

## SOME MODERN CROSS-BEARERS

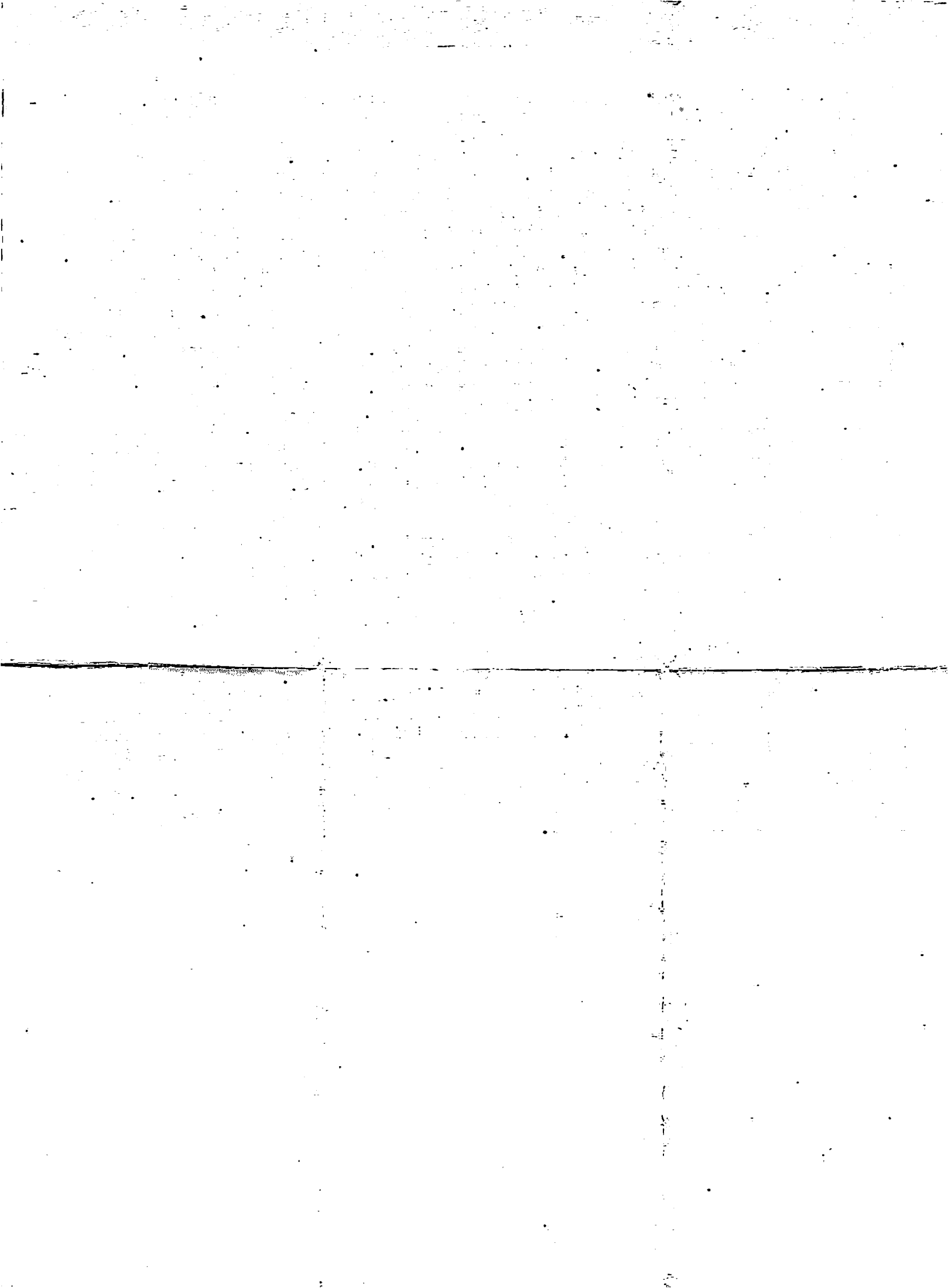
Jesus said: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" Mt. 16:24-26.

My purpose is not so much to expound this text as to illustrate it in the lives of several men I know. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

I came to know Elder Lee just about a year ago, and gradually learned something of his remarkable life. For he had been thrice a cast out. Reared in a wealthy comfortable Korean home he had all the advantages of education and training such a home could offer. But he came in touch with some Christians, heard the call of Jesus Christ to his own soul, and determined to follow Him. His old-fashioned heathen father in anger cast his son out of his house because of his new belief in the foreign religion. On his own, Lee's honesty and thrift coupled with the advantage of a good mind and education, soon enabled him to become a prosperous man in his own right. I believe it was a medicine and drug business in which he was so successful. But one day he was confronted with an awful fact. He was a leper--victim of that dread disease which means not only lifelong physical pain but also constant separation from all non-leprous society. For the second time Lee was cast out--not only from family but from all society as well. But again he was fortunate in not having to beg for a living as do most lepers--roaming the country-side exposed to wind and cold, heat and rain. He went to our large Leper Colony near Soonchun. Here were comfortable homes, plenty of food and medical care, but more than this a large church of more than 1000 members where he was very active and was ordained an elder. But when I came to know him he was a third-time cast out--this time through his own volition. Taking seriously the words of Jesus he left his relatively comfortable life and was touring other leper colonies preaching the Gospel. But these other communities were destitute. I found him working with some 500 lepers near our city. They lived in pitiful shacks out in an old dry river bottom. But he was getting results. This spring in one service I baptized 46 of these lepers and received 50 others into the catechumen class--all the results of a few months labor by Elder Lee.

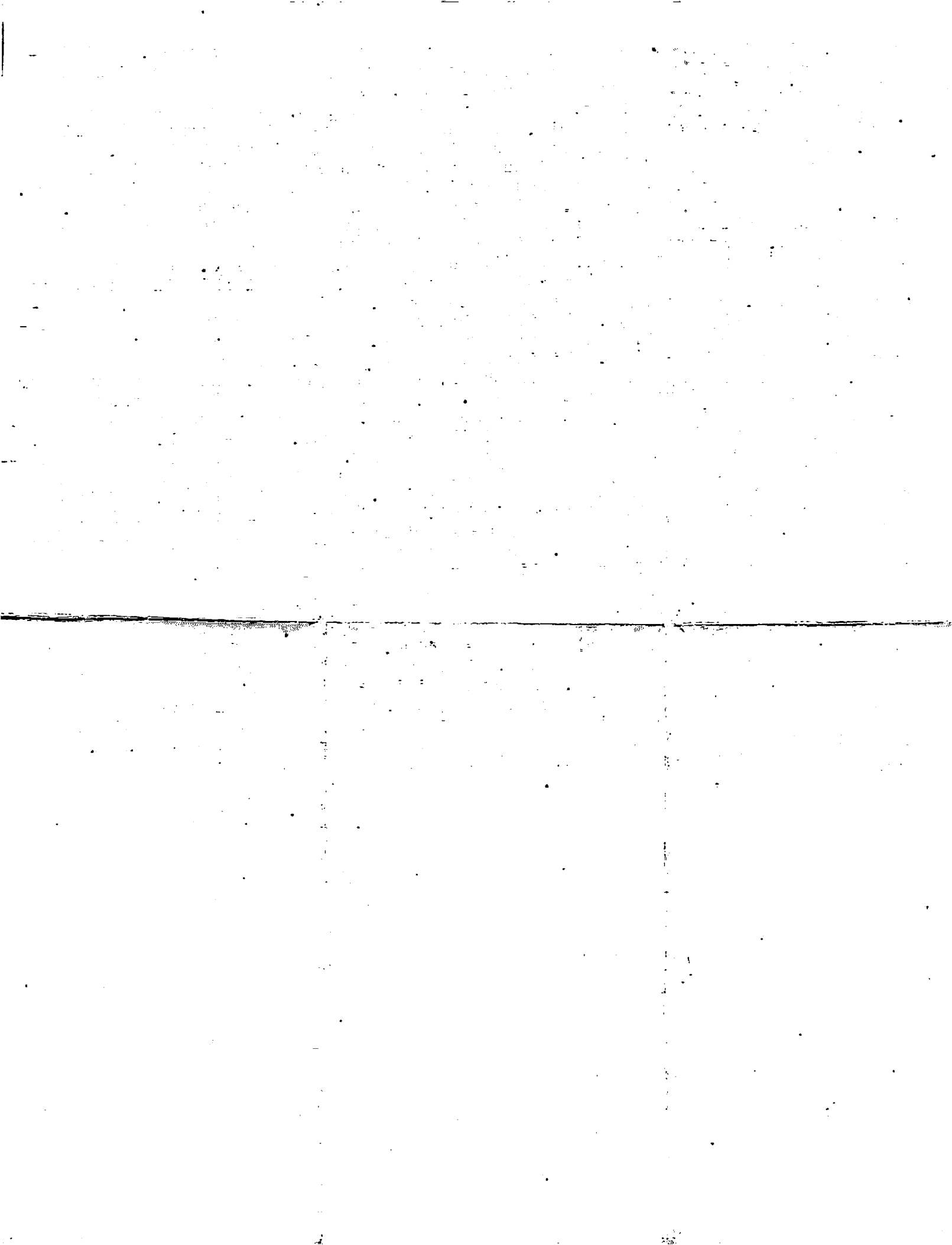
Then there is Deacon Koo. For many years he lived in far North Korea where he was a fairly prosperous farmer. The Communist government's restrictions and persecution drove him south two or three years ago. Slipping over the 28th parallel in the dead of night with his wife and three or four small children meant he could bring nothing with him--and besides he had sold all that he had to pay the underground traffic racketeers. Although he might have made more money in some business he wanted to do church work, so last fall at a pitifully small salary he became the local evangelist in a village where a brand-new church was being started through the efforts of the pastor and members of a nearby city church. This pastor was, by the way, murdered by the Communists this summer. Deacon Koo is not a brilliant man. I doubt if he ever got beyond grammar school. He was just a patient, slow, methodical plodder. In the sight of men perhaps his work has been small, but not in the sight of God. This spring he invited me to, as he explained it, "gather in the first fruits" of his labor. We baptized 2, and received 10 others into the catechumen class. By self-sacrifice Deacon Koo had nurtured the growth of the little church and was buying a small house for 9 bags of rice, the house to be converted into a church. Faithful in the little things, he willingly denied himself to follow His Lord.

Elder Kim was not an elder when I first came to know him. He was the head of a painting firm. Most of the painters were his own brothers and nephews. Two years ago when I arrived in Korea there were no doors, windows,



screens, lighting, plumbing fixtures in the house we were to occupy. A building in that condition rapidly deteriorates and everything had to be fixed up and painted. Kim was the painting contractor. I soon learned that he was superior to the other workers. For he was a Christian. I could depend on a fair estimate of costs from him. The work would be quickly ~~done~~ and well done. I knew none of his men would steal things left around the house. About a year ago I received a printed invitation to attend Kim's ordination as an elder at ~~the~~ a special afternoon service in the Central Presbyterian Church. I went. The church was packed. Ribbons and flowers decorated the platform. Visitors from all the churches in the city and many churches in other places were present. Ordaining an elder in Korea is a big occasion and a man has to be superior in his qualifications spiritually to be so honored. He must be a leader, able to preach and organize new churches, and fulfill all the duties of a presbyter. The service lasted three hours. The pastor preached. Several prominent visitors spoke. Visiting brethren offered greetings and congratulations. The two who were being ordained spoke. Girls from the Sunday School presented them with flowers. Visitors presented gifts. There was special music. Finally the moment came for the laying on of hands. All visiting elders and preachers were invited to take part. I was one of about 75 who crowded forward to lay their hands on the two new elders. Elder Kim deserved the honor. He knew the obligations as well as privileges involved. He also knew the cost in time and money if he were to fulfill his duties. He knew too of the dangers--for a Christian elder in Korea is a leader and as such is subject to the particular attention of Communist agents and armies. No President of the United States was ever inaugurated into office with a higher sense of his office. This summer, Elder Kim paid the supreme sacrifice; he was beaten to death with a hoe by the Communist invaders. "For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it."

We who have heard the call to the Gospel ministry have not yet denied ourselves overmuch--in fact we may have gained somewhat. But our calling is more than a vocation like business or medicine. It is a call to deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow Him, whether through the toils and sufferings of this life, or through death. If every minister in our church and every student for the ministry will face this honestly and prayerfully we will experience a great revival in this land and there will be no lack of volunteers to fill the terribly depleted ranks of those who serve on foreign fields. "If any man would come after me," said Jesus, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."



# Some Modern Cross-bearers

Mt. 16:24-26

Intro.

I. Some Korean Cross-bearers

A. Elder Lee

B. Deacon Koo

C. Elder Kim

II. Missiary Cross-bearers

A. Robert J. Thomas

B. W. D. Reynolds

C. Doctors, Nurses, Teachers.

D. Currently

E. Appeal

Conclusion - The Cross of Christ  
Leper Colony Communion

"When I Survey -"

