

◆GOALS◆

Godly Worship Service
Raising Kingdom Workers
Evangelizing Korea
Evangelizing World
Social Service for Local Area

The Biweekly Choong Hyun

I love you, O LORD, my strength,
(Psalm 18:1)

For to me, to live is Christ
and to die is gain.
(Philippians 1:21)

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Young People of Choong Hyun Devoted to World Missions

God's Grace Overflows at the Missions Retreat



The love of Choong Hyun Church for the next generation is apparent as we have been trying to raise kingdom workers. It would be a blessing for our entire congregation to be able to recognize these future church leaders as 'pillars of the church' even now. The church started this annual missions retreat to challenge the young people of Choong Hyun for world missions and raising them as possible missionaries of the future. There were many students devoted to missions at this retreat. The missions committee realized the necessity of continuing to open the missions retreat and wanted to have a united missions retreat for the middle, high, college, and young adult groups.

As the whole church started to sing the hymn, "Grant Me a Desire to Save Lost Souls," the atmosphere for world missions blossomed. The church wanted to provide the needs for young people so that their short mission trip plan can be successful. There were more than 340 students who attended this missions retreat including volunteers for short term missions, scholarship students of our church and other people with interests in world missions. As we gave full control of all the orders of the retreat to the Holy Spirit through prayer, the attendance was unexpectedly large.

The theme of this retreat was "To be Like Jesus." The main speaker was Reverend Gabshin Jung, from February 26 to 28 at Choong Hyun Prayer Garden. It was a precious time for us to gaze at the glory of God. This year's

missions retreat was different from that of previous years because there were special programs to train for evangelism and prayer, and to focus on world missions through special lectures and visual aids. Reverend Gabshin Jung spoke on "My Debt to the Gospel." It moved the hearts of the congregation and

challenged them to repent of thinking that missions is only for the few. Many students experienced God and found the will of God towards their lives for world missions as they committed their lives for world missions. They came back with a strong commitment, but that was not the end of the program.

The missions committee planned to have prayer meetings separated by the target nations after the Friday night prayer service at Bethany Hall. Beginning with this retreat which called for the unification of the middle, high, college, and young adults, the research on world missions will accelerate in order to prepare to be effective messengers of Jesus. God who worked through this missions retreat will always be with us. We do not have our own plans for world missions, but we are ready to follow the plans of the Holy Spirit. God will be glorified through the devotion of the young people of Choong Hyun for world missions. The church must pray for these young people.

Parish Meetings for Men Reviving Spirituality in the Parish Begins with the Men

Parish meetings for men started from February of this year in order to better equip men to be spiritual leaders in their families and parishes. The revival of men's spirituality will bring about the revival of our church as a

whole. Choong Hyun's men were eagerly awaiting this kind of meeting for a long time.

Now they will have a time and a place to share their personal struggles in maintaining their faith in a secular society while resolving their problems from a biblical perspective. The Parish Committee has started to make the text books for the meetings and they will be published very soon. Pray for the parish meeting for men so that they could wisely overcome the reality of their heavy load at work and still be able to attend these meetings.

Serving with a Qualified Spirituality and Leadership Training for Chief and Assistant Parish Leaders

The Parish Committee decided to train the chief and assistant leaders of each parish group for 24 weeks starting on March 11, 1998. This training will be held immediately following the Wednesday night service. Nine parish group pastors have prepared the text for the training by choosing themes that fit their respective parishes.

The form of this year's training will be slightly different from that of previous years. The training of each parish group will be led by their own pastor who best knows the particular circumstances of their own groups. Following are the themes for this year's training:

Spirituality of Parish Leaders (6 meetings)
Doctrine of the Church (2 meetings)
How to Run a Parish (1 meeting)
How to Make a Visitation (1 meeting)
Parish Administration (1 meeting)
Hermeneutics (2 meetings)
What is the Gospel (1 meeting)
The Guidance of God (1 meeting)
Individual Bible Study (2 meetings)
How to Lead Parish Texts (2 meetings)
Criticism of Heresies (2 meetings)
Special Lecture I: How to Witness
Special Lecture II: How to Bring

Let's Make a Change (3)

Wasting God's Resources - bulletins and other printed materials

Waste paper piles up every Sunday on the steps of the educational buildings. In particular, the bulletins and other documents are scattered all over the place, making this beautiful building quite unsightly. There were times when the Sunday School carried out a "Collect and Reuse" program for wasted paper. However, it proved to be ineffective. Economical use of Sunday school supplies has been highly recommended but that has not been followed up.

Each Sunday, more than 16,000 papers are printed in B5 and B4. However, most of them are thrown into the trash can after being used for only one hour or so. This kind of waste is being repeated every Sunday.

Therefore, there have been various programs to re-circulate these waste papers. For instance, each group within the church is required to collect and re-use any unprinted sides, at least as scrap paper. Moreover, we ought to recognize that it is the responsibility of every member of the body of Christ to use God's resources wisely. This includes re-using paper as well as keeping the church clean from waste materials such as old bulletins.

In an effort to save in this time of economic crisis, let us all make an extra effort to save where we can. Let us all assist in the re-circulation of printed materials. Let us also make verbal communications rather than printed announcements wherever possible.

Hymn to the Awesome Majesty of God

(Psalm 29:1-11)

This powerful Old Testament chapter is a psalm of David that consists of eleven verses. It is a sacred song (hymn) filled with the awesome majesty of God, in honor of God. It contains three special messages that will awaken every Christian heart to the awareness of God's holiness. It was written ten centuries before Christ. As such, some of the verses require an historical perspective in order to fully experience the dynamics of its meaning.

The first two verses are a call to praise and worship the Lord's name.

"Ascribe to the Lord, O mighty ones, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength" (vs. 1).

David is petitioning the kings, the sons of God, to give recognition to the one God (Yahweh). He is commanding them to not only recognize that Yahweh is Lord above all but asks that they give Him all glory and strength. Back in 900 B.C., the kings were looked upon as sons of God because of their religious and political power. Many kings looked to other gods for their strength and as such gave glory to them instead of Yahweh.

"Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name; worship the Lord in the splendor of His holiness" (vs. 2).

David is opening their eyes to Yahweh and explaining God's amazing majesty, the splendor of His holiness. He specifically asks them to give God His rightful name and worship Him. He instructs them with the best advice; to humble themselves in worship.

Like the kings of old, many Christians have similar obstacles to overcome in our contemporary world. Unfortunately, our other gods are not as easily seen as the other gods of old. With 20th century modernization, Satan has found numerous areas to twist and deceive our vision of God's holiness. Our focus becomes smudged when we take our eyes off of Jesus and look to the world for power and answers to our dilemmas. Society enforces

self-centered thinking rather than God-centered living. We must renew our thoughts with David's wisdom that God is God and deserves our recognition and worship in the splendor of His holiness.

The second message contained in Psalm 29 regards praising the Lord's voice.

"The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord thunders over the mighty waters" (vs. 3).



"The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, Sirion like a young wild ox" (vs. 5-6).

Cedar was considered the prince of trees because of

its strength and difficulty to cut. David vividly illustrates that God can not only break the cedars but more importantly breaks them into pieces. He also uses Lebanon and Sirion, Lebanon as the location of the cedars and Sirion as the

Psalm 29 is a passage of God's sovereignty. It is a passage we need to understand and experience. As Christians, we have direct access to our Lord through His Son, Jesus Christ. This amazing grace is freely given by our God, our majestic and awesome Lord.

I pray this Psalm calls you to praise and glorify our Creator, the One who loves us and call us His people. I pray this hymn opens your heart to God's unending mercy and fills you with the awareness of His holiness.

At the time of David's writing, the god, Baal, was considered to be the god of water. Baal was thought to be responsible for the rain. David is telling them here that Baal cannot compare with God. God is thunderfully more powerful.

"The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is majestic" (vs. 4).

David continues to describe the voice of the Lord's supreme authority by referencing elements and events familiar to the people of that time.

destination for building with the cedars. Once the cedar trees are cut and roll down the mountain, they must be transported to Sirion. This hard and slow human process is a simple process to God, as David illustrates in the movements of young animals.

"The voice of the Lord strikes with flashes of lightning. The voice of the Lord shakes the desert; the Lord shakes the Desert of Kadesh. The voice of the Lord twists the oaks and strips the forest bare. And in His temple all cry, 'Glory!' " (vs. 7-9).

Again, David refers to familiar elements to stress the ultimate power of God: lightning, the famous desert of Kadesh, and trees. God's strong voice strikes, shakes and twists these elements. The key phrase used here is "And in His temple all cry, 'Glory!'" The trees, plants, birds, fishes, flowers, and all creatures except humans, cry "Glory."

Humans are the exception. We have free will and choice. David's call for us to praise the Lord's voice, with all his mighty examples, should awaken our appreciation through Christ of God's powerful voice. God's almighty voice, His beautiful voice deserves our adoration and praise.

David concludes this psalm with God's blessing. He begins by reaffirming God's awesome position, "The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord is enthroned as King forever" (vs. 10).

Keep in mind that the people of Palestine were aware of the flood of Noah, the Dead Sea, Sodom and Gomorrah and were fearful. All the people knew of Baal and David rightly placed God above the waters. He describes God as sovereign, 'enthroned as King forever.' David ends this wonderful hymn,

"The Lord gives strength to His people; the Lord blesses His people with peace" (vs. 11).

God takes care of His people. How? He blesses them with strength and peace.

Psalm 29 is a passage of God's sovereignty. It is a passage we need to understand and experience. As Christians, we have direct access to our Lord through His Son, Jesus Christ. This amazing grace is freely given by our God, our majestic and awesome Lord. I pray this Psalm calls you to praise and glorify our Creator, the One who loves us and call us His people. I pray this hymn opens your heart to God's unending mercy and fills you with the awareness of His holiness. May the Lord bless you with strength and peace.

Message to Laodicea

(Revelation 3:14-22)

The prophet John received a vision from Jesus Christ to record and give to the following seven churches in Asia: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Each church received a special and personalized message that addressed Christ's concern for their particular situations. His counsel of repentance and encouragement in faith were communicated to help them overcome and receive eternal life.

These churches encircled each other around the Aegean Sea and were part of the Roman emperor's trading routes. The city of Laodicea was a wealthy city during the first century. It was so rich that after it suffered a major earthquake in 60 A.D., it rebuilt itself without imperial aid. Can you imagine the city of San Francisco trying to rebuild itself after a huge earthquake without the assistance of the federal government?

This wealth accumulated in the major trades of linen, wood, gold and wine. It afforded them the luxury of a famous medical school that specialized in ears and eyes. This city, founded 2,000 years ago, even had a bank for the exchange of monies. Laodicea was a liberal and affluent city that welcomed immigrants, especially Jews.

It's prosperity provided hot water piped in from a hot spring some ten miles to the south and cold water from a spring six miles to the north. This water was an important aspect of daily living. It was used for healing purposes, drinking, bathing, and other activities.

The letter addressed to Laodicea begins, "These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation." The phrase "Amen," applied to the Jews. The phrase "the faithful and true witness" appealed to the Gentiles, and the phrase "the ruler of God's creation" was directed to both Jews and Gentile. The wisdom of this introduction, the divinity of Jesus Christ, petitioned all those familiar to God. It was written to

gain the attention of all Christian citizens.

The letter goes on to deliver a powerful message in a contextualized format that transmits specifically to the church of Laodicea and at the same time reveals its meaning to present day Christians. Unlike the other six letters, this letter does not pinpoint any specific sin or contain a commendation. The church of Laodicea did not reject the gospel nor did they maintain it with any great joy, enthusiasm, reflection or conviction. They appeared to be good Christians and truly believed that Jesus is the Son of God.

Laodicea felt that they had everything and needed nothing. They had gold, fine clothing and medical technology. They believed in Christ and practiced their religion. Christ looked at them and gave them a totally different picture of themselves. He told them that they were wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. He counseled them to buy gold from Him so that they could become rich; buy white clothes to wear so they could cover their nakedness and salve to put on their eyes so that they could see. He was telling them that their sources of wealth, protection, and health were unnatural. Their gold was false

amenities for its time, and Christian practitioners. Anyone who viewed them could only think the very best about them and desire to be like them. But God looked into their hearts and saw the truth.

Today, many Christians appear outwardly good. They attend church every Sunday, read their Bible everyday, tithe regularly, pray constantly, and help those less fortunate. From all appearances they seem very blessed and are held in high regard. But remember, only God can see into the heart. He knows whether they are hot or cold. He knows if they are lukewarm.

Where are you in the thermal spectrum? Keep in mind that there is no in-between with God - lukewarm is unacceptable. God does not want people half-in and half-out. The words of Jesus are strong and stern, "I will spit you out." The exhortation is for a real commitment to the things of God.

In concluding His letter, Christ mentions that He comes to everyone, individually, and knocks on their door. Our part is to listen and open our hearts to His voice. He wants to share life with each one of us, so that we can endure and reign with Him forever.

The letter addressed to the church in Laodicea is really fitting for our church today. Too many times, Christians become placid and lose their perspective of God's grace. Too many times, Christians get caught up in their everyday activities and forget God's unending grace. Too many times, Christians act self-righteously and fail to honor God's amazing grace. Serving Jesus Christ demands everything you have. He wants your heart, your life, your soul, your spirit, your mind, your thought, your dreams, your past, your present and your future.

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." I pray that our church hears and is zealous and seeks only God's grace, so that we can overcome and sit with Christ on His throne, just as He sat down with His Father on His throne.

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Jesus had a unique style of presenting His message culturally as well as historically. Jesus looked straight into their hearts and warned them that they were neither hot nor cold but lukewarm. He was about to spit them out of His mouth unless they repented.

Laodicea did not need to contemplate this message, they knew exactly what Jesus meant. Their delicate sense of water carried Christ's message straight to their hearts. Laodicea knew the implications of hot and cold because their environment was surrounded by the use of hot and cold water. With all of its medicinal properties, luke-warm water was considered to be bad - something to make your stomach sick.

- only God alone can give real gold. Their linen and clothing was inadequate - only God could clothe them in white. Their medicine was deceptive - God alone heals. Christ was bringing the truth back into the picture - the truth that God's blessings of gold, clothes and healing come only from Him. His blessings are real and last forever.

Laodicea had a self-satisfying religion that lacked repentance. They didn't know God's real grace. In His letter, Jesus told them that He rebukes and disciplines only those He loves. He wanted them to earnestly repent - to turn from their lukewarm life and seek Him.

From all appearances, the church of Laodicea seemed good. It had a wonderful location with top

❁ Exploring Sudan, Mission of the Barren Land (2)

A Wonderful Service with Tears of Joy

Dae Sun Ha

(Elder, Chairman of Administration Committee)

In 1994, the Korean Organization for International Cooperation Association (KOICA) sent a whopping \$4.5 million to establish the Korea-Sudan Missionary Training School. After operating it for two years, they handed it over to the government of Sudan. The fact of the matter is that the government of Sudan does not have the ability to run the school, so they rented it out. They are barely able to pay the electric bill and the instructor's salaries. Currently, there are 96 native students who are diligently training across four areas - computer, sewing, electrical wiring, and car repair - at this school. In this situation, the two objectives that missionary Youngdae Kim has in maintaining continual access to this school are to convert people and to provide a place for vocational training.

The next place that we visited was the Gospel Book Center where missionary Youngdae Kim was renting an office space. This is at an important traffic center in Khartoum, where it is convenient to meet many native pastors. Therefore, we supported their air conditioner repairs, reading card production, and telephone line installations. We also received a shabby eight square yard room. However, we used this room for evangelism in the area. Because of some late payments, the center was concerned that the power may be shut off.

From six o'clock in the evening, 94 people met at the Korean church (a storage room that Daewoo used to use) in order to praise God on Christmas Eve for our "Christmas worship service." Reverend Paul Seunglim Lee message and the innocent praise of the children's choir was openly and warmly received by the people at the orphanage.

The next day, December 25, was Christmas. It was a special and unique experience to be able to celebrate Christmas on the African continent under the blazing heat of the desert sun.

After leaving our bedroom at nine o'clock in the morning, we went to worship together with the Choong Hyun Native Missionary Church as they celebrated Christmas on a Korean farm. Deacon Do who lives in Sudan opened a farm in the middle of the forest. They used this simple outdoor meeting facility along with their old amp system.

Though the government of Sudan is an Islamic country, Christians are permitted to gather together only on Christmas day. It is a unique day. In



▲ We could see the work of the living God in the villagers as they played their drums and sang praises to God.

order to commemorate Christmas, the natives from each tribe lifted the banner of the cross, and beat their drums while singing praises in an orderly procession into the church even as early as an hour before the worship service. As we saw all of this, we could see the work of our living Lord with sincerity while heartily greeting our brothers in Christ with a firm handshake.

Their order of worship is not particularly different from ours, but the hymns that they sang during their worship (without hymnals and without musical accompaniment) was such an awesome and blessing experience. Furthermore, when Reverend Lee was preaching they gave their attentive ears and were touched by the word. This was enough to bring tears to our eyes.

❖ A Wonderful Thought of Choong Hyun

The Joy of Glorifying God with My Wife

Samuel Park

(Pastor for the 7th Grader Group, Assistant Director for Choong Hyun Publishing)

I just became a bridegroom four months ago. I was a busy seminarian who had to take care of myself by preparing meals, shopping, doing laundry, and many other things with a full schedule at church along with a heavy academic load. I told myself that when I get married, I would hand over these household chores to my wife. Then I can and will focus only on ministry and studies. But things did not work out the way I expected after I actually got married. I had to bear the burdens of my wife just as much as I handed over my burdens to her. In fact, I became a busier man than when I was a single. Marriage is not something that makes more time to do church work and study. Church work never became easier simply because I got married.

But the experiences that I am having through married life make my ministries a lot richer and fruitful. Now I better understand the love and will of God more deeply through

some of the experiences that I can get only through marriage. Therefore, I came to a sound conclusion for the purpose of marriage: the purpose of a marriage is not to have a comfortable life but to glorify God with the glory that I can never give without my wife.



Church work and a married life are not two separate ministries but one. It is because a church's ministry starts from a pastor's family life and the spirituality that has been sown in his family will bring a fruitful result to his ministry. Apostle Paul says, "Marriage is a mystery." Marriage is an experience that can reveal the mystery of the relationship between Jesus Christ and His Church.

I give all the thanks and glory to God for granting me a precious wife, bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. Furthermore, I thank God for the pregnancy God has granted us 17 weeks ago.

The Republic of Sudan

Sudan is Africa's largest country along the Nile River and the Sahara Desert. Khartoum is the capital city of Sudan. Sudan has enormous agricultural and mineral resources. Yet political strife has caused approximately 60% of the population to suffer from malnutrition.

The Egyptians and British jointly controlled the Sudan from 1899 until Sudan's independence in 1956. Since then, there has been lots of bitter fighting between different factions vying to seize control of the government. Iran has had significant interests in Sudan as a way to undermine the stability of the entire North African region.

Sudan is comprised of about 140 ethnic groups totaling about 30 million people. About 36% of the population is of Arabic origin and 64% is of non-Arabic origin.

Because 70% of Sudan is Muslim, it was declared to be an Islamic Republic in 1983. The government forced Islamic laws on people of all faiths, including the significant number of Christians living in the south who number about 20% of Sudan's population.

Among the Christians, more than half are Roman Catholic. Among the Protestants, Presbyterians and Episcopalians are the dominant denominations.

There had been about 162 Protestant missionaries to Sudan in 24 agencies. However, many of them have had to leave since 1990. There are approximately 371 Catholic missionaries to Sudan. There were also native missionaries. There are about 16 Protestant and 55 Catholic missionaries from Sudan.

There has been a major effort to stamp out Christianity since 1985. This includes the bombing of Sunday church services and other collateral damage to Christian property as well as the assassination of church leaders. They have even offered food to starving Christians to convert to Islam. The Christians are suffering tremendously in this *jihad* or holy war. In the midst of this suffering, the Church has continued to see growth. Some become Christian only to oppose the government. Others have a genuine working of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

The Christians in Sudan are in need of prayer for many things. They need food and medicines which do not get stolen by the government. They are also in need of leaders to replace those who are lost in the *jihad* and to lead much needed classes for the new converts. Finally they also need greater unity in the midst of their tribal and denominational differences.

(All statistics are based on Patrick Johnstone's *Operation World* 5th edition, 1993)