

How my mission has changed since I was first appointed as a missionary.

- ① We were appointed one year after World War II when Korea had been liberated from 40 years of Japanese occupation, and reached the field in 1948, two years before the Korean War.

For over a decade Korea was poverty stricken, war-ravaged, politically and economically unstable ...devastated.

Although already one of the most amazing products of missionary effort, her church reflected all this turmoil.

Pre-war <sup>church</sup> strength was in the north and thousands of ~~these~~ Christians <sup>refugees</sup> streamed south to escape communism empty-handed, beginning life anew bolstered by a strong faith and zeal to start churches wherever they settled.

- ② My mission then and now is evangelism through church planting, but circumstances and methods now are as different as night and day.

Upon my arrival North Chulla Presbytery assigned me a rural district with over a half-million people, ~~and~~ <sup>in</sup> about 25 churches ~~mostly~~ <sup>too</sup> small to be recognized, and only 5 pastors.

They provided me with precious little direction...jump in and get these weak churches on their feet, help where villages are clamoring for new churches to be started!

For many decades the Korean church had been self-governing, but in that emergency situation of necessity missionaries had to rely on their own devices in church planting while also administering hospitals, schools, seminaries, and an enormous relief program.

- ③ Today finds physical conditions improved from primitive to modern, from dangerous to secure, from uncomfortable to relative ease.

Church leadership has multiplied 10-fold, and we work alongside well-educated, competent and dedicated pastors, educators, and medical personnel.

Institutional work is entirely under the direction of Korean colleagues.

Where for many years I was often assigned pastoral oversight (sort of a 1-man session) ~~over~~ <sup>for</sup> 35-40 churches, the increasing number of Korean pastors no longer makes this a necessity.

I still work as a church planter in close cooperation with the evangelism committees of 4 Presbyteries with approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Korea...encouraging every effort to plant and nurture new churches.

- ④ All administration has moved from post-war missionary hands into Korean Church management, giving her full control of her own affairs, growing self-confidence as an indigenous institution, and increasing partnership with overseas churches.

Meanwhile the missionary is free to engage in direct evangelism and to participate in the life of the young church as needed.

As I grow older I find myself giving more time to counselling with seminary students, younger pastors and rural evangelists as we visit back and forth.

We are still able to help with some tough jobs nobody else wants, and sometimes act as "neutral" peacemakers in church disputes.

We rejoice that like Paul's missionary ~~team~~ <sup>team</sup> touring Asia Minor we can report that "the churches are being strengthened in the faith, and are increasing in number daily."

When my wife and I retire in 1986, we know we will leave a church beginning her second century, founded on the Word of God, blessed by His Spirit with a fire for evangelism, able to survive and grow as the need for missionaries declines, geographically and historically strategically located

by the providence of God to assume a place in the forefront of world-wide mission.

Thank God that "He must increase, but I must decrease!"