death, but that it has actual relevance to the issues of all people at this very moment.

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## Kim, Ik-Du (1874-1950)

Sungyoung Huh<sup>1</sup>

*He does not command us to do anything beyond our ability. We must earnestly pray so that we do not remain as we were before, but are transformed into new persons. I wish for you to receive everything abundantly before God in fervent prayer and to give all the glory to God.*<sup>2</sup>

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### Introduction

Given the unquestionable influence of Christianity in Korea, we could not say it without Kim, Ik-Du. The Reverend Kim, Ik-Du (1874-1950), was a representative figure in the revival movement in the early Korean Protestant Church, is aptly called "The D. L. Moody of Korea."<sup>3</sup> He was noted as a revival preacher whose ministry was marked by the strong presence of the Holy Spirit and manifestation of miracles of healing.<sup>4</sup> God raised up Reverend Kim Ik-Du to begin a great work of salvation for the Korean people.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century there were patterns which appeared in the radical-holiness revival around the world.<sup>5</sup> This revival started with indigenous Christians rather than the missionaries in areas such as Madagascar and northeast India. Evangelists Gil, Sunjoo and Kim, Ik-Du pushed the Pentecostal dimensions of the Korean revivals in directions that similarly unsettled the Presbyterian missionaries there.<sup>6</sup> The Reverend Kim, Ik-Du was following in the footsteps of the pioneering evangelist Gil, Sunjoo. He is often described as the most dynamic evangelist during the Japanese colonial period, particularly during the 1920s and 1930s. Kim is also best known for his healing ministry. His healing ministry was so popular but some people didn't believe the miracle. Therefore his followers investigated the miracles and published their findings in a volume called *Ijeok Myeongjeung*.

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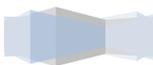
<sup>2</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim, Ik-du: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 46.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>5</sup> Jay Riley Case, *An Unpredictable Gospel* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 244.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 244.



## Background – Hermit Nation

The last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Korea was a time of attempted adjustment to a modern world.<sup>7</sup> Before that, Korea had long been isolated from all nations except China and Japan. Because of the ruthlessness of the Japanese invasion in 1592 by Hideoshi, the minds of the Korean were poisoned against all foreigners.<sup>8</sup> And Korea became the “Hermit Nation,” determined to resist every attempt of the outside world to pry open her closed doors.<sup>9</sup> Because of these circumstances, Korea restricted opening up to foreign religions.

During Joseon (Lee Dynasty, 1392-1910), Confucianism was dominant in Korean society and it had unlimited sway over the minds and hearts of Koreans. Before the Lee Dynasty, Buddhism was a major religion. Like Buddhism, Confucianism came from China through international exchange. Strictly speaking, Confucianism is not a religion, but a system of ethics, or it may be better called philosophy. Therefore there was not a strong sense of worship of a divine power even though there was still Shamanism and Buddhism, but rather a sense of moral living. This sense of morality already pervaded the people’s life and it was a huge obstacle for missionaries to evangelize Korea.

Among early missionaries in Korea, Horace Allen’s arrival to Korea in 1884 signaled the opening of Protestant missions in Korea.<sup>10</sup> Later Horace G. Underwood was soon to join Allen in Korea. At that time, missions and evangelizing were not allowed in Korea therefore they prepared to work. In 1986, R. S. Maclay reported that Christianity was allowed by the royalty. He mentioned it below:

*The success of our appeal to the king when I visited Korea was complete. The royal permit to Christianity removed all legal obstacles and the way was opened for Christian work in Korea.<sup>11</sup>*

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## Life – from Gangster to Pastor

The Reverend Kim, Ik-Du, the only son of the farmer Kim Eung-Seon, was born in the village of Pyeongchon in the district of Daewon, Anak County, Hwanghae Province (in what is now North Korea).<sup>12</sup> Kim was initially drawn to Confucian texts and Zen Buddhism, but after failing the

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<sup>7</sup> In Jong You, “The Impact of the American Protestant Missions on Korean Education from 1885-1932,” Ph.D. Thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1967, 42.

<sup>8</sup> George T. Brown, *Mission to Korea* (Board of World Mission, 1962), 5.

<sup>9</sup> L. George Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910* (Union Christian College Press, 1929), 11-16.

<sup>10</sup> Everett N. Hunt, Jr. *Protestant Pioneers in Korea* (Maryknoll, NY: Oris Books, 1980), 17.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>12</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim, Ik-du: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 13.

*Gwageo*,<sup>13</sup> government exam, and going bankrupt in a business endeavor, he turned to drink and fistfights for amusement.<sup>14</sup>

The person who made Kim to confess his sin was the wife of missionary William Swallen. One day in 1900, she propagated Christianity by distributing papers and she met Kim. She tried to evangelize him with the paper and Kim threw away the paper by wiping his nose. Therefore she said to him. “If you do like that, your nose will be rotten.” Her words remained his mind for a while and he attended the gathering led by William Swallen and he was changed.

From that day to his baptism ten months later, Kim strove to lead a holy life by restraining his words and actions, and by reading through the Bible a hundred times. Kim was also baptized by Reverend Swallen in 1901.<sup>15</sup> The following year he worked as a *jeondosa*<sup>16</sup> in the Jaeryeong and Sincheon areas, and eventually graduated from Pyeongyang Theological Seminary in 1910 to begin his official pastoral ministry.<sup>17</sup>

Beginning in 1911, the year after his graduation from Pyeongyang Theological Seminary, Rev. Kim led revival services, and began manifesting the miracles that became characteristic of his ministry.<sup>18</sup> Since his first miracle of healing, he was noted as a revival preacher whose ministry was marked by the strong presence of the Holy Spirit and the manifestation of the miracles of healing.<sup>19</sup> After this, Rev Kim, Ik-Du agreed to become a pastor at Seoul’s Namdaemun Church and the Seungdong Church. At the outbreak of the Pacific War, he temporarily suspended his ministry, but in 1946, the year after Korea gained its independence, he joined an alliance of Christians in North Korea and travelled among North Korean churches to lead services. On October 14, 1950, while coming out from an early morning service, he was shot and killed by retreating North Korean soldiers.<sup>20</sup>

### **Sermon – Passionate and Variety**

Rev. Kim, Ik-Du was not educated well. Even though he was not educated he was like an expert in biblical knowledge. Even in his eleventh year after leaving the Sincheon Church, Rev. Kim, Ik-Du continued to visit once a year to lead revival services and look over the church and the school. It would have been impossible to pastor a church for twenty-four years, then return to preach each year for eleven more years, without having an incredible knowledge of the Bible, or without being a preacher of unusual anointing. Rev. Kim’s sermons were marked by fiery passion and great variety.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The highest-level state examination to recruit ranking officials during the Goryeo and Lee Dynasty.

<sup>14</sup> KIATS ed., *Joseon Yesugyohoe Ijeok Myeongjeung* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 15.

<sup>15</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim, Ik-du: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 14.

<sup>16</sup> A non-ordained minister, or pastor’s assistant; catechist.

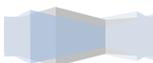
<sup>17</sup> KIATS ed., *Joseon Yesugyohoe Ijeok Myeongjeung* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 15.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>19</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim, Ik-du: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 15.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.



Through Rev. Kim's sermons, Rev. Ju Gi-cheol was moved and other great revivalists of Korean Church such as Rev. Jeong Jae-Seon and Rev. Lee Seong-Bong were also inspired. During the half-century from when he began serving the Lord, Rev. Kim travelled throughout Korea and as far as China, Siberia, and Japan. He led 776 revivals, built 150 churches, and delivered some 28,000 sermons, truly standing at the forefront of the work of saving souls in his country.<sup>22</sup> For these reasons many people gathered to listen to his sermons whenever he had a revival service even though they lived far from the place held the revival service.

### **Theology through Preaching**

Rev. Kim's sermons were generally welcomed the most by marginalized groups, such as people of low income or those suffering from physical ailments. Rev. Kim praised the virtues particular to these groups, such as humility, acquiescence, poverty, and simplicity.<sup>23</sup> Also, partly out of his own life experience, his sermons emphasized humility, sacrifice, and the dignity of the poor. His message was predominantly oriented toward life after death – he often commented that the end of the present social order would be the final judgment of God – and his vision of Paradise was enthusiastically espoused by the underprivileged.<sup>24</sup> Because the society of that period was so poor, his messages of judgment and end-times were welcomed by people. Through his messages, we can find out two main streams of his sermons.

#### ***Understanding of the Holy Spirit***

Rev. Kim's sermon, "Receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:1-12)," gives us a glimpse of his understanding of the Holy Spirit.<sup>25</sup> He preaches that a person can become a complete Christian only when he receives the Holy Spirit. Without receiving the Holy Spirit, no one can do anything. He explains the Holy Spirit as follows:

*Then, what is the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Church? Baptism means washing. Physical baptism is a sign of being washed clean with water in the name of the Father, the son, and the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is different. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is compared to fire, and the Holy Spirit is compared to a dove. This doesn't mean that a dove is the Holy Spirit. It means that the Holy Spirit is as gentle as a dove. It is speaking*

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>24</sup> Peter C. Phan, ed., *Christianities in Asia* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 222.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 21.

*about the character of the Holy Spirit. To have received the Holy Spirit as a dove means that one's character has become gentle like that of a dove.*<sup>26</sup>

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Rev. Kim also insisted that we should discern how to receive the Holy Spirit. He preached using four guidelines how we receive the Holy Spirit; (1) Temporary inspiration, (2) Outward inspiration, (3) Inner inspiration, and (4) Overflow of Holy Spirit.<sup>27</sup> Through his sermons, he emphasizes we should receive the Holy Spirit and be able to discern how to receive the Holy Spirit. By receiving the Holy Spirit, he insists people will be blessed.

*Therefore, dear Christians who believe in Jesus, I eagerly desire that through the Holy Spirit we receive all the blessings mentioned above by serving the Lord with devotion, by way of truthful prayer, and by true Bible study and obedience to God with sincerity.*<sup>28</sup>

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#### ***Law or Gospel?***

Rev. Kim used Matthew 7:13-14 to preach a sermon titled “Enter through the Narrow Gate.” and he made the following points in the opening of the sermon;<sup>29</sup>

*There is no power within the church. There is no wealth of the world in the church. There is no glory of the world. That is why the road to the church is very narrow. Once you enter the church you can neither smoke nor drink nor have concubines. Thus, that road is narrow. On the other hand, the road is wide outside the church. Since the roads are well paved and advanced, you can even travel anywhere far with the convenience and benefit of transportation if only you have money today. You can do whatever you want. The range of your activities is unlimited, and there are many roads that lead you to sin. The road that makes you sin is truly wide and broad. However, if you follow that wide road there will be destruction and submersion and no eternal life must go through the narrow gate of conversion into the church.*<sup>30</sup>

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But the final words of this sermon were, “The wide road eventually becomes narrow, and its end is death. So let's go along the narrow road, just as the Lord has taught us.” This message

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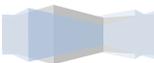
<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 110-113.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 148.



did not arise from an attitude of asceticism or legalism but it was an indication of the steps of a holy life.<sup>31</sup> Rev. Kim, Ik-Du seemed to proclaim Gospel rather than Law even though most pastors including him insist to keep the Law. This means this was an element of that period even though there were legalistic elements in his sermons.

## His Works

There are few of his writings in print in spite of his fame and influence. These are categorized in two kinds of writings. First type of writing is about his sermons and second type of writing is about his miracles.

The first is his sermon texts, published in 1924 in Sinangui Ro (The Road of Faith), and by Choe In-hwa in 1940 under the title, *Kim Ik-Du Moksa Seolgyojip* (Collected Sermons of Rev. Kim Ik-Du). The Second category is the work *Joseon Yesugyohoe Ijeok Myeongjeung* (A Testament of Miracles in the Joseon Jesus Church), which established Kim as a miracle worker. Although this book is not authored by Rev. Kim, it is an examination and published record of his achievements and is an important resource for the study of Kim Ik-Du<sup>32</sup>. Also this book is a testament to the miracles that God allowed in this country through Rev. Kim's ministry during the early days of Korean Christianity.<sup>33</sup>

## Healing (Miracle) Ministry

Korean Protestantism has had a history of revivalism, the most notable being the Wonsan revival and the "Korean Pentecost" that commenced at a meeting of Methodist and Presbyterian missionaries at Pyongyang in 1907. In 1906-10, 80,000 Koreans became Christians and there were preachers whose ministry was accompanied by miracles and healings.<sup>34</sup> Especially Rev. Kim, Ik-Du was one of the most popular preachers with Gil, Sun-Joo and Yi, Yong-Do. He was very famous for his healing and deliverance ministry.

### *Joseon Yesugyohoe Ijeok Myeongjeung*

*Joseon Yesugyohoe Ijeok Myeongjeung* (A Testament of Miracles in the Joseon Jesus Church) is a collection of the miracles manifested through Rev. Kim, Ik-Du, and which, "Through faith [...] have flowed out from Sincheon, and into all of Joseon via the Yellow Sea; such miracles of which to testify across the great expanse of East and West." These accounts were passed through the examination and research of the "Miracle Witness Committee" centered around Rev. Im Taek-Gwon of the Hwanghae Presbytery and published in 1921 by the Joseon Yasogyo Seohoe<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>32</sup> KIATS ed., *Joseon Yesugyohoe Ijeok Myeongjeung* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 16.

<sup>33</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim, Ik-du: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 19.

<sup>34</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 136.

<sup>35</sup> KIATS ed., *Joseon Yesugyohoe Ijeok Myeongjeung* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 17.

(Joseon Jesus Church Press).<sup>36</sup> About 60 photographs are included in this book. These are of the people who confessed to have experienced the miracle of healings, the pictures of revival services, and the photographs of Rev. Kim, Ik-Du.

This book carries several points of significance for the history of Korean Christianity. Concerning this, Kim Jae-Hyun mentions three points. First, the novelty with which Rev. Kim's miracles hit the early church and the debates surrounding them transformed these events into a central topic in the development of the Korean church. Second, this book points out that Rev. Kim's miracle ministry did not remain restricted to an individual sphere, but influenced the society and the culture of the time. Third, this book shows that miracles are brought about through human cooperation with God's grace.<sup>37</sup> There is no doubt that these miracles have brought revival to Korean churches, have helped believers to think more clearly about the Christianity, and led many people to repent of their mistakes. In this sense, this book has influenced our faith up to now.

### *The Characters of His Healing Ministry (Miracle)*

Rev. Kim is best known for his healing ministry and there are several characteristics of his healing ministry. First, his healing ministry was not made by himself but with God. After his ordination to the ministry in 1910, Kim performed a couple of healing "miracles," the first of which involved his wife who had a running sore on her neck. She had been treated at the mission hospital for three years, but to no avail. As the last resort, Rev. Kim and his wife prayed for several days for healing, and within two weeks she was completely cured of the disease.<sup>38</sup> Second, accounts of Rev. Kim's healing ministry had published as a volume, *Joseon Yesugyohoe Ijeok Myeongjeung* for the record. Most people do not believe the miracles and the miracles often used to be orally transmitted. On the other hand, Rev. Kim's healing ministry has still remained through the book and inspires us.

### **Contributions**

After the Sam-Il Movement, the Korean Church had a period of spiritual recession for a while.<sup>39</sup> However, there was an increase in the number of Christians in the Korean church in the following years. Rev. Kim, Ik-Du was one of the contributors to this phenomenon. His ministry made people to believe Jesus Christ through the miracles. Because of his healing ministry, there were many people who came to listen to his sermons and see the miracles wherever he had a gathering. This evangelized not only persons who had an illness but also their families. In addition, his ministry gave a power to the church to revive through gathering. As people could recover their faith, people had more concern to build churches. Whenever he had a gathering in

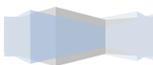
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<sup>36</sup> This press later became the Daehan Gidokgyo Seohoe (The Christian Literature Society of Korea).

<sup>37</sup> KIATS ed., *Joseon Yesugyohoe Ijeok Myeongjeung* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 20, 21.

<sup>38</sup> Peter C. Phan, ed., *Christianities in Asia* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 222.

<sup>39</sup> March First Independence Movement. The March 1st Movement, or *Samil* Movement, was one of the earliest public displays of Korean resistance during the occupation of the Korean Empire by Japan.



order to evangelize people, there was a miracle, and he said to people to pray for his ministry. He emphasized that there is nothing without prayer for his ministry. This lead people to set great store by prayer, and following famous pastors like Rev. Lee Sungbong also emphasized the importance of prayer. This might be a great footnote of spiritual leadership in Korea.

## Conclusion

Rev. Kim, Ik-Du was the greatest healing miracle pastor of Korean Protestant Christianity. He was mentioned like “A Sage of High Repute” (*Dong-a Ilbo*, No. 92) or “One of the Three Wonders of the World” (*Gidok Sinbo*).<sup>40</sup> Through books about him and his miracles, I realized that he was a person of Holy Spirit. He is not only like a lion when he preaches in revival service but also has a warm-heart toward the people. Through him, many people were healed and began to believe Jesus. This flowed into the church, and churches had their faith restored. This is what we have to do as Christians. While I was reading his sermons and his healing ministry accounts, I felt that his voice is near my ear like he is standing beside me, and his messages moved my heart. Even though he was an old man from the past, he still challenges us with his wonderful faith that was demonstrated in and through his life.

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<sup>40</sup> KIATS ed., *Joseon Yesugyohoe Ijeok Myeongjeung* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 22.

## Ju, Gi-Cheol (1897-1944)

Giuk Choe<sup>1</sup>

*Why are we Christians hesitating to abandon our lives for the Lord...?  
Why should we remain firm to the end in obedience to God's  
commandments, confronting the idolatry of the Shinto shrine at the cost of  
our lives? Without question, it is because of the idea of God-centeredness.”<sup>2</sup>*

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### Introduction

The Reverend Ju Gi-Cheol is one of the greatest martyrs which the Korean church has ever produced. Rev. Ju became influential in the theological and faithful life of the Korean church in the wake of the Independence Movement of Korea, shaping the history and belief of the Korean church, the understanding of the relationship between church and state, and the model of resistance to unjust powers. His life was a clear illustration of what one must follow and what one must resist. He left a permanent mark on the Korean church regarding the “reality of martyrdom-faith.”<sup>3</sup> In that sense, this paper will consider his life and theological thoughts by historical materials and his sermons.

### Life Journey

Ju Gi-Cheol was born on November 25, 1897. He was the fourth child of seven brothers and sisters by elder Ju Hyun-Sung in Woongchun in Kyungnam Province.<sup>4</sup> In 1913, he entered Osan School in Jeongju. This school was founded for nationalist education and here, Ju Gi-Cheol learned of faith, patriotism, and nationalism from such respected leaders of the people as Jo Man-Sik and Yi Seung-Hun. After spending three years at the school, he entered Yeonhee School, but he had to drop out of the program because of an eye disease. He then spent four-and-

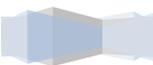
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<sup>2</sup> In-Seo Kim, *History of Rev. Ju's martyrdom and his sermons collection* (Seoul: Life of Faith, 1958), 11.

<sup>3</sup> Sang-Gyoo Lee, “Reverend Ju Gi-Cheol: The Man who loved only God for his lifetime,” in KIATS ed., *Ju Gi-Cheol: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 13-14.

<sup>4</sup> Jong Teack Oh, “The roots of Puritanism in the Korean Presbyterian Church,” Ph.D. Thesis, University of Pretoria, 2007, 129.



a-half years in hopelessness and frustration until he attended a revival meeting led by Kim Ik-Du in Munchang Church in Masan, Gyeongnam province. He had a significant religious experience at the meeting and proceeded to pursue ministry. He entered the Presbyterian Seminary in Pyeongyang in March of 1922. He graduated in September of 1925 and ministered at Choryang Church in Busan (1926-1931), Munchang Church in Masan (1931-1936), and Sanjeonghyeon Church in Pyeongyang (1936-1944).<sup>5</sup>

He took the lead in the movement against Shinto shrine worship. He was ministering at Sanjeonghyeon Church when he first got involved in the controversy surrounding Shinto shrine worship. Upon his first apprehension in February of 1938 – Pyeongyang Presbytery, which he belong to, approved of Shinto shrine worship in September, 1938 – he was imprisoned for seven years with the charge of disturbing the order and continued his resistance therein.<sup>6</sup> He suffered incarceration and brutal torture four times for a total of about seven years.<sup>7</sup> When he was imprisoned for the fourth time, the Pyeongyang Presbytery cancelled the pastoral license of Reverend Ju Gi-Cheol and closed down Sanjeonghyeon Church which stood as the symbol of resistance against Shinto shrine worship. Ju Gi-Cheol was martyred on the night of April 21, 1944 in a prison.<sup>8</sup>

## Theology and Sermons

### *God-centered Theology*

The sermons of Ju reflected his theological thoughts as well as the philosophy of his ministry. “His sermons were his confessions, his life, and his spirit sealed by his blood.”<sup>9</sup> One of the most remarkable ideas shown in his sermons was the “God-centered” theology. On September 1, 1936, he preached on the subject of *Ilsagako* (the mind not to be scared of even death) at the Pyeongyang Theological Seminary. He emphasized three points. First of all, be ready to die for following Jesus. Secondly, be ready to die for leading other souls to Jesus. Thirdly, be ready to die for witnessing the truth of the resurrection.

*Shall we live after denying Jesus? Alternatively, shall we die to follow Jesus? It is a real death to deny the true Jesus, while to die for Jesus means to live in the real sense of the Word. The time when Jesus was welcomed has past; now it is the time of persecution and suffering; let anyone who does not want to follow Jesus, go! But all those who are willing to follow Jesus are required to deny themselves.... Why are we Christians hesitating to abandon our lives for the Lord...? Why should we remain firm to the end in*

<sup>5</sup> Sang-Gyoo Lee, “Reverend Ju Gi-Cheol: The Man who loved only God for his lifetime,” 15-16.

<sup>6</sup> Jong Teack Oh, “The roots of Puritanism in the Korean Presbyterian Church,” 130.

<sup>7</sup> According to Sang-Gyoo Lee, 16, his period of confinement is as follows: from February to June 1938 (first imprisonment); from August 1938 to February 1939 (second imprisonment); from August 1939 to April 1940 (third imprisonment); from August 1940 to April 21, 1944 when he was martyred (fourth imprisonment).

<sup>8</sup> Sang-Gyoo Lee, “Reverend Ju Gi-Cheol: The Man who loved only God for his lifetime,” 16.

<sup>9</sup> In-Seo Kim, *History of Rev. Ju's martyrdom and his sermons collection* (Seoul: Life of Faith, 1958), 11.

*obedience to God's commandments, confronting the idolatry of the Shinto shrine at the cost of our lives? Without question, it is because of the idea of God-centeredness.<sup>10</sup>*

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Ju's theology of "God-Centeredness" was based upon the idea that we Christians should be ready to die to keep the first commandment. In other words, it would be "the idea of God's honor" because the reason we keep the first commandment is to glorify the Creator God.<sup>11</sup> God was always the center of Ju's sermons. The reason that he could die a martyr to God is his "God-centered" faith. He was a man who loved God "fervently."<sup>12</sup> His burning love for God is reflected in the following sermon, "Love God Fervently."

*If you look at all the prophecies, they are also the expression of fervent love towards God. The reason all the prophets admonished people with a righteous anger like fire is that people were not awake, had no fear or sincerity, and did not have fervent love towards God...Though there are a few churches around, how many do you think are there who fervently love God among the billions of church members around the world?...If God does not exist, then we must go and become atheists! But if God truly exists, then we must serve him with all our hearts and serve him with fervent love!<sup>13</sup>*

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### ***Theology of Shinto Shrine Worship Opposition***

The great heritage of Ju's life comes from his opposition to and resistance against the enforcement of Shinto shrine worship. This orientation not only determined the direction of his pastoral life but eventually formed the Ju Gi-Cheol model of martyrdom. His life and ministry run parallel to the Japanese colonial rule in Korea and its policy on religion, especially its policy towards Christianity and the subsequent persecution against the Korean church. The evangelistic faith he came to espouse truly became a source of vitality and energy that sustained him through his life.

Theologically, Ju was a strict conservative and evangelical who believed the Bible was inspired by the Holy Spirit and he adhered faithfully to the tradition and polity of the Presbyterian Church. These convictions shaped the theological basis by which he opposed Shinto shrine worship. The reason why he opposed Shinto shrine worship can be summarized in three points. First of all, he considered Shinto shrine worship as idolatry and thus contrary to God's commandment. For him, to worship at the Shinto shrine was to break the first and second commandments. This is the most essential reason he opposed it. Second, he thought that Shinto

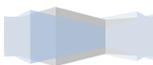
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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 14-15.

<sup>11</sup> Kyu-Chul Chung, "Orthodox reformed theology and the challenge of contemporary conservative theology," *Shinhak Jinam* 70, (Seoul, 2003), 225.

<sup>12</sup> Gi-Cheol Ju, "Love God Fervently," in KIATS ed., *Ju Gi-Cheol: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 64.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 63-67.



shrine worship was an oppression of the individual's freedom of conscience and religion. Third, he opposed it in order to keep "the purity and holiness of the church." To him, the continuous oppression by Japanese colonial rule was ultimately aimed at destroying the Korean church. Thus Ju fought in order to preserve freedom of religion and spiritual liberty as well as to maintain purity of faith and the holiness of the church.<sup>14</sup> Thus, his faith could not be compatible with Shinto shrine worship. His last sermon before he died for his Christian belief was "My Prayer: Five Supplications" based on Matthew 5:18 and Romans 8:18 and 31-39. This showed his feelings against Shinto worship.

*I am on the verge of death. The dark hand that seeks my life draws close every minute. Facing death, I cannot but pray for the strength to overcome its power. Every living thing laments before death and every human life trembles in fear and grieves before it. The power of death seems to be the devil's most powerful weapon in threatening human beings. How many people have forsaken righteousness for fear of death, and how many people abandoned their faith in order to save themselves from it?... O, my Lord! Permit me not to defile the Lord's name by cherishing this life. Let me keep the Lord's commandments even if this body shall break and become dust... Since you died for me, how can I pretend not to know you because I fear death!... O Pyeongyang! O Pyeongyang! My Jerusalem of the East, the Land of Courtesy!<sup>15</sup> Glory has left you... I shall give, I shall give this small life to the Lord. Sword, do you wait for me! I shall go forth to you.<sup>16</sup>*

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After Korea's independence from Japan, a Christian newspaper reported about the persecution of Korean Christians opposing Shinto shrine worship as follows:

*From 1938-1945, about 2000 Christians were arrested for their refusal to practice Shinto worship, and about 50 people died in prison for their faith. Rev. Ju Gi-Cheol (1897-1944) of Pyeongyang was one of the 50 martyrs.<sup>17</sup>*

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### **Eschatology**

The contents of his sermons have "apocalyptic" characteristics. His sermons are full of the conviction of the cross and the resurrection. His sermons show the hope which comes from the cross and resurrection, and this permeates his faith.

*This road of the cross is the road our Lord had taken. If you are willing to meet the Lord you must take this road. Also, this road is the one on which*

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<sup>14</sup> Sang-Gyoo Lee, "Reverend Ju Gi-Cheol: The Man who loved only God for his lifetime," 20.

<sup>15</sup> In those days, Pyeongyang was called Jerusalem of the East after the Pyeongyang Great Revival in 1907.

<sup>16</sup> Gi-Cheol Ju, "My prayer: Five Supplications," in KIATS ed., *Ju Gi-Cheol: Essential Writings*, 157-170.

<sup>17</sup> Jong Teack Oh, "The roots of Puritanism in the Korean Presbyterian Church," 132.

*you walk with the Lord. This road is the one on which you walk with the Lord. He said, "Carry your cross and follow me," so the road of the cross is the one Jesus took...Let us overcome the persons that we are and carry our own crosses and follow Jesus who is the way of life. May we receive the eternal Holy Spirit as we walk with the Lord by living piously.*<sup>18</sup>

*Those who go the Lord's path of the cross will reign with our Lord. But they will not be able to avoid pain in the world of the Devil. The world is constantly running towards the end. As a result the devotion of many people is cooling down...We must be awake, see that the road of the cross is open to us, regain our confidence, and walk that road with joy. Let us remember that the road we walk is not the one that people of the world take. The road of the cross! That is our road.*<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, his sermons show a clear understanding of life and death. This perspective of life and death not only deals with the problems of human morality and finitude, but more importantly it delineates the attitude of a faithful life in its entirety. This commitment enabled him to fight until martyrdom and resist against the unjust interference of national power. His sermon, "Preparing for Death," reflects his apocalyptic hope of heaven.

*Why do we fear death? We fear death because we are worried about the punishment that follows it...You will enter into heaven if you live your life in fear of God, and you will go to hell if you live in prodigality solely to fill your own stomach...There is no comfort but only sadness if you go the road of hopelessness. Believers will meet each other in heaven to serve the Lord and live in glory, and they will rejoice when they think of their sinless condition.*<sup>20</sup>

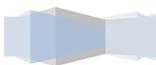
## Conclusion

Reverend Ju Gi-Cheol, who could be compared to the early Christian martyrs under great persecution by Rome, resisted and fought against the power of Japanese Imperialism in order to keep his faith and the holiness of the church. Throughout his life in his sermons, ministry, and opposition to Shinto shrine worship, he demonstrated the way of a true Christian who does not fear even death in order to obey God. Eventually, he went the path of a martyr for the glory of God. The driving force for his actions was essentially love for God. His faithful life illustrated what is loving God "with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might" (Deut 6:5, NRSV).

<sup>18</sup> Gi-Cheol Ju, "Let us walk the way of the Cross," in KIATS ed., *Ju Gi-Cheol: Essential Writings*, 46-47.

<sup>19</sup> Gi-Cheol Ju, "A prayer towards the Cross," in KIATS ed., *Ju Gi-Cheol: Essential Writings*, 52-53.

<sup>20</sup> Gi-Cheol Ju, "Preparing for Death," in KIATS ed., *Ju Gi-Cheol: Essential Writings*, 56-58.



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Oh, Jong Teack. "The Roots of Puritanism in the Korean Presbyterian Church," Unpublished PhD diss., University of Pretoria, 2007.

## Lee, Seong-Bong (1900-1965)

Chanmi Park<sup>1</sup>

*“You had five husbands, and the man you have now is not your husband.”  
Then for the first time ever, she started to feel guilty for her sinful life and  
she turned around and counted her fingers: there was man called Kim<sup>2</sup> who  
would spend money extravagantly,  
a man named Jee who had immense knowledge,  
a man named Moon who was gifted in writing,  
a man called Kwon who had fine power and influence,  
and a man named Huh who was profligate.  
As she actually counted the number of husbands whom she had lived within  
the past she could not help but bow her head before Jesus who had looked  
through her mind.<sup>3</sup>*

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### Introduction

The Reverend Lee, Seong-Bong (1900-1965) is a central figure who led the flow of the spirituality of Korean Christians in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and following. He is often called “the Moody of Korean Christianity.”<sup>4</sup> He led the revival movement, and became the representative revivalist for the whole Korean Protestant church.<sup>5</sup> He was a Holiness pastor, but his work was not limited to the Holiness Church. He went and served the small churches and the poor people. He ministered not only at orphanages and leper communities, but also at police headquarters and military bases. He also organized “the Immanuel Special Force” who moved and led together the meeting and worship services.<sup>6</sup> His speech was very powerful to the people at that time, since he added his own stories, and it reflected their folk life. His preaching always included songs whose words were rewritten by Lee himself. Also, he loved to give examples and

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<sup>2</sup> Each last name represents a type of man. Kim (金) means gold; a rich man, Jee(智) means wisdom; a wise man, Moon(文) means letters; a intelligent man, Kwon(權) means power; a powerful man, and Huh(虛) means a bluff; a swashbuckler.

<sup>3</sup> Seong-Bong Lee, “Brightening the Eyes of the Samaritan Woman,” in KIATS ed., *Lee, Seong-Bong: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 139.

<sup>4</sup> KIATS ed., *Myeongsimdo Ganghwa: The Discourse on the Myeongsimdo* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 15

<sup>5</sup> KIATS ed., *Lee, Seong-Bong: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 14.

<sup>6</sup> KIATS ed., *Myeongsimdo Ganghwa: The Discourse on the Myeongsimdo* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), pp15-16



explanation with the books which allowed the people to understand easily such as *Cheollo Yeokjeong Ganghwa*, which means “The Discourse on the Pilgrim’s Progress” and *Myeongsimdo Ganghwa*, “The Discourse of Myeongsimdo”, and *Myeongsimdo* (明心圖) means “The Drawings of the Bright Heart.” The two books were originally introduced from the western world, but they were re-written by Lee including his unique and powerful messages and easily approachable explanations.

## Historical Background

When Seong-Bong was young, Korea was under the Japanese forced occupation (1910-1945). Korea had had political turmoil through the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century from the end of the Joseon dynasty to the Republic of Korea while passing the period of the Korean Empire and Japanese Imperial Period.

However, that was also the time that Christianity was spreading into Korea. Missionaries from the western countries came to Korea, and with the evangelical movement, they built schools and hospitals. In 1907, there was a Great Revival Movement at Pyongyang. About 1,000 people had a series of meetings on the teaching of the work of Holy Spirit. In the unstable period, the revival moments had continued through the spiritual leaders such as Rev. Gil Seon-Ju, Rev. Kim Ik-Du, and Rev. Lee Seong-Bong.

On the other hand, it was a period to be challenged to hold the faith for Christians since the suppression from the Japanese Imperial forces was getting stronger upon them. There were many new converts, while at the same time some people became apostates when they were threatened by the Japanese force.

## Life Journey

Rev. Lee Seong-Bong was born on July 4, 1900, in Gangdong County, South Pyeongan Province. He explained that his parents were commoners and low-class sinners.<sup>7</sup> When his mother began to attend a church, the family became Christians when Seong-Bong was six years old. In his youth, he spent most of time working in their family orchard. His attention was only to make money. Leaving behind his mother’s encouragement, he was skipping church attendance on Sundays.<sup>8</sup>

One Sunday, when Seong-Bong was on his way home from the market, all of sudden, his legs began to hurt, and his right leg collapsed, and that time he was 21 years old. The experience led him to realize his own brokenness, and then he went through the repentance of sins in his life.<sup>9</sup> In 1925, he entered Gyeongseong Bible School, and he described that the three years was like “being shaped in a furnace”<sup>10</sup> There he learned the essence of Christian faith through the teaching of Rev. Lee Myeong-Jik. After graduating, he started his ministry as a pastor from

<sup>7</sup> KIATS ed., *Lee, Seong-Bong: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 16.

<sup>8</sup> KIATS ed., *Myeongsimdo Ganghwa [The Discourse on the Myeongsimdo]* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 15.

<sup>9</sup> KIATS ed., *Lee, Seong-Bong: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 17.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 17.

Mokpo to many other locations. In the 1930s Lee was appointed as a nationwide itinerating revivalist to resolve the problem of division crisis in the Holiness Church. He traveled the entire country, and led revival meetings while embracing all the denominations. When the Japanese authorities attempted to suppress his ministry, he even traveled to Manchuria to minister. After Korea's liberation, he came to Pyeongan Province in 1945, and later he traveled south to rebuild churches.<sup>11</sup>

## Sermons and Theology

Lee's core message was focused on the four gospel principles which were emphasized by the Holiness Church: rebirth, holiness, healing, and the second coming. It was also common throughout Korea in the revival moment period. He expressed well the popular Christianity which has been central to evangelicalism in Korea.<sup>12</sup> Also his messages came from his personal experiences, which made them more powerful. He loved to preach with stories which made the audience more approachable to the message.

### *Repentance of Rebirth*

His speech begins with the confession of sins since his life journey had been started with his experience of the confession and the rebirth. Rev. Kim Ik-Du also emphasized the importance of repentance, and Lee was influenced by him. Lee said without repentance there would be no experience of rebirth and the baptism of Holy Spirit.<sup>13</sup>

*When the light of the Holy Spirit embraces a heart, all wickedness is driven away in one's anguish and repentance. It is not a sinner that goes to hell, but it is the unrepentant that goes to hell. Repentance is the foundation of salvation and entrance to heaven. A believer once said repentance is another definition for innocence and another word for progress. Repentance is God's mandate and a condition for receiving the Holy Spirit.<sup>14</sup>*

Lee also liked to share his experience about repentance. This story appears several times in his sermons. It shows what it is like to repent, and how the life of the person could be changed through it.

*One night, while I was sleeping beside an assistant pastor, he abruptly poked me through my blanket. I woke up from my sleep and asked him what was*

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<sup>11</sup> KIATS ed., *Myeongsimdo Ganghwa: The Discourse on the Myeongsimdo* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 15.

<sup>12</sup> KIATS ed., *Lee, Seong-Bong: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 16.

<sup>13</sup> Lee, Deok-Sik, *The Revival Sermons and the Central Message*, p6 from <http://www.sungbong.org/Data/sb-treatise.htm>

<sup>14</sup> Lee, Seong-Bong, KIATS ed., *Myeongsimdo Ganghwa: The Discourse on the Myeongsimdo* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 44.



*the matter, and he replied, "Pastor, it says Peter repented when he heard the rooster cry, right? I will repent too." Then I said, "You mean, as an assistant pastor, you still have not yet repented?" He lamented, "Even though I've repented of the little things, I still have embarrassing secrets I cannot easily talk about. Pastor, I can't sleep at all at night, and I can't stand thinking about that sin." So as we prayed together waking up from our sleep, assistant pastor poured out all his hidden sin. When he disclosed the unspeakable secret sins, I was truly thankful to the Lord.<sup>15</sup>*

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Lee said to people that you should repent when the chances are given to you. He never talked that a sinner cannot go to the kingdom of God, but a person who does not repent will despair, he said.<sup>16</sup> Thus, for him, the most significant thing is to repent no matter how was your life before.

### ***The Holy Life***

He also emphasized the holy life after the rebirth. That was the central message of Holiness Church and the revival movement. His point was once a person has experienced the rebirth, the new life should be continued through the holy life. He said since the spirit of Christ is holy, you are not able to see him if you are not holy. That means if you are in the Spirit the Spirit will lead you to the holy life. Holiness is the command over the earth from God, it is also the will of the Father, and it is the right to be the citizen of Heaven.<sup>17</sup>

*The day of the Lord will come like a thief, so what kind of person ought you to be? The passage, the day of the Lord coming like a thief, can be analyzed in two ways. ... First, it means that we do not know when he will come....Furthermore, to come like a thief means that He will be taking the righteous believers, the valuable believers, and the good believers. When a thief comes, does he steal something like old diapers? He will take precious items such as gold rings and fine Jeogori [a Korean style coat or jacket].<sup>18</sup>*

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He asked what person we should be to be Christ's Bride in this message. Only a prepared and holy person can be used as a vessel that God uses nobly.<sup>19</sup> He said "Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2), and tomorrow is the Devil's day.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Lee, Seong-Bong "Let us Love the Lord," in KIATS ed., *Lee, Seong-Bong: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 42.

<sup>16</sup> Video Recording by Min, Kyeong-Bae, *The Illumination of the Revival Movement of Rev. Seong-Bong Lee* (<http://www.sungbong.org/chapel/VODlist.htm>)

<sup>17</sup> Lee, Seong-Bong "The Gospel of Holiness," in KIATS ed., *Lee, Seong-Bong: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 112.

<sup>18</sup> Lee, Seong-Bong "The Holy Life," in KIATS ed., *Lee, Seong-Bong: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 75-76.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

*...Then a very old demon in the far corner of the room stood up and called out the president of the demons, suggesting, "Why would it be so difficult when there is a uniquely clever scheme to put souls into hell? Aren't there words like, 'tomorrow,' 'later,' and 'next time'? Humans like to use these words the most and they find them comforting." At that moment, the demons unanimously agreed.*

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While he emphasized the second coming, he preached to the Christians in Korea to receive grace and open their mouth to confess their sins, to testify of God's grace, and to yearn with affection.<sup>21</sup>

### ***The Way of the Cross***

His message was centered to the cross and the grace from the cross. He said, we shall be melted by the true love of the cross of atonement: always boast of the cross with praises of thanksgiving. We shall nail the self-centeredness of our past, present and future onto the cross and bury it.

*I went back to my home village for the first time in many years as I heard the sad news that my mother had passed away. However, as the promised revival assembly date with the Manchurian church approached, I barely rested one night at home and had to leave early the next day. ...I arrived in Pyongyang and went to see my young daughters who were studying at someone else's house. ... I inevitably needed to leave, and rose up abruptly,...When I looked at their appearance as they followed me, dragging sneakers with torn off heels, revealing reddish skin through the various holes in their socks, and wrapping their ears with torn-off towels instead of wearing warm furry hats.<sup>22</sup>*

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Like this, he denied himself, while following the cross. He could not attend when his mother passed away, even though he got the message on time. He could not take care of his family, since he was leading many revival meetings. Rather, he talked about being joyful and grateful because of suffering, since small joy comes from small sufferings, and great joy comes from great suffering. Just like thorns prevent a child to pluck the lilies, the hardships and trials surrounded the believers are the hedges of God's love which protects the believers.<sup>23</sup>

### **His Works**

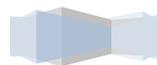
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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>22</sup> Lee, Seong-Bong "Following the Lord," in KIATS ed., *Lee, Seong-Bong: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 69.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 81.



During his lifetime, Lee published five volumes of his works.

Volume one, *Mallo Mothamyeon Jugeumeuro* [If Not by Words, Then By Death]

Volume Two, *Sarangeui Gangdan* [Pulpit of Love]

Volume Three, *Immanuel Gangdan* [Immanuel Pulpit]

Volume Four, *Bucheungui Bigyeol* [Secrets of Revival]

Volume Five, *Cheollo Yeokjeong Ganghwa* [The Discourse on the Pilgrim's Progress],  
*Myeongsimdo Ganghwa* [The Discourse on the Myeongsimdo], *Yonaseo Ganghwa* [The  
Discourse on the Book of Jonah]<sup>24</sup>

Vol. 1 is his autobiographical sketch. Also the phrase *If Not by Words, Then By Death* is well known which reflects his ministry and sermons. Vol. 2 to 4 includes his sermons, and the whole texts are found in his website in Korean text.<sup>25</sup> He liked to use some stories and examples from his compiled books. Here is an example.

*If you read The Pilgrim's Progress, Christian meets three sleepyheads on his way. Their names are Ignorance, Slothful, and Heedless. When Christian asked, "Ignorance, how can you sleep so much in such a dangerous place?" he answered, "Dangerous? What's so dangerous? ...Christian said again, "Slothful, get up!" Then Slothful replied idling, "Awww, let me sleep just a little longer." ...Heedless replied, "Hey you! Why don't you worry about yourself rather than someone else?" and continued to sleep. In today's church, you can divide sleepyheads into three general types. They sleep like Ignorance because they do not know; they sleep like Slothful, for they are indolent; they sleep like Heedless, for they are complacent.*<sup>26</sup>

## The Characteristic of His Messages

### *Telling His Story*

He did not hesitate telling his own story in the pulpit, since he passed the process of rebirth, there was no shame talking about his past, and that was his testimony. That made his sermons easier to listen to and more approachable to the audience.

### *Singing Songs*

His songs include his theology and his message. By using well known tunes, he added his own words to the songs, and sang with the people during his sermon at the revival meetings and

<sup>24</sup> KIATS ed., *Myeongsimdo Ganghwa: The Discourse on the Myeongsimdo* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 16.

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.sungbong.org/revival/revival.htm>

<sup>26</sup> Lee, Seong-Bong "The Second Coming," in KIATS ed., *Lee, Seong-Bong: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 161.

worship services. He published *Immanuel Sungga* [The Collection of Immanuel Songs] which was the collection of the songs for which Lee had been re-written the words.

*The lily beneath the mountain, Bright morning star,  
The lily in the thorn field, How beautiful and precious!  
Jesus, my Lord, Come into my heart.  
With only you, my Lord, I am satisfied.*<sup>27</sup>

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His favorite songs are kept and recorded in his website.<sup>28</sup>

### *Using Stories and Examples*

As an example of *Cheollo Yeokjeong Ganghwa* above, he liked to give stories for the understanding of audience. *Myeongsimdo Ganghwa* is one of the books he liked to use. It is a book that uses graphic illustrations to depict the spiritual life of a believer from rebirth to death. The original other of the book is J. E. Gossner (1773-1858), and it was translated by William Baird during the early years of the Korean Protestantism. Gossner was a Catholic priest, but he was excommunicated and became a Lutheran pastor. It was also translated into Malayan, the West African language of Tshi, English, Chinese, and finally Korean. Chinese and Korean texts have a very different structure from the original version. Especially, Lee added his explanation with his own words in each chapter, and added songs at the end and in between.<sup>29</sup>

### **Conclusion**

While I was reading and listening to his messages, I found out that some of the stories and metaphors are those with which I have been very familiar. I could see how powerful his influence was and is through his experience. The reasons why people gave their attention to him is he answered God's calling sincerely, and talked to us how he was following Jesus and how we could do so as well. Also, he loved his people very much by approaching them with all the tools he could bring.

Since he was very influential upon modern Korean Christianity, his simple and easy message models are still found in churches, and it brings some criticism about Lee and his message. He is represented the form of message "Jesus to heaven, and unbelief to hell," which means if you believe, you are saved and will be in heaven, but if not, you cannot be saved.

However, I believe, thanks to his Christ-centered message, the Christians in Korea could go through the political turmoil and the hardship, and could keep their faith. His powerful messages have held the spirituality of Korean Christians. Even though, he was not a great theologian, or one that gave us an intellectual message, he should be remembered again by the

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.sungbong.org>

<sup>29</sup> KIATS ed., *Myeongsimdo Ganghwa: The Discourse on the Myeongsimdo* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 16-20.



Christians in this age, because his way of life and messages shows that he was the one of the sincere followers of Jesus.

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## ***Simeon Yi, Yong-Do (1901 – 1933)***

John SongYin Paik<sup>1</sup>

*Speechlessness, humility, prayer, obedience*

*Let us make this our motto and not forget it.*

*The reason I have made 'Speechlessness' (是無言, Simueon) my nickname is to express that speechlessness is right and because I am like Simeon, who waited all his life in the temple for the Messiah and rejoiced when he finally met him.<sup>2</sup>*

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### **Introduction**

Living in a time with no certainty and with his poor health that did not guarantee a tomorrow allowed Yi Yong-do's to channel his enthusiasm into a less settling way of life and theology of lament. This led him to an intense prayer life, a search for a more powerful spiritual experience, and preaching eschatological messages to those undergoing individual crises and the crisis of the Korean nation. This enabled Yong-do to focus all his pain and suffering into tears of repentance and even gratefulness to God, and transcending all the despair into a new hope and new life of an uncertain time and era. As a result his own spiritual mystical experiences, love for Jesus Christ and those who were suffering, and his own practices of how to live a life as followers of Jesus has been transferred to those who listened to his sermons and joined his revival meetings.

### **A Time of Despair and Nihilism**

During the Russo-Japanese War in 1906, Japan initiated its occupancy in Korea claiming itself as protector of the peninsula and took over Korea's diplomatic rights as well. After years of oppression and persecution, the Korean people finally responded in a non-violent movement demanding for independence on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1919, the so called, 3.1 Movement. A huge portion of the movement consisted of young students who were yearning for their freedom and independence from the dominating occupancy of the Japanese colonialism. However, the demonstration did not succeed resulting in the death of many protestors, the persecution of others, and the imprisonment and torture of still others. This failure brought great despair to the Korean

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<sup>2</sup> KIATS ed., "Yi, Yong-Do: Essential Writings" (Korean Christian Leader Series, 2009), 93.



people eliminating any hope left. Moreover, the Japanese colonial policy, which mainly was exploiting the land and properties of the Koreans, led them into severe poverty. This left them with no more meaning for life under the cruel coercion and the society was morally decayed producing problems like alcoholism, STDs, opium addiction and so on.<sup>3</sup> It was right in the middle of this tragic era that Yi, Yong-Do was called to speak the gospel to his nation and its people.

### **Life of Suffering**

In April 6, 1901, Yi, Yong-Do was born as the third son in an average family. Despite his weak physique and emotional character, he was talented in speaking in public. His parents, on the other hand, did not have a healthy relationship. Yong-do's father who was a heavy drinker and his mother, who was a Christian, always argued about her being a Christian and going to church. Young Yong-do grew up watching his mother being mistreated and oppressed by his father because of her faith.<sup>4</sup>

When the 3.1 Movement occurred, Yong-do, who was a nineteen-year old student, joined the movement and was imprisoned for two months. A year later he was arrested again for being involved in a demonstration and spent six months in jail. And a year after that, he was put in prison for two years for being involved in the independence movement. His love for his country and his lack of patience when facing injustice caused him three years in prison with its accompanying persecution and torture. Coming back to school, his school principal, A. W. Wasson who saw Yong-do's passion for his country and leadership, recommended him to go to seminary and become a pastor.<sup>5</sup> He became one of the most impactful revival ministers in Korean history, however, was only able to speak the word of God for five years. He died when he was 33 years old.

### **Mystical Experiences**

While in school, he was suffering from a lung disease and had to take a break from seminary. During this time with two of his seminary friends Lee Ho-bin, and Lee Hwan-shin, Yong-do led revival meetings at two churches in a small town. After fervently praying and singing hymns, Yong-do went up to the pulpit to preach. Then, suddenly he saw a vision of Christ on the Cross close up to him. He started crying because of this impressive and heart touching experience. And those who were witnessing Yong-do were touched and also started crying with God's as well. After this mystical incident, Yong-do recovered from his illness and committed himself to devote his life to the Lord.

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<sup>3</sup> Sang-Hyeon Cho, "Research on the Mysticism of Yi, Yong-Do," MA Thesis, Mok-won University, 2009, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Joo-duk Kim, "The Theology of Mission for Church Renewal by Lee, Yong-do," *Theology of Mission*, Vol.19 No, 2008, 191.

<sup>5</sup> Cho, 14.

Returning to seminary with his health recovered, Yong-do was filled with confidence. He graduated successfully, and in January 1928, he was dispatched to a local church in Tongchon, Gang Won-do providence. At the beginning, however, his ministry was not going well. Because his sermons were intellectual and theological, the members of the church who were not well educated had difficulty understanding them and being touched. This made him very disappointed, so he went up to a mountain and prayed for ten days without any food or water, and this made him into a different person. He would always be praying, evangelizing, visiting homes, taking the ill to hospitals, and bring home those who were beggars. On Christmas Eve in 1928, in the middle of a vehement prayer, Yong-do encountered an evil spirit or demon. He prayed and fought with the demon all night long, and finally defeated it and it left the area. When he came back, windows were broken, walls were smashed, and there was blood on his hands and his clothes. And after this second mystical incident, his prayer, sermons, and ministry became more and more solidified.<sup>6</sup>

The next day, December 25<sup>th</sup> of 1928, the members of the church were filled with the Holy Spirit through Yon-do's sermon, feeling the presence of the Spirit, they started to repent if their sins, and since then the church began to grow rapidly. In 1930 Yong-do finally became ordained as a Methodist pastor.

### Revival, Repent, Reform

The transformation of Yong-do brought a revival in the churches in the Tong-cheon area. The churches were filled and people started to recognize his name. And after the revival meeting at Pyeong-Yang (the current capital of North Korea) Central Church, Yong-do's popularity began to grow rapidly. From 1931 to 1933 he went to more than 100 churches leading numerous revival meetings in different areas, and different denominations. Everywhere he went, the churches were filled with people and there was weeping and wailing with tears flowing down their cheeks with repentance and confession. The following is a testimony of a witness who attended one of these meetings:

*Some of our friends gathered at my house and spent the whole night crying. Ever since, these people met at my home. ...Every night we would gather and pray, praise, cry, sometimes danced until two to three in the morning or sometimes even till sunrise.*<sup>7</sup>

The first thing he shouted at revival meetings and the content of revival itself to Yong-do was repentance. The revival meetings he led were filled with weeping and crying not only from the sorrows of the people and their tragic time, but of crying of repentance from sin.

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<sup>6</sup> Yoon-Kyu Kim, "A Study on Pastor Lee Yong-Do's Mystical-Enthusiastical 'Spiritual Formation' and 'Revival Movement,'" *Theology and Praxis*, 2009, 310-311.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 313.

*The Joeson Church needs to experience revival. What the Korean Church does not have: prayer, evangelism by individuals, enthusiasm, love, courage, a heart of thanksgiving, praise, cooperation, Bible studies, a truth-seeking heart, community service, and family prayers.*

*What it has: useless gossip, useless talkativeness, criticisms, a heart that seeks only money, laziness, argumentativeness, conflict, having no heart, fear, complaints, anxiety, worries, separation, harlequin-type entertainments, a heart that seeks to gain money, envy, selfishness, instability in families.” February 9, 1927<sup>8</sup>*

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To him, revival meant repentance, and that was the first thing that had to happen individually and in the churches of Korea. He goes on talking about revival;

When there is a revival:

*First, even the vilest sinners that are filled in arrogance and evil intentions, even those that they declare that they know neither God nor their souls, even those that have become blinded by the riches of the world, will repent of their sins... there is enthusiasm, love, service, self-sacrifice, joy, satisfaction, and pleasure...there is a miracle... May 2, 1927<sup>9</sup>*

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According to Kim, Joo-duk, Yong-do’s call for revival and repentance was a call for reform of the Korean churches facing its darkest times. It was the revival of the church, and repentance of the church that he was eager to say through his revival meetings at the churches he visited. The reformation he was shouting to the Korean churches was not a systematic external reform but rather an internal reform initiated by the individual.<sup>10</sup> He refuted the churches and Christians who were attempting to avoid the suffering of the Cross:

*You churches of today that kill Jesus and only share the garments of him! You have threw away the blood of Jesus, the flesh of Jesus, and exult yourselves by merely taking the formalities, where is your foundation in your faith in Jesus? Today’s Christian demands a strange Jesus, and today’s pastor preaches a strange Jesus. When the real Jesus comes they will have to be slaughtered. They have murdered the real Jesus. They are promoting the devil as Jesus as asked by sin. Woe to the churches of today! The Jesus they*

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<sup>8</sup> KIATS ed., “Yi, Yong-Do,” 107.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>10</sup> Kim, 310-311.

*demand was a Jesus of flesh, of wealth, honor, while the real Jesus is Jesus of glory, of humbleness, of the poor; of the lowest... it is not to fit Jesus into your hearts but to fit yourselves to Jesus!*<sup>11</sup>

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However, the revivals did not leave merely positive impressions, especially to those who were serving churches in the area. The local churches and ministers were threatened since when Yong-do's time came to preach during a revival session the churches would be packed. However when it came time for the local ministers to preach the churches would not be filled at all. Also, local churches were afraid that they might lose church members or the members would anticipate a similar quality of preaching from the pastors such as Yong-do as had, which was mostly not the case. Furthermore, the shouts for repentance and reformation of churches were not pleasant to the ear in most churches nor to the ministers as well. In turn, the Pyeong-yang Annual Convention announced that he would no longer be invited as a revival speaker within the parish. The basis of their decision was that, "Yong-do is a liar, loves to be served, is a destructionist, brings disorder, and local pastors are poorly treated after his revival meetings. Therefore, we should not allow Yong-do entering our parish."<sup>12</sup>

Yong-do was also accused of being a heretic for associating with a shaman figure Lee, Yoo-shin, who was possessed with a spirit, and actually joined a shaman ritual, *Gangshin-goot*, and received a spirit. Yong-do also introduced Han Joon-myeong, who called himself the returned Christ, to others.<sup>13</sup> In 1932, Yi, Yong-do was condemned as heretic by the Presbyterian General Assembly, which led to a committee meeting of the Methodist Church to consider Yong-do's resignation as a pastor. Nonetheless, Yong-do's revival meetings were held day after day, and wherever he went the church was overcrowded by those who wanted to listen to him preach, and his sermons touched more deeply the hearts of people with eagerness and passion.<sup>14</sup>

The fruits and revival as a result of Yong-do's sermons and meetings bear witness to the highly mystical characteristics in his ministry. While no longer using intellectual or complex vocabulary but still being able to communicate the Gospel, and at the same time having those at the meetings repent and be filled with the Spirit in a short matter of time is not to be seen as normal or ordinary. Then what was the source of Yong-do's mysticism as a revivalist? Cho suggests that the source of his mysticism lies in his prayer, tears, and Christology.

## **Theology of Lamentation: Prayer, Tears, Suffering**

### ***Prayer***

When she was mistreated by her husband, it was her prayers that allowed her to undergo the hardships and struggles Yong-do's mother was facing, it was prayer that healed the lung disease

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<sup>11</sup> Kim, 323.

<sup>12</sup> Cho, 24.

<sup>13</sup> Kim, 330.

<sup>14</sup> Cho, 26.



he was suffering from, enabling him to study at seminary, it was through prayer that he met Christ and was filled with the Holy Spirit, it was through prayer he defeated the evil spirit during the night long battle, and it was prayer that transformed everything in his life. Prayer was everything to him in his faith, ministry, and life.

*Prayer is my joy, my meaning, my life, my duty. Without prayer there is no joy for me, no existence for me, no life for me, and no good for me. Prayer is my life and my movement. It seems like there is no better work than prayer...*<sup>15</sup>

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According to Cho, prayer to Yong-do was not simply pardoning to God but rather was a mystical and creative place where one's life was reborn. Yong-do called this the Exchange of Life.

*Whenever we enter into prayer, we must find our unrighteousness and give this to him as a price in order to earn the precious life of the Lord. Like that person who sits and waits for people to exchange money at the exchange booth, the Lord's spirit, namely, the Holy Spirit and the angels await us at the fate of the spiritual world; when we enter with our unrighteousness held in our hands, they welcome us and greet us with the abundance of life. We are moved by his love and grace that we shed warm tears and sing praises of gratefulness; because of his affectionate treatment, we are not even waiting of the night passing by, engaging in the deep communication what this and that words.*<sup>16</sup>

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In a letter to his close friend, Yi Deok-Bong, he also gave practical instructions how to pray:

*First, you should pray every early morning (between 5 and 6 a.m.)  
Second, you should pray in the woods or the field if at all possible  
Third, you should pray first for your own holiness, your family, for the salvation of your people, and then the salvation of humankind. Afterwards, pray your own supplications.*<sup>17</sup>

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### **Tears**

As mentioned at the beginning, when Yong-do was little he was an emotional boy, moreover, he has lived a life of tears. His tears from his mother and family, tears of losing his country, tears of

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>16</sup> KIATS ed., "Yi, Yong-Do," 131.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 106.

the suffering of the people, tears of his personal illness and sorrows. However, his tears did not remain as of pain and sorrow, but escalated into tears toward Jesus Christ, tears of awe, tears of gratefulness, and tears of grace. His tears enabled people to share their tears and cry out for God's mercy and grace, ask forgiveness, and give thanks. One day during a service, he wasn't able to speak because he lost his voice from crying out in prayer. This was written in his journal:

*I cannot speak. The word of God is not coming out of my mouth. My sermon is swirling in the center of me. It is tormenting me. I only cry for I cannot speak. These tears are my sermon. I lift my hands with all my strength for I cannot speak the words in my core. These hands I lift are my sermon.*<sup>18</sup>

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Yong-do's tears were a more powerful communicating medium than rhetoric. The people who gathered at the church all had lost everything, their country, property, families, dignity, and hope. Who would not cry in this stage of their life and in history? Through Yong-do's tears, people were feeling Christ crying with them and comforting them at the same time.

### **Suffering**

It is seen that Yong-do's life had a turning point at the end of the summer in 1929, seriously entering into mysticism. His faith journey and worldview before and after this point shows difference that is he no longer shows signs of trouble or instability he had shown before, at least appearing in his journals and other's writings. In his journal on August 23, 1929 he wrote:

*I who was wondering finally found my way... that way could be difficult to find, and easy to find at the same time, and I have wasted half of my life on the roads... the way is the way Jesus has walked. I am to simply trust and follow that way. Though others call me, "being behind times," or "outdated," or "stupid," I will none. Instead, I will consider those words as supreme glory, since it is persecution following the Lord. Till now, I have greatly lived a world of another. I was too afraid of the eyes of others. From now on, I am willing to be a 'Jesus-holic'. I will fanatically believe... It is unbearable to take compliments from the world for being smart while my life is lethargic... O, Lord, allow me to follow only you at any level you allow me to. Amen.*<sup>19</sup>

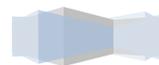
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Such as Paul did, Yong-do was a Christ suffering mystic who chose the way to death as one who lives in Christ and for Christ. Participating in the sufferings of Jesus Christ was the essence of his faith, joining the life Jesus lived, accompanying the way to the Cross, and on the

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<sup>18</sup> Cho, 24.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 31.



Cross. And this is why it was so important for him to follow and imitate the way of Jesus. In order to follow the way of Jesus he has made his motto based on the life Jesus has lived:

*Suffering is my teacher: there is more to learn from suffering when it comes than when I am in comfort, and I am able to learn truth. Poverty is my beloved wife: Poverty does not leave me, as my beloved wife would not. I cannot but love pitiful poverty rather than proud wealth. Lowliness is my palace: I should not be situated somewhere up high, my mind should always humble itself and stay somewhere low. Hence lowliness always becomes the palace in which I live. It is a time when everything is resolved when one likes suffering, poverty, and lowliness.<sup>20</sup>*

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Although, he was shouting for repentance and reform, at the bottom of his heart was the deep love of Jesus Christ he experienced and was eager to share with others. Even before his mystical experiences, he was an emotional child, who loved his mother, and loved his country, and his friends and so on. After his spiritual experience his love has focused to Jesus and the body of Christ, the church. And there are numerous stories of him taking care of the ill, poor, and young. His love for Jesus has spread to loving his neighbors as well. One reason, Yong-do was associated with the heretical figures introduced above was that he considered them, despite their beliefs and ways, to be also created in God's image and he believed that he did not have the right to rebuke them, while he understood their place being ostracized by the churches and denominations.

Yong-do had a mystical experience of uniting in Christ of love or unification of love. His goal was to experience the suffering Lord by himself and become one in a mystical, blood related fusion with Christ. He attempted to unite with Christ mentally by experiencing his pain. Therefore imitating Jesus' life was just a part of his many efforts in becoming like Christ. To him, other religious institutions and formalities were secondary, compared to meeting and experiencing Christ and having fellowship with the living divine through faith, love, and prayer.

## Conclusion

Today there are various opinions and views on Yi, Yong-do, especially whether or not he was a heretic, a non-church destructionist, or a mystical egoist who lived in his own mind. Looking back, it is hard to agree with these views of criticism when we look at the results and fruits he has left for today's church. They are anything but heretical, where churches have grown unprecedentedly, and his love was never contained within himself. At the end of his short life, Yong-do was a founding member in establishing the Joseon-Jesus

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<sup>20</sup> KIATS ed., "Yi-Yong-Do," 91.

Denomination, which has been heavily criticized for not being coherent with its emphasis on unity of the body of Christ. However, this is again hard to follow since he was not in any sense initiating the establishment, very ill, and to be fair he was almost banned to preach the word of God in both the Methodist and Presbyterian churches leaving him very few places to preach.

Living in a time with no certainty and with health that did not guarantee a tomorrow may have pushed his enthusiasm into a less settling way of life and theology of lament, leading him to pray more intensely as well as seeking for a more powerful experience, and sending eschatological messages. However, this actually enabled him to focus all his pain, and tears of suffering into tears of repentance and thanks to God, and transcend all the despair into a new hope and new life. Moreover, this experience, love, and life was transferred to those who listened to his sermons and joined his revival meetings.

Fighting for the freedom of his country, shouting the truth to the churches knowing that he will be disliked and disfavored, and living the most humble life not only as a pastor, but also as a human being, Yi, Yong-do must be a figure close to a saint, or a prophet. One of the most common sermons Yong-do would give was how to live as a true Christian, and introduce biblical characters as an example. He explained their virtues and how we should and could be like them. But there was no better sermon that he gave than by showing a life of those of the biblical forbearers himself.

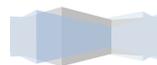
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## Kim, Gyo-Shin (1901-1945)

Hyoung Gu Yang<sup>1</sup>

*Seongseo Joseon! You shall go to the house of Israel; do not pass through the hand of so-called established Christian; shake dirt off from your shoes at the door of the house whose owner worships foreign missionary more than the Christ and value a church building more than the Bible. Seongseo Joseon! You shall go to Koreans who have Korean spirit rather than to so-called established Christians! Go to countryside, to mountain villages; make it your mission to comfort a woodcutter. Seongseo Joseon! If you have so much patience, wait for Koreans born after the date your initial issue was published, and talk to them, discuss with them; why shall I heave a sigh of despair just because we are to meet fellow thinkers after a century is passed?*<sup>2</sup>

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### The Life of Kim Gyo-Sin and Historical Background

Kim Gyo-Sin was born on April 18, 1901 into a distinguished Confucian family in Hambeung, South Hamgyeong Province. Having graduated from Hamheung Public Agricultural School in March of 1919, he participated in the March 1<sup>st</sup> Liberation Movement that year. His experience in that movement would have been an occasion in which he newly recognized himself as a Joseon person.<sup>3</sup> Years later, he went to Japan to enter the Tokyo Advanced Teaching School. At this stage, he agonized over the decision between the Confucian way of self-cultivation and Christian salvation as a means to achieve self-perfection. He was finally baptized and converted in June of 1920 at a Holiness church in Tokyo. But disappointed at the conflict in his church, he left it in November 1920. While in a state of inner turmoil, he started to attend Uchimura Kanzo's Scripture Research Group from January 1921.<sup>4</sup> Upon arriving in Japan in July 1927, he launched the journal *Seongseo Joseon* (*Scripture Joseon*, 1927-1942) with Ham Seok-Heon, Song Do-Young and three other members of the Joseon Scripture Research Group. Through this

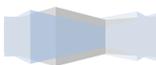
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<sup>2</sup> Kim Gyo-Sin, "Introduction at the Launching of Seongseo Joseon," (July 1927)

<sup>3</sup> Joseon is the name of Korea's last dynasty (1392-1910). It used to mean "Korea" or "Korean" until the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>4</sup> Uchimura Kanzo (1861-1930) was a Japanese author, Christian evangelist, and the founder of the Nonchurch Movement of Christianity in the Meiji and Taisho period Japan. He regarded Christianity as "Jesus Christ who lives and is always with us." He tried to understand Christianity not as a historical structure, but rather a spiritual mindset that demolishes that historical approach from the inside and continuously renews itself.



journal, Kim, Gyo-Sin spread Christianity based on a Non-Church position, while at the same time deepening his own thoughts to argue for a uniquely Joseon Christianity.

As a result of the “Seongseo Joseon Incident<sup>5</sup>,” he was interrogated by the Japan government, and he was imprisoned for a year. After his release from prison in 1944, he could no longer teach or evangelize, so he entered the Japan Nitrogenous Fertilizer Factory in Heungnam and worked as the chief of the housing office for Joseon employees. Even there, He focused his efforts on the improvement of their lives and the development of their character. Even under surveillance, he taught the Korean alphabet to the workers. While nursing a worker infected by typhus fever, however, he was infected himself, and he eventually died.<sup>6</sup> By understanding suffering not as meaningless toil imposed on the powerless but as “creative labor” through which the injustice of the world is purified, and by willingly bearing this burden Kim Gyo-Sin was a dramatic witness to Jesus Christ.

### Christian Thought of Kim Gyo-Sin

#### *Distinguishing the essence from the ceremonial tradition of Christianity*

A distinct feature of Kim Gyo-Sin’s Christian thought is, most of all, the fact that he strived to distinguish the essence from the ceremonial tradition of Christianity to minimize the practice and give maximal emphasis on the spirit. He thought that the core of Christianity lay in the liberation from self and the world to become a truly free being by connecting directly to God. Thus, he believed that the essence of Christianity was not the form, but the spirit, which lay in dynamic relationship between God and each believer. If the systems, rituals, and clergymen of the church existed without this spirit, it was nothing more than a shallow religious hobby. So he understood that it was none other than Luther’s Reformation which focused on this essence of Christianity and maximized the directness between God and the individual believer.<sup>7</sup>

*I regret to say that the faith of today’s church is dead. Its orthodoxy is but a lifeless form and its progressiveness is only secularism. The church is no longer the body of Christ, the salt of the world, or the refuge for the lonely soul. It is no better than a cultivation center or a cultural institution.... But at least Christianity must not fall into formalism or worldliness. Was Christ not crucified in order to eliminate that very formality and worldliness?<sup>8</sup>*

#### *Joseon Christianity*

He thought it was shameful, and was not afraid to criticize Korean Churches as they were

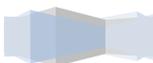
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<sup>5</sup> On the pretext of “Jowa (A Condolence for Frogs),” an article in the March 1942 *Seonso Joseon*, the colonial government arrested Kim Gyo-Sin and his colleagues for participating in the independence movement. Because this article, “Jowa,” means that the Joseon people are frogs and the Japanese government policy severe winter.

<sup>6</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim Gyo-Sin: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2008), 12-19

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-20.

<sup>8</sup> Kim Gyo-Sin, “Return to a God-Centered Faith,” (December 1935)



strongly influenced and began to imitate the structures of foreign mission organizations. Kim Gyo-Sin strongly opposed the Korea church turning into some branch office of a foreign mission organization. His thought of Joseon Christianity is well mentioned in “the introduction at the launching of *Seongseo Joseon*.”

*At that time, I felt as if I heard a voice: “No matter what you do, you are a Korean! Ah! How can there be any other phrases which have more endless meanings than those? Understanding those, everything was hopeless, and everything was finished. At that moment, my vision focused clearly on one target, and the target was clearly God. I cannot dare to boast that I love Korea, but I believe I understand what relationship there is between Korea and I; how can I confront people who will laugh at slowness and tardiness of me.”*<sup>9</sup>

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So Kim Gyo-shin thought that as the Lutheran Church and the Methodist Church had emerged from Germany and England respectively, the Korean church also needed to develop its own form of existence independent of foreign missionaries. He believed that because Koreans, just like westerners, were noble beings created in the image of God, God wanted Koreans not to be ashamed of their own history and tradition but to directly connect themselves to God and creatively improve their inherited tradition.<sup>10</sup> In this sense, when the Japanese regarded the Korean Peninsula as an inferior location, rather he noted that the location of Joseon is not unfavorable but it has a lot of merits at “Joseon Jiri Sogo”:

*As discussed in detail, we should be content and thankful for having wonderful country, considering geographical factors such as geographical Units, area and population, mountains and coastlines, God’s gift of ideal climate, and the central location of a historical stage or a scene. Korea is definitely adequate to provide high standard of living and she can be a center stage that can contribute much to world history.... The fact that there were not much peaceful times proves, without any doubt, that Korea is centrally located in Asian political arena. Korea is an insecure place to seclude oneself from the world, but an ideal place for one to play an active part in world affairs....Only the primary cause of the problem depends on people who live there; their quality and courage are important factors.”*<sup>11</sup>

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Also he did not hesitate to severely criticize and challenge Joseon Christianity which was

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<sup>9</sup> Kim Gyo-Sin, “Introduction at the Launching of *Seongseo Joseon*,” (July 1927).

<sup>10</sup> KIATS, 16.

<sup>11</sup> Kim Gyo-Sin *Joseon Jiri Sogo* (A Brief Study on Joseon Geography: March 1934).

dozing off in the midst of Western thought and institutions. The reason he published 158 issues of *Seongseo Joseon* in a course of 16 years, wrote “Joseon Jiri Sogo” to discuss the place of Joseon and his hope in the history of salvation, and published Ham SeokHeon’s “History of Joseon from a Biblical Perspective” was part of his effort to search for a form of existence for Joseon Christianity that could, by maintaining a national identity, firmly enroot itself in the traditional history of Korea.<sup>12</sup>

*The Spirit Christ actualized in lives*

Kim Gyo-Sin thought that one of the key elements of faith was for individual believers to manifest the spirit of Christianity in their lives. For him, it was crucial that we transform our own lives by making our every single move rely on Christ, who continuously tries to engage in conversation with us through Scripture. To thereby benefit our neighbors with overflowing honesty and purity, and to make peace with others through calmness, joy and an unyielding will of hope, we ought to be witnesses of the power of Christianity by actualizing this spirit of Christ in our lives.<sup>13</sup> He severely criticized the believer who did not practice the instruction of the Bible:

*If we ask a believer today for what purpose he believes in Jesus, one might answer probably that one does so in order to be washed of his sins and enter into eternal life. But the truth is, rather, aren't there more of those who say that they believe in Jesus for the improvement of their lives, to gain reputation from others, for self-cultivation or for social businesses?...Though people may say they want eternal life, it is nothing more than the greed of an old man on his deathbed and meaningless words to young adults. What is it other than perverted greed, wanting to enjoy all the glories of this world like the non-believers enjoy but wishing for additional blessings in heaven, of which the non-believer takes no part? What is it other than empty words to say that though the body dies, our soul will remain and be fulfilled afterwards?<sup>14</sup>*

Moreover, he emphasized that it is extremely dangerous to evangelize only with words. Only the “evangelization of existence,” which was expressed through the believer’s life, was true evangelism. His thought is revealed well in an essay on “Evangelism through Being.”

*The spreading of Christianity is not done by beautiful rhetoric or phrases but by the cross and the power of our Lord Christ, who has risen from the dead. This Biblical principle especially applies to the generation that wanders about*

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<sup>12</sup> KIATS, 21-22.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>14</sup> Kim Gyo-Sin, “Return to a God-Centered Faith”, (December 1935).



*in the streets witnessing for Christ, which is only the form of Christianity. This is not age in which we should witness the gospel through sermons or the so-called gospel tracts, but we have confronted a time when we must testify through the entire being of the believer.*<sup>15</sup>

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### ***Prophetic Christianity***

He realized that in true Christianity, the gospel, and prophecies were not mutually exclusive, but must coexist with equal value. This is so because those Christians who have been transformed into truly free persons who can love others in the gospel cannot help but criticize and resist any unjust reality that interferes with this principle of freedom and love.<sup>16</sup> We can find out his prophetic and resistance spirit through the opening column of “Jowa” in *Seongseo Joseon* (March 1942):

*Early one rainy spring morning, the ice chunks between the rocks finally began to melt. I lowered myself to look into the pond and see how the frogs were doing, and alas, I could see two or three dead frogs floating around. I presume that the catastrophe happened due to the severe cold of last winter which froze the pond down to its very bottom. It is because parts of the pond froze which usually do not. After gathering the dead ones and burying them, I saw two frogs crawling around near the pond. Ah, it seems they, at least, have avoided extermination!*<sup>17</sup>

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We can see in this essay that he regarded true Christianity as a spirit that claims war against all enemies of the truth in response to the movement of the age and setting. That is, he objected to the idea of religion merely being a means to securing inner freedom. Moreover, true Christianity must take the role of a prophet who fulfills his calling as a good steward and realizes his responsibility in relation to his neighbors.

### **The Non-Church Movement of Kim, Gyo-shin**

The non-church movement is an indigenous Japanese Christian movement which was founded by Uchimura Kanzo in 1901. The non-church Christians agree with Uchimura that there is a basic distinction between “ecclesia” and “church.” Etymologically, “ecclesia” refers to an

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<sup>15</sup> Kim Gyo-Sin, “Evangelism through Being,” (October 1937).

<sup>16</sup> KIATS, 22.

<sup>17</sup> Kim Gyo-Sin, “Jowa- A Condolence for Frogs”, (March 1942) In reference, the Japanese Governor-General’s office claimed that the essay was an allegory of Korea and Japan, with the frogs representing the Korean people, and the bitter winter symbolizing Japan’s imperial policy, and that the essay presented a veiled declaration of Korea’s future resurrection. On the basis of this accusation, Kim Gyo-Sin, Ham Seok-Heon, Song Du-Yong, and 13 others were imprisoned, and some 400 readers were questioned. This became known as the “Seongseo Joseon Incident.” Because of this incident, *Seongseo Joseon* could not be issued.

assembly or congregation of believers, whereas “church” or “Kirche” refers to a temple or chapel. So the non-church Christians believe that Christ intended to create the former, an informal spiritual community rather than a major institutional system.<sup>18</sup> Also, Uchimura viewed Christianity as “Jesus Christ who lives and is always with us.” He tried to understand Christianity not as a historical structure, but rather a spiritual mindset that demolishes that historical approach from the inside and continuously renews itself. Kim Gyo-Sin called Uchimura “the one and only great teacher,” and considered Uchimura’s understanding of Christianity “the true gospel.”<sup>19</sup>

Such are the reasons why Kim Gyo-Sin had chosen a Non-Church theory. This theory advocates a minimalistic form of lay Bible study groups based on a simplified faith and Scripture, leaving everything else in a state of simplicity and nature. He argues his thought of Non-Churchism against the opposite of it.

*But what we learned from Uchimura over a period of ten years was the Bible, not Non-Churchism. We have learned the gospel. Even if in his mind there was the intention to establish and accomplish the Non-Church Movement, what I learned was not Non-Church theory or belief but the truth of the Scripture.... Some say the inherent mission of the Non-Church Movement is to attack the established church, but my Non Churchism is by no means so... We refrain from such grand thoughts of church reformation but only try to follow in the footsteps of Christ by learning the truths of Scripture and disciplining ourselves with whips. If you nevertheless want to call it Non-Churchism, go ahead.<sup>20</sup>*

For him, Non-Churchism was the way to maximize the spirit and simplify procedures so as to not overlook the main essence. Kim Gyo-Sin said that his Non-Church theory “entrusted the entire life of the Christian to Christ,” and was a “complete Christianity” which tried to live by the standard of Christ with God as the center. At the same time, his Non-Church theory was the spirit of criticism and protest against everything that obstructed its motivation and practice.<sup>21</sup> He explains an essential meaning of his Non-Churchism to the proponents of the Churchism:

*It was Luther’s Protestantism and Mr. Uchimura Kanzo’s Non-Churchism that protested against the so called “the proponents of the Churchism” who advocated the omnipotence of the church and declared that there is no deliverance outside the church. They argued, instead, that there is indeed deliverance outside the church and claimed that it was not a matter of*

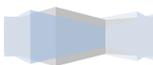
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<sup>18</sup> Carlo Caldarola, *Christianity: The Japanese Way* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979), 50.

<sup>19</sup> KIATS, 13.

<sup>20</sup> Kim Gyo-Sin, “My Non-Churchism,” (September 1936), quoted from KIATS, 117-118.

<sup>21</sup> KIATS, 20-21.



*church affiliation but a matter of faith. Therefore if Roman Catholicism had not become corrupt through Churchism, Luther's Protestantism would have been unnecessary, and if the new church had not fallen into a state of abnormality due to church supremacy, there would have been no need for Non-Churchism. Non-Churchism is also called "the full Christianity."<sup>22</sup>*

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In this sense, we can assess his Non-Churchism pursued to find out an initial spirit of Church not enclosed by institutional formality. Needless to say, even Kim Gyo-Sin acknowledged the necessity of a minimal formality in the church, in the gathering of people with limited knowledge.

### Assessment of Kim Gyo-Sin

Kim Gyo-Sin was a solitary heretic in the Korean church while he was alive. *Seongseo Joseon*, which was written in prayer and blood in his spare time in teaching, had no more than 400 subscribers. Even today there are denominations that disapprove of the Non-Church theory, calling it a heresy which denies the church.<sup>23</sup> Then today why do scholars research his thought and life?<sup>24</sup> Why do we still commemorate him?

First, his Christian thought and life always bear the responsibility of history, maintaining an apocalyptic hope. Kim warns that it is a serious misunderstanding to think that Christianity includes mysterious trickeries to indulge God's favor through predicting one's fortunes. He insisted that Christians should be commonsensical persons who would suffer insecurity rather than be relieved in false peace, and awakened persons who agonize in awareness rather than live in vain paralysis. And if a Christian happens to fail trying to fearlessly live a life of universal justice, they can fail in security because Christianity is a religion that has overcome death.<sup>25</sup>

Second, he tried to pursue an essential feature of Church. For him, Non-Churchism was the way to maximize the spirit and simplify procedure so as to not overlook the main essence. Through his Joseon Non-church Movement, we will be able to discover the keen subjectivity of the faith and thought of Kim Gyo-Sin, who tried to distinguish the essential and universal spirit from Japanese formality even in Non-Church theory, and to subjectively uphold it as a Joseon Christian.<sup>26</sup>

Third, he tried to connect the two themes of faith and the nation. For him, Christianity was a formative power of creative history which transformed the history of Joseon so that it could anticipate the justice and mercy of the God who "preserves the self-existence of the weak," and manifest and testify to it in history.

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<sup>22</sup> Kim Gyo-Sin, "A Discussion of the Withdrawal of the Title Non-Churchism," (May 1937), KIATS, 119-121.

<sup>23</sup> KIATS, 23.

<sup>24</sup> According to <http://dl.nanet.go.kr/SearchList.do>, master and doctoral thesis about Kim Gyo-Sin is over 70 pieces in Korea.

<sup>25</sup> KIATS, 25.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 26.

## Conclusion

The Korean Church boast about 10 million Christian members and has sent out the second highest number of missionaries, next to the United States. Compared to the 400 thousand Protestants in Kim Gyo-Sin's lifetime, it has grown considerably. But unfortunately, we can hardly find witnesses of the spirit and power of Christianity in such a large church. Though he died, his many essays and words are saying to today's Christians: Do you keep purity and honesty in your heart and in your lives? Are you properly serving this beautiful creation of God through a service of love? Is your spirit of Christianity alive and active? We had to be encouraged and learn from predecessors of faith, such as Kim, Gyo-Sin.

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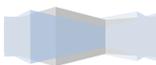
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<http://www.biblekorea.net/index.html> Homepage of Kim Gyo-Sin's essays



## Han, Sang-Dong (1901-1976)

Chan Hyung Chang<sup>1</sup>

*My prayer was as follows: 1) Help the corrupted pastors under Japanese rule become renewed by establishing a retreat center, 2) Raise pastors who would share their fate with the Korean Church based on truth by building a seminary, and 3) Build a church by raising evangelists.<sup>2</sup>*

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### Introduction

At the Yoido Full Gospel Church Rev. David Cho has been sued for misappropriation of church money. At the KumNan Methodist Church Rev. Kim HongDo has transmitted by heredity the church to his son. At the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea, a manager Rev. Hwang KyuCheol threatened the people in the meeting with a gas gun. At the SamIl Church Rev. Chun ByungUk has been sued for sexual misconduct. Heredity, moral issues and violent behavior are all current issues in the church which have been criticized by both believers and non-believers.

All the pastors mentioned above once positively influenced the people in and out of the church and they all had been the leaders who were representative of the Korean church. However, if looking at the latter part of their lives and recent behavior, many people admired them not for a life of gradual sanctification but criticized them for a life of deterioration. It's not simply individual problems but it's the barrier to cover the glory of God. It also makes the honor of Christianity fall to the ground.

Accordingly many pastors and those who have consciousness of faith lament deeply concerning such a reality and speak out through the Church Restoration Movement. However the way to restore the church is sometimes a matter of conflicted among them and in the worst case ethical violations appear even among the reformers. The intention is good but if the way is wrong it makes the situation even worse.

In the era of Korean church history following liberation from Japanese imperial rule and the Korean War, there were also the same difficulties and problems among the churches and

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<sup>2</sup> KIATS ed. *Han, Sang-Dong: Korean Christian Leaders Series* (Seoul: Kiats, 2009), 202.

Christians. Under the abuse of power of false ministers, apostasy, the split of churches, and illegality and corruption arose. The same problems as in recent days existed then, and also there was a Church Restoration Movement. But there was a different way and mode of life for the Church Restoration Movement through the efforts of Rev. Han Sang-Dong, who worked in the Church Restoration Movement his entire life. Rev. Han Sang-Dong had a correspondence between his sayings and his life. Although the contents of the sermon and the teaching of a preacher is good if the life of the preacher doesn't follow his saying, it weakens the message of God. Rev. Han Sang-Dong is a good model of the Church Restoration Movement, who showed the correspondence between saying and life. Such a true Christian is needed at this point in the churches today.

### **Life and Background**

Rev. Han Sang-Dong was born in 1901, but in his early age he was adopted by his uncle, so he wasn't cared for by his original parents. Han Sang-Dong spent his childhood in DaDae port and he was very solitary then, but his adoptive parents were wealthy, so he financially had no difficulties.

When Han Sang-Dong was 7 years old, he began to study Chinese literature in SeoDang.<sup>3</sup> In 1910 Han Sang-Dong entered DaDae practical school for studying modern learning. On February 10, 1916 Han Sang-Dong entered DongLae high school after DaDae practical school for six years. At that time DongLae high school was one of the top schools. Han Sang-Dong needed to study more and made a decision to study abroad in Japan. However his parents were against his study, and at last he stopped studying.

In May 1918 Han Sang-Dong became a teacher in DaDae practical school, which is his alma mater. From then Han Sang-Dong had experience to teach. Han Sang-Dong was financially stable, and he married Kim ChaSook on May 31, 1921, and he spent his time as a teacher.

In spring 1924 the day of change came to Han Sang-Dong. Park ChangGeun, who was the minister in the church then, evangelized Han Sang-Dong, and the next year in 1925 Han Sang-Dong was baptized and he became a Christian and devoted himself to the church life.

In 1926 because of the matter of sacrificial rites for ancestors, Han Sang-Dong was excommunicated from his adoptive parents and even from the Han's clan.<sup>4</sup> Because of his faith about Ten Commandments, especially the second one, idolatry, later it became the motive against Shinto shrine worship.<sup>5</sup> In September 1927 he transferred his job to JinJu GwangLim school. He, however, had a passion for spreading the Good News, so after one year he quit his job and went to KyungSeong Pearson high Bible school for study.

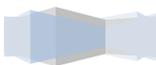
Han Sang-Dong began to evangelize in HakLim-ri, HaIl-myun, Koseong-kun, South KyungSang province in March 1929.

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<sup>3</sup> A private school for the study of Chinese classics.

<sup>4</sup> Sacrificial rites are still very important for non-Christian Koreans.

<sup>5</sup> The shrine of Japan gods who founded Japan.



Through the support of the women's mission union in South KyungSang province, Han Sang-Dong began to evangelize, but there wasn't remarkable achievement. In 1931 Han Sang-Dong moved from KoSeong to SamRyang, and he once again began to evangelize, but because of a flood he had difficult times, so that year he moved to JinKyo, HaDong-kun in South KyungSang province and cultivated the church there. For the cultivating of the JinKyo church, he went to a mountain to pray, while praying, he experienced the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, his church revived. At that point Han Sang-Dong made a decision to study theology and left to go to seminary in PyeongYang in 1933. When Han Sang-Dong graduated from the school in 1936, he was serving the Cho Ryang church in Pusan. In 1937 he had a calling from MunChang church in MaSan as a successor to Rev. Ju, Gi-Cheol.

When he was serving MunChang church, he was ordained by the presbytery of South KyungSang in 1938. After this event Han Sang-Dong began to speak out to those who hadn't kept loyalty toward God with worshipping at the Shinto shrines, and for his movement the congregation of his church was suffering from the pressure of the Japanese government. But the congregation willingly accepted such a suffering in order to keep their purity of faith, Han Sang-Dong encouraged that movement. For this movement, he was put in jail by the Japanese government in 1940.

### **According to his chronology, the core of his faith and sermon**

#### ***Forty's, 1940-1945, In Prison***

*My ministry is now a restoration movement of the Korean Church, and the movement is about leading repentance of wrongdoing under Japanese politics, and prayer life as well as being a prophetic voice. Another thing is to produce pastors who would sacrifice for the Korean Church by establishing a seminary.<sup>6</sup>*

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His saying above is reinforcing his calling and his task for the future while he was in jail due to his rejection of Shinto shrine worship.

As I said in the beginning, based on the Bible, Shinto shrine worship is to disobey the second commandment of Ten Commandments, and the rejection of Shinto shrine worship is one of the basic of virtues of a Christian. Thus he was faithful to the Bible. Han Sang-Dong thought how to deal with those who seemed to apostatize through Shinto shrine worship which broke the basic commandments as a Christian.

Han Sang-Dong never thought of forsaking those who were in apostasy, rather he wanted them to repent and to be changed entirely. Accordingly while he was in jail, he planned to found a kind of monastery<sup>7</sup> in which the corrupted pastors under Japanese politics would be trained and

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<sup>6</sup> Kiats ed. *Han Sang-Dong: Korean Christian Leaders Series*, 203.

<sup>7</sup> It didn't come true in real.

renewed. Another plan was, instead of PyeongYang Theological Seminary, to found an alternative seminary in order to raise and train the candidates who stand on the truth of the Word of God. Later on that was the very motive of the foundation of Goryeo Theological Seminary. And the last one he desired was to cultivate a church in which the truth would be delivered and the lay person would be raised and trained.

Han Sang-Dong showed the example like one of the prophets in the Old Testament, Elijah who was against the false prophets even before death. It was taken for granted by him that pointing out it was wrong that many pastors disobeyed the word of God through Shinto shrine worship, and he was never afraid of any pressure and persecution.

***Fifty's, 1955, Determine to Encounter Loneliness While Doing a Christian Movement***

*What does a Christian movement mean? It's a movement that shows God to men. If not, it will be satisfying to live a spiritual life individually. There won't be any need for a Christian movement. Who will show our people of the Korean Christendom the living God of Yahweh? Do you know your mission, students? Are you trying to show Jehovah God to men with the things everyone can do, after having secured manpower and money? My hope is that you would become like the lonely Elijah who had fire come down on the altar in his fight against the 850 prophets of Baal.<sup>8</sup>*

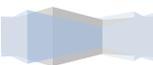
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In prison Rev. Han Sang-Dong made a decision to found a seminary in which the faithful servants of God would be raised and trained. The writing above is well reflected through his decision and his life. Through the story of Elijah, who were alone against many false prophets, Han Sang-Dong strongly extorted his students and at the same time he encouraged them with the ultimate Elijah's victory. In the beginning of his writing Han Sang-Dong said that the human person was too weak to live alone, so had to gather together for more power, and the key of success in the world depended on the number at my side, and those things could give people a place in the higher status in the society but that was not the real success as a Christian. Thus Japan insisted that one body of the nation of Japan was the ideal model of powerful nation in the world. But at last that was proven false by Japan's defeat of war.

Ultimately, Han Sang-Dong said that no matter who one believed or not, the destiny of our life was under the sovereign of God. In other words, if the pastors, who had responsibility to deliver the truth, forsake their consciousness of their faith, and if they choose the logic of this world, at last they will end their life with tragedy as the other cases which have appeared in the Bible. If one make sure that a religious movement is right, even alone, and even against many, but bravely and putting trust upon God, then finally one would achieve the victory like Elijah.

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<sup>8</sup> Kiats ed. *Han Sang-Dong: Korean Christian Leaders Series*, 136.



***Sixty's, 1960, Faith is the Life of Hope***

*Man is a creature of hope. Without hope man is filled with despair. Hope isn't seen in the world of animals. They just go on surviving. They live by instinct. But man lives with a hope.....when we live in hope we don't live as we please. They are always cautious. They live a life of self-control. They live a life of patience. They live a life of discipline. They live in love.....Dear congregation! I hope that you all become people who hope for the kingdom of heaven. Let's live putting our hope in the eternal life rather than putting the purpose of life in the world. When we put our hope in the next life we can live bearing any difficulties of this world.<sup>9</sup>*

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When Han Sang-Dong was getting old, close to the latter part of his life, he was telling about not the loneliness of his struggle for keeping his faith, but telling about where our life ultimately was heading for. It is the very putting one's hope in the heaven. If one puts hope in heaven, it would draw the one so as to live as God want she or he to live, not according to the worldly desire. Rather, if the one puts hope in heaven, then his or her life naturally would be drawn to the one who God wants to live. As Han Sang-Dong said, when we put our hope in the next life we can live bearing any difficulties of this world. "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." Like Romans says, to those who are waiting for the upcoming glory, although there are difficulties to enter the glory, they have power to overcome any kind of difficulties and can endure all sufferings for hope.

And also the writing above is reflecting the difficulties at that time, it was written around 1960 right after Korean War. At that time, to those who were suffering from extreme poverty, the purity of faith and all kind of good stories were not effective at all to the poor. To them their poverty was their reality and the gaining of wealth was their only concern. Han Sang-Dong couldn't solve the problem of poverty for them, but showing them the ministry of Jesus, telling them the ultimate message of Jesus was also about the good news of the kingdom of heaven. Thus Han Sang-Dong focused on this message, the kingdom of heaven.

***Seventy's, 1975, The Will of God and the Will of Human***

*We Christians should first think about the will of God and the word of God before we think about our own thoughts, opinions or will. The reason is that putting God first is the most correct way of thinking, the most unregretful way of doing things, and the way to happiness. If there is a wish for Christians, it is to fulfill the will of God. Jesus also demonstrated that his wish was to fulfill the will of God.....I see believers stop at nothing to*

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 68-70.

*accomplish their will or intention and fall victim to temptation. Why would they insist on fulfilling their will that wouldn't benefit themselves or others before God even if it becomes actualized? The reason is simple. It is because of corrupted sinful nature.....I am certain that when we abandon our will and contention and think God's will only the Christians world and our country will become brighter and peaceful.<sup>10</sup>*

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The above sermon was written at the end of his life. At that time in Korea there was the movement of *SaeMaEul*.<sup>11</sup> All the people in Korea tried to do the best to achieve a better life. All the people in Korea then had a strong will to do no matter what if they live well and escape from poverty. No matter whether believers or not, their only concern was wealth, and they only focused on the result, not the procedure and whether it was morally wrong or not.

The essence of religion is to know God's will toward the world. If a person wants to know and find the value of a human being, without knowing God's will, we can't become a faithful believer and have faith in truth. Not following the way to fulfill our own desire, although we were suffering and we had losses, we should find and follow God's will, and furthermore we should live for the glory of God and live for our neighbors. Then we can find hope and fruit of our life, he said. Han Sang-Dong emphasized that the will of God was the motive of the purity of faith, the power to endure solitary and the courage for keeping faith from all kind of temptation.

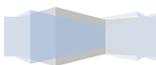
## Conclusion

The sermon of Rev. Han Sang-Dong is not hermeneutical nor a logical sermon and it is difficult to categorize his sermon to a specific class. However, one thing is certain that the message of his sermon was powerful, for it was transformed and digested in his language through his life. As I mentioned in the beginning, the sermon is effective and powerful when the preacher's life supports the sermon. Rev. Han Sang-Dong is the one of the most influential pastors, as a pastor, a preacher and a spiritual leader in the most troubled era of Korean church history. Moreover, he kept his loyalty to God, but to those who didn't keep loyalty to God, and to those who had the abuse of power, he never competed and spoke out with the same way and life of their secular ways. To him, the Church Restoration Movement is the life not saying. Rev. Han Sang-Dong always embraced all the people whether they were wrong or not. He never judged others but rather loved them for the unity of Christ's church, yet he was responsible for the first big split in the Presbyterian Church of Korea and that his desire for reform actually meant that his new Koshin denomination became the smallest of the major Presbyterian denominations in Korea and the one most marginalized in terms of ecumenical relations.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 37-39.

<sup>11</sup> Movement for "Live well", the movement was the stepping stone to have achieved the development of recent Korean economy.



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## Son, Yang-Won (1902-1950)

Soo Kwang Lee<sup>1</sup>

### *Nine Thanks<sup>2</sup>*

*I thank the Lord for producing sons of martyrdom from the blood of a sinner like me.*

*I thank the Lord for choosing me, among so many believers, to have the privilege of caring for these beautiful treasures.*

*I thank the Lord for letting me offer up my eldest and my second eldest sons, the most beloved of my three boys and three girls.*

*They say it is precious to have a son who is martyred. Still more, I thank the Lord that my two sons were martyred together.*

*They say it is blessing [enough] to believe in Jesus and die a peaceful death, but I thank the Lord for letting my sons be shot to death while carrying out the work of evangelism.*

*My sons were preparing to study abroad in the U.S. but I thank the Lord, because my heart is relieved to know that they went to heaven, a better place than America.*

*I thank the Lord for giving me a loving heart with which to lead my enemy to repentance and embrace him as my son.*

*I am thankful, believing that the martyrdom of my two sons will bear countless fruit of heaven.*

*I thank the Lord for allowing me to recognize God's love even in adversity and for granting me faith to overcome.*

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## Introduction

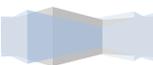
There were two main events that shaped the life and martyrdom of Rev. Son Yang-Won. The first was living with leprosy patients as a pastor at Aeyangwon. He brought down the wall of social isolation and discrimination against people with leprosy. The second was rejecting Japanese Shinto shrine worship and opposing communism to the end of his life. Indeed, this resulted in his two sons' death in the incident known as the Yeosu Uprising<sup>3</sup> in October of 1948

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<sup>2</sup> Yang-Won Son, Selected by The Korea Institute for Advanced Theological Studies (KIATS), *Son Yang-Won: Essential Writings*, (Seoul Korea: The KIATS press, 2009), 194-95. This was written by Pastor Son Yang-Won after suffering the loss of his two sons during the Yeosu uprising that broke out in October of 1948, while Son was leading a revival meeting at the Aeyangwon church.

<sup>3</sup> This incident was basically conflict between the democracy-based faction allied with the U.S. and the communist



while Rev. Lee, In-Jae, who had been in jail together with Son for opposing Shinto worship, was leading a revival meeting at Aeyangwon.<sup>4</sup> The older son, Dong-In, and the younger son, Dong-Sin, who were attending Suncheon High School and Suncheon Junior High, were killed by a group of left-wing students led by An Jae-Seon.

I believe that Rev. Son's theology expressed in his life has a lot to do with Luke's theology, which can be summarized as two main themes "Resistance to Roman imperial theology"<sup>5</sup> and "Social gospel" for several reasons. First, both Rev. Son, Yang-Won and Luke's Gospel continually focus on the resistance to imperialism. Rev. Son was consistently resistant to Japanese imperialism and communism, and Luke's Gospel implicitly shows the opposition to Roman imperial theology. Second, both Rev. Son and Luke's Gospel emphasize the social mission of the gospel for minority groups. Third, Rev. Son Yang-Won shows his obedience to God as a martyr as Jesus did in the gospels. In this way, Rev. Son might be the one of the memorable Christians who fully followed Luke's theology though he did not realize it.

## Historical Background

Rev. Son, Yang-Won (1902-1950) was born in 1902 and died in 1950, living a short life of only forty eight years. During his lifetime, the social and religious situation of Joseon (the former title of Korea) was such that the strength of the traditions of Confucianism and Buddhism could no longer provide a way out of crisis. In this historical context, Son inherited the Presbyterian faith from Presbyterian missionaries, his grandfather, and father. Moreover, he gained knowledge of eschatological spirituality from Rev. Gil, Seon-Ju, the experience of being born again and the assurance of salvation through Rev. Nakada Juji, and learned the social responsibility of the Christian gospel from Uchimura Ganzo. Furthermore, he modeled the eschatological faith and martyr spirituality of Rev. Ju, Gi-Cheol.<sup>6</sup>

The faith that was formed and conditioned in him was preserved as a pragmatic orientation that would never be shaken throughout his life. Indeed, in the span of four generations, Rev. Son's family produced one elder (his father), three ministers (himself, Son Mun-won, and Son Eui-Won) and three martyrs (Son Dong-In, Son Dong-Sin, and himself).<sup>7</sup> As a student-pastor, Son worked in the capacity of an itinerant external-pastor in affiliation with

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faction allied with Russia after the establishment of the Republic of Korea on August 15, 1948. From this time on, the American regime began a military operation against the communists in South Korea. However, this incident occurred when a battalion, consisting predominantly of communist sympathizers, attacked the Yeosu police station, massacred civilians, advanced as far as Suncheon and overtook the Suncheon police station.

<sup>4</sup> Chong-Soon Cha, *Aeyangwon and Martyr of Love: Son Yang-Won*, (Seoul Korea, The KIATS Press, 2008), 40.

<sup>5</sup> Roman imperial theology incarnated in Caesar was formed in the sequence of "religion, war, victory, and peace," or "Peace through War," as Crossan summarizes in his article "Roman Imperial Theology." in *In Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*. In other words, the Roman imperial theology can be summarized as "the stronger prey upon the weaker" in the law of the jungle.

<sup>6</sup> Chong-Soon Cha, *Aeyangwon and Martyr of Love: Son Yang-Won*, 33.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

Gyeongnam Presbytery from 1926 to 1932 and served as a minister-in-training at Pyeongyang Neungnado Church from 1935 to 1938. After that, he was appointed as the senior pastor of Aeyangwon Church from July 14, 1939 and had been serving in that capacity for a year and two months when he was arrested by the Yeosu police after a Wednesday night service on September 25, 1940. He was incarcerated there until August 17 of 1945 upon the liberation of Korea from Japan. Following his release, he was reappointed to the pastorate and ordained by Gyeongnam Presbytery in March of 1946. He remained in his pastorate until he was taken into custody by the Yulcheon security office of the Yeosu police station on September 13, 1950.<sup>8</sup>

### **Rev. Son's theology and Luke's theology**

Then, what is the key idea of his life and ministry? I believe that the life of Rev. Son Yang-Won can be categorized in two main themes: the first is "Resistance to Japanese Imperial theology and communism" and the second is "Social responsibility of the Christian gospel." Basically, his resistance to Japanese imperial theology can be found in his anti-Shinto shrine worship, and his opposition to communism could be revealed in his two sons' death and his own death. Interestingly, these two major themes in his life seem to be closely connected with Luke's theology, which also can be summarized as "resistance to Roman imperial theology" and "social gospel."

#### ***Resistance to Imperial Theology***

First, both Rev. Son, Yang-Won and Luke's Gospel place stress on the resistance to imperial theology, which can be understood as the sequence of "religion, war, victory, and peace," "Peace through War," or "the stronger prey upon the weaker" in the name of emperors. Specifically, Rev. Son, Yang-Won's resistance to Japanese imperialism was explicitly revealed in his opposition to Shinto shrine worship in the 1930s and his anti-communism was shown in his two sons' death and his own death after the independence from Japan. Indeed, Shinto shrine worship was the typical policy concerning imperial theology with regard to the religious issues after the Sino-Japanese War in the 1930s. Interestingly, Japanese imperial theology expressed in Shinto shrine worship seems to be associated with Roman imperial theology incarnated in Caesar with the phrase "Peace through War." Indeed, Rev. Son Yang-Won's theology about Shinto shrine worship was easily found in his various letters during his time in prison and in the police interrogation records, and the record of his trial as follows:<sup>9</sup>

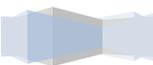
*Q: What are your complaints to Japan?*

*A: It is the coercion of Shinto worship. The Shinto shrine is a place of offering sacrificial rites to Cheonjodaesin, the first ancestor of the royal*

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 155.



*family, and for that reason, I say it is a form of idolatry...In Christianity, it is unrighteous for Christians to offer sacrificial rites to their own ancestors...We are commanded not to have any other gods...Therefore, the government's policy forces Christians to commit the sin of serving two gods, which Christians regard as unrighteous. It is the single greatest violation of God's will and, for this, the severest judgment of God will fall upon the emperor in the time of God's judgment.<sup>10</sup>*

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Here, Rev. Son explicitly expressed his objection to Shinto shrine worship by saying that the Japanese emperor would receive the severest judgment from God in due time. Also, Rev. Son instructed his son, Dong-In not to participate in Shinto shrine worship even if it meant being expelled from school in his letter to his son.

*And make sure that you don't send Dong-In to school on the day of Shinto worship. Don't let him bow before any shrine. And even if the school finds out about this and says they will expel him from school, please ask Dong-In not to bow, for we can never bow to the Shinto shrine. We cannot do this, for this is against the Second Commandment. Please talk this through with my father as well.<sup>11</sup>*

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Also, Rev. Son's rejection of communism is closely related to his opposition to imperial theology, because communism also can be defined as "Victory through War," and it denies the Triune God. Rev. Son fasted and held meetings every day so that the patients of Aeyangwon would be infected by God, not by communism.<sup>12</sup> Finally, Rev. Son and his two sons were executed by communists. For Rev. Son, his death meant the fulfillment of the promise he secretly made to his sons upon their deaths. He had been living the last two years of his life looking forward to the realization of that promise. At the same time, his death was the fulfillment of what he preached in his messages throughout the period of Korean War.<sup>13</sup> His radical opposition to communism can be found by Lady Oh Martha, the wife of Rev. Cha Nam-Jin, senior pastor of Jangcheon Church at the time as follows:

*During the Yeosu Incident, a large number of people from Chicken Head Village were taken into custody. Originally, this village was the home of the Choe clan and also contained many communist sympathizers. In other words, the majority of men in this village had been killed during the Bodo League*

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<sup>10</sup> Son Dong-Hee, *In-Prison Ministry of Rev. Son, Yang-Won, the Martyr of Love*, 184-85.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 40-41.

<sup>12</sup> Chong-Soon Cha, *Aeyangwon and Martyr of Love: Son Yand-Won*, 196.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 199.

*incident, thereby reducing the population to women only. The communist contingents that suffered greatly during the Yeosu incident rose up in violence in the wake of the 6.25 invasion. Rev. Son requested that I come to Aeyangwon, saying, "Let's all die as martyrs. Let's die."<sup>14</sup>*

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Similarly, Luke's Gospel implicitly shows the opposition to Roman imperial theology. Indeed, Jesus' ministry in Luke's Gospel should be understood in the context of the conflict between the Roman Empire and the Galilean and Judean people. This can be shown in several episodes in Luke's narratives: Jesus' birth and infancy stories, Jesus' exorcism, and Jesus' proclamation of kingdom of God. First, the story of Jesus' birth and infancy narratives in Luke reveals the author's intention that Jesus was born to challenge the Roman imperial order. Unlike the other Gospels, the story begins with the mention of Caesar Augustus' decree (Gaius Octavius ruled as *Caesar* or *Emperor* from 31 BCE to 14 CE, and was acclaimed *Augustus* in 27 BCE) that all should be registered. In fact, the author of Luke-Acts is the only person who refers to the Roman emperors by name: Augustus (Luke 2:1), Tiberius (Luke 3:1), and Claudius (Acts 11:28; 18:2). It is worthy to note Ringe's saying, "In occupied Palestine...Peasants and artisans like the carpenter Joseph would have paid more than half of his income consumed by the various levels of Roman taxes, with the yearly tax due to the temple adding to the burden."<sup>15</sup> In this way, the Roman Emperor was oppressing the struggling people, and Joseph was forced to return with his wife to his hometown Bethlehem, which he or his parents probably had left because of hardship to make a living there. In this context, Jesus is born, and Luke describes Jesus as the Messiah, the Lord, and the Savior against the oppressive empire at his birth (2:11).<sup>16</sup> Indeed, given the fact that all the titles "Divine, Son of God, God, Lord, Redeemer, Liberator, and Savior of World" belonged to Caesar the Augustus before Jesus ever existed, as Crossan points out,<sup>17</sup> the expression "Savior (σωτηρ)," only used in Luke's gospel (1:47; 2:11) among the synoptic Gospels, could carry a radical voice. This shows that Luke depicts Jesus as the alternative and real Savior or Lord in opposition to Caesar. In fact, this kind of Luke's intention is also shown in the songs of Mary (1:46-55), Zechariah (1:67-79), and Simeon (2:29-32)

Next, the episode of Jesus' healing of the Gerasene demoniac (8:26-39) is the biggest example where exorcism might symbolize the defeat of general demonic forces such as the Roman troops. Here, the name of the demonic forces is revealed by Jesus (8:30), "Legion," which was the Roman army unit of approximately six thousand soldiers and an equal number of support-troops. Ringe says it might symbolize the occupying forces whose presence meant the loss of control over every dimension of the society to residents of the Roman Empire.<sup>18</sup> In

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>15</sup> Ringe, *Luke*, 41.

<sup>16</sup> "to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord (NRSV)."

<sup>17</sup> Dominic Crossan, "Roman Imperial Theology." in *In Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*, Edited by Richard Horsley, 73.

<sup>18</sup> Ringe, *Luke*, 120.

addition, the herd of swine rushing down the steep bank into the lake and being drowned is strongly reminiscent of the Exodus destruction of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea. Interestingly, the name of the demons in exorcism cults among East African people were usually from foreign forces, such as "Lord Cromer (the British general)" or "Kijesu (symbolizing the overall force of the Christian mission)" according to Horsley.<sup>19</sup>

Also, Jesus' proclamation of the "kingdom of God" in Jesus' saying should be understood in the socio-political and economic context. The most notable passage about this issue might be the so-called Beelzebul controversy (Luke 11:14-23; cf. Matthew 12:22-30; Mark 3:22-27). Here, the treatment of Jesus' exorcism is closely linked with the presence of the kingdom of God, and it might further imply the liberation of the people of God from oppressive imperial rule. The notable expression is in verse 20, "But if it is *by the finger of God* (*ἐν δακτυλῷ θεοῦ*) that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you." Given that Matthew's version of the story in 12:28 says 'But if it is *by the Spirit of God* (*ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ*),' Luke's expression 'the finger of God' looks unexpected because Luke usually tends to focus on the Spirit. Yamazaki-Ransom claims that the expression "by the finger of God (*ἐν δακτυλῷ θεοῦ*)" is an allusion to Exodus 8:15 (NRSV v. 19), where Moses and Aaron confront Pharaoh's magicians by producing gnats.<sup>20</sup> Here, the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God!" This is where the expression "the finger of God" is first used in the Old Testament and Moses overpowers the Egyptian magicians for the first time, for in the previous plagues they imitate Moses' miracle. In this way, Luke's use of the expression 'the finger of God' in the Beelzebul controversy adds a political voice to the cosmic conflict between God and Satan, as Yamazaki-Ransom points out.<sup>21</sup> Also, the following parable (Luke 21:22) concerning the strong man (parallels in Matthew 12:29 and Mark 3:27) strengthens Luke's political voice. The meaning of the parable seems clear: the strong man refers to Satan, and the stronger one is God/Jesus. However, Luke seems to connect intentionally the conflict between God/Jesus and Satan with the military and political context by using words such as palace (*αὐλή*), conquer (*νικᾶω*), full armor of heavy-armed soldier (*πανοπλία*), and booty (*σκυλον*) while the Markan and Matthean parallels have domestic household imagery. From this context, I agree with Horsley's argument that for Luke the conflict between two kingdoms is not just a spiritual battle, but connotes the earthly political context under Roman imperial domination.<sup>22</sup>

### ***Focusing on Social Mission for the Oppressed***

Second, both Luke's theology and Rev. Son's theology focus on social mission for minority group. Rev. Son's concern for the minority group was continually expressed in his ministry for

<sup>19</sup> Richard A. Horsley, "Jesus and Empire." in *Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*, Edited by Richard Horsley, 85.

<sup>20</sup> Kazuhiko Yamazaki-Ransom, *The Roman Empire in Luke's Narrative* (New York: T&T Clark International. 2010), 99.

<sup>21</sup> Kazuhiko Yamazaki-Ransom, *The Roman Empire in Luke's Narrative*, 99.

<sup>22</sup> Richard A. Horsley, "Jesus and Empire." in *In Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*, Edited by Richard Horsley, 86.

leprosy patients at Aeyangwon. Especially, he was honored by the patients at Aeyangwon because of his integrity as a person of both faith and action. This episode might be the good example for this:

*At that time, Aeyangwon was divided by barbed-wire into two sectors and the public had to get permission from the patient sector in order to enter. In addition, even the session conference room for Aeyangwon Church, which was located in patient sector, was divided...When Son was newly appointed, however, not only was the partition screen removed, but he also freely moved about in and out of patients' living quarters. At the time, there were individuals among patients who functioned as nurses, and due to the stench, even they were reluctant to go in and out of the rooms of those patients in intensive care units. Impervious to the risk of infection or stench, Son moved in and out of patients' rooms. From time to time, he would tell the story of Father Damien and say, "Honestly, I wish I could live with you all." He did not worry about getting infected by the disease.<sup>23</sup>*

In this way, of eleven years and two months as the senior pastor at Yeosu Aeyangwon, Rev. Son spent about five years in prison and six years and two months pasturing his patients as its shepherd.

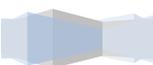
As for Luke's Gospel, the concerns for the poor, disease, children and women in Luke's Gospel are explicitly revealed in Luke's narratives. First, in the first speech of Q material (Luke 6:20-26 and Matthew 5:1-11), both Luke and Matthew begin Jesus' saying with a series of blessings or "beatitudes." Here, it is interesting that Luke's first and second blessings focus more on people's physical issues than Matthew does, as I mentioned above. Luke says that the kingdom of God belongs to "the poor," whereas Matthew refers to "the poor in spirit" and in the second blessing Luke maintains "Blessed are those who are hungry now (Luke 6:21)" while Matthew mentions "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6)." Despite the differences between the two speeches, however, it seems clear that poverty under the Roman Empire underlies the theme of the kingdom of God in this speech. Further, the concern for the people's economic needs can also be found in Jesus' teaching on prayer (Q/Luke 11:1-4). The Lord's Prayer is basically for the kingdom that focuses on people's needs of sufficient food and a cancellation of debts due to the demands for taxes, tribute, and tithes of the Roman Empire.

## Conclusion

Overall, it has become clear that Luke's narratives are carefully located in the context of Roman imperial domination. Rome's role is not merely to provide historical credibility to the Lucan

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<sup>23</sup> Chong-Soon Cha, *Aeyangwon and Martyr of Love: Son Yang-Won*, 39.



gospel. Rather, Luke is intentionally presenting Jesus as a rival to the Roman Emperor as the true Lord of the world. In this context, Rev. Son Yang-Won seemed to be the representative Christian, who expressed Luke's theology throughout his life by rejecting Japanese imperial theology and communism, and by showing God's love to the minority groups.

I believe that the theology found in Rev. Son is also significant for Christians today, especially to my Korean church community. This is because social, political, and economic polarization has become more serious nowadays in Korea. As a result, big companies are getting bigger and small businesses are getting smaller. This kind of social phenomenon is now spreading in many areas, even in the church. The Korean church now has a tendency to increase the church members and to expand the size of the church buildings to win the competition with other churches, following the free-market economy which is similar to the Roman imperial theology of "Peace through War." Also, idolatry has been pervasive in Korean churches in the forms of mammonism and sexual immorality. Many Christians including famous pastors are now involved in a series of sex and money scandals. In this context, I believe that the Korean church should learn Rev. Son's theology which rejects imperial theology and lifts up the social minorities and social justice.

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사단법인 산돌손양원기념사업회, <http://www.sonyangwon.com/main.php>

## Mansu Kim, Chung-choon (1914-1981)

Jeunghoon Kim<sup>1</sup>

*The difference between the strong and the weak does not lie in what they possess, but in their hearts and spirits. There are people who are strong though poor. Even enslaved workers can have more power than the capitalists who rule over them. Even among the people who are trampled upon because they have no power, there are many who are stronger than those in power. In such cases, we see that the weak become strong, and the strong become poor. Among those who lived their lives in pursuit of spiritual values, we often see people who lived as strong people even though they were weak.*<sup>2</sup>

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### Introduction

The Reverend Mansu<sup>3</sup> Kim, Chung-choon (1914-1981) was a pastor, a writer, and a scholar equipped not only with academic knowledge, but also with passion for the pastoral ministry. As a well balanced pastor and a scholar, Mansu stressed the importance of the theology that is not just “conceptual or doctrine-oriented but practical and related to the details of human life.”<sup>4</sup> During the military dictatorship in South Korea, Mansu took a great interest in social justice and the wellbeing of the oppressed. Mansu’s studies in the Old Testament provided the biblical evidence for the Minjung (people’s) theology. Mansu developed Korean contextual theology based upon Korean’s *Han*<sup>5</sup>, a theology of *Mokmin*<sup>6</sup>, and comparative study of Israel’s history and Korean history.

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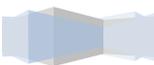
<sup>1</sup> Jeunghoon Kim is a M.Div. candidate of Columbia Theological Seminary. [salib333@gmail.com](mailto:salib333@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 33.

<sup>3</sup> Mansu: Kim Chong-choon’s penname. Mansu means “late grain.” On a late autumn day, around the time of sunset, Kim was walking alone on the levee of a rice paddy, soothing his aching heart because his life seemed a failure after he had contracted tuberculosis. Then he found an ear of late grain—overripe and full of kernels—bending down. Kim felt that his situation was similar to that ear of grain abandoned in the empty rice paddy, and he gave himself the penname Mansu. KIATS ed., *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 12.

<sup>4</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 195.

<sup>5</sup> Scholars acknowledge that *han* is central to the Korean character. Scholars have called it an all-encompassing sense of bitterness, a mixture of angst, endurance and a yearning for revenge that tests a person's soul, a condition



## Historical Background

Korea was under Japanese colonial rule in the 1940s. After liberation from Japanese rule in 1945, the Korean War broke out in 1950. Mansu served several local churches during the Japanese colonial period and the Korean War. Mansu's heart went out to the people who were oppressed by Japanese rule and the corrupted authorities. Mansu was a true pastor who ministered to the oppressed and the marginalized until he coughed up blood due to overworking. Korea was under the military dictatorship in 1960s and 1970s when Mansu served Hanshin University and Yonsei University as a professor. "Mansu greatly contributed to the restoration of democracy and social justice from the viewpoint of liberation theology, and he contributed to providing a theological direction for the Church's mission in the midst of the suffering and pain of 1970s military dictatorship."<sup>7</sup>

## Life

Mansu was born on November 6, 1914, in Dongnae County, South Gyungsang Province. Mansu's hometown was the remotest of remote villages on the mountain. Mansu traveled 50 li<sup>8</sup> round trip everyday to attend elementary school. The door to middle school was not open to Mansu because his family couldn't afford to send him to school. Around that time, the Australian Mission Board in Busan decided to provide middle school education for Mansu. One year later, Mansu transferred to Soongsil Middle School and met Rev. Song Chang-Geun<sup>9</sup>. Under the personal guidance of Rev. Song, Mansu vowed to become a minister. Mansu studied theology in Tokyo at Aoyama Gakuin University and graduated in March of 1943. During the Korean War, Mansu studied at Toronto Emmanuel College in Canada with help from the Canadian Mission Board. He majored in the Old Testament. During two years of studying in Canada, Mansu felt how broad and deep his field was. Mansu entered the doctoral program at Edinburgh University in Scotland and earned a Ph.D. in 1961. Mansu served several churches as an associate pastor and a senior pastor. Mansu served the churches as best he could. Mansu built a thirty-meter

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marked by deep sorrow and a sense of incompleteness that can have fatal consequences. But *han* has also been described as a sense of hope, an ability to silently endure hardship and suffering in a relatively small nation with a long history of being invaded by more powerful neighbors. Glionna, John M. "A Complex Feeling Tugs at Koreans." *Los Angeles Times*. <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jan/05/world/la-fg-south-korea-han-20110105>

<sup>6</sup> *Mokmin*: in traditional Korean thought, the proper shepherding of the people expected of a leader in. Kim, Chung Choon. KIATS ed., *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 218.

<sup>7</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 22.

<sup>8</sup> Li: a unit of distance equaling roughly 400 meters. Kim, Chung Choon. KIATS ed., *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 40

<sup>9</sup> Rev. Song Chang-Geun (1898-1951?), Presbyterian Church pastor. He studied at San Francisco Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Iliff Theological Seminary in Denver. Rev. Song was the first person who introduced liberal Christianity to Koreans. Rev. Song devoted his later life to Christian social work. His teaching and life greatly influenced Kim Chong-Choon's theology and ministry.

Chu, Jaeyong. "Manwoo Song Chang-geun: His Life and Theology." *The Veritas*. N.p., 10 Nov. 2010. Web. 14 Nov. 2012. [http://www.veritas.kr/contents/article/sub\\_re.html?no=9133](http://www.veritas.kr/contents/article/sub_re.html?no=9133)

church wall with his own hands. He placed roofing tiles for the church building that he served. Every morning, Mansu would light a kerosene lamp for early morning prayers then go house to house to awake his church members. After having pastoral experiences at several churches, Mansu served as a professor of theology at Yonsei University and Hanshin University. From the time when he started his academic career until he passed away in 1981, “Mansu exhibited great energy and passion in his work as an Old Testament professor, education administrator, chairman of allied organizations, editorial chair, writer, and pastor.”<sup>10</sup>

## Theological Themes in Mansu’s Sermons

### *Minjung Theology*<sup>11</sup>

Mansu’s message was often focused on the oppressed people who suffered from social injustice and the big gap between rich and poor in Korean society. Mansu criticized the capitalists and authorities who ruled over the weak by redefining the true meaning of weakness and strength in his sermon “Though Weak, We are Strong.” Mansu maintains that making people strong doesn’t lie in material possessions but in pursuing spiritual values. Therefore the oppressed can be higher than the authorities and the poor can be more valuable than the rich.

*If a person must possess something to become strong, that person is always imperfect in his strength. If a natural man is deemed to be strong because he is given money, position, power, knowledge, or skill, he is not truly strong. Even enslaved workers can have more power than the capitalists who rule over them. Even among the people who are trampled upon because they have no power, there are many who are stronger than those in power.*<sup>12</sup>

Mansu studied Jeong Yag-Yong<sup>13</sup>’s *Mokminsimseo*<sup>14</sup> in order to suggest the effective governing and the proper shepherding of the people as a leader. Mansu examined *Mokminsimseo* and discovered that Jeong Yag-Yong’s treatise *Mokminsimseo* was filled with the description of the oppressed. Employing *Mokminsimseo*, Mansu inspired his students to defend the oppressed and show interest in the benefit and wellbeing of the people.

*When we examine the content of this book-a vast content that consists of 12*

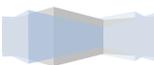
<sup>10</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 16.

<sup>11</sup> As liberation theology emerged from the concern of Latin American theologians for the poor in their countries, Minjung (the oppressed) theology came out of the struggle of concerned Korean Christians for social and political justice in Korea. Park, Sung A. *Minjung Theology: A Korean Contextual Theology*. Berkeley: Biblicalstudies.org, n.d. Pdf. [http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/ijt/33-4\\_001.pdf](http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/ijt/33-4_001.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> KIATS ed., *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 33.

<sup>13</sup> Jeong Yag-Yong (1762-1836): one of the most well-known Korean Confucian scholars. *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 218

<sup>14</sup> A treatise on just and effective governing written by Jeong Yag-Yong during the reign of King Sunjo in which he alludes to the abuse of provincial officials. *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 218



*lectures and 72 articles--there is not a page that does not depict the conditions of the people who were deceived, exploited, trampled, beaten, poverty-stricken, and insulted. This book exposes...official clerks who did not care for the people, but were busy satisfying their personal gain and greed...In his Mokminsimseo, Dasan<sup>15</sup> strongly defends the people, and shows interest in the benefit and wellbeing of the people, as well as in the defense of people's character and the protection of the dignity of that character.<sup>16</sup>*

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Mansu's Old Testament studies and his interpretations are also focused on the liberation of the oppressed. Mansu discovered that the dynastic history of the Old Testament was not written to narrate the legacy of the kings but it was written to instruct that caring for the people is the principle of one nation's success and prosperity.

*In the books of Kings...they wanted to make it clear that if the ruler of a nation turns a blind eye to people's situations, his power will inevitably become corrupt, which in turn necessitates God's judgment.<sup>17</sup>*

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Mansu changed the way of studying the prophets in the Old Testament. Old Testament scholars had had a "tendency to focus on the historical situation, political situation and political leaders and their policies."<sup>18</sup> However, Mansu viewed the prophets' messages from the viewpoint of the people. Mansu criticizes the lack of "sociological interest in the status and the role of the *minjung* even though the *minjung* was an important factor in constituting biblical history."<sup>19</sup>

*Until now, studies on prophets have had a tendency to overly focus on what the prophets thought about the questions of God and history, and about cultic sacrifice and society. Old Testament scholars had little interest in how common people were oppressed and lived under iron rule and harsh treatment...When we see the prophets' messages from the viewpoint of the people, however, their meaning takes on new nuances.<sup>20</sup>*

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<sup>15</sup> Jeong Yag-Yong's penname. *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 218

<sup>16</sup> *Kim, Chung-choon: Essential Writings* (Seoul: KIATS, 2009), 219-220.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

Not only the prophetic books in the Old Testament but also Psalms, Proverbs, Job, and other books in the Old Testament were the significant sources that Mansu employed in emphasizing the importance of *minjung*. Mansu's Christian theology was not just for the privileged groups who enjoyed power and wealth but "it was for the oppressed who were harshly treated, exploited, and deprived of human rights."<sup>21</sup>

### ***Lamentation Theology***

Mansu's lamentation theology originates from his own experience at the sanatorium. Mansu experienced the total despair and the pain of physical weakness due to his lung disease. During his life at the sanatorium expecting to live only three more months, Mansu overcame the despair by putting complete trust in God and meditating on the Book of Psalms. The true value of Mansu's lamentation theology lies in its triumph and restoration through the process of lamentation. Mansu's lamentation theology is well explained in his sermon "People Thirsty for God" based on Psalm 42. In his sermon, Mansu attests that human beings can achieve the ultimate comfort and happiness only from God. The only way that human beings experience God's presence in their lives is "seeking, waiting for, loving, and yearning for God" in the midst of suffering and despair.

*This (Psalm 42) is a poem composed by a human whose existence is a fundamentally different from people who say they can lead a beautiful, great, and free life without God. This is a cry, a confession from the depth of a human soul, which says a human being cannot live without God even if he has all things...Why? Why did the poet earnestly miss God like this?...The person who wrote Psalm 42 lived under such conditions in which the faith of Israel was ridiculed...The poet of Psalm 42 ... wrote this song in the midst of this tragedy of being captured...Because of the mockery, "Where is your God?" the poet could not but thirst for God even more.*

*God, my rock, Why have you forgotten me?*

*Why must I go about mourning because of the mocking of the enemies?  
(Psalm 42:9)<sup>22</sup>*

Mansu concentrates on discovering the true meaning of lamentation theology in the Book of Psalms. Mansu maintains that one doesn't have to just remain in despair but has to put more trust in God in the midst of suffering.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 195

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 88



His sermon on Psalm 22 well explains why the Book of Psalms is not the “psalms of lamentation but the psalms of trust.”<sup>23</sup> Many commentators consider this poem (Psalm 22) as a psalm of suffering or lamentation... Psalm 22 is the most beautiful psalm of trust. The expression “*Eli, Eli, lama azabtani*” is words of lamentation, but its spirit is such that the psalmist trusts that God will deliver him from his trouble according to his will, knowing that all other hands of human salvation are cut off from the poet and that the poet can plead his case only to God... Therefore, in the psalm, the psalmist praises God, believing that the poet is already delivered by the heart of trust.<sup>24</sup>

Mansu’s lamentation theology came from his own experience of physical disease. Also his pastoral ministry for the weak and the oppressed greatly helped the formation of Mansu’s lamentation theology. Mansu encouraged people to face reality squarely in the midst of suffering and confess their suffering to God honestly. The core value of Mansu’s lamentation theology lies in its true message. Many evangelical churches and revivalists stressed the materialistic blessings and miraculous signs as the key to liberation from difficulties at the time. However, Mansu emphasized the importance of experiencing God’s presence in times of failure by seeking and trusting Him. Mansu believed that trusting God and finding God’s presence in the midst of difficulties was the key to the true liberation from the hardships.

### ***Korean Indigenous Theology***

The theology of *Mokmin* needs to be used once again as an example of Mansu’s contribution to the development of Korean indigenous theology. In his preaching for the graduating students at Hanshin University, Mansu emphasized that Korean students of theology needed to develop Korean indigenous theology by “finding something (in Korean history) in agreement with the spirit of the Gospels and trying to realize that in historical reality”<sup>25</sup>

*I think we need to do the work of theologizing the mokmin spirit of Mokminsimseo...the pastoral ministry that you are interested in and are willing to offer your body to must exhibit the spirit of mokmin...the theology of mokmin must become your spirit of pastoring...The road you and I must follow is the road of mokmin pastoring. Today, we should not be proud because we have changed into the ceremonial gown that resembles to Jeong Dasan’s attire. Rather, we should remember that unless Jeong Dasan’s mokmin spirit becomes our theology, we are like the subjects of an embarrassing fashion show.*<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 98

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 96-98

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 222

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 226-227

Mansu believed that Koreans are also chosen people before God as were the Israelites. “Mansu argues that God is the universal God. God can’t be limited to only one nation but God exists for all nations. Therefore Korean history also has to be included in the Salvation History.”<sup>27</sup> Mansu formed the theological foundation that Korean indigenous theology could firmly stand and develop by reaffirming the existence of the omnipotent God.

## Conclusion

The Reverend Mansu Kim, Chong-choon’s theology has been considered an example of the theology that served as a bridge between the conservative Christians and the liberal Christians in Korea. Mansu’s theology encompassed both the conservative Christians and the liberal Christians by emphasizing both the importance of personal spirituality and the social spirituality that accomplishes personal piety and social change in his studies.<sup>28</sup> Mansu’s physical illness led him to recognize the sufferings of others. His recognition of God in the midst of his physical illness served as a foundation for his lamentation theology. Mansu learned piety through suffering and discovered that experiencing God’s presence in one’s life was the way to overcome difficulties. Social injustice and the big gap between the rich and the poor in Korean society during the military dictatorship led Mansu to take an interest in social justice and Minjung theology. For that reason, Mansu’s theological studies and his sermons were mainly focused on the biblical figures that were oppressed and marginalized. Mansu was a “late grain” that had seemed to be abandoned. However, Mansu was a good grain that had the full kernel in its head. Mansu came up in the barren land and finally produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times in the hope of turning the barren land into good soil.

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<sup>27</sup> Ahn, Byung-moo. *Mansu Kim, Chung-choon's Theology and His Philosophy*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. PDF. [http://simone.or.kr/jbcgi/board/download.php?file\\_name=%B8%B8%BC%F6%20%B1%E8%C1%A4%C1%D8%0%C7%20%BD%C5%07%D0%B1%B3%00%B0%20%BB%E7%BB%F3.pdf&file\\_size=6293343&code=board1](http://simone.or.kr/jbcgi/board/download.php?file_name=%B8%B8%BC%F6%20%B1%E8%C1%A4%C1%D8%0%C7%20%BD%C5%07%D0%B1%B3%00%B0%20%BB%E7%BB%F3.pdf&file_size=6293343&code=board1).

<sup>28</sup> Cha, Joon-hee. *Kim Chung-choon's Theological Understanding of the Book of Jeremiah*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. PDF. [http://old.ot21.org/?module=file&act=procFileDownload&file\\_srl=451&sid=646ca702922646b86f15931fe4904f3e](http://old.ot21.org/?module=file&act=procFileDownload&file_srl=451&sid=646ca702922646b86f15931fe4904f3e).

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**Choi, Jashil (1915-1989)**  
**“Hallelujah Lady” -Evangelism with Fasting Prayer-**

Moo Je Cho<sup>1</sup>

*When I led the revival services for three days and prayed for them, the children who had been sick for a long time were healed miraculously. Wherever I went, the Holy Spirit worked, and the blind opened their eyes, the lame stood up, and anyone who desired so received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>*

*I prayed for 100 days with this purpose. I lifted up this earnest prayer for two hours, starting every night at 10 o'clock. But I did not hear anything about him even on the 100th day of my prayer. So I prayed for another 100 days.<sup>3</sup>*

*If I die, I go to heaven. If I live, I can spread (proclaim) the good news (gospel).<sup>4</sup>*

*All to spread to Koreans and foreigners worldwide the message of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the three-fold prayer practice of fasting, overnight prayers, and tongues.<sup>5</sup>*

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## Introduction

Rev. Choi Jashil was known as the “Hallelujah Lady” which is the title of her autobiography. She was the spiritual mother of Rev. Cho Yong Gi who co-founded with her the 750,000 member Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, Korea which is still the largest congregation in church history worldwide. Actually, she was the mother-in-law of Rev. Cho and she began her

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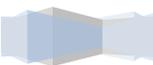
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<sup>2</sup> Jashil Choi, *Hallelujah Lady* (Seoul, Korea: The Kiats Press, 2009), 310.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 325.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 345.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 357.



ministry in cooperation with Rev. Cho in a 5-member family church and built it up to a record as the largest mega-church in history. The roles of Rev. Choi and Rev. Cho in ministry seem like the two faces of one coin. While Rev. Cho focused on preaching the words, she focused on pastoral care with visitation and prayer.

She emphasized the works of the Holy Spirit. She used her own life experience as testimony when she proclaimed the gospel to convert non-believers. She prayed with fasting to bring about miraculous healings for the sick and the poor. She was the healing minister of miracles with the help of the Holy Spirit based on her own personal experiences. She influenced the spread of the theology of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, praying in tongues, *Tong-sung Gido* (loud voice prayer), fasting prayer in a massive prayer facility or in individual cave-style rooms, over-night prayer, and healing ministry throughout the Pentecostal denominations and even to the Korean churches in general. She was dedicated to the Korean churches when she opened the age of prayer movement in the mega size prayer center. With her ministry role model, fasting prayer could spread widely to the Korean churches as a popular way of prayer. Above all, she revealed her theology through her own life faith journey rather than through preaching. She built up her peculiar theology of divine healing with fasting prayers for spread personal evangelism worldwide.

## Historical Background

Korea was under the oppressive Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945) when Choi Jashil was born in 1915 and grew up. While poverty prevailed on the Korean peninsula, Christianity was also widespread. It began with American missionaries' endeavors in the late 19th century as well as the early 20th century and bloomed with the so-called Great Revival Movement at Pyong-Yang (now the North Korean capital city) in 1907. It begot several Korean spiritual leaders of the first generation such as Rev. Gil Seon-Ju, Rev. Kim Ik-Du, and Rev. Lee Seong-Bong. Specially, Rev. Lee Sung-Bong was considered as a key leader of the Revival Movement in Korean church history in 1930-1960. While Rev. Lee Sung-Bong advocated the healing ministry in Korean Christianity based on his own healing experiences with the grace of Jesus, his influences prevailed in Korean churches.

After the Korean War, South Korea produced numerable desperate people such as war orphans, the sick, the poor living in absolute poverty. South Koreans were eagerly looking for freedom from absolute poverty. They wanted success and prosperity at any cost. From the 1960s South Korea also experienced a miraculous economic development under the political iron-clad dictatorship of Park Chung-Hee through a military coup. In Christian churches, South Korea also experienced astonishing growth in numbers resulting in some mega-churches. One of the representative mega-churches since 1960 in South Korea was the Yoido Full Gospel Church founded by Rev. Choi Jashil and her son-in-law Rev. Cho Yong Gi. Its Sunday worship attendance reached 450,000 which has yet to be equaled by an individual church.

## Personal Faith Journey

Choi Jashil was born in 1915 in the city of HaeJu, Hwanghae province (the border line between China and North Korea now) as the eldest daughter under parents who had the strong heritage of Buddhism, Confucianism and Shamanism. When she was 12 years old, Choi Jashil became Christian after witnessing the miraculous healing power of prayer in the name of Jesus Christ by Rev. Lee Sung Bong. With strong impressions of two miraculous healing occurrences by means of prayer in the name of Jesus, she received an unforgettable impression in her heart; the power of Jesus is in healing for the sick with prayer.

In 1935 while she was in her twenties she became an obstetric nurse in an effort to overcome her family poverty. It drove her to a life of pursuing financial success. She became an entrepreneur in Soul taking over a match manufacturing company. It soon made her millionaire. She neglected her church as well as her family due to business.

With bankruptcy of her business in 1953 as well as the death of her mother and daughter within the timespan of four days, she decided to commit suicide on a mountain near Seoul by means of starvation. During her fasting in the cave of the mountain, she met a special prayer gathering by Rev. Lee Seong-Bong in the same valley of that mountain. Rev. Lee's special prayer preaching reminded her of the first encounter of the gospel 30 years ago by him with same message. Choi Jashil prayed *Tong-Sung Gido* overnight and experienced herself praying in tongues and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

With the advice of Rev. Lee Seong-Bong, she became a student of the Full Gospel Seminary under the Assemblies of God, a Pentecostal denomination in Korea. As the only forty year old student while all other students were in their early twenties, she introduced her classmates to the prayer in tongues as the proof of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. She met Cho Yong Gi as a classmate. They were team leaders for student mission activities. While a student Choi Jashil was strong in taking care of classmates with prayer in tongues and witnessing to Jesus based on her own personal experience, and the student Cho Yong-Gi was gifted to proclaim the word through powerful preaching. They complemented each other in the street preaching missionary activities.

After her graduation from seminary, she started the home worship in 1958 in Seoul with only her own family and Cho Yong-Gi attending. She focused on taking care of the children in a poor town of northwest Seoul, Korea. Focusing on healing ministry with prayer, she took care of the sick, weak, and poor through visitations. It resulted in the miraculous healing occurrences in her small ragged tent church. The miracles of healing through her united ministry with Cho Yong-Gi made her church grow miraculously. In ten years, her church had grown to 8,000 members. The rapid growth in numbers followed miraculous healing occurrences in their ministry.

Choi Jashil became famous worldwide in the 1970s as the news spread of her church's rapid growth with miraculous healing power of her prayer. Her fame resulted in invitations for her to visit other countries such as Japan and Taiwan in the mid 1960s to many cities in Canada,

USA, Germany, and elsewhere during 1970s-1980s. She introduced the power of prayer of fasting, witnessing Jesus Christ based on her own experiences, and showed numerable healing occurrences in other countries during prayers. She initiated the fasting prayer movement based on her experience. There is the Choi Jashil Full Gospel Prayer House (Prayer Mountain) in Osan-ri, in the northern outskirts of Seoul, Korea to institutionalize her fasting prayer movement.

## Ministry & Theology

Her ministry was focused on miraculous healing the sick with prayer to convert them to become Christians. The key factor in her theology was the baptism of the Holy Spirit whose proof is the prayer of tongues. For complete repentance, she argued that all Christians need to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and then they shall communicate with God in the prayer of tongues. With prayer in tongues, she focused on pastoral ministry for healing, and personal evangelism.<sup>6</sup> Her assurance on the healing power of the prayer in tongues based on her own experience gave the strong theological foundation to build up her united ministry with Cho Yong-Gi into the miraculous healing occurring ministry. Her autobiographical theology on prayer developed from the baptism of the Holy Spirit to fasting prayer and collective fasting prayer.

### *Prayer in tongues: “the baptism of the Holy Spirit”*

She experienced prayer in tongues during the prayer of three days after Rev. Lee Seong-Bong’s revival meeting at the mountain in Seoul where she gone to commit suicide.

In her experience, she argued that the goal of the prayer of repentance should lead to the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

*The work of repentance that began like this finally exploded like a volcano on the third day. ... My tongues seemed twist and began speaking strange words that were neither English nor Japanese.<sup>7</sup>*

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Since then, every time when she tried to pray, strange words came out her mouth and, she said, no matter how much she tried to stop herself, it was useless. With prayer in tongues, she experienced the fullness of peace and joy in her heart. Her aggressive advocacy of prayer in tongues as the proof of the baptism of the Holy Spirit affected the theology of Cho Yong-Gi when he was a seminary student. Rev. Cho confirmed his assurance later in his book that prayer in tongues is the proof of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>8</sup> While admitting various proofs of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Rev. Cho emphasized that the ultimate main proof among all proofs is the prayer in tongues. The experience of the Holy Spirit of Choi Jashil opened the door to introduce Rev. Cho to the experience of the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>6</sup> Choi, *Hallelujah Lady*, 321-322.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 86-87.

<sup>8</sup> Yong Gi Cho, *Five layers of Gospel and Triple Rhythm of Blessing* (Seoul: Young San publisher, 1983), 100.

### ***Partnership Ministry***

Yoi-do Full Gospel Church founded by Choi Jashil and Cho Yong-Gi has been the world biggest mega-church in membership through their partnership ministry. Choi was not only the spiritual mother but also the real mother-in-law of Cho. They were perfect partners in long term ministry since they met in seminary as the classmates. While Cho focused on preaching, Choi focused on personal evangelical activities and pastoral care including visitations. Choi emphasized that the pastor should experience the gospel before proclaiming in evangelical activity. She said that “the Gospel of the pastor is living power and miracle in life. It is the power of God which let the dead soul live again, let non-being turns to being, let the pains be healed, and let the despair change to the hope. Therefore the pastors who proclaim the Gospel should experience in their life first and then get assurance in faith of the power of the Gospel.”<sup>9</sup>

The slogan of Choi Jashil in ministry was “If I die, I go to heaven. If I live, I can spread (proclaim) the good news (gospel).”<sup>10</sup> She thought her mission was evangelization. She was eager to do church planting with personal evangelical activity. She wrote concerning the methodology and importance of personal evangelical activity. Her evangelical activity was basically the confession her faith on Jesus Christ with her own personal testimony. It was powerful to persuade people to come to Jesus. She explained in her book why she focused her ministry especially on personal evangelical activity. 1) It is a guide for the sinner to go to Jesus. 2) It is to transfer my experience of Jesus to the people. 3) Evangelization is the purpose why Jesus came. 4) Evangelization is God’s last commandment. 5) It is what God wants. 6) It is the greatest responsibility of Christians. 7) It is the secret of spiritual growth. 8) It is the channel of blessing and rewards. 9) It is the practice of love. 10) Without evangelical activity, there will be wrath.<sup>11</sup>

From the first 5 members’ worship in planting a church in the 1950s till the worship for the 750,000 member mega-church in the 1980s, the partnership in ministry between Choi and Cho was solid like a rock.

### ***Fasting prayer campaign***

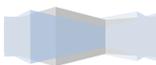
Choi thought fasting prayer is the expressway for the Christian seeker to get the blessing of the power of God. She founded Osan-ri fasting prayer center, one of the biggest fasting prayer facilities in South Korea. And also she presided over the international fasting prayer conference annually. While she went out of country for missionary trips, she emphasized the importance of fasting prayer because she experienced the overcoming of her own tribulation in her life by the fasting prayer. The emphasis on fasting prayer also came from her testimony. She explains about the fasting prayer in her book of *The Power of Fasting Prayer*.

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<sup>9</sup> Choi, *Gae-in Jeon-do-ue Yeol-shaeh: The Key to Personal Evangelism* (Seoul: Youngsan Publisher, 1979 and Seoul: Logos Co., 1998), 153.

<sup>10</sup> Choi, *Hallelujah Lady*, 345.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 34



*Christianity is not any theory nor ideology but the movement of life, truth, the Spirit and love. Fasting prayer is strongly recommended to be a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ to experience correctly the movement of life, truth, the Spirit and love.*<sup>12</sup>

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She offered three levels of profits from the fasting prayer as follows<sup>13</sup>; 1) spiritual profits to get the power of faith with the personal experience which makes positive thinking, which shall beget success in life, 2) good for physical health, and 3) it improves mental health. She said fasting prayer would give the power to get freedom from sin, disease and all curses and protect from all bad things. In fasting prayer, she said, the nature of God is healing.

She said, “If the usual prayer is like a regular bomb, the fasting prayer is the nuclear bomb one thousand times more powerful in power than a regular one.”<sup>14</sup>

She also provided the road map of fasting prayer for Korean Christians. According to her theology of fasting prayer, 1) fasting prayer is not a spiritual training but the most urgent appeal to God, 2) never do it for showing-off, and 3) do not fall into to the temptation of arrogance. The mythical experience of self-humbleness with death of flesh to live the soul will make experience to meet the power of God, 4) the order of fasting prayer is important; repentance prayer, seeking prayer of fasting goal with meditation of the Scripture, and patient waiting time of faith to see the result of prayer, 5) it is a change of my ego, and 6) it should not be righteousness.

Choi’s personal experience of fasting prayer in the cave begot a 20,000 person capacity prayer center which includes numerous individual praying spaces of a one person capacity cave. The miraculous church growth in her partnership ministry with Rev. Cho based on fasting prayer influenced the fasting prayer movement among Korean churches with a crossing over denominational lines since the 1970s. She also became the role model for female pastors in the Korean churches of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well as the pioneer in praying and pastoral caring.

### ***Divine Healing ministry***

During 47 years, her church grew from 5 members to 750,000, the world’s biggest church ever. It is estimated that the miraculous church growth in Korea is due to her divine healing ministry based on the fasting prayer movement.<sup>15</sup> From the time of church planting, she showed the divine healing for the sick people. Her divine healing ministry with Rev. Cho resulted in the explosive church growth. She became the representing woman evangelist of revival meetings and divine healing pastor in Korea.

She explained how divine healing worked in her autobiographic book, *Hallelujah Lady*. She argued that divine healing works when the sick people have a strong passion for recovery.

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<sup>12</sup> Jashil Choi, *Gum-sik Gi-do-ue Nung-reok: The Power of Fasting Prayer* (Seoul: Youngsan Publisher, 1976; and Seoul: Logos Co., 1996), 6.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 47-50.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 98-99.

<sup>15</sup> Sang Gun Choe, *Choi Jashil-ue Sang-ae wa Sa-yerk Yon-Goo: The life and ministry of Rev. Choi Ja Shil* (Seoul: Ho-Ser University, 2012), 112.

For her, salvation occurs simultaneously with divine healing. Therefore, the person saved by God should be freed from the disease. The divine healing can occur when the sick appeal strongly with prayer. Secondly, repentance is an indispensable requirement for divine healing. Thirdly, forgiveness for me and neighbors is requirement for divine healing. Fourth, it is through faith that supernatural miraculous healing can occur. Fifth, the commandment and announcement for divine healing is in the name of Jesus Christ. Sixth, collective prayer includes the laying on of hands on the head.<sup>16</sup>

The goal of her ministry was to evangelize the people. And the most powerful methodology was divine healing with the fasting prayer. It made her a miraculous success in Korea, which drove her to foreign missionary trips with revival services through the East Asian countries to North America, and to Europe. The ministry of short-term missionary visits was also focused on the same pattern of her divine healing.

In her later years, she made efforts to export her own style of ministry and theology worldwide. In her biography, she said

*focusing on Japan, the United States, Taiwan, and Germany, I put all my effort into fixing the flag of the Full Gospel all over the world. Sometimes I stayed up all night on the plane, and sometimes I fasted, all to spread to Koreans and foreigners overseas the message of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the three-fold prayer practice of fasting, overnight prayers and tongues.<sup>17</sup>*

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## Conclusion

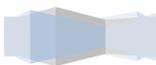
Choi influenced Korean churches to encourage the prayer center movements, fasting prayer, and divine healing ministry. Especially her miraculous church growth helped *tongsung gido*, divine healing ministry and fasting prayer to spread over the Pentecostal denominations in Korea. Her influence of prayer with building the prayer center made the birth of hundreds of large prayer centers in Korea. Her emphasis on spirituality of fasting prayer made it a universal prayer mode in Korean churches. Her ministry focused on individual salvation with fasting prayer accompanied by miraculous divine healing resulting in an astonishing church growth.

Her ministry and theology based on her experience testimony might be an alternative model for the western churches including those in the U.S. which are experiencing decline and where there are the words of Scripture without the power of the words as through the divine healing in the real life of the sick and the poor. She also showed the successful role model of partnership in ministry as well as the frontier role model as a female minister in Korea.

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<sup>16</sup> Choi, *Hallelujah Lady*, 186.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 357.



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## Moon, Ik-Hwan (1918-1994)

The Preaching Poet in Wilderness

Jaewoong Jung<sup>1</sup>

*...How about a dream like this?  
A dream,  
Along to the DMZ 155 miles  
To the East Sea where the sun rises,  
On a peak of mountain toward blue ocean,  
Taking a shovel-full of northern soil  
Soaked with the blood of National Army soldiers  
And a shovel-full of southern soil  
Mounded over the flesh of Communist Army soldiers,  
Burying both of them in a place.  
May the grave be the place of pilgrimage  
For our 50 million people...<sup>2</sup>*

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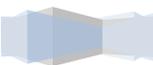
### Introduction

Rev. Ik-Hwan Moon is a distinctive figure in that he tried to fulfill a realistic political goal of democratization and reunification not only by political struggles but also by theological and literary inspirations. In other words, he reframed and recreated realistic political problems with theological symbols, literary metaphors, and imageries. The political addresses which remain are few due to his long prisoned life, but his sermons, lectures and articles show his thoughts well. In particular, his sermons contain his theological dialogue with the social context in which he lived. Also, his sermons which are identified with his radical life have inspired many preachers to reconsider their sermons, challenging what is the authentic preaching in this world in which the gospel and evils are coexisting, struggling and having conversation. In this essay, I will briefly explore his life and sermon world.

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<sup>2</sup> Ik-Hwan Moon, "The Heart Praying a Dream" in *The Heart Praying a Dream* (Seoul: Shilcheon Literature, 1978).



## Historical Background

For over 1,000 years, Korea was a unified nation. However, with the demise of the Chosun Dynasty, the Korean people suffered from Japanese colonial rule for 36 years. After World War II, Korea was liberated from Japan, but divided into two Koreas. Consequently, this unstable political situation ignited the Korean War. The war was suspended with the cease-fire agreement but it left over two million casualties and over ten million dispersed people. In North Korea, the rule of the patriarchic dynasty of Kim Il-Sung has continued, and the people in South Korea suffered from a succession of dictatorial regimes. The political situation of division required a strong leadership which could be easily led to an autocracy.

Trampling the short spring of democratization in 1960 which was achieved by struggle against autocracy of the former president, Seung-Man Lee, General Jeong-Hee Park began a military dictatorship. Although he achieved rapid economic development, he was criticized due to his harsh persecution of human rights and his cruel autocracy. Eventually, for the perpetuation of his dictatorship, in 1972, the government announced the Yushin constitution which guaranteed the tenured reign for the president Jeong-Hee Park. It kindled the national anti-dictatorship democratization movement.

Even though this autocracy was ended by the assassination of the president Jeong-Hee Park, a new military dictatorship regime emerged by a military coup in 1979. The new government succeeded in the policy of the former dictator that pursued economic development and political oppression at the same time. In 1987, the military dictatorship eventually ended up by national civil demonstrations requiring the abolition of dictatorship and the execution of democratic direct voting.

## His Life Journey

Ik-Hwan Moon was born on June 1, 1918, in Myungdong-chon, Hwaryong-hyun, Manchuria. His father was Rev. Jae-rin Moon and his mother Shin-mook Kim.<sup>3</sup> At the time of the demise of the Chosun Dynasty, the ancestors of Rev. Moon who participated in Gab-oh-farmer's revolt<sup>4</sup> immigrated to national Northeastern frontier, Hamkyung-do. After the collapse of Chosun, they moved to Manchuria and founded a community for the pursuit of independence for Chosun from Japan. There Ik-Hwan Moon learned western knowledge and Christianity and made a decision to become a pastor. In 1938, he studied at the Japanese Theological Seminary in Tokyo and later Korean Theological Seminary (the current Hanshin University). In 1947 he graduated from Korean Theological Seminary and was ordained as a Presbyterian pastor. In 1949, he entered

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<sup>3</sup> Hee-Dong Chae, "The Life and Thought of Ik-Hwan Moon (Late Spring)," *Minjung and Theology* 3 (2000): 84-103. For his detailed life story, read: Hyung-Soo Kim, *A Critical Biography of Ik-Hwan Moon* (Seoul: Shilcheon Literature, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> This was the oppressed farmer's revolt against a local governor's corruption and exploits and foreign force's intervention during the Chosun Dynasty, supported by an emerging religion, "Donghak" which literally means "Eastern Studies."

Princeton Theological Seminary, but his studies were suspended because of the Korean War (1950-53). In August 1954, he earned the Master of Theology in the Old Testament Studies at Princeton Theological Seminary and studied further at Union Theological Seminary (New York) in 1965-66. After returning to Korea, he served Hanbit Presbyterian church and taught Old Testament studies at Hanshin University and Yonsei University. In 1968-1976, he participated in the project of the Common Translation of the Bible launched jointly by the Korean Protestant Church and the Korean Catholic Church. Also, he became a poet in order to understand and translate Hebrew poetry in the Old Testament. In other words, he was an intellectual in scholarly society but didn't participate in social activities until 1975.

However, the suicide of Tae-II Jeon who was a young labor leader (1970) and the questionable death of his friend, Dr. Jang Joon-Ha (1975) led him to participate in the democratization movement against dictatorship. Beginning with his arrest due to the "3.1 democratic proclamation for saving nation" (1976), he was imprisoned six times for a total 19 years due to his activity for democratization and the reunification movement. In 1987, as soon as he was released from prison, he went to the funeral ceremony and cried out the names of the killed students in civil demonstration. This event made him as a prophetic figure of the democratization movement.

After 1987, he began to concentrate on the reunification movement. He thought that the strongest cause threatening democracy in Korea was national division and that true democracy could not be fulfilled without solving the problem of national division. Thus, in March 1989, he entered into North Korea, had two conferences with Kim Il-Sung, and announced the joint declaration between the two Koreas with the committee of Peaceful Unification of the Nation belonging to North Korea. After returning to South Korea, even though he was arrested and imprisoned again, his visit shocked society and evoked concerns about reunification movement. For these reasons, he was nominated as a candidate for the Nobel prize for peace. And today his view on the reunification movement is evaluated as the significant contribution to the later unification movement and the unification policy of the progressive government. After being paroled, he preoccupied in the democratization and unification movement and died of a stroke in 1994.

## His Works

As a theologian, poet, activist and preacher, he left abundant writings. As a theologian, he wrote many theological articles and books including *The History of the Hebrew People*, and translated several books, including Common Translation of the Bible and *Life Together* (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1964). As a poet, he published five collections of poems and many essays. In 1999, his writings including poems, essays, articles, sermons, addresses and other writings were published in an archive having 12 volumes. The 12<sup>th</sup> volume<sup>5</sup> in his archive contains the

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<sup>5</sup> Ik-Hwan Moon, *Archive 12: Sermons* (Seoul: Four Season, 1999).



collection of his 88 sermons and the 4<sup>th</sup> volume<sup>6</sup> contains 55 partial sermonic writings. When we analyze the titles of his sermons, 26 sermons among a total of 143 sermons deal with political topics directly, including democracy (3), communism (1), human rights (2), justice (3), reunification (2), laws (3), peace (1), liberty (1) and the relationship between Christianity/Church and Politics/Nation (5). In particular, he stresses resurrection as the core issue of how to live in faith in this world. In three sermons about resurrection, he focuses the features of Christian belief and challenges us how to live as a Christian.

In addition to his primary writings, there are significant studies about his life, poems, political activities and theological works. However, there is rarely any study about his preaching, even though he is evaluated as one of the renowned preachers in Korea. As a second resource for studying him, *A Critical Biography of Rev. Moon* written by Hyung-Soo Kim provides an outline of the main episodes in his life. Also, theological, political and literary articles about him contribute to the study of his life and thought in diverse dimensions.

## His Sermons and Theology

### *Minjung theology*

In studying the characteristics in his sermons and theology, firstly, we find that his sermons are based on minjung theology. Minjung theology is a contextual theology emerged in responding to the Korean social-political environment in the 1970s. To be specific, minjung literally means the mass of the people, but in particular those people who are politically oppressed, socially alienated, economically exploited, and culturally and intellectually underprivileged.<sup>7</sup> He was one of core members in the Minjung theology movement with Byung-Moo Ahn and Nam-Dong Suh. However, different from other minjung theologians, Ik-Hwan Moon didn't leave many academic writings about minjung theology. This is because the time during which minjung theology emerged as academic theological systematic studies is identified with his active time as a social activist during which he was imprisoned over 10 years from 1975-1994. Thus, his lack of writings on minjung theology is not because of his shortage of attention to it, but because of the limitation of his environment. However, his minjung theological thought is fully expressed in his sermons and other writings. In particular, his sermons reflect his minjung theological thought well. In his sermon, "Living before the Resurrection," he identified the resurrection of Jesus with the resurrection of minjung, and the church with the minjung in this way:

*I assert that the Church began with the event in which the resurrection of Jesus became the resurrection of People (Minjung). The Church is People who are born again with burning soul of Jesus, burning mind, burning sense of justice and burning love. The Church is People who were dead with Jesus*

<sup>6</sup> Ik-Hwan Moon, *Archive 4: Unification 2* (Seoul: Four Season, 1999).

<sup>7</sup> Sangyil Park, *Korean Preaching, Han, and Narrative* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 15.

*and risen again with Jesus, the body of Jesus which was dead with People and have risen again with People. Jesus is the risen People and the risen Jesus with People.*<sup>8</sup>

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That is to say, he interprets the church as minjung and the rise of church as the resurrection of minjung. Also, in his other sermon, “Thanksgiving and Hymn,” he identified the Hebrew people under the Egyptians with the Black people who lived under the oppression of White people and the Korean people under the oppression of Japanese imperialism.<sup>9</sup> This understanding is similar with Byung-Moo Ahn’s understanding of minjung and *οκλος* in Gospels. In other words, he regards the main members of early Christianity as the lower class-oppressed people who can be called “minjung” in application to Korean context. Rev. Moon shares this similar hermeneutic frame each on the biblical world and reality, and applies the context of biblical people to the current audience in his pew.

### ***Prophetic sermons***

Secondly, Rev. Moon employs diverse resources of the prophets in the Old Testament in order to criticize current evils and inspire listeners to imagine a new utopian world instead of current society. This thought had developed throughout his academic and sermonic life. He published a sequence of seven articles on the prophet Jeremiah (1959) and the Israelite prophetic movement (1962-63) in the theological magazine, *Christian Thought*. These writings show his academic understanding of the prophets in the Old Testament. He employs diverse prophets’ stories and imageries in his sermons, such as Nathan, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezechiel, Amos, Micah, Jonah, and Habakkuk. In his sermons, prophets are the protectors and advocates for minjung and the accuser against unjust oppressors. This prophetic paradigm is applied in interpreting and responding to reality in his sermons. He preaches to his audience and urges them to reconsider reality in the perspective of the prophets and to dream of a new age like the prophets suggested.

To be specific, his thoughts are reflected in his theological writings and sermons. In his book, *The History of Hebrew People*, he understands the Exodus as a liberating war for Canaan peasants and Hebrew people to come out of Egypt and Canaan peasants as the oppressed people by the Egyptians. Despite, this Israel then royal regimes led them to forget their identity as *Habiru* and to become oppressors. Thus, the prophetic movement in the Old Testament was a reaction or resistance against this historical regression in which liberators became oppressors. And Jesus was the successor of the prophetic movement which pursues the ideal community of oppressed people.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, he thinks that a preacher as a successor of Jesus’ movement should have a prophetic insight which watches reality thoroughly and a prophetic courage which speaks out against injustice and corruption. These prophetic qualities are to serve a new world

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<sup>8</sup> Ik-Hwan Moon, “Living before the Resurrection,” the Sermon of the Easter service in 1983 at EYC, not published.

<sup>9</sup> Ik-Hwan Moon, *Archive* 12, 87-88.

<sup>10</sup> Ik-Hwan Moon, *The History of Hebrew People* (Seoul: Sammin-sa, 1990), 44, 70. recited in Tae-Soo Yim, “Minjung theological interpretation on the Old Testament,” *Minjung and Theology* 6 (2001): 20-21.



which fulfills the biblical view of justice and peace. In his sermon, “Toward Tomorrow Breakthrough Today,” he claims this thought in this way:

*Israel's prophets who flowered again in Jesus, stood up with the mission for people to prepare for the rising new morning, they had sharp eyes which watch through a dreadful reality. The prophets struggled for upright attitude of life to draw a new age.<sup>11</sup>*

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This understanding of the prophet's task culminates in a prophetic utopian imagery as an alternative for overcoming realistic suffering and evils.

*Doesn't justice stem from a not-deceitful and honest mind? ...In ever-fresh, innocent and honest beauty, back to the source of life, there is a dream and fantasy. There is an imagination which nobody conceived. The prophet Isaiah imagines a peaceful world which will be fulfilled with justice by the messiah, "sprout" and "fresh bud" of humankind. Wolves play with sheep and leopards roll with goats and lions feed on grass with calves...<sup>12</sup>*

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As a result of his employing prophetic imageries into his sermon, his sermons become a living prophecy inviting the contemporary audience in his pew to experience struggles and dreams of prophets in reflecting their reality.

### ***Poetic Political Sermon***

The final feature of his sermons is that he tries for listeners to accept his political ideas as Christian thought by means of poetic rhetorical devices. Although his pursuing political goals, democratization and reunification are a too sensitive political agenda to deal with in the pulpit, he reinterprets his political agenda into an issue of Christian faith. To be specific, he suggests that the political agenda is not only a secular political issue but also the core issue strongly relevant to Christian profound thought. In his early sermon, “Christian and Democracy,” he claims that democratic thought is rooted in Christian thought and that the fundamental thought of democracy is human dignity and connects it with the biblical message in this way:

*Where did the thought that one's individual dignity is as valuable as 99 people's come from? Who was the figure who taught that individual life is as*

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<sup>11</sup> Moon, *Archive* 12, 102.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

*valuable as the whole world? You already have the answer. This is the Word of the Lord. Thus, democracy which is based on individual dignity is result from the Christian church.*<sup>13</sup>

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Furthermore, he reframes the political norms with theological concepts. In his sermon of “Resurrection,” he says that “If we say that democracy is a making minjung the lord of history, the resurrection of minjung is the democracy which we are experiencing right now.”<sup>14</sup> In the same step with it, he asserts that “If we say that democratization is the resurrection of minjung and ethnic community, democratization is beyond the political dimension. It is in the dimension of faith and morality. For me, democratization is... the way of faith to live the resurrection in the earth.”<sup>15</sup> He repeats this idea in his sermons and writings as the conjunction point of biblical message and his political agenda. Thus, in this way, for him, the political ideals and religious vision became intermingled and inseparable.

More interesting is that he expresses this political-theological idea by poetic metaphors and imagies in his sermons and writings. For example, in his sermon, “Living after Resurrection,” he describes eating a meal of rice as a kind of Eucharistic behavior. He depicts rice as the results of farmers’ blood, and states that the participation in the Eucharist is the eating flesh and blood of farmers, because the materials of the Eucharist are the fruits of farmers’ bloody labor. His re-imagination of the Eucharist image identified with farmer’s suffering inspires listeners to identify themselves with the oppressed people under a brutal government.

Also, this Eucharist image is found in his poem, “The Heart of Praying a Dream.” He pictures the act of burying both “body of northern soil soaked with the blood of National Army soldiers” and “southern soil mounded over the flesh of Communist Army soldiers” in a place. This image is similar with the action putting bread into the cup in the Eucharist. This Eucharist imagery employed in his sermons and poems functions to identify democratization and unification as a sacred action. This poetic imagination on political issue is very effective in delivering his claim that the Christian message can overcome political controversy.

## Conclusion

Most Korean preachers have thought that non-political preaching is the most authentic preaching, because preachers should deliver the Word of God, not human political opinions in pulpit. However, the Word of God is not proclaimed in a vacuum, but in a particular social-political environment. When the Word is delivered to listeners, it encourages them to reconsider and to reevaluate current reality in the criteria of biblical justice. Thus, preachers have a responsibility to respond to the world in reflection on the Bible. In this sense, the sermons of Rev. Ik-Han

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>14</sup> Moon, *Archive* 4, 314.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 319.



Moon challenge contemporary preachers to proclaim the justice of God in the modern world. In particular, his literary rhetoric in delivering the prophetic message could be great reference for preachers to build an effective and authentic prophetic preaching.

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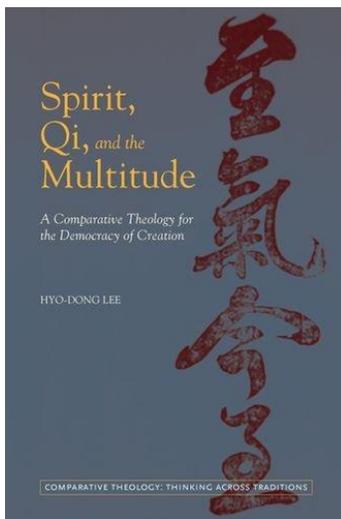
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## New Books

***Telling the Stories of Han: A Korean, Feminist Theology of Subjectivity (Gender, Theology and Spirituality)*** [Paperback] by Jeong-Soo Kim, Acumen Publishing, 2014.

This study looks at the marginalized han-ridden women in Korea who have been completely divested of all human rights. So strong is their belief in their fate that they lack the power even to see themselves as a subject/human being or as a victim. The author seeks to find what idea of subjectivity could empower them to see themselves as a subject/human being as well as a woman. She presents the ethical and theological view of the human subject as the embodied spirit of Korean women evoking and unfolding their han-full stories of suffering.



***Spirit, Qi, and the Multitude: A Comparative Theology for the Democracy of Creation (Comparative Theology: Thinking Across Traditions)*** Paperback by Hyo-Dong Lee, Fordham University Press, 2013.

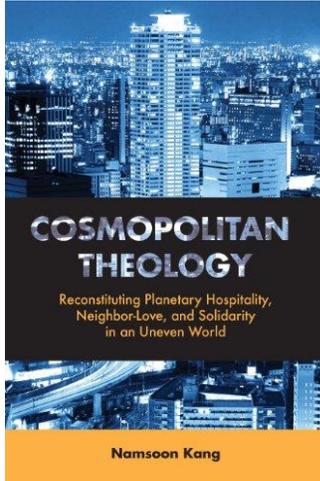
We live in an increasingly global, interconnected, and interdependent world, in which various forms of systemic imbalance in power have given birth to a growing demand for genuine pluralism and democracy. As befits a world so interconnected, this book presents a comparative theological and philosophical attempt to construct new underpinnings for the idea of democracy by bringing the Western concept of spirit into dialogue with the East Asian nondualistic and nonhierarchical notion of qi.

The book follows the historical adventures of the idea of qi through some of its Confucian and Daoist textual histories in East Asia, mainly Laozi, Zhu Xi, Toegye, Nongmun, and Su-un, and compares them with analogous conceptualizations of the ultimate creative and spiritual power found in the intellectual constellations of Western and/or Christian thought namely, Whitehead's Creativity, Hegel's Geist, Deleuze's chaosmos, and Catherine Keller's Tehom.

The book adds to the growing body of pneumatocentric (Spirit-centered), panentheistic Christian theologies that emphasize God's liberating, equalizing, and pluralizing immanence in the cosmos. Furthermore, it injects into the theological and philosophical dialogue between the West and Confucian and Daoist East Asia, which has heretofore been dominated by the American pragmatist and process traditions, a fresh voice shaped by Hegelian, postmodern, and postcolonial thought. This enriches the ways in which the pluralistic and democratic implications of the notion of qi may be articulated. In addition, by offering a valuable introduction to some representative Korean thinkers who are largely unknown to Western scholars, the book advances the study of East Asia and Neo-Confucianism in particular.

Last but not least, the book provides a model of Asian contextual theology that draws on the religious and philosophical resources of East Asia to offer a vision of pluralism and democracy. A reader interested in the conversation between the East and West in light of the global reality of political oppression, economic exploitation, and cultural marginalization will find this book informative, engaging, and enlightening.

***Cosmopolitan Theology: Reconstituting Planetary Hospitality, Neighbor-Love, and Solidarity in an Uneven World*** by Namsoon Kang, Chalice Press, 2013.



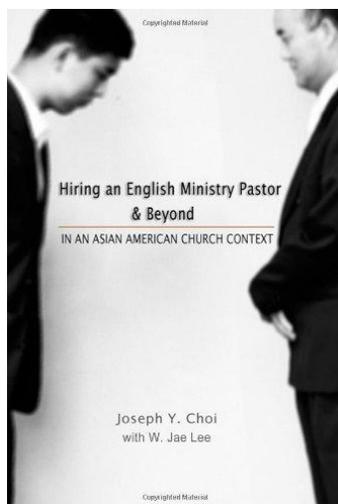
"If Kang's convivial cosmopolitics lead the way to a public theology to-come and it just im/possibly might what good news for a world of boundless diversity. This is a work of visionary wisdom and conceptual brilliance, plying theory and its practice with the attractive force of a hospitable cosmos." --Catherine Keller, Drew University, author of *On the Mystery* and co-editor of *Polydoxy: Theology of Relation and Multiplicity*.

"In *Cosmopolitan Theology* Namsoon Kang forges a powerful and well informed argument for cosmopolitanism, not as a faceless universalism but as a universality of the singular and unique. Invoking the ancient Biblical motif of neighbor love which is joined with a postmodern meditation on singularity, alterity and hospitality, the result is an engaging and engaged plea for planetary political solidarity and religious compassion--what she describes as a 'public theology to come.' A book for everyone and about everyone." --John D. Caputo, professor emeritus, Syracuse University

"As we can no longer deny the cosmopolitan reality in which we find ourselves, for good or for ill, the question is which cosmopolitan perspectives to embrace. In this book, Namsoon Kang provides helpful roadmaps and constructive proposals. What is the place of the fashionable cosmopolitanisms of multiculturalism and easygoing difference and of the alternative cosmopolitanisms of global justice, compassion, and love? Theology becomes a guide to new forms of solidarity, illuminating the flows of power that characterize the different options." --Joerg Rieger, Perkins School of Theology, SMU

In *Cosmopolitan Theology*, author Namsoon Kang proposes a theology that embraces and at the same time moves beyond collective identity position and group-based allegiances. It crosses borders of gender, race, nationality, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, and ability. Kang offers a vision of a global community of radical inclusion, solidarity, and deep compassion and justice for others. Blending theology with philosophy, she crosses borders of academism and activism, and the discursive borders of modernism, postmodernism, feminism, and postcolonialism.

*Cosmopolitan Theology* sheds a new light both in academia and the community of Christian believers by providing a public relevance of Jesus' teaching of neighbor-love, hospitality, and solidarity in our world today.



***Hiring an English Ministry Pastor & Beyond: In an Asian American Church context*** by Joseph Y. Choi, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2011.

“The book *Hiring an English Ministry Pastor* is a valuable resource and tool to help many Asian-American churches across the United States. I would strongly recommend all Korean-American churches to have this book as an important source in hiring the right English Ministry Pastor.” - Nathan Lee, Founder of Father's Heart Ministry, Overseer of Korean Campus Ministry at University of Maryland College Park, Evangelism Explosion College Campus Ministry, Founder and director of Kingdom Conference

“I believe the book will be a valuable resource, not only for the current generation but also for many generations to come.” – Jon

Choi, Lead Pastor of Global Harvest Church, Adjunct Professor at Dallas Baptist University

“This book fills a special need in church ministry literature. Very few books address specifically Asian-American concerns with their unique multicultural, multilingual and historical contexts. *Hiring an English Ministry Pastor* fills such a need and gives insights that will benefit all who are engaged or interested in this dynamically growing ministry. Many times I read this book and said, “Yes, yes, yes!” Joseph Choi understands and speaks with credibility. I highly recommend this book.” – John Tung, English Pastor for over 20 years at Chinese Bible Church of Maryland, Rockville, MD.

"This book is a must read for anyone who is interested in the recruitment and employment process of Asian/Asian-American pastors and ministers. Joseph Choi has made a great contribution to this important area by providing a timely and fascinating handbook. I recommend the book strongly." – Dr. Sung Wook Chung, Denver Seminary, Associate Professor of Theology and Director of Korean Initiatives Part of my ministry is to assist and facilitate the planting of new Asian American churches.

Joseph Choi's book "Hiring an EM Pastor" breaks new ground in this new frontier of American church planting. There is no other book written which is as comprehensive and practical on the subject of the nuts and bolts of planting and staffing an Asian American English speaking church. For anyone who wants to know more about this subject I recommend that you read and put its principles into practice. - Dr. Ron Blankenship, Director of Missions/Church Planting Catalyst for Montgomery Baptist Association in MD and Adjunct Professor of Missions at Washington Baptist University.

Joseph Y. Choi is the co-founder of JnJ Publishing House, whose vision is to provide ministry resources that are “Real, Practical and Supernatural” for the next generation. He attended Golden Gate, Denver, and Liberty Baptist Theological seminaries. He is co-author of *New Beginning I've accepted Christ – now what?* Further book projects on *Real People Real Suffering Real Victory*, *Men of Integrity* and *Supernatural* will be released in the near future. As speaker, author, and pastor, Joseph Choi's passion in life is to reach lost souls for Jesus Christ.



## MEMORY AND HONOR



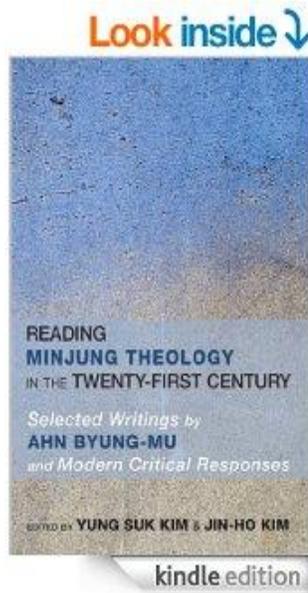
Memory and Honor: Cultural and Generational Ministry with Korean American Communities Paperback by Simon C. Kim, Michael Glazier, 2013.

*Memory and Honor* is a theological reflection on the American experience of the people of Korean descent. It is a reflection on the heritage of rupture, displacement, and resettlement as the key to identity and hope for those continuing to live in between the cultures, languages, and belief systems of Korea and the United States.

This book gives voice to the first generation of immigrants and their children. Since the majority of Korean immigrants are Protestants, the first- and second-generation Catholic community is a minority of minorities, an ethnic minority as well as a religious minority. Thus, as a minority group and as a minority of minorities, Korean American Catholics may have more to contribute to church and society since this country was founded, developed, and

maintained by immigrants such as these. Readers will come away with a deeper appreciation of the Korean immigrant contribution and more readily see the Korean American Catholic community as an authentic expression of church.

*Simon Kim is assistant professor of theology at Our Lady of Holy Cross College in New Orleans, LA. He earned a Ph.D. in theology from The Catholic University of America in 2011, specializing in theology in cross-cultural contexts. He works extensively with Korean American communities and offers conferences, workshops, and retreats across the country on Korean American pastoral ministry.*



***Reading Minjung Theology in the Twenty-First Century: Selected Writings*** by Ahn Byung-Mu and Modern Critical Responses [Kindle Edition] by Yung Suk Kim (editor), Jin-Ho Kim (editor), Pickwick Publications - An Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2013.

This edited volume brings Ahn Byung-Mu's *minjung* theology into dialogue with twenty-first-century readers. Ahn Byung-Mu was one of the pioneers of Korean *minjung* theology. The centerpiece of his *minjung* theology is focused on the Greek word *ochlos*, understood as the divested, marginalized, powerless people.

Part 1 introduces readers to his life and theological legacy. Part 2 includes four important

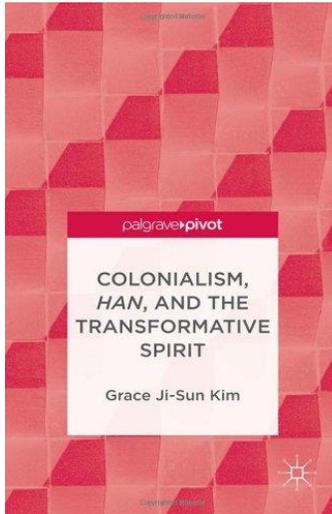
writings of Ahn Byung-Mu: “Jesus and *Minjung* in the Gospel of Mark,” “*Minjung* Theology in the Gospel of Mark,” “The Transmitters of Jesus Event Tradition,” and “*Minjok*, *Minjung*, and Church.” Part 3 contains a collection of articles from international scholars who evaluate and

engage Ahn's *ochlos/minjung* theology in their own fields and formulate critical readings of *minjung* theology. Responses include postcolonial, black theology, and feminist perspectives.

“A fascinating collection exploring the roots and current relevance of Korean *minjung* (‘crowd’ or ‘masses’) theology’ as expressed by one of its founders and most prolific exponents, Ahn Byung-Mu. The writers engage a wide range of social locations, revealing both changed circumstances since Ahn’s pioneering work, and the ongoing importance of his work in our globalized, dominating empire. A great conversation to enter for both those already familiar with this indigenous Korean form of liberation theology and those looking to expand their listening to include voices often silenced.” —Wes Howard-Brook, Seattle University

Yung Suk Kim is Assistant Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at the School of Theology at Virginia Union University. He is the author of *Christ's Body in Corinth* (2008) and *A Theological Introduction to Paul's Letters* (2011).

Jin-Ho Kim is Chief Researcher of The Christian Institute for the Third Era in Korea. He served as the minister of Hanbaek Church, established by Ahn Byung-Mu, and as the chief editor of *Contemporary Criticism*. Among his numerous publications, his Korean publications include *Historiography of Jesus History: Jesus beyond Jesus* (2000), *Radical Liberalists: Unfamiliar Travels with the Fourth Gospel* (2009), and *Citizen K, On the Threshold of the Church* (2012).



*Colonialism, Han, and the Transformative Spirit* by Grace Ji-Sun Kim, Palgrave Pivot, 2013.

Colonialism, globalization and consumerism have devastated large parts of our world. For the past five centuries, the West has nurtured self-worth through the accumulation of worldly goods, serving our own selfish interests and exploiting others. This has been disastrous not only to human beings but to the whole ecology of the planet. Consumerism drives trade, but consumer buying is now like an unchained beast with tooth and claw causing *han* (unjust suffering) for exploited peoples as well as for other species and even for planet Earth. This book will examine ways of rethinking and reimagining ourselves, helping us to work in more just directions for a safer, sustainable planet. Empowering ourselves to act more justly

includes reimagining and renewing our inspiration from God who is the transformative Spirit who gives, sustains and empowers life to all.

