

◆ 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)

Place of Publication: Choong Hyun church
665-1 Yocksam Dong, Kangnam Ku, Seoul Korea (☎ (02) 552-8200)

Publisher: Kim, Sung Kwan Editing: Kim, Eun Ho Chief Editor: Cho, Sun Keun

1998 Relief Aid

"Whatever You Do for the Least of My Brothers, You Do for Me"

Let us love the poor in spirit and flesh
Relief aid established in place of Christian media

This year, explicit changes have taken place in the distribution of relief aid from our church. From now on, all relief will be in the form of daily food rations rather than money. The relief is not exclusively for our own church members, but also for non-Christians who are in need. The church recently increased its relief budget from 100 million won to 500 million won in order to accommodate today's greater need. However, the purpose of these changes is to help our church members to give more love to people in need as they continue to pray for them.

Up to now, relief aid had been a primarily administrative task without actually understanding the true condition of those in need. When regular relief or special relief times came, parish pastors made a list of the people who were in need. Then the relief aid committee would fill that need. Therefore, this impersonal procedure of assisting the poor lacked

love and concern between the church members and those in need. Furthermore, it was very hard to accurately assess each person's situation.

However, the relief aid that we have set for this year requires the concern and positive involvement of parish pastors and church members. First of all, a list of the people who are in need is recommended by parish pastors and members. Then the parish pastors visit the people on the list in order to evaluate their need. The distribution of ration tickets occurs only after verification of their genuine need.

Furthermore, parish members voluntarily help deliver the rations to the poor, and they have the opportunity to have conversations with their brothers and sisters in need. Productive relationships can be built naturally through these types of encounters. Consequently, there can be a continual supply of love and concern for the needy.

While relief aid is good, there are a few potential dangers in the implementation of such a program. The church must be careful not to fall into either of two traps. First, the church must be careful not to use daily rations as a bargaining tool to insist upon a non-Christian's conversion. The opposite extreme is that the church might provide the physical food without the gospel. We must avoid both of these extremes. We must pray as we humble ourselves to deliver the gospel through love. We must not hesitate to recommend the people who are in need in our parish. Our relief aid for the poor is not a one time task, but it must be ongoing until they are out of need.

Training for Male Parish Leaders Eighteen Consecutive Wednesdays Beginning March 18

As the training for assistant district and parish leaders started on March 4 after the 11:00 Wednesday service, the training for male parish leaders began from March 18 after the 7:00 Wednesday service. The male parish leaders will cover twelve subjects on eighteen consecutive Wednesdays for an hour each night at Bethany Hall.

The class is being led by the pastors who wrote the text for the course as categorized by theme. There were 102 male leaders who attended the first meeting on the 18th and 131 on the 25th to learn about the Doctrine of the Church from Reverend Gabshin Jung. Through these lectures, the male parish leaders will be equipped with a solid biblical foundation so that their service for the church can be more effective.

The church must pray for our male leaders including their participation in these lectures in the midst of their individually busy schedules.

Weekly Bible Study

Saints Who Overcome This Time of Economic Crisis
469 People Enrolled; Still Awaiting More

Weekly Bible Study groups began on March 7 with opening services led by the Choong Hyun Bible Institute. 469 people applied for this program, but this falls short of last year's enrollment of 545 members.

Perhaps this was caused by the economic crisis that we are facing today. However, the more difficulties we face, we should learn to overcome our crises through the living Word of God. The Bible Institute considered the possibility that the lower turn out this year may be because fewer advertise-



ments were made for this year's program. That is why the door remains open for more applicants.

Only by learning the Word of God can the members of Choong Hyun serve the various parts of the body of Christ more effectively.

GOD IS LOVE

LOVE EACH OTHER
AS
I HAVE LOVED YOU
(Jn. 15:12)

Let's Make a Change (4)

Be Careful of Noises During Worship

During the sincere hour of worship, the sharp shrill of hand phones and beepers fill the air between the singing of the choir. Even the sound of alarm watches and the ruffling of plastic bags as well as page flipping, and many other unnecessary noises is often disruptive to the worship experience for many people. There are even people who make noise as they zip up their Bibles during the benediction with the hopes of leaving a step ahead of the rest of the congregation. It is unedifying to see people running out the door before the final choral postlude.

Let us make a change by avoiding these unnecessary noises during the worship services. Also, let us not leave the sanctuary until the conclusion of the postlude, when the service is completely over. Let us have a godly worship service and exchange warm greetings with one another after the service as we walk out the doors of our sanctuary.

A little consideration like this will make the worship service more enjoyable and fulfilling for all who participate.

Message 1 by Reverend Sung Kwan Kim



Living Hope

(1 PETER 1:3-5)

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (vs. 3). Who died and rose again? Jesus! Only through Jesus can we receive a new life that provides living hope. Think about it! If you are born again you have living hope because of God's great mercy through the death and resurrection of His Son and our Lord - Jesus Christ. This one sentence is so powerful because it says everything! Peter does not mince words but pointedly gets to the heart of our Christian foundation. Without this all important foundation nothing everlasting can ever be a part of our lives. This means that our lives depend upon knowing, living, hoping and perhaps dying with faith in the absolute truth of this one simple sentence.

When Jesus referred to Peter as a rock - He was not joking. Peter's inspired words are rock solid wisdom that we all need to ponder, appreciate and fully understand! Who's Peter? He was a fisherman who was the first one Jesus called to be His disciple. He was the one who walked on water for a moment. All his personal experiences in witnessing Jesus' miracles opened his eyes to the divine revelation that indeed Jesus was the Lord, the living Son of God. After Jesus' ascension, Peter was led by the Holy Spirit. He understood that the power of being born again in Christ is so tremendous that it produces living hope.

Many people have difficulty understanding what it means to be born again. Let us take the story of Nicodemus as an example of the vast majority of seminary scholars who although highly educated still do not understand the vital implications of being born again. First, Jesus tells Nicodemus that "unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Second, Jesus tells Nicodemus that unless one is born again "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Therefore, unless one is born again he or she can neither see nor enter

heaven. How powerful is being born again? Obviously very powerful because it gives us living hope to see and enter God's eternal kingdom.

How can we become born again so that we can see and enter heaven? Only through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Jesus died for you and me. We have to have a relationship with Jesus in order to receive His gift of eternal life. That

resurrection from the dead was a one time necessity. "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, 'Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades'" (Rev. 1:17-18). Jesus has everything and we get everything through our faith in Him.

Jesus is not going to die again. He died on the cross once and for all! His resurrection from the dead was a one time necessity.

We have total victory in Jesus. This is absolutely our living hope!

This world has no hope but the one who does the will of God has real living hope! "This is the promise which He himself made to us: eternal life" (1 John 2:25)! The blood of Jesus washes away our sins. He died just for us.

relationship is completely and totally based on our faith in Him. "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith" (1 John 5:4).

Only through Jesus do we have faith in God, "who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God" (vs. 21). Wow!!! Jesus' power is so awesome that it allows us to place our faith and hope in God. Without Jesus we clearly can not have faith in God. His presence in our lives is the only connection we have to God.

Jesus is not going to die again. He died on the cross once and for all! His

spotless, the blood of Christ" (vs. 19).

Eternal life is reserved for you "who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (vs. 5). This is God's grace for our salvation. This is our living hope. Through our faith we are protected by the power of God and will receive His blessings. This passage speaks volumes to the absolute truth that we walk by faith not by sight. Salvation is not something we can visibly see, it requires faith - living hope in Christ.

"Therefore prepare you minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (vs. 13). We need to discipline our thinking, be self-controlled, and focus our faith in Christ. Our living hope will be realized only when we meet Jesus face to face. Until that time, our faith must persevere through the trials and tribulations of this earthly life. Through daily meditation, study, prayer, worship and praise of our Lord and Savior in the Spirit we can remain strong until the last times.

"The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever" (1 John 2:17). This world has no hope but the one who does the will of God has real living hope! "This is the promise which He himself made to us: eternal life" (1 John 2:25)! The blood of Jesus washes away our sins. He died just for us. Easter is our living hope. Jesus' love provides everything we need. It is my prayer that every pastor, elder, deacon, and church member is born again into this living hope.

We have total victory in Jesus. This is absolutely our living hope!

To know Christ is "to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (vs. 4). Wow!!! Not only do we get to see and enter heaven but we also get something eternal, pure, and glorious - eternal life! The only thing this world and its inhabitants have to offer are fame and fortune - artificial and temporal things. Jesus offers the real thing - the only thing worth hoping for - eternal life! We are able to receive this amazing inheritance not because of the futile life given by our parents and ancestors, "but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and



Message 2 by Reverend Sung Kwan Kim

God Alone a Refuge

(Psalm 62:1-12)

There is no other place or person anywhere to be found that is pure, great, and good and who gives absolute love and eternal blessings.

Faith in Jesus Christ opens the door to God's refuge.

It is a fact that life is tough, no matter who you are, where you live, what you own, when you were born, or how wealthy you are! The reality of human life is burdensome! In the world today there are many people confronting severe political, economic, cultural and religious hardships. In many parts of Africa and India there is mass starvation, and especially in Ruanda, governmental conflicts are claiming thousands upon thousands of human lives. In Russia, China, and Middle Eastern countries, people are still berated and persecuted for Christian beliefs. In the United States many women are facing life threatening breast cancer, stroke, and heart attacks.

I was born in Manchuria, China because my father had to escape from Japanese religious persecution. At that time my family was very poor. Because of the lack of food, I was not able to walk until I was three years old. After the second World War, my parents moved to North Korea and then later to South Korea. During the Korean War many people died. At a very young age, I witnessed death and killing. I know that there is no real refuge in this world!

Everyday I read in newspapers and magazines or hear on the radio or television that the world is in crisis. Day after day people all over the world are crying out in real pain, real turmoil and real distress. They do not have real happiness and they do not have any real refuge. Many of their situations are not only sad but hopeless. Death is either very near or has come bitterly close. They seek comfort in themselves, friends, family, confidants, food, alcohol, and drugs to ease their burdens only to find that these measures are temporary at best and totally detrimental overall.

As a king and strong fighter, David's life was filled with many threatening events. He knew that in fighting, if you lose, you lose your life and are gone. He had many personal experiences in which people tried to twist him and lie to him. His own flesh and blood, his beloved son Absalom, rebelled against him. Not only his son

but all of Israel! He was old at this time and because he had to quickly escape for his life, he ran without shoes. Just imagine his crisis and how desperate his situation truly was (II Samuel 15:7-17:22).

It was at this critical time that King David wrote Psalm 62. In spite of all the suffering and hardship he was experiencing, it shocked me to read his true confession of faith, "My soul waits in silence for God only; From Him is my salvation" (vs. 1). Here we discover the beautiful knowledge that not only does David wait for the Lord but he waits in silence. Yes - silence! That's the shocking news! He does not expose his heart to friends, family, and confidants but silently waits on God. Here we find the secret to peace and tranquility. How many times in your life have you experienced tremendous pressure and silently waited on God? David totally gives his whole heart to God and recognizes that God is his only hope - his deliverer!

He uses the word "only" six times in his twelve verse song. Obviously, the real answer to all our questions is "only" God. David continues, "He only is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken" (vs. 2). Through his life's experiences, David knows that God is like a rock - a huge boulder that cannot be moved. A huge fortress that he can rely upon at all times to protect him. He knows that in this fortress, no one and nothing can harm him.

Through falsehood, David's enemies attempted to overthrow him in his weakened condition. He expresses his personal knowledge of this human behavior, "How long will you assail a man, That you may murder him, all of you, Like a leaning wall, like a tottering fence? They have counseled only to thrust him down from his high position; They delight in falsehood; They bless with their mouth, But inwardly they curse" (vss. 3-4).

How very true is this thought? When someone is in a high position of authority or enjoying a decent life, there are always people who try to tear down and destroy this person. They

talk the good talk on the outside but inside they hate the fact that there is someone doing better than they are. Their advice is usually dressed in flowers with hidden thorns to cause their adversary to fall down or they say nothing at all hoping calamity will strike.

David answers this dilemma by reiterating that God alone is his hope, salvation, rock, stronghold and that his soul silently waits only for God (vss. 5-7). He warns others, "Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us" (vs. 8). Here we receive intense wisdom to trust God always and to give Him our whole heart because He is our refuge. There really is a person that gives total comfort to any situation - no matter how grievous or serious. What amazing news?

"Men of low degree are only vanity and men of rank are a lie; In the balances they go up; They are together lighter than breath. Do not trust in oppression and do not vainly hope in robbery; If riches increase, do not set your heart upon them" (vss. 9-10). Here again, David presents the real picture of humanity. If you place the wicked on a balance scale, their side goes up because they weigh as much as air! They are worthless! David cautions everyone not to trust in the folly of ill-gotten gain or human strength or even wealth. Your heart deserves so much more than these things offer.

He concludes, "Once God has spoken; Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God; And lovingkindness is Yours, O Lord, For You recompense a man according to his work" (vss. 11-12). Through his personal experience, David acknowledges that power and lovingkindness is God's. He praises God and lets us know that it is God who awards each person in relation to his faith.

In the New Testament, Peter refers to Jesus as a rock (I Peter 2:4). As Christ's head disciple, he also understood God's unchangeable, unmovable, and powerful sovereignty. As human beings, our innate nature is hopeless. We are all sinners who have



fallen away from the glory of God. Thanks to Jesus Christ, we have an avenue of hope and a rock solid refuge! Through His death and resurrection, those who have faith in Him will not die but receive eternal life. God loved us so much that He sacrificed His only Son, so that we could have a relationship with Him that lasts forever. This relationship begins the moment you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. When your heart opens itself to Christ, the Holy Spirit is able to dwell within you. His voice will guide and direct you in Christ towards God's refuge and glory.

If you listen and follow His directions, your life will be blessed eternally. In times of hardship and suffering He will lead you to the only refuge that provides total protection, safety, and comfort. He will guide you to God - the only true refuge. As a refugee, David knew where to go. His heart knew the One who gives complete care and perfect love. So we too, in our desperation, need to constantly remember God as our only refuge. There is no other place or person anywhere to be found that is pure, great, and good and who gives absolute love and eternal blessings. Faith in Jesus Christ opens the door to God's refuge. Take the key and enter into a life filled with peace, joy, and love beyond your wildest imagination or deepest understanding. Seek and find refuge in the only God whose grace is eternally abundant!

Exploring Sudan, Mission of the Barren Land (3)

Christmas Decorations Made from the Beloved Clothes of the People

Dae Sun Ha (Elder, Chairman of Administration Committee)

The warmth of that Christmas service with the villagers remained in our hearts. Then we headed to Jabaharulia Church with two native pastors through the desert for a couple of hours. Unfortunately, the two automobiles we were using broke down in turn on the way to the church. Nevertheless, by the grace of God, we arrived at the church where nearly 200 villagers were awaiting us in front of the refugee church.

The church is comprised of a single 80 square yard building with mud walls and a reed roof. We entered into the church where electricity was not available and we saw pieces of fabric hanging on a rope in front of the pulpit. We thought they did this to decorate the church in honor of their traditional shamanism. However, evangelist Moses told us that the members of the refugee church wanted to decorate the building for the Christmas service. The only resources they had with which to decorate the building was their beloved clothing. We were so touched by this gesture of love and sacrifice.

Missionary Youngdae Kim raised a number of students through Theological Education by Extension (TEE) and had a completion worship service for them. When Reverend

Toot, the senior pastor of Jabaharulia Church, presented graduation certificates to 21 people, we also gave them gifts which we had prepared from Korea. In return, they gave each of us a handmade necklace of a cross. It was a wonderful time to share the love of Christ.

The next day, December 26, began with a visit to Nile Bible College. This school has a four year program with 83 students, 6 professors, 3 classrooms, and a library of 5000 books. The next school that we visited was Joorhee'eff Bible School. It had 64 students, 12 teachers, 2 classrooms, and a shabby dormitory. These two schools or institutions were supported by Missionary Kim, who is well respected by the villagers, in order to develop native Christian leaders.

The last place that we visited on the 26th was Maiyo Church, one of the few refugee churches, and a refugee medical center. We drove on an unpaved road for an hour before we arrived at this inexpressibly poor and pathetic area for refugees. However,



the faith of the Christians that we met including that of Reverend Machiah, was rather active and fearless in the face of trials and hardships. We came to realize the meaning of our Lord's words that the gospel must be preached to every corner of the world.

Because of the limitations of the scope of this report, I cannot write all the things that we saw and did, but we could understand the ministries with which Missionary Youngdae Kim was involved for more than two years founded by his sweat and tears and prayers. If we continue to support Missionary Kim and raise native Christian leaders, then the gospel will blossom, not just in Sudan, but throughout the African continent.

Kingdom Information

The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Algeria lies along the Mediterranean coastline. Its capital is Algiers. Though some agriculture is possible, about 80% of the country is covered by the Sahara Desert. Almost all of the nation's 30 million Algerians live along the coastline, though there are about half a million people living nomadically in the desert as well.

Most of the people speak Arabic. Many are Arabized Berber. French and English are the other commonly used languages. Only about 50% of the population is literate. Where there is demand for translated Bibles, there are often restrictions in the distribution of the Bibles.

The Algerian economy is heavily dependent on oil exports. However, the economy suffered with declining oil prices. The economy also suffered due to the political instability in the region.

Algeria had been a French colony for 132 years. After a bitter war, Algeria won its independence in 1962. A socialist regime held power for 30 years. However, the people wanted change. Since its independence in 1962, the nation is almost entirely Muslim (about 99.4%), though they are separated between radicals and secularists. Christians number only about 0.4%. This amounts to about 20,000 Protestants and about 45,000 Catholics.

As is evident by the high percentage of Muslims, opposition to the gospel is intense. They remember years of "Christian" conquests in centuries past. So, the missionary seed has borne little fruit. Also, with independence, and the failure of the socialist political system in the eyes of the people, Islamic rule seems to be the only viable alternative. A radical Muslim government could make conditions for Christian evangelization of Algeria even more difficult.

The Berbers number as high as 40% of the population. The Berbers have an history of Christianity. However, the Islamic Arab majority resents them. When people turn to Christ, there has been much persecution. Many want to be trained, yet few willing to suffer as leaders for the gospel of Jesus Christ. The number of missionaries in Algeria has continued to decline since 1970. Most missionaries had been using secular jobs to maintain residency in Algeria. Others are expelled. Of the 2 million or so Algerians in Europe, there is more access to the gospel. However, this does not mean that there is any more acceptance of the gospel.

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

A Wonderful Thought of Choong Hyun

Noodle of Love

Our church is open not only to our own church members, but also to the neighbors around our church as well as visitors from different parts of the world. In particular, the first basement of the Mission Center is becoming widely known for serving hungry and thirsty people. Literally any can come to this place to have hot noodle soup with kimchee.

Everyone who eats this noodle has his own reason for coming. The people who stay at church all day eat this noodle for lunch. There are others who eat this noodle simply for the taste, but many poor people eat this noodle because they are starving and have no other place to go where they can fill their hunger. So this is an holy place where they can personally experience the love of Christ.

A question pops up in our mind when we enter Manna Hall: Who

prepares all these oodles of noodles? It is Senior Deaconess Junggoo Park who has been serving in the kitchen for fourteen years. She also has four others who serve together to make this bountiful meal possible every week.

About 7000 people eat these noodles each Sunday. Of course, this work cannot be prepared by only five ladies. However, there are also a number of volunteer workers who cooperate to make this mission a success.

The five workers are so thankful when people tell them that it was a good meal. This tells us that we did not show them our appreciation as often as we should have. It is easy to complain, but difficult to thank. Let us not withhold our words of thankfulness and appreciation any longer.

These ladies love to see people enjoying their food, but often times,

they notice many people who take too many noodles at one time. This is fine, except that many of these same people cannot finish their food. Consequently, they end up throwing away these noodles which were prepared with heart. Do not waste food! Never! We must realize that there are people who are starving while we are wasting our food.

The cafeteria is not a place of luxury. Rather it is a place where piles of used dishes and vegetables fresh from the farm or market need to be cleaned. The floor is always wet from all this cleaning so that they have to wear heavy boots. Their hands and aprons are always wet as well. In this messy place, we can find the warmth and love of those who work day and night to prepare the noodle of love. Let us not forget this!