

**CONTEXTUAL HOPE IN KOREAN  
PENTECOSTALISM'S THREEFOLD BLESSING**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis discusses the Threefold Blessing: salvation, financial prosperity, and healing as a contextual hope in the Korean Pentecostal context. Ironically, hope always begins in hopeless situations and it will not function as a hope unless it is renewed in the new context. No one hopes for the hope that already has been achieved. As hope is contradictory to current difficulties, it can be hope to those who are suffering from the current lack, deficiency and hardship. The Threefold Blessing was the most urgent and eager hope for desperate Koreans in the post Korean context. As the Threefold Blessing was contradictory to the socio-economic and political situations of Korea after the War, it could be hope to Koreans. In fact, the Threefold Blessing successfully contextualized into the Korean context and has deeply lodged into Korean Pentecostals' life. However, as today's Korean contexts changed, it is questionable if the Threefold Blessing can continuously give hope to contemporary Koreans. Thus, the Threefold Blessing has to be reinterpreted and recontextualized into today's Korean Pentecostal context theologically. If the old Threefold Blessing emphasized spiritual, physical and prosperous life of individuals, the new Threefold Blessing has to be understood in wider theological perspectives, including social and ecological matters. Throughout this thesis, I will review the contextualization of the Threefold Blessing in the Korean context as a Pentecostal hope and suggest the ways of its recontextualization for present and future Korean Pentecostals with theological interaction with Jürgen Moltmann's theology of hope.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AG</b>	Assemblies of God
<b>APTS</b>	Asian Pacific Theological Seminary
<b><i>AJPS</i></b>	<i>Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies</i>
<b>KAG</b>	Korean Assemblies of God
<b>CTCCA</b>	Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>ITI</b>	International Theological Institute
<b><i>JPT</i></b>	<i>Journal of Pentecostal Theology</i>
<b>PCCNA</b>	Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America
<b>PFNA</b>	Pentecostal Fellowship of North America
<b>YTI</b>	Yeongsan Theological Institute
<b>YFGC</b>	Yoido Full Gospel Church

## GLOSSARY

Abouji : Father

Amateras: the Japanese heavenly goddess

Cheong-Bi- Sa-Sang (청빈사상, 淸貧思想): the idea of honourable poverty

Che-Sa: the Confucian ancestral worship

Chonju: the lord of heaven

Chosŏn WhangJo Silrok: the Annals of The *Chosŏn* Dynasty

Chukbok (축복, 祝福): Blessing.

Gidowon: Prayer Mountain

Gut: shamanic ritual

Haet Byet Jeong Chaek: the Sunshine Policy

Hak-Gyo: School

Hangŭl: Korean Language

Han (한, 恨): accumulated feeling of unresolved resentment

Hanmoon: Chinese composition

Hananim: one Supreme Being

Haneunim : heavenly One and Supreme

Han-puri: the resolution of *Han*

Jang Lo (장로): Presbyterian

Jaju: self-support

Je-Joong-Won: House of Universal Helpfulness

Jesu (예수): Jesus

Jesu Sŏngkyo Lukabokum Jyunsŏ (예수성교누가복음전서, The Book of Luke of Jesus Christ)

Joeushin Hananim: good God

Joong-In: the middle-lower class

Kookga Jochan Gidohoi(국가조찬기도회: the National Prayer Breakfast)

Kwang-Hye-Won: Widespread Relief House

Mi Gam li(미 감리): American Methodist

Minjung (민중, 民衆): a group of ordinary people

Oh-jung-bok-eum: the Five Fold Gospel

Sam-jung-chuk-bok: the Three Fold Blessing

Silhak: Practical Thought

Tao: the great ultimate in Confucianism

The Chosŏn Dynasty: the last dynasty of Korea before Japanese occupation  
(1392-1897 A.D.)

The Daehan Jeguk: the Korean Empire (October 1897 - August 1910 A.D.)

Tianzhu shiyi: The True Teaching of the Lord of Heaven

Yangban: the upper-class Koreans

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. The Background and Aim of the Research

Before Christianity arrived in Korea, Korea was a hermit kingdom which isolated itself from the Western world. As Confucianism was the foundation of the nation, the cultural, socio-political and religious lives of Koreans were based on the ideas of Confucius. In the beginning of Christianity in Korea, Confucianism was both the most crucial persecutor of and the most significant contributor to Korean Christianity. Koreans practiced Confucian ancestor worship, which combined Confucian filial piety with the Korean shamanic belief, because they believed that fortune and misfortune were dependent on how they served their ancestors. As a member of this society, ancestor worship was not optional but was an essential prerequisite for Koreans. In the early days of Korean Christianity, ancestor worship was the greatest obstacle to evangelism.

To Korean Christians, ancestor worship was regarded as idolatry and, conversely, denying the practice of ancestor worship was regarded by Korean governors as a repudiation of the Korean state. Thus, many Korean Christians were persecuted and martyred by the Korean government due to their rejection of ancestor worship. Nevertheless, the contribution of Confucianism to the advent of Korean Christianity cannot be overlooked. Christianity was brought into the country not by the western missionaries but by Korean neo-Confucian (*Silhak*) scholars in the eighteenth century. Furthermore, they also translated the Bible into the Korean

language.<sup>1</sup> Some *Silhak* scholars wanted to transform the nation through ‘practical studies and thought’,<sup>2</sup> and consequently became interested in Western civilization as well as Christianity. As a closed-door policy carried out in the country, their hope, however, could not become a reality. Through the Treaty of Kanghwa in February 1879, also known as the Korea-Japan Treaty of Amity which was an unequal treaty imposed by force, Korea opened her ports to trade with other countries. After the treaty was signed, Korea became subject to Japan, and the whole nation was plunged into chaos. In 1905, Korea became a protectorate of Japan and a Japanese colony in 1910. As a consequence, the Korean people suffered socio-political repression and religious persecution for 35 years under the Japanese rule (1910-1945). During that time, Koreans could find little hope for the future in the previous socio-political or religious systems and found themselves in a desperate situation. Their properties and family members were taken by the Japanese government for the wars that Japan carried out in Asia and in the Pacific. In this situation, there were two significant developments in Korean Christianity: firstly, remarkable church growth; and secondly, the emergence of Korean Pentecostalism.<sup>3</sup>

Many Koreans began to attend church, not only because they were attracted by the Christian faith but also because they knew that the churches under western

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<sup>1</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Silhak* is a compound word with *Sil* means ‘practical’ or ‘actual’ and *hak* can be translated as ‘learning’ or ‘studies’ in English. From the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, *Silhak* developed with the metaphysical nature of neo-Confucianism and became a social reform movement with practical approach to statecraft in Korea. It denied following Confucian teachings without critics. See, The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Silhak,” *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15ed. 1987.

<sup>3</sup> See chapter 1, section 4.

missionaries had a degree of independence from Japanese rule, since the Japanese government did not want to enter into a diplomatic row with other countries. Later, in the early 1930s, this changed when the Japanese enforced Koreans to practice Shinto worship. Once they became Christians, Koreans became actively involved in prayer meetings and Bible studies. They prayed intensely for their country and to enable them to overcome their desperate situations. Thus the church became a shelter for Koreans wishing to find hope in their difficult circumstances. As a result, the Korean revivals broke out in Wonsan (1903) and Pyongyang (1907), which became the catalyst for the emergence of Pentecostalism in Korea. Thus, Pentecostalism in Korea began before the arrival of Western Pentecostal missionaries. Like Korean Christianity, Pentecostalism began spontaneously in Korea and formulated its own Pentecostal practices in Korean contexts under Japanese rule. Unlike the early North American Pentecostal movement, which originated in the Azusa Street Revival, early Korean Pentecostalism did not emphasize manifestations of the Spirit such as speaking in tongues. Korean Pentecostalism focused more on repentance and Bible study after the Korean revivals broke out. Korean Pentecostals focused on the future hope of the Kingdom of God since they lacked hope in the present. Most messages from early Korean Pentecostal preachers focused on repentance for salvation and the Kingdom of God.<sup>4</sup> However, this eschatological hope of the Kingdom metamorphosed into an emphasis on the Kingdom of God in the ‘here and now’ after the ‘Threefold Blessing’ theology was introduced by Yonggi Cho in the post-Korean

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<sup>4</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 4.

War context during the early days of the Yoido Full Gospel Church (YFGC) around 1958-1959.<sup>5</sup>

Korea was liberated from Japan in 1945, but five years later the Korean War broke out. During the three-year Korean War (1950-1953), innumerable people were killed or went missing, and millions of families were divided.<sup>6</sup> The war left Korea terribly devastated. The majority of Koreans suffered severe poverty and disease in the aftermath of the war, and their properties were destroyed. In order to survive, many were reduced to eating the bark off trees. For Koreans affected by the war, the Threefold Blessing summarized the hope they placed in God during that time: salvation for their souls, prosperity to overcome the absolute poverty they were facing, and divine healing for their diseases. The Threefold Blessing became the primary focus of Cho's message and later the central theological tenet of Korean Pentecostalism. When Cho began his ministry on the outskirts of Seoul, those who were poor and sick became his church members. Although the YFGC was started with six members, including Cho himself, on May 15, 1958,<sup>7</sup> within about three

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<sup>5</sup> For the 'Threefold Blessing', see chapter 3, section 4.1.3.

<sup>6</sup> During the Korean War (June 25, 1950 to July 7, 1953), American casualties were 157,530, including 33,625 deaths, and there were about 14,000 casualties of other U.N. forces. About 257,000 South Korean soldiers were either killed, wounded, or missing, and 244,000 South Korean citizens were killed, over 229,000 wounded, and 303,000 went missing. While South Korea was occupied by the North Korean military, about 200,000 South Korean youths were forcibly drafted into the North Korean Military, 84,000 South Koreans were kidnapped and relocated to North Korea, and 129,000 South Koreans were executed by the Communists. See Andrew C. Nahm, *Korea: A History of the Korean People* (Seoul: Hollym International Corp., 1988), pp. 377-378. The Korean War was the biggest national tragedy. During the War, most of industrial facilities and foundation were destroyed. Although many people survived the war, they were still victims. Their houses were destroyed, and most of them lost family members.

<sup>7</sup> Karen Hurston, *Growing the World's Largest Church* (Kaduna, Nigeria: Evangel Publishers Ltd., 1994), p. 22.

decades, it became the largest church in the world with 700,000 registered members in 1990.<sup>8</sup> During that time, the poor and the sick, who were the ordinary people of Korea, became the protagonists of Korean Pentecostalism, Korean Pentecostalism, with its emphasis on the Threefold Blessing, gave them hope. Through the influence of Cho, most Korean Pentecostal pastors preached sermons based on the Threefold Blessing, which has become the main theme of the Korean Pentecostal message and the hope of Korean Pentecostals.

The emergence of Cho's Threefold Blessing roughly coincided with the development of Moltmann's theology of hope in Germany. Both developed in similar contexts; the former in the ruins of the post-Second World War Germany and the latter in the post-Korean War context. Cho and Moltmann's personal hardships through the Korean War and the Second World War influenced their respective theologies. However, as Moltmann's theology of hope was introduced to Korean Christianity by Korean *Minjung* and liberal theologians, the socio-political elements of his theology have been magnified, and it was initially considered as a form of liberal theology by conservative Korean Pentecostals. As a result, direct theological dialogue between the Threefold Blessing and Moltmann's theology of hope did not take place until the mid-1990s. Since then, Moltmann has begun to engage in a dialogue with Korean Pentecostalism. In September 1995, through the arrangement of one of his pupils named Dr. Jong Wha Park, Moltmann met Cho at the YFGC. After

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<sup>8</sup> Young Hoon Lee, "Dr. Yonggi Cho's Influence on the Korean Church in Relation to His Pneumatology" [in Korean], *Journal of Youngsian Theology* 7 (August 2004), pp. 138-39



this theological dialogue, Moltmann said that he came to recognize Cho as a Christian theologian and was amazed at the similarities in their personal biographies as well as the theological and historical affinities between Cho's theology and his theology of hope.<sup>9</sup> In June of 2004, Moltmann was officially invited to the 2004 Young San International Theological Symposium as one of the main speakers. The main theme of the symposium was 'Dr. Yonggi Cho's Theology of Hope'. In the symposium, Moltmann presented a seminar paper entitled 'Der Segen der Hoffnung: Die Theologie der Hoffnung und das volle Evangelium des Lebens' [The Blessing of Hope: the Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life']. The paper served as an introduction to the theological and historical similarities of the two theologies. Following the symposium, however, the theological conversation between them did not continue. Since then, scholars both inside and outside the world Pentecostal/Charismatic movement have studied the Threefold Blessing in terms of the Korean shamanistic influences on Korean Pentecostalism or as one of the factors behind the explosive church growth of Korean Pentecostalism, but not as the Pentecostal hope in Korean contexts. Through giving hope to Koreans through its emphasis on the Threefold Blessing, the YFGC has grown remarkably. However, Pentecostal church growth in Korea has stagnated since the early 1990s.<sup>10</sup>

For contemporary Korean Pentecostals, the Threefold Blessing is not as influential as it was in the post-Korean War context. After the Korean War, Koreans

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<sup>9</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "The Blessing of Hope: the Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life", trans. Margaret Kohl, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13.2 (2005), p. 148.

<sup>10</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea: Its Historical and Theological Development* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2009), p. 120.

were afflicted by two major problems: extreme poverty and illness. The Threefold Blessing gave Koreans hope that they could overcome these difficulties. However, as the Korean socio-economy has developed, the context of Korean Pentecostalism has changed. In Korea today, there is no longer national poverty, and the National Health Service has also developed well. Most Korean Pentecostals identify themselves as middle class citizens. This means that the Threefold Blessings of spiritual salvation, materialistic prosperity and physical health are less appealing to contemporary Korean Pentecostals. Today, Koreans are less concerned about poverty and ill-health and more concerned about individual and social matters such as family breakdown, the gap between the rich and the poor, ethical matters such as the problem of moral hazard and *noblesse oblige*, and the ruined eco-system caused by the rapid industrialization and urbanization. Thus, the salvation, healing, and prosperity incorporated in the Threefold Blessing have to be understood in a broader sense. For instance, healing has to be reinterpreted not only for the body but for the society, the family, relationships, and the ecosystem. Often the people of Korea are referred to as the people of *Han*. Most Koreans live with individualistic and collective *Han*. Although the healing of *Han* is a significant element of healing, the healing of the Threefold Blessing has concentrated on healing for the body. Salvation also has to be understood not only in its spiritual dimension but to include socio-political aspects. The hope of Korean Pentecostals for divine financial blessings has focused on individual and personal prosperity. However, the hope for prosperity must shift from an emphasis on individual material blessing to a more communally-oriented

prosperity for the whole society. This means that prosperity in the Threefold Blessing has to be reinterpreted and recontextualized to incorporate not only the individual but the whole of society and the ecosystem. Hope is expressed differently in different socio-economic and political circumstances, and for different individuals. Hope that has already been realised can no longer be regarded as 'hope'. In this sense, the Threefold Blessing must be recontextualised for today's Korean Pentecostal contexts if it is to remain relevant.

The aim of this dissertation is to review the Threefold Blessing in terms of a theology of hope. The Threefold Blessing will be discussed as the contextual hope in Korean Pentecostal contexts in five chapters. For this, the historical and theological basis of the Threefold Blessing will be reviewed, and a theological comparison with Moltmann's theology of hope will be made. However, the Threefold Blessing will be understood not in terms of Moltmann's theology of hope but rather as the contextual hope in Korean Pentecostal contexts. In other words, the main aim of this thesis is neither to simply make comparisons between Moltmann's theology of hope and the Threefold Blessing nor to take issue with his theology of hope, although Moltmann's theology of hope is one of the primary theological sources for this research. In the final two chapters, it will be argued that due to the change in Korean Pentecostal contexts it is necessary to recontextualize and reinterpret the Threefold Blessing for contemporary Korean Pentecostals. Furthermore, in the last chapter, the futuristic aspects of the Threefold Blessing will be discussed, and it will be suggested that the

Threefold Blessing has to be renewed in new Korean Pentecostal contexts in order to give ongoing hope to Koreans.

## 2. Previous Studies

Korean Pentecostalism and its beliefs and practices have been researched in religious and cultural perspectives by Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal scholars. Woong Boo Yoo researched the roots of Korean Pentecostalism in Korean history and culture under Dr. Walter Hollenweger in Birmingham and published his Ph. D dissertation under the title *Korean Pentecostalism: Its History and Theology* in 1988.<sup>11</sup> He researched the unique historical and theological characteristics of Korean Pentecostalism in comparison with American and European Pentecostalism. It is the fact that his research is significant as an introduction to Korean Pentecostalism for Pentecostal studies in the Western world. However, he discusses Korean Pentecostal theology and history from the perspective of Minjung theology without dealing with the Threefold Blessing as a theology of Korean Pentecostalism.

On the contrary, Ig Jin Kim discusses the religio-social context of Korea, the doctrines of classical Pentecostalism, the influences of the American Assemblies of God on Korean Pentecostalism, and the life and theology of Yonggi Cho in his book, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism: Sunbogeum (pure gospel)*

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<sup>11</sup> Boo Woong Yoo, *Korean Pentecostalism: Its History and Theology* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1988).

*Pentecostalism* (2003).<sup>12</sup> He defines ‘the Threefold Blessing and the Fivefold Gospel’ as Sunbogeum theology and Yonggi Cho as the main Sunbogeum theologian.<sup>13</sup> However, he discuss ‘the Threefold Blessing and the Fivefold Gospel’ within only eight pages of his book. As a result, his studies are very brief and could not carry out deep theological discussions for the Threefold Blessing.

Young Hoon Lee researches the historical and theological development of the Spirit movement in Korea. In his book, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea: Its Historical and Theological Development* (2009), Lee exclusively focuses on Cho’s biography and his theology as well as the history of the YFGC.<sup>14</sup> He divides the history of Korean Pentecostalism into six chronological periods and discusses current emerging theological questions in regard to the relation between Korean Pentecostalism and socio-political and ecological issues. He illuminates how Korean Pentecostalism needs to respond to these issues for its future development. As the senior pastor of the YFGC after Yonggi Cho, he also presents rich empirical information about how the YFGC has engaged in social works and world mission in other developing countries.

There are also prominent dissertations and books focusing on the history and theology of Korean Pentecostalism as well as the history of the YFGC and Cho’s

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<sup>12</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism: Sunbogeum (Pure Gospel) Pentecostalism* (Zoetermeer, Netherlands: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 2003).

<sup>13</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, pp. 202-209.

<sup>14</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*.

theology.<sup>15</sup> In his book, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (2004), Allan Anderson discusses in depth the theology of Cho and Korean Pentecostalism from the perspective of global Pentecostalism and contextual theology.<sup>16</sup> Harvey Cox examines the relation between Korean shamanism and Korean Pentecostalism from a religious, rather than theological, perspective in his book, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (1995).<sup>17</sup> Although these books are not monographs focusing solely on Korean Pentecostalism and its theology, they are important for understanding Korean Pentecostalism from a theological, historical and religious perspective.

In regard to the theological conversations between Pentecostals and Moltmann, there are several articles written by Moltmann and published in the *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*.<sup>18</sup> In an article, entitled ‘The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life’, Moltmann examines the contextual

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<sup>15</sup> Jae Bum Lee, “Pentecostal Type Distinctives and Korean Protestant Church Growth”, (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1986); and Sung Hoon Myung, “Spiritual Dimensions of Church Growth as Applied in the Yoido Full Gospel Church”, (Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1990).

<sup>16</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

<sup>17</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1995).

<sup>18</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “A Response to My Pentecostal Dialogue Partners”, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 4 (1994), pp. 59-70; “A Pentecostal Theology of Life”, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 9 (1996), pp. 3-15; and “The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life”, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13.2 (2005), pp. 147-161.

commonalities between his theology of hope and Cho's theology as well as the biographical similarity between himself and Cho.<sup>19</sup>

### **3. Research Questions**

The following questions have guided this research on the Threefold Blessing:

- 1) Is it possible to understand the Threefold Blessing as the Pentecostal hope in the Korean context?
- 2) How is the Threefold Blessing related to the Korean context? How can the Threefold Blessing be understood in the Korean context? What kind of hope did the Threefold Blessing give to Koreans in the post-Korean War context?
- 3) How has the Threefold Blessing been developed? Why is it influential in the lives of Koreans?
- 4) What are the theological differences and similarities between Moltmann's theology of hope and the theology of the Threefold Blessing?

To what extent is the Threefold Blessing still relevant to contemporary Koreans ? How can it be understood in the contemporary Korean context? How can it be reinterpreted and recontextualized for the contemporary Korean context?

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<sup>19</sup> See chapter 3, section 5.

#### **4. Research Strategies and Methodology**

The main purpose of this research is to rediscover the Threefold Blessing as a source of contextual hope for Pentecostals in Korea. For this, first of all, it is necessary to understand the historical background of Korean Pentecostalism. Korean Christianity and Pentecostalism were both introduced by indigenous Koreans rather than Western missionaries. Before the early Western missionaries came to Korea, there were Korean native Christians in Korea, and the Bible had already been translated into the Korean language. The Pentecostal movement had also begun in Korea before the North American Azusa Street Revival broke out in 1906. Since then, Korean Pentecostalism has developed in its own ways and has been contextualized into Korean contexts. The Threefold Blessing developed as a result of the contextualization of Pentecostalism in Korea. Thus, the thesis employs historical, theological, and contextual approaches to understand the Threefold Blessing as a source of Pentecostal hope in the Korean context.

Furthermore, the thesis adopts an analytical approach. The research draws upon church growth data, a Gallup opinion poll of Korean Christians, personal interviews with scholars, and a questionnaire survey created by the researcher. Through analysis of this data, the influences of the Threefold Blessing as a source of contextual hope for Korean Pentecostals and its impact on the growth and future prospects of Korean Pentecostalism are explored. Some historical inconsistencies exist among academic studies with regard to the dates of early missionaries' arrivals, persecutions, martyrdoms, and other events in the history of Korean Christianity and



Pentecostalism. The thesis addresses these inconsistencies through analysis of original copies of early missionaries' letters and minutes, journals, newspapers, diplomatic documents, *Chosŏn WhangJo Silrok* (the Annals of The Chosŏn Dynasty),<sup>20</sup> and the official website of the YFGC. In addition, through an analysis of the questionnaire survey, the study will reflect upon the contemporary contexts of Korean Pentecostalism and the necessity of reinterpreting and recontextualizing the Threefold Blessing.

The study employs a qualitative research. The qualitative approach is employed to gain a theologically understanding of the Threefold Blessing as a contextual Pentecostal hope in the Korean context. Therefore, throughout this thesis, quantitative and qualitative methodologies are used interchangeably.

#### ***4. 1. Qualitative Approach: Archives, Interviews, Documents, and Publications***

The qualitative methodological approach used in this thesis includes an integrative review of publications and documents, literature reviews, theological analysis of Yonggi Cho's sermons, and interviews. For the theological discussions, I employed three qualitative methodological approaches: historical, theological, and interdisciplinary methods. A religio-historical method is important because the

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<sup>20</sup> The Annals of the Chosŏn Dynasty is one of Korea's national treasures and is listed in UNESCO's Memory of the World registry of 1997. The Annals, consisting of 1,893 volumes, record national affairs and the activities of the country which were reported to the kings during the period 1392-1910. As a national treasure, it was not opened to the public until 1995. On 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2005, the official website of the Annals of the *Chosŏn* Dynasty was opened to public. Its official website is <http://sillok.history.go.kr/main/main.jsp>. Our discussion of Korean historical events, including the persecutions and martyrdom of Christians, will be based on this Annals in this research.

Threefold Blessing developed against the background of Korean religiosity and the post-Korean War context. Some scholars, such as Harvey Cox, Boo Wong Yoo, and Walter Hollenweger simply identify the unique character of Korean Pentecostalism as having been derived from Korean shamanism, and the success of Korean Pentecostalism as being caused by shamanistic influences. However, the Threefold Blessing is more deeply immersed in the Korean socio-political, economic, and religious contexts than Korean shamanism. Cho's theology is also influenced by his personal experience of hardship under Japanese rule, during the Korean War and the critical physical and financial conditions after the war,<sup>21</sup> rather than shamanistic influences. The Threefold Blessing as a contextual hope, therefore, has to be understood not only in the Korean religious context but also in the socio-economic context after the Korean War. Thus, it is important to examine how and in what contexts the Threefold Blessing has been contextualized. It is also important to explore how the Threefold Blessing can be recontextualized for the very different contemporary Korean context in order for it to continue as a source of hope for Pentecostals.

In the first chapter, the historical context of Korean Pentecostalism is discussed. In this chapter, I discuss the Korean Pentecostal context before the theory of the Threefold Blessing emerged and what kind of hope Korean Pentecostals had within the context. For this, it is necessary to examine archival and historical sources

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<sup>21</sup> Allan Anderson, "The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho", *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 7: 1 (January 2004), p. 114.

such as the minutes and letters of missionaries, biographies, and diplomatic and official documents. In the first part of chapter three, the origin of the Threefold Blessing is discussed. The most important part of this research is not to gain a broad knowledge of Korean history, culture, and religions, but to discover how and by whom the theory of the Threefold Blessing has been developed, in which context it is been developed, and when it was first taught to Korean Pentecostals.

The thesis also employs a theological approach. Many scholars both inside and outside the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement have researched the theology of the Threefold Blessing.<sup>22</sup> However, it has not been considered from the perspective of a contextual hope in the Korean Pentecostal context. After the three years of the Korean War (1950-1953), Koreans found themselves in serious difficulties. In this situation, the Threefold Blessing became a source of hope to Koreans. However, the Threefold Blessing as a source of hope has not been analyzed theologically. Instead, as already noted, some scholars emphasize the relationship between the Threefold Blessing and Korean shamanism from a religious perspective.<sup>23</sup>

The major question of this thesis is how the Threefold Blessing can be understood as a source of 'hope' in the Korean Pentecostal context. This entails three main theological tasks. Firstly a systematic study of the Threefold Blessing was

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<sup>22</sup> Boo Woong Yoo, *Korean Pentecostalism*; Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1997), pp. 99-105; Sung Hoo Myoung and Young Gi Hong (eds.), *Charis and Charisma: David Yonggi Cho and the Growth of Yoido Full Gospel Church* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2003); and Allan Anderson, "The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho", pp. 101-123.

<sup>23</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 213-41; and Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, pp. 13-4.

carried out, especially in relation to its soteriology, Christology, and doctrine of God. Secondly, comparisons were made between the Threefold Blessing and Jürgen Moltmann's Theology of Hope. Finally, the thesis seeks to explicate the contextual meaning of the Threefold Blessing in the Korean context. In this research, therefore, the Threefold Blessing is examined from a soteriological, pneumatological, eco-theological, and socio-theological perspective. By engaging with theological debates, including those related to Moltmann's theology of hope, the study reflects the Threefold Blessing as a contextual hope in the Korean context. Furthermore, the theology of the Threefold Blessing is continually compared with Moltmann's theology of hope, and understood from the perspectives of contextual theology. In order to discover the soteriological and Christological significance of the Threefold Blessing as well as the concept of God in the Threefold Blessing, Cho's various sermons and books are reviewed and discussed. Cho's sermons are also examined in order to show his theological transition with regard to the Threefold Blessing since his sermons after the new millennium show certain changes in relation to soteriology, extended perception of healing, social-theology, and eco-theology.<sup>24</sup> Many studies of the Threefold Blessing have been conducted from a religious perspective, focusing on the indigenous religious influences of shamanism. These studies have tended to downplay the influence of socio-economic and political contexts on the development of the Threefold Blessing. However, Allan Anderson shows the importance of the post-Korean War context and Cho's personal suffering from poverty and illness for

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<sup>24</sup> See chapter 5, section 2.

the emergence and popularity of the Threefold Blessing.<sup>25</sup> In this thesis, the Threefold Blessing is understood in terms of a contextual hope in the Korean context. I realized that Moltmann's direct theological approaches to the theory of the Threefold Blessing and his theology of hope provide rich theological insights for understanding the Threefold Blessing in terms of hope.<sup>26</sup> Throughout this thesis, Moltmann's theology of hope, his Christology, and his soteriology are compared and contrasted with the theology of the Threefold Blessing. However, Moltmann's theology of hope cannot be fully applied to the Korean context without a contextual understanding of the Korean context. This means that any study of the Threefold Blessing requires an interdisciplinary approach which combines theology with a sociological analysis of the context in which it emerged. In other words, the Threefold Blessing has to be understood not only in terms of the influence of indigenous Korean religions but also the socio-economic and political contexts of Korea. Moreover, it is necessary to reinterpret the Threefold Blessing for the contemporary Korean context. In addition, through gaining an understanding the Threefold Blessing in the Korean context, the reasons why Koreans enthusiastically accepted the messages of the Threefold Blessing and how the Threefold Blessing needs to be recontextualized into the contemporary Korean context can be discovered.

In addition to the other research methodological approaches mentioned above, a number of interviews were conducted to capture and collect more insightful data.

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<sup>25</sup> Allan Anderson, "The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho," pp. 101-123.

<sup>26</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "A Response to My Pentecostal Dialogue Partners", pp. 59-70; "A Pentecostal Theology of Life", pp. 3-15; and "The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life", pp. 147-161.

Face to face interviews took place with the scholars, including Jürgen Moltmann, Vinson Synan, and Amos Yong. These interviews were video recorded. Discussions were also conducted through email with Young Hoon Lee, the current senior pastor of the YFGC following Yonggi Cho's retirement.

The interview with Moltmann was intended to discover how Moltmann understands the Threefold Blessing in relation to his theology of hope and what his thoughts were about its future development for contemporary Koreans. The purpose of the interview with Synan was to understand the theological and ministerial influences of the North American Pentecostal/Charismatic movements on Yonggi Cho and his theology in terms of healing and prosperity. The interview with Yong was to discuss how healing in the Threefold Blessing needs to be interpreted theologically for the disabled, the wider society, and the ruined ecosystem. The purpose of the interview with Lee was to understand the socio-political responsibilities of the YFGC for contemporary Koreans and the possibilities for the future development of the Threefold Blessing after Cho's retirement.

## **5. Structure of the Thesis**

In chapter 1, the historical context of Korean Pentecostalism is discussed. The chapter includes a brief examination of the history of Korean Christianity and Korean Pentecostalism in order to understand the character of Korean Pentecostalism and its historical and theological background which provided the soil for the development of the Threefold Blessing theology. Korean Pentecostalism began in the early 1900s

during a period of socio-political turbulence. Since the Kanhwa Treaty in 1876, Korea had virtually become a tributary of Japan and it lost its sovereignty in 1910. The Japanese occupation ended in 1945. Meanwhile Koreans lost hope for the future and suffered from the effects of Japanese imperialism, Korean Pentecostal revivals broke out in Wonsan (1903) and in Pyongyang (1907). As Korean Pentecostalism started before the arrival of Western Pentecostal missionaries, it was able to become contextualized in the indigenous social and religious contexts of Korea. Cho was born in 1936 and personally went through the hardships of Japanese colonial rule, the Korean War (1950-1953) and its aftermath. In fact, Cho's theology developed out of these historical experiences and through the influence of indigenous religions. Thus, an understanding of the historical context is important.

In chapter 2, the contextualization of Pentecostalism in the Korean context is discussed. In order to do contextual theology, external and internal factors relevant to the context must be understood. In his discussion of contextual theology, Stephen Bevans addresses external factors including “historical events, intellectual currents, cultural shifts and political forces” and internal factors such as “the incarnational nature of God”, “the sacramental nature of reality”, and “the understanding of the nature of divine”.<sup>27</sup> However, Bevans overlooks other fundamental factors that need to be considered for contextual theology. These include ‘people’ as the subject of contextualization; the specific nature of God for the people; the primal religiosity and

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<sup>27</sup> Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), pp. 5-10.

the ethical emotion of the people; the socio-political, economical, and religious contexts; and the way ‘scripture’ is contextualized. In this chapter, the people of Korean Pentecostalism, the nature of God for Korean Pentecostals, and the negative and positive influences of shamanism as primal religiosity on Korean Pentecostalism will be discussed in terms of the contextualization of Pentecostalism in the Korean context.

Chapter 3 begins with a discussion of the origins and development of the Threefold Blessing based on 3 John 2. This is followed by an examination of hope in the Threefold Blessing in relation to Moltmann’s theology of hope. As Moltmann was invited to Korea by *Minjung* and liberal theologians who were mostly Moltmann’s pupils or studied in Germany, the socio-political aspects of Moltmann’s theology were emphasized to Korean Christians. As a result, Moltmann and his theology were neither initially welcomed by Korean conservative Christians nor by Pentecostals. However, as Moltmann began to dialogue with Korean Pentecostalism from the 1990s, Korean Pentecostals were able to understand this theology from a broader perspective. In 1995, he was invited by Korean Pentecostals and conducted a seminar in the YFGC, where he did not hesitate to define the Threefold Blessing as hope for the Koreans in the post-Korea War context.<sup>28</sup> The Threefold Blessing of Cho and Moltmann’s theology of hope were developed against a background of similar social contexts and experiences of personal hardship. Comparing himself with Cho,

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<sup>28</sup> Personal interview with Jürgen Moltmann on 4 January 2012 at his house in Tübingen, Germany.



Moltmann says, “Pastor Cho began his mission in the *Han* of the Korean people after the Korean War; I began my life in Christ in the *Han* of the Second World War and in the ruins of post-war Germany”.<sup>29</sup> However, while both theologies focus on the theological theme of ‘hope’, there are also theological differences between them. Thus, in this chapter, the Threefold Blessing will be debated from the perspective of a theology of hope.

In chapter 4, the Threefold Blessing will be reinterpreted in terms of a contextual theology of hope. One of the contributions of Korean Pentecostalism to Christianity in Korea is the emphasis on the spiritual life of Christians and the focus on the experience of the Spirit. Nevertheless, the emphasis on spiritual blessing has often been understood simply as salvation, healing and financial prosperity, and has been criticized by mainstream Christianity as being influenced by Korean shamanism. In fact, the Threefold Blessing is concerned with the practical life of Korean Pentecostals, who understand the Kingdom of God not only in eschatological terms but as an existential matter. In other words, Korean Pentecostals want to experience the Kingdom ‘here and now’ in the present. In this chapter, the concept of the Kingdom in Korean Pentecostalism will be explored as will the difference perspectives on the Kingdom held by Cho and Moltmann.

In the final chapter, the Threefold Blessing will be evaluated from the perspective of contemporary Korean Pentecostals. Moltmann says that hope is always

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<sup>29</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life”, p. 149.

contradictory to the reality that can be experienced at present.<sup>30</sup> Thus, hope that is not contradictory to the current reality will lose its functions as hope. In the same sense, hope which is already achieved can no longer be regarded as hope because it is not relevant to current matters. As prosperity and healing were contradictory to the post-Korean War context, they provided hope for those Koreans suffering the effects of poverty and sickness. However, the Threefold Blessing has to be recontextualized for the new context of Korean Pentecostalism. Healing and prosperity need to be understood in a wider sense to include a focus not only on the individual but also on society. For example, healing needs to be reevaluated in order to encompass not only the body but society as a whole. Prosperity also needs to be understood to include not just the individual but the whole community. There needs to be a theological shift in relation to the theology of the Threefold Blessing from a focus on ‘having’ for one’s own sake to ‘sharing’ with one’s neighbour. This chapter will discuss the necessity of the reinterpreting and recontextualizing the Threefold Blessing for the contemporary Korean Pentecostal context in order to give ongoing hope to Koreans.

## 6. Linguistic Use

For the qualitative methodology, first, multiple languages mainly English and Korean, but also German and Chinese occasionally are used in order to use more original texts. The official written language of the Chosŏn Dynasty was *Hanmoon*

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<sup>30</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope: on the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology*, trans. James W. Leitch (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), p. 18.

(Chinese composition) and until the early 1980s, many books, articles, and newspapers were published in Korean mingled with Chinese characters. Some articles and seminar papers presented by Moltmann in Korea have not been translated into English yet. For Korean books regarding Korean Pentecostalism and the Threefold Blessing, articles published in Korean journals, and Yonggi Cho's books and sermons not translated in English, I had to use my Korean language, which is my mother tongue, and translate them. For this research, I have tried to use original texts as much as possible to approach my topic with deeper knowledge. As a result, I could develop my topic more precisely with appropriate data and context.

## **7. Significance of the Study**

This thesis will contribute to an understanding of the Threefold Blessing in the following areas. First, the Threefold Blessing will be reflected as a contextual hope in Korean Pentecostal contexts. The Threefold Blessing has been researched from various theological and pastoral perspectives. It has also been studied from a religious perspective, especially in relation to Korean shamanism. However, the Threefold Blessing has not been considered as a source of hope in the Korean Pentecostal context. In this thesis, the Threefold Blessing will be understood as a contextual hope and discussed from the perspective of contextual theology. This means that this study is the first research to approach the Threefold Blessing as a contextual hope in Korean Pentecostal contexts. Second, this thesis reconsiders Korean Pentecostal understandings of God and the people, and the relation between

indigenous religions/national emotions and the Threefold Blessing from the perspective of contextual theology.<sup>31</sup> In terms of the Threefold Blessing, the God of Korean Pentecostals has to be understood as *Joeushin Hananim* (good God).<sup>32</sup> When Christianity first came to Korea, God was contextualized as the judge who punishes people on the Day of Judgment. However, the Threefold Blessing has transformed the nature of God from a being to be feared to one who gives blessings to His people. The people of Korean Pentecostalism are not ὄχλος (*ochlos*), a socio-political group, but rather λαός (*laos*), the ordinary Korean people subject to sufferings. Korean shamanism as the primal religiosity, *Han* (the unique national emotion of Koreans), and the healing of Han will be explored in relation to the theology of the Threefold Blessing.

Third, this study will help to further theological dialogue between the Threefold Blessing and Moltmann's theology of hope. While the socio-political aspects of Moltmann's theology of hope have been discussed by Korean *Minjung* and liberal theologians, theological conversations between Moltmann and Korean Pentecostals have rarely occurred. However, there are theological and contextual similarities as well as differences between Moltmann's theology of hope and the Threefold Blessing. Both theologies originated in similar contexts: Moltmann's hope in the ruins of Germany after World War II, and the Threefold Blessing in the desperate situation of Korea after the Korean War. Moreover, Moltmann and Cho

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<sup>31</sup> See chapter 2, section 2 and 3.

<sup>32</sup> For more on *Joeushin Hananim* (good God), see chapter 2, section 2. 2.

have similar biographical histories. For both of them, Christ is the subject of hope, and hope can be found in hopeless situations because of Him. However, there are also theological differences between them. In this thesis, theological similarities and differences between them will be examined and debated. Furthermore, I will suggest that Korean Pentecostals have to reconsider Moltmann's eco-social perspectives in his theology of hope in order to understand the Threefold Blessing in today's Korean Pentecostal contexts.

Fourth, this research will discuss the reasons why the Threefold Blessing has to be reinterpreted and recontextualized in contemporary Korean Pentecostal contexts. Spiritual salvation, financial blessing and healing were the hope that Koreans needed most after the Korean War. However, as the economy and the National Health Service of Korea have developed on a par with more advanced countries, today's Koreans struggle more with personal and social issues such as environmental problems, the unequal distribution of wealth, family breakdown, and so on rather than absolute poverty and sickness. If the theology of the Threefold Blessing is to remain as a source of hope for Koreans, this change in context needs to be recognized. It is doubtful that the Threefold Blessing can give hope to Koreans unless it is reinterpreted for contemporary Korean Pentecostalism.

Fifth, furthermore, this thesis will discuss and suggest how the Threefold Blessing needs to be reinterpreted in today's Korean Pentecostal contexts. It will argue that the soteriology of the Threefold Blessing needs to be extended to include not only individual and spiritual aspects but also salvation for society, the socio-

political oppression, and the whole universe. Healing must be understood not just as the curing of the body but also the irrationalities of the society, social discriminations, broken families and relationships, dehumanization, ruined ecosystem, and so on. The scope of prosperity also has to extend beyond its focus on the personal dimension. Korean Pentecostals have already been blessed financially. If they continue to focus on financial blessings for themselves, they are in danger of descending into Christian materialism. To avoid this, they will need to practice sharing the blessings they already have with others. Today's Threefold Blessing has to focus more on prosperity, healing, and salvation for society as a whole rather than for individuals. This transition of the Threefold Blessing needs a new theological foundation, based on love and sacrifice. Without love, sacrifice, and sharing in the sufferings of others, it is impossible to resolve issues such as the unequal distribution of wealth, social discrimination, and the breakdown of family relationships.

## **8. Limitation of the Study**

Firstly, the research is limited in terms of the particular Korean Pentecostal churches. It is difficult to define the boundary of Pentecostalism in Korea clearly because, due to the strong influence of the Spirit movement, most Korean churches have practiced spiritual gifts including speaking in tongues, and numerous Korean Christians have experienced the manifestations of the Spirit. According to Harvey Cox, about eight percent of Korean Christians have experienced the baptism in Holy

Spirit.<sup>33</sup> However, in this thesis, Korean Pentecostalism refers to the Pentecostal movement led by Korean Pentecostal churches which are affiliated with the Korean Assemblies of God and Christians who are influenced by Cho and his theology even in mainline Korean Churches.

Secondly, in previous studies, the focus has been on the relation between the Threefold Blessing and the church growth of the YFGC or on the influences of shamanistic belief on the prosperity theology. However, in this thesis the Threefold Blessing will be understood in terms of a contextual hope in the Korean Pentecostal context. Thirdly, the purpose of the theological dialogue with Moltmann is not to criticize his theology of hope from the perspective of Korean Pentecostalism but to reflect upon ways in which it may contribute to the recontextualization of the Threefold Blessing as a source of ongoing hope for Koreans. Thus, the theological debates with Moltmann's theology will be focused on discovering the theological differences and similarities between Moltmann's theology of hope and the theology of the Threefold Blessing. In contrast to Moltmann's concept of hope, the hope contained in the Threefold Blessing is more temporal and focused on earthly life. For instance, Moltmann's hope is focused on the Resurrection of Christ and His second coming. For Moltmann, the Kingdom of God is eschatological. In contrast, the hope of the Threefold Blessing is based on the suffering of Christ, and the Kingdom is not merely eschatological but in the present 'now and here'. As the Threefold Blessing was contradictory to the problems faced by Koreans after the Korean War, it was able

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<sup>33</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 233.

to give hope to most Koreans who were struggling with spiritual, financial and health problems. Throughout this thesis, Moltmann's theology of hope will be used as one of the primary sources and methods for understanding the Threefold Blessing as hope.



## CHAPTER 1

### THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF KOREAN PENTECOSTALISM

#### 1. Introduction

Korean Pentecostalism has developed in relation to indigenous Korean religions, culture, traditions, and socio-political and economic circumstances. The Threefold Blessing originated in these Korean contexts. In order to understand the Threefold Blessing as a contextual hope in Korean Pentecostal contexts, the historical context of Korean Pentecostalism has first to be understood. In previous studies of Korean Pentecostalism, the influences of shamanism on Korean Pentecostalism have been considered.<sup>34</sup> However, the influence of Confucianism on Korean Christianity as well as Korean Pentecostalism has been overlooked. From the early seventeenth century, among Korean Confucian scholars, *Silhak* (Practical Thought) scholars, known as Korean neo-Confucian scholars, hoped to reform the Chosŏn Dynasty (1393-1897) with practical science including the promotion of Western civilization. Their curiosity about Western civilization led to an interest in Christianity. They went to China where they had opportunities to form relationships with Western missionaries. When they returned, they brought Christianity to Korea. Furthermore, they translated the Bible into the Korean language. However, their hope of changing the country was frustrated by the power of the conservatives within Korean

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<sup>34</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 213-41; and Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, pp. 13-4.

Confucianism who had a vested interest in the country. The Chosŏn Dynasty began to carry out a closed-door policy and continued to inflict severe persecutions on Christians because most early leaders of Korean Christianity were Korean Christian Confucian scholars who were influenced by *Silhak* scholars. Many of them were killed or exiled to an island as a result of the persecutions. As Christianity came to Korea through Korean Confucian scholars before the arrival of Western Christian missionaries, there were no teachers for these early Korean Christians. As a result, they became absorbed in Bible study and adopted a literal approach to interpreting the Bible. This is one reason that both Korean Christianity and Korean Pentecostalism are conservative and Bible-centred.

The Korean Pentecostal revivals started from Bible studies during the early 1900s. The Korean Pentecostal movement also started before the arrival of Western Pentecostal missionaries in the country. Thus, there is a doubt that early Korean Pentecostals understood the manifestations of the Spirit from a theological or pneumatological perspective. Nevertheless, Pentecostalism was successfully contextualized into Korean primal religiosity and the socio-political context of Korea under Japanese occupation. In this chapter, a brief history of Korean Christianity, the birth of Korean Pentecostalism and the contextualization of Korean Pentecostalism under the Japanese rule will be examined.

## 2. Historical Overview of Christianity in Korea

Between the late seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries, the academic tendency of *Silhak* scholars seemed strange to traditional Confucianism. *Silhak* scholars rejected learning for learning's sake and rather pursued practical learning. They were interested in Western civilizations and tried to adopt new methodologies for their studies.<sup>35</sup> They also began to research Christianity from an academic standpoint. As noted, Christianity was not introduced by Western missionaries but by Korean Confucian scholars.

Yi Sugwang (1563-1627) was the pioneer of *Silhak*. As an official of the Chosŏn Dynasty, he had opportunities to visit China three times.<sup>36</sup> Whilst in China, Yi had a chance to study about basic Catholicism through the Catholic pamphlet, *Tianzhu shiyi* (The True Teaching of the Lord of Heaven) written by Matteo Ricci.<sup>37</sup> As an encyclopaedist, he had interests in various fields such as astronomy, geography, history, institutions, customs, religions, and culture. Based on his considerable learning, he wrote a book named *Chibong yusŏl* in 1614.<sup>38</sup> In this book, he introduced Roman Catholicism and its doctrines for the first time. He mentioned some of the essential truths of Christianity such as the nature of God the Creator and the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Furthermore, he criticised the idea of transmigration of

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<sup>35</sup> Everett N. Hunt Jr., *Protestant Pioneers in Korea* (New York: Orbis Books, 1980), p. 5.

<sup>36</sup> Michael C. Kalton, "An Introduction of Silhak", *Korea Journal* (May) 1975, p. 31.

<sup>37</sup> Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (eds.), *Christianity in Korea* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), p. 9.

<sup>38</sup> Michael C. Kalton, "An Introduction of Silhak," p. 31.

the soul in Buddhism and even introduced the concept of the Papacy.<sup>39</sup> After Yi Sugwang, many *Silhak* scholars had interests in Christianity as well as in Western science and civilization. Initially, they approached Christianity with academic rather than religious curiosity but later they began to have an interest in the Christian faith. In 1610, Huh Goon (1569-1618) went to China and brought twelve Catholic prayer pamphlets back to Korea. He studied Christianity and the Christian faith sincerely, and converted to Christianity.<sup>40</sup>

Yi Ik (1681-1763) mentioned that Christianity has something not existing in Confucianism which are immutable truth and the true truth that matured men and scholars need to follow. The Lord of heaven in Christianity is similar to *Tao* (the great ultimate in Confucianism).<sup>41</sup> In his book entitled *Sŏngho sasŏl*, he described the Virgin Birth of Jesus, the public life of Christ, the Crucifixion, and even the Resurrection. However, he also approached Christianity scientifically and did not personally adopt the Christian faith.<sup>42</sup> Through the influence of Yi Ik, many Korean Neo-Confucian scholars became interested in Christianity during the eighteenth century. Among them was Hong Yoo Han, who became a Christian by himself and observed the Sabbath from around 1770. In order to pursue an ascetic life, he spent the rest of his life on a mountain for the sake of his faith.<sup>43</sup> In the winter of 1783,

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<sup>39</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity] (Seoul: Yeonsei Chulpansa, 1993), p. 51.

<sup>40</sup> *Kidokshinmoon* [Christian News Paper], 17 March 2009, available from <http://www.kidok.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=58701>, accessed on 6 July 2010.

<sup>41</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 52.

<sup>42</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 52.

<sup>43</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 54.

Sŭng Hun Yi had an opportunity to visit China with his father who was a member of the annual legations to China. While he was in Beijing, he converted to Christianity and was baptised in public by Louis de Grammont in February, 1784.<sup>44</sup> Louis de Grammont gave him the baptismal name Peter with the hope that Yi would be the first stone of the Korean Church.<sup>45</sup> In the spring of 1784, when Yi Sŭng-Hun returned to Korea, he brought religious books, tracts, images, and crucifixes with him but the Bible was not given to him.<sup>46</sup>

Soon after Peter Yi returned to his homeland, he baptized his friend Tŏk-Cho Yi. Sŭng-Hun Yi gave him the baptismal name of John.<sup>47</sup> Within five years of Peter Yi's return, as a result of his enthusiastic evangelism, approximately four thousand Koreans converted to Christianity.<sup>48</sup> This means that Christianity in Korea was begun by Korean indigenes, especially Confucian scholars, and self-propagated across the nation before Western missionaries arrived in Korea. As long as Christianity was accepted as a Western philosophy rather than a religion, there were no serious conflicts with traditional religions and Confucianism in Korea. However, afterwards, it came into collision with Confucianism because early Korean Christians denied traditional Confucian practices such as ancestor worship. Confucianism was not just a

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<sup>44</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], pp. 56-7.

<sup>45</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910* (Seoul, Korea: Yonsei University Press, 1980), p. 32.

<sup>46</sup> Arthur Judson Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East: The Story of Korea's Transformation and Japan's Rise to Supremacy in the Orient* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919), pp. 487-88.

<sup>47</sup> Harry A. Rhodes (ed.), *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A. vol. I 1884-1934* (Seoul Korea: The Presbyterian Church of Korea Department of Education, 1984), p. 59. See also, George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, p. 32.

<sup>48</sup> The Edinburgh Review, "Corea", *The Edinburgh Review*, vol. 136 (October) 1872, p. 304.

religion in the Chosŏn Dynasty but the fundamental ideology of its politics, economics, culture and traditions.

During the Chosŏn Dynasty, there were five remarkable nationwide persecutions of Christians in Korea: the Shin-hae persecution (1791), the Shin-yoo persecution (1801), the Ki-hae persecution (1839), the Byoung-oh persecution (1846) and the Byoung-in persecution (1866). These persecutions were closely related to two religious and political matters: *Che-Sa*, the Confucian ancestral worship, and the matter of opening a port. The first persecution occurred because of religious reasons related to Confucian ancestor worship. Refusing ancestor worship was not just regarded as an act against the traditional religion but also against the social system based on Confucianism. The Chosŏn government regarded the refusal of ancestor worship by Christians as a challenge against the country.

In 1742, both the Franciscan and Dominican missions in China sent a petition to Rome with regard to Confucian ancestor worship. Pope Benedict XIV defined Confucian ancestor worship as a religious and superstitious practice which could not be accepted by the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>49</sup> Regrettably, this decision of Vatican Rome brought terrible persecutions to both Chinese and Korean Christians. Thomas Kim Pum Wu was the first victim of the decision in Korea. He was arrested and tortured because of his act of burning ancestor tablets. He was exiled to an isolated

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<sup>49</sup> Myung Hyuk Kim, “Ancestor Worship: From the Perspective of Korean Church History”, in Jung Young Lee (eds.), *Ancestor Worship and Christianity in Korea* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), p. 23.

island and died there of injuries caused by his torture.<sup>50</sup> Yun Chi Choong and Kwan Sang Yeon also refused to practice the ancestral rite and they burned their ancestor tablets.<sup>51</sup> For these reasons, they were accused and killed on November 8, 1791,<sup>52</sup> which was the first persecution of Korean Christianity and named the Shin-hae persecution. Later on, political and diplomatic matters with Western powers added to the later persecutions. The Western powers put pressure on the Chosŏn Dynasty to adopt an open-door trade policy for the international trade, but the Chosŏn Dynasty resisted this with a policy of seclusion. As Christianity was the symbol of the Western powers, the persecutions occurred not only because of religious matters but also for political reasons. Through the religious persecutions, the conservative Korean Confucians tried to eliminate their political adversaries who were favourably disposed to Western civilization and Christianity. In 1801, the Shin-yoo persecution broke out. This persecution was related to a letter written by Hwang Sayŏng regarding a diplomatic and political issue. Hwang Sayŏng was arrested in Jaechŏn in Choong-Chŏng province.<sup>53</sup> He wrote a letter to a bishop in China to report the horrors of Christian persecutions in Korea. In the letter, he requested the Western Powers to send two hundreds warships and 50,000-60,000 soldiers to Korea to press the Chosŏn

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<sup>50</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, p. 32.

<sup>51</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 62.

<sup>52</sup> *Chosŏn WangJo ShilLok* [The Annals of the Chosŏn Dynasty], King Jŏng-Cho Year 15 (1791), November 8.

<sup>53</sup> *Chosŏn WangJo ShilLok* [The Annals of the Chosŏn Dynasty], King Soon-Jo Year 1 (1801), October 3.

Dynasty to allow Christianity.<sup>54</sup> In the eyes of the Chosŏn government, this letter was certainly a severe threat to the structure and even the survival of the nation. Hence, the Korean government concluded that Christianity was dangerous to “the moral fabric of society by its refusal to perform the *che-sa* rites and raised the question of the political subordination of the nation”.<sup>55</sup> Hwang Sayŏng was put to death by dismemberment on November 5, 1801, and all of his family members were exiled to different islands.<sup>56</sup> During the Shin-yoo persecution, about three hundreds Christians were executed.<sup>57</sup> In the Byoung-oh persecution in 1846, 75 Korean Christians and three European missionaries were killed.<sup>58</sup> After the Byoung-oh persecution ended, Korean Christianity had to suffer severe suppression. However, Christianity was not destroyed but rather spread rapidly. By 1866, there were 25,000 Christians in Korea. However, among them, at least 8,000 Korean Christians and seven priests including two Western bishops were martyred as a result of the Byoung-in persecution that year.<sup>59</sup>

The fears of the Chosŏn government regarding Christianity can be analyzed in relation to three elements: firstly, “the subversion of traditional social mores”; secondly, “the loss of national sovereignty”; and thirdly, “the significant extent to

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<sup>54</sup> *Chosŏn WangJo ShilLok* [The Annals of the Chosŏn Dynasty], King Soon-Jo Year 1 (1801), October 5.

<sup>55</sup> Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (eds.), *Christianity in Korea*, p. 10.

<sup>56</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 70.

<sup>57</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 70.

<sup>58</sup> Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia Vol. II: 1500 to 1900* (New York: Orbis Books, 2005), p. 315.

<sup>59</sup> Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1964), p. 415.



which the church had taken root”.<sup>60</sup> The Western powers made a political issue of the martyrdom of their missionaries and dispatched forces to Korea with the justification of protecting their people. The main purpose of this military action, however, was to coerce the Chosŏn Dynasty into opening a port for foreign trade. Eventually, the Chosŏn government ratified the Kanghwa Treaty (朝日修好條約, *Cho Il Soo Ho Jo Yack*) with Japan on February 27th, 1876 (King Ko-Jong year 13, February 3<sup>rd</sup> of the lunar calendar).<sup>61</sup> With this agreement, the Chosŏn government guaranteed the security of foreigners in Korea. As a result, the nation-wide persecution for Christianity was brought to an end.

As Roman Catholicism had already experienced socio-political conflicts and persecutions by the government during the early years of Christianity in Korea, Protestantism as well as Pentecostalism was able to consolidate without experiencing persecution by the Chosŏn government. Protestant missions in Korea began with the arrival of Horace Newton Allen, a medical missionary, in 1884.<sup>62</sup> Allen was originally appointed to China and sent by the Presbyterian Board of Missions. However, he struggled to find a satisfactory field to work in China. One reason he had difficulties in China was because of his personality and his inability to get along with others. Fred Harvey Harrington, Allen’s biographer, describes Allen’s character by using the terms “thin-skinned, short-tempered, and unforgiving” and defines him

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<sup>60</sup> Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (eds.), *Christianity in Korea*, p. 11.

<sup>61</sup> *Chosŏn WangJo ShilLok* [The Annals of the Chosŏn Dynasty], King Ko-Jong Year 13 (1876), February 3.

<sup>62</sup> Everett N. Hunt Jr., *Protestant Pioneers in Korea*, p. 17.

as a “touchy and crotchety man”.<sup>63</sup> While Allen was in China, he heard that Korea greatly needed doctors because there were none. In the meantime, Dr. Henderson of Shanghai suggested Allen consider moving to Korea.<sup>64</sup> As Allen requested permission to go to Korea, the Presbyterian Board of Missions hesitated before agreeing to his request. The board judged that there was as yet no missionary work for him in Korea. After persuading the Presbyterian board that his move to Korea would be a great opportunity, he arrived in Korea on September 20, 1884.<sup>65</sup>

Although he did not have an official status when he arrived in Korea,<sup>66</sup> as a physician Allen had many opportunities to meet and build relationships with native officials as well as with upper class Koreans.<sup>67</sup> Three months after his arrival, on December 4, 1884 (October 17<sup>th</sup> of the lunar calendar, King Ko-Jong year 21), a coup d’état by a group of progressive scholars and officials who wanted to reform the nation, called Gabshin Jǒngbyeon, broke out against the conservative factions having political powers in the Chosǒn government.<sup>68</sup> In this incident, many soldiers and two politicians were seriously wounded, including Yǒng Ik Min who was a nephew of the Queen and the most important man next to the King in the Chosǒn cabinet. He was also a former ambassador to the United States<sup>69</sup> and had just returned from the States

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<sup>63</sup> Fred Harvey Harrington, *God Mammon, and the Japanese: Dr. Horace N. Allen and Korea – American Relations, 1884-1905* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), p. 6; and Everett N. Hunt Jr., *Protestant Pioneers in Korea*, p. 16.

<sup>64</sup> O. R. Avison, “In Memoriam: Dr. Horace N. Allen”, *Korea Mission Field* (May) 1933, p. 103.

<sup>65</sup> Everett N. Hunt Jr., *Protestant Pioneers in Korea*, p. 16.

<sup>66</sup> Everett N. Hunt Jr., *Protestant Pioneers in Korea*, p. 19.

<sup>67</sup> Everett N. Hunt Jr., *Protestant Pioneers in Korea*, p. 16.

<sup>68</sup> *Chosǒn WangJo ShilLok* [The Annals of the Chosǒn Dynasty], King Ko-Jong Year 21 (1884), October 17.

<sup>69</sup> Joseph H. Longford, *The Story of Korea* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1911), p. 321.

after exchanging the ratification of the Korean-American treaty before the incident.<sup>70</sup> He was severely wounded by an assassin's sword.<sup>71</sup> None of the 14 herbal doctors in the Royal Court was able to save his life.<sup>72</sup> At that time, Mr. Scudder, Secretary to the U.S. Legation, came to Allen's house with a note from Mr. Paul G. von Moellendorff who was a former secretary of diplomacy in the Chosŏn government. In the note, von Moellendorff asked Allen to come immediately and treat Yŏng Ik Min who had lethal wounds.<sup>73</sup> Allen went to Min as he hovered between life and death, and spent a whole night performing a surgical operation on him.<sup>74</sup> With three months of medical treatment, Allen was able to restore him to health.<sup>75</sup> After this event, King Ko-Jong gave Allen the house of Hong Yong Sik, who was executed after the fall of Gabshin Jŏngbyeon (the coup d'état of December, 1884), as a hospital building where Allen could practice modern Western medicine. At a cost of between six hundred and one thousand dollars, the house was remodelled into the first Western hospital in Korea. The king named the hospital Kwang-Hye-Won (Widespread Relief House), and it was later renamed Je-Joong-Won (House of Universal Helpfulness).<sup>76</sup> This first

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<sup>70</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, p. 102.

<sup>71</sup> Horace Newton Allen, *Things Korean: A Collection of Sketches and Anecdotes Missionary and Diplomatic* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1908), p. 70.

<sup>72</sup> Annette Hye Kyung Son, "Modernisation of the System of Traditional Korean Medicine (1876-1990)", *Health Policy* 44 (1998), p. 264.

<sup>73</sup> Horace Newton Allen, *Allen's Diary*, December 5, 1885 (Seoul: Dankook Daehakgyo Chulpansa, 2008), p. 407.

<sup>74</sup> Lee Sŏng Sam, "Gabshin Jŏngbyeon Gwa Kidokgyo [Gabshin Jŏngbyeon and Christianity]", *Kidokgyo Sasang* [Christianity Thoughts] (December) 1973, p. 144.

<sup>75</sup> Horace Newton Allen, *Things Korean: A Collection of Sketches and Anecdotes Missionary and Diplomatic*, p. 70.

<sup>76</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, p. 106.

Western hospital officially opened on April 10, 1885,<sup>77</sup> and replaced two Korean traditional medical institutions, Hyeminso and Hwalinso.<sup>78</sup> The hospital was under Allen's supervision and the king appointed Allen as the court physician.<sup>79</sup> Since the event, Allen won the confidence of the Chosŏn government and was able to pave the way for Protestant missions in Korea.<sup>80</sup>

### 3. The Use of *Hangŭl*<sup>81</sup>

There were three literary styles in Korea when Christianity came to Korea; i) *Hanmun*, Chinese characters mostly used by *Yangban*, the upper-class Koreans; ii) *Hangŭl* (*Kukmun*), native characters used by *Joong-In* (the middle-lower class) and the middle bureaucratic class Koreans; iii) *Kunhanmun*, the mixed script of Chinese and Korean.<sup>82</sup> Most of the early Christians in Korea were literate and highly educated. They also included members of the aristocratic class.<sup>83</sup> Most Korean Scriptures were

<sup>77</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, p. 106.

<sup>78</sup> Annette Hye Kyung Son, "Modernisation of the System of Traditional Korean Medicine (1876-1990)", *Health Policy* 44 (1998), p. 264.

<sup>79</sup> Robert E. Speer, *Presbyterian Foreign Mission: An Account of the Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, 1901), p.164.

<sup>80</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, p. 102.

<sup>81</sup> *Han'gŭl* was invented by King Sejong at the end of 1443 or the beginning of 1444. Through the experiment of its practicality in publishing *Yongbi-ŏch'ŏn-ga*, *Han'gŭl* was officially introduced to the Korean people in 1446. However, it was not welcomed by the Korean *Yangban* upper class, who were proficient in Chinese literature until the early eighteenth century. See, Keith Pratt and Richard Rutt, *Korea: A Historical and Cultural Dictionary* (Richmond Surrey, U.K.: Curzon Press, 1999), p. 158.

<sup>82</sup> Thomas Herbert Darlow and Horace Frederick Moule, *Historical Catalogues of Printed Editions of the Holy Scriptures in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society Vol. II (cont.)* (London: The Bible House Co., 1903), p. 885.

<sup>83</sup> Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (eds.), *Christianity in Korea*, p. 10.

printed in *Hangŭl* with some mixed scripts.<sup>84</sup> Using *Hangŭl*, when the Bible was translated into Korean is significant in terms of the contextualization of Christianity.<sup>85</sup> *Hangŭl* was not popularly used among upper-class Koreans due to toadyism to China and a preference for the Chinese language although it was the vernacular script of Korean at that time. Yong Bock Kim says that translating the Bible into *Hangŭl* is “the injection of Christian language into the language of the common people in Korea.”<sup>86</sup> As Korean Confucian scholars used *Hangŭl* to translate the Bible into the Korean language, ordinary Korean people could easily read the Korean Bible and understand the gospel. In other words, if the Korean Bible had not been translated into *Hangŭl*, the language of the ordinary Korean people, Christianity could not have become quickly indigenized and propagated in Korea. During the Chosŏn Dynasty, the education of women was mostly carried out at home, and *Hangŭl* was the language of women. As Korean women could read the Korean Bible written in *Hangŭl*, Christianity was able to quickly spread to Korean women. There is another contribution of Korean Confucian scholars to Christianity which is to translate the Bible into the Korean language. It was not hard for Korean Confucian scholars to translate literature written in Chinese into the Korean language. When Korean

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<sup>84</sup> Thomas Herbert Darlow and Horace Frederich Moule, *Historical Catalogues of Printed Editions of the Holy Scriptures in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society Vol. II (cont.)*, p. 885.

<sup>85</sup> Donald N. Clark, “Christianity in Modern Korea”, *Education About Asia*, vol. 11 No. 2 (Fall) 2006, p. 38.

<sup>86</sup> Yong Bock Kim, “Korean Christianity as a Messianic Movement of the People”, in Yong Bock Kim (ed.), *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History* (Singapore: The Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia, 1981), p. 79.

Confucian scholars translated the Bible into Korean, they chose *Hangŭl*. As a result, Korean Christianity was able to spread rapidly among ordinary Korean people.

First to be translated into the Korean language was the Lord's Prayer. While Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff, a German missionary to the Far East, was in Korea for a month from 17<sup>th</sup> July to 17<sup>th</sup> August, 1832, he put Korean pronunciations into the Lord's Prayer in Chinese with the help of a Korean native named Yang Yi.<sup>87</sup> Although this translation was defective, it was published and became a textbook for the Korean language entitled, *Remarks on the Korean Language*.<sup>88</sup> It was the first attempt to translate the Bible into Korean.

The Scottish Presbyterian missionaries, John Ross and John McIntyre (Ross' brother-in-law), had ministered to Koreans in different regions of Manchuria since 1873. In 1876, the first Korean Protestant converts, Sung Ha Yi, Hong Chun Paik, and Sang Yun Sŭh of Sorai, were baptized by McIntyre. Among them, Sang Yun Sŭh became the pioneer Protestant evangelist in Korea.<sup>89</sup> Sŭh received the gospel while he was under John McIntyre's care for a disease he picked up in Manchuria.<sup>90</sup> In 1878, Ross made a long trip from Manchuria to the Korean Gate (probably the town of Wiju), where many Korean travellers stayed temporarily before going on to China or returning to their homeland. The purpose of his journey was to acquire more knowledge about the Korean language. Ross met Sŭh there and hired him as his

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<sup>87</sup> Deok Joo Rhie, *Chogi Hankook GidokgyoSa YeonGoo* [A Study on the Early Christian History in Korea] (Seoul: The Institute for Korean Church History, 1995), p. 327.

<sup>88</sup> Thomas Hobbs, "Pioneers", *The Korea Mission Field*, vol. 34 No. 5 (May) 1938, p. 90.

<sup>89</sup> Harry A. Rhodes (ed.), *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A. vol. I 1884-1934*, p. 74.

<sup>90</sup> Alex A. Pieters, "First Translations", *The Korea Mission Field*, vol. 34 No. 5 (May) 1938, p. 91.

Korean language teacher. Under the supervision of Ross in 1882, the first translation of Luke's Gospel in Korean was completed by Sŭh with two other Korean assistants, Ung Chan Yi and Chin Kui Kim.<sup>91</sup> They used the 'Delegates' Version'<sup>92</sup> as the source text for the first Korean version.<sup>93</sup> The first translation work was completed with an imperfect Korean. There were many mistakes in terms of grammar and spelling, and Chinese idioms were often not translated. However, Koreans did not have a problem reading and understanding their first Bible.<sup>94</sup> Luke's Gospel in Korean was entitled 예수성교누가복음전서 (*Jesu Sŏngkyo Lukabokum Jyunsŏ*) [The Book of Luke of Jesus Christ], and 3,000 copies were published in March 1882 at Mukden in China.<sup>95</sup> In the same year, the Gospel of John was also translated and published.<sup>96</sup> After the Gospel of John was published, Ross wrote a letter to R. Arthington in regard to the cost of publication which was £50 with an extra £10-12

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<sup>91</sup> Harry A. Rhodes (ed.), *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A. vol. I 1884-1934*, p. 74.

<sup>92</sup> The Delegates' Version is one of the Chinese translations of the Bible. The earliest version of the Delegates' Version was translated by Joshua Marshman, his collaborator Johannes Lassar, Marshman's unnamed Chinese assistant, and Marshman's son. In 1822, it was published at Serampore in India. The fourth revised edition is called the Delegates' Version. Its New Testament and Old Testament were published in 1852 and in 1854 respectively. See, Patrick Hanan, "The Bible as Chinese Literature: Medhurst, Wang Tao, and the Delegates' Version", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (June) 2003, pp. 198-98.

<sup>93</sup> Alex A. Pieters, "First Translations", p. 91.

<sup>94</sup> Alex A. Pieters, "First Translations", pp. 92-3.

<sup>95</sup> Thomas Herbert Darlow and Horace Frederich Moule, *Historical Catalogues of Printed Editions of the Holy Scriptures in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society Vol. II (cont.)*, p. 886; and also see footnote number 14 in Christine Sungjin Chang, "John Ross and Bible women in the early Protestant mission of northern Korea and Eastern China", *Rethinking Mission* (March) 2008, p. 5.

<sup>96</sup> W. D. Reynolds, "Fifty Years of Bible Translation and Revision", *The Korea Mission Field*, vol. 31 No. 6 (June) 1935, p. 116.

for Sūh.<sup>97</sup> In 1883, Acts was also translated by Ross, and 3,000 copies were printed along with 3,000 copies of the revised Luke. At that time, he removed all Chinese expressions and errors in the first version of Luke's Gospel.<sup>98</sup> The expense of this publishing endeavour was refunded to Ross along with the previous expenditures of translation.<sup>99</sup> Soon after the Scriptures were printed in the Korean language, Sūh left Manchuria for his homeland with the newly published Gospels in Korean in 1883.<sup>100</sup> Since then, at least 15,690 copies of the Ross Version of Luke's Gospel were circulated among the Korean people through colporteurs between 1883 and 1886.<sup>101</sup>

In 1883, Rev. Henry Loomis, an agent of the American Bible Society in Japan, asked Yi Soo Chon (Rijutei in Japanese), a converted Korean living in Japan, to translate the Japanese version of the Gospel of Mark into Korean.<sup>102</sup> 3,000 copies of Mark's Gospel in Korean were published by the American Bible Society in Yokohama, Japan.<sup>103</sup> When the pioneer missionaries of the Korean mission, Appenzeller (a Methodist) and Underwood (a Presbyterian), arrived at Chemulpo on April 5, 1885, they brought with them bundles of Mark's Gospel translated into Korean.<sup>104</sup> However, it did not take a long time for them to realize that Korean

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<sup>97</sup> *Editorial Correspondence of the British Foreign Bible Society – Inward*, Vol.17, p. 76 f. Quoted in Christine Sungjin Chang, "John Ross and Bible women in the early Protestant mission of northern Korea and Eastern China", p. 5

<sup>98</sup> Alex A. Pieters, "First Translations", p. 92.

<sup>99</sup> Thomas Herbert Darlow and Horace Frederich Moule, *Historical Catalogues of Printed Editions of the Holy Scriptures in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society Vol. II (cont.)*, p. 886.

<sup>100</sup> Ellasue Wagner, "Through the Hermit's Gate with Suh Sang Yun", *The Korea Mission Field*, vol. 34 No. 5 (May) 1938, p. 94.

<sup>101</sup> W. D. Reynolds, "Fifty Years of Bible Translation and Revision", p. 116.

<sup>102</sup> W. D. Reynolds, "Fifty Years of Bible Translation and Revision", p. 116.

<sup>103</sup> Alex A. Pieters, "First Translations", p. 92.

<sup>104</sup> W. D. Reynolds, "Fifty Years of Bible Translation and Revision", p. 116.



indigenes already had the Scripture written in their own language two years before they arrived in Korea.<sup>105</sup> By 1887, the whole New Testament was translated into the Korean language,<sup>106</sup> and in the same year, the first New Testament in Korean was published by R. Ross at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society (B.F.B.S).<sup>107</sup> In fact, without Korean Confucian scholars who knew the Chinese and Japanese languages, the versions of Ross and Rijnse could not have been translated.<sup>108</sup> The versions were the result of the incredible cooperation between missionaries and native workers. Since the Bible Committee of Korea had been established in 1887, the Scriptures were no longer translated by individual translators but by the board of translators.<sup>109</sup>

John Fox, a treasurer of the American Bible Society, and J. H. Ritson, a superintendent in the translating and editorial department of the B.F.B.S, came to Korea at the same time in 1907.<sup>110</sup> Ritson was deeply impressed by the revivals that had broken out in Korea.<sup>111</sup> After the conference with the Permanent Executive Bible Committee, they authorized W. D. Reynolds and two Korean members of the Board

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<sup>105</sup> James Moulton Roe, *A History of the British and Foreign Bible Society 1905-1954* (London: The British and Foreign Bible Society, 1965), p. 151.

<sup>106</sup> Matthew's Gospel, and Mark's Gospel were translated by J. Ross in 1884. In 1885, John's Gospel and Ephesians also were translated by J. Ross. See, Thomas Herbert Darlow and Horace Frederich Moule, *Historical Catalogues of Printed Editions of the Holy Scriptures in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society Vol. II (cont.)*, pp. 886-87.

<sup>107</sup> Thomas Herbert Darlow and Horace Frederich Moule, *Historical Catalogues of Printed Editions of the Holy Scriptures in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society Vol. II (cont.)*, p. 887.

<sup>108</sup> W. D. Reynolds, "Fifty Years of Bible Translation and Revision", p. 116.

<sup>109</sup> Thomas Herbert Darlow and Horace Frederich Moule, *Historical Catalogues of Printed Editions of the Holy Scriptures in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society Vol. II (cont.)*, pp. 887-90.

<sup>110</sup> Henry Otis Dwight (ed.), *The Blue Book of Missions for 1907* (New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1907), pp. 177-78.

<sup>111</sup> James Moulton Roe, *A History of the British and Foreign Bible Society 1905-1954*, p. 148.

called Seung Tu Ye and Cheng Sam Kim to commence the translation of the Old Testament into the Korean language. After the last verse of the Bible was translated into Korean on April 2, 1910 at 5 P.M., Hugh Miller, an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, received a telegram saying, "Translation finished".<sup>112</sup> In 1911, the Old Testament was published and given to the Koreans.<sup>113</sup> As many as 8,000 copies of the Old Testament were sold in the first year, and the price of the Scripture was around of 1.00 yen (50 cents).<sup>114</sup> The early editions were printed on only one side of the paper but later ones were printed on both sides.<sup>115</sup>

#### **4. The Birth of Korean Pentecostalism**

There were two remarkable Pentecostal revivals in Korea: Wonsan (1903) and Pyongyang (1907). In comparison with the Azusa Street Revival (1906), which was characterized by the experience of speaking in tongues,<sup>116</sup> the Korean revivals were categorized by "emotional repentance with loud weeping and simultaneous

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<sup>112</sup> W. D. Reynolds, "Fifty Years of Bible Translation and Revision", p. 118.

<sup>113</sup> H. G. Underwood, "Bible Translating", *The Korea Mission Field*, vol. 7 No. 10 (October) 1911, p. 297.

<sup>114</sup> Gerald Bonwick, "The Year's Work of the British and Foreign Bible Society", *The Korea Mission Field*, vol. 8 No. 7 (July) 1912, p. 212.

<sup>115</sup> Thomas Herbert Darlow and Horace Frederich Moule, *Historical Catalogues of Printed Editions of the Holy Scriptures in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society Vol. II (cont.)*, p. 886.

<sup>116</sup> On April 18, 1906, the *Los Angeles Times* reported the event of the Azusa Street Revival right after the revival broke out with the headline "Weird Babel of Tongues". The writer reposted that "breathing strange utterances and mouthing a creed which it would seem no sane mortal could understand, the newest sect has started in Los Angeles." See Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movement in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), p. 84.

praying”.<sup>117</sup> There are still some theological debates if the Korean revivals are a Pentecostal movement, because there was no report of tongues-speaking at the beginning of the Korean revivals. A tongue event is the prominent key to define which spiritual movement is a Pentecostal movement in classical Pentecostal perspectives. However, Dayton says that glossolalia cannot define Pentecostal movement adequately because tongue speaking has appeared in other religious groups such as the Shakers and Mormons in the nineteenth century.<sup>118</sup> During the Korean revival movement healings and miracles were commonly performed by the early Korean Pentecostal leaders such as Seon Ju Gil, Ig Doo Kim, and Yong Do Lee.<sup>119</sup> According to Gale, during the Pyongyang revival, Chinese Christians came to Pyongyang to meet Gil and they wanted to pray together. Gale says, “They prayed, the Chinese in their unintelligible monosyllables, and the Koreans in their world-forgotten language of antiquity.”<sup>120</sup> This means that there was a tongue event even in the Korean revivals, although speaking in tongues was not commonly practised. For these reasons, the Korean revivals have been accepted as Pentecostal revivals by missionaries in Korea. For instance, at the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, the Pyongyang revival (1907) was declared as a “genuine Pentecost”.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 37.

<sup>118</sup> Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>119</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, pp. 136-37. For more on Seon Ju Gil, Ig Doo Kim, and Yong Do Lee, see chapters 5.1; 5.2; and 5.3.

<sup>120</sup> James S. Gale, *Korea in Transition*, p. 216.

<sup>121</sup> World Missionary Conference (1910: Edinburgh), *Report of Commission I: Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World* (Edinburgh: Olphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), p. 77.

#### 4. 1. Wonsan Revival (1903)

Robert. A. Hardie, a Canadian medical missionary who arrived in Korea in 1890, was engaged to lead a group of seven missionaries and Korean native Christians for a week of prayer meetings and Bible studies at Wonsan in August, 1903.<sup>122</sup> As he read Luke 11:13, he realized the reason why his missionary work was not successful. He found that he was depending on his own missionary skills instead of upon the Spirit. He felt “a deep conviction of sin and captivation by the holiness of God”<sup>123</sup> and realized the power of the Holy Spirit within him. He confessed “his own pride, hardness of heart, and lack of faith”<sup>124</sup> before other missionaries and Korean Christians. Furthermore, he humbly asked them to pray for him.<sup>125</sup> They were overwhelmed by Hardie’s act and began to repent of their sins until they all received the baptism in the Spirit.<sup>126</sup> Just as the Topeka revival in early 1901 was regarded as “the beginning of American Pentecostalism”,<sup>127</sup> so the Wonsan revival marked the beginning of Korean Pentecostalism. However, compared with the American revival,

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<sup>122</sup> As the city of Wonsan was one of the Canadian Mission territories, Robert. A. Hardie was able to lead the meeting of missionaries. See Roy E. Shearer, *Wildfire: Church Growth in Korea* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1966), pp. 160-61.

<sup>123</sup> Young Hoon Lee, “Korean Pentecost: The Great Revival of 1907”, *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 4/1 (2001), p. 74.

<sup>124</sup> Young Hoon Lee, “Korean Pentecost: The Great Revival of 1907”, p. 74.

<sup>125</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *Evangelical Awakenings in Eastern Asia* (Minnesota: Bethany Fellowship Inc., 1975), p. 26.

<sup>126</sup> Lillias H. Underwood, *Underwood of Korea* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1918), p. 224.

<sup>127</sup> J. R. Goff Jr. insists that the Topeka revival marked “the birth of the Pentecostal movement.” See J. R. Goff Jr., “Topeka Revival”, in Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2003), p. 1147. However, since other Pentecostal revivals had already broken out, and Pentecostals experienced the manifestations of the Spirit in other parts of the world before the American revivals, the American revivals should rather be called “the beginning of American Pentecostalism” rather than “the birth of the Pentecostal movement”. See Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, pp. 23-24.

during the Wonsan revival, there was no report of tongues-speaking but there was public repentance instead. This public repentance became the standardized charismatic phenomenon of the Korean Pentecostal movement and continued until the great Pyongyang revival (1907) broke out.<sup>128</sup> Soon after the Wonsan revival occurred, the story of the Wonsan revival spread over the nation,<sup>129</sup> and many similar conferences and spiritual crusades took place all over Korea.<sup>130</sup> Among classical Pentecostal scholars, either the Topeka revival or the Azusa Street revival is regarded as “the birth of Pentecostal movement”.<sup>131</sup> However, Allan Anderson argues that the American revivals are not the sole beginning of Pentecostal movement because Pentecostal/Charismatic revivals occurred around the world at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century and many of them are not connected with the American revivals.<sup>132</sup> The Wonsan revival has two significances in terms of global Pentecostalism. First, it was the first Pentecostal event to break out in Korea. Through the Wonsan revival, the Pentecostal movement was started independently of American Pentecostalism. Mary C. Rumsey was the first Pentecostal missionary to arrive in Korea from the Azusa Street revival in March, 1928, via Japan.<sup>133</sup> Second, the Wonsan revival was a spiritual event characterized by the public manifestation of repentance through the Spirit. During the Wonsan revival,

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<sup>128</sup> Lillias H. Underwood, *Underwood of Korea*, p. 224.

<sup>129</sup> Lillias H. Underwood, *Underwood of Korea*, p. 224.

<sup>130</sup> Allen D. Clark, *A History of the Church in Korea* (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1971), p. 159.

<sup>131</sup> J. R. Goff Jr., “Topeka Revival”, in Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, pp. 1147-1149.

<sup>132</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, pp. 19-38.

<sup>133</sup> Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 140; and Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 66.

although there was no evidence of speaking in tongues, Koreans were overwhelmed by the Spirit and began to repent of their sins in public.

After the Wonsan revival, there was a significant change among the missionaries regarding ecumenical co-operation. Many prayer meetings and Bible study classes were held spontaneously by Korean Christians with the purpose of seeking the baptism in the Spirit.<sup>134</sup> As the Pentecostal movement broke down racism, clergy-lay dichotomy, denominationalism and even gender inequalities, missionaries in Korea began to disentangle themselves from denominational boundaries after the Wonsan revival.

From the beginning of Protestantism in Korea, Presbyterianism and Methodism were the dominant forms of mainstream Christianity.<sup>135</sup> As circumstance dictated, they alternatively competed and co-operated with each other in the mission field. Initially, certainly, they cooperated in the work of the government hospital established by Allen until they started their own missions. Underwood described this co-operation of early missionaries in Korea as the spirit of harmony.<sup>136</sup> However, in later years, competition between the two denominations predominated. In fact, the early missionaries, especially those from the United States, were influenced by denominationalism which prevailed in the religious life of Americans in the mid-

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<sup>134</sup> Young Hoon Lee, "Korean Pentecost: The Great Revival of 1907", p. 75.

<sup>135</sup> In the early years of Protestantism in Korea, there were four denominational groups: Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian. Although these missions were started almost at the same time, the Anglicans and the Baptists did little, if any, cooperative work. See George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, pp. 198-99.

<sup>136</sup> Horace G. Underwood, "Division of the Field", *Korea Mission Field*, December 1909, p. 211.

nineteenth century.<sup>137</sup> Once a church was started, it was clearly identified by its denominational affiliation. For instance, the first Protestant church in Korea established by Underwood in September, 1887 was named ‘Saemunan Presbyterian Church’.<sup>138</sup> One month later, the first Methodist church was opened by Appenzeller in Seoul and named ‘Jeongdong Methodist Church’.<sup>139</sup> At that time, both the Northern Methodists and Presbyterians had worked together for years in North Pyongan province, Chulla province, Choong Chung province, Kyung Kui province, and some South Pyongan areas.<sup>140</sup> The Choong Chung province, the central area of the Korean peninsula, was occupied by the Southern Presbyterians, the Northern Methodists, and the Baptists.<sup>141</sup> Thus, conflicts among missions were inevitable in many places.

In 1893, consequently, the Northern Methodists and the Northern Presbyterians made a comity agreement to prevent friction and overlapping of mission territory. The substance of the agreement was that both missions could coexist in a region having a population of five thousand but smaller districts should be given to the mission that came to the area first. Furthermore, without a letter of recommendation, no membership could be transferred from one denomination to

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<sup>137</sup> Richard J. Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 2-5.

<sup>138</sup> Roy E. Shearer, *Wildfire: Church Growth in Korea*, p. 43.

<sup>139</sup> William Elliot Griffis, *A Modern Pioneer in Korea: The Life Story of Henry G. Appenzeller* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1912), p. 211.

<sup>140</sup> N. C. Whittemore, “Fifty Years of Comity and Co-operation in Korea: Comity in Division of Territory”, Harry A. Rhodes (ed.), *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. June 30 – July 3, 1934*. (Seoul: YMCA Press, 1934), pp. 94-95.

<sup>141</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, pp. 200-01.

another.<sup>142</sup> Yet, due to the excessive rivalry between denominations, the agreement was impracticable. Moreover, as the Methodist Bishop R. S. Foster disapproved of the agreement when he came to Korea, the participation of the Methodists in the agreement was nullified.<sup>143</sup> However, in 1905 (after the Wonsan revival), four Presbyterian missions and two Methodist missions gathered together and created a mission organization named ‘The General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea’.<sup>144</sup> When they chose the name of the council, they decided to drop the terms 장로 (*Jang Lo*, Presbyterian) and 미 감리 (*Mi Gam Li*, American Methodist). The purpose of the council was to encourage co-operation between denominations in the mission field.<sup>145</sup> The Wonsan revival had another significant impact, which changed the mission strategy in Korea. Whereas before the revival, the churches had focused on visible results such as founding schools and hospitals, afterwards they became concerned about the spirituality of Korean Christians. They began to focus more on the spiritual life of Korean Christians. After the revival, the early Korean Pentecostals began to concentrate on practicing three things: fervent prayer, evangelism, and Bible study.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, p. 201.

<sup>143</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, p. 201.

<sup>144</sup> Deok Joo Rhie, *Chogi Hankook GidokgyoSa YeonGoo* [A Study on the Early Christian History in Korea], p. 164.

<sup>145</sup> Hugh Miller, “The History of Co-operation and the Federal Council”, p. 256.

<sup>146</sup> Taek Bu Jeon, *The Faith Mountains of Natives*, pp. 132-205.



#### 4. 2. *Pyongyang Revival (1907)*

After the Wonsan revival, spiritual awakenings spread over the nation. In its aftermath, Bible study meetings became a regular feature, and Korean churches held Bible study classes for a week or even longer. Korean Christians set aside those days to study the Bible and to pray.<sup>147</sup> Bible study was significant to the early Korean Christians for two reasons. First, there were not many Christian teachers who could teach the Bible to them. Thus, they had to learn by themselves about the Christian faith through reading the Bible. The second significant factor was the influence of the Confucian tradition of studying Confucian scriptures and discipline in daily life. The Jang Dae Hyun Church and the South Gate church in Pyongyang had remarkable meetings, and seven hundred people converted to Christianity in two weeks in 1905.<sup>148</sup> In September 1906, Korean Christians and missionaries met together for several evenings at the Jang Dae Hyun Church in Pyongyang. During that time, Dr. Howard Agnew Johnson was introduced to the awakenings in India (1905-07)<sup>149</sup> and in Wales around 1904-05.<sup>150</sup> When Korean Christians as well as missionaries heard about the blessings in Wales and in India, they desired to be filled by the Spirit and to

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<sup>147</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1977), p. 67.

<sup>148</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *Evangelical Awakenings in Eastern Asia*, p. 27.

<sup>149</sup> At Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922)'s Muki Mission in Pune, young women were baptized by the Holy Spirit and experienced spiritual manifestations including speaking in tongues in the period 1905-07. See Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 124.

<sup>150</sup> The Welsh revival broke out under Evan Roberts who, at that time, was twenty-six-year-old. Through him over 30,000 people converted to Christianity, and 20,000 people became new church members. See Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 86.

experience the manifestations of the Spirit.<sup>151</sup> When Johnson asked the congregation who would bring revival to Korea as had happened in Wales, Seon Ju Gil (1869-1935), the elder of the lay assistants in the Central church, was the only one to raise his hand. After this, Gil began to meet for prayer every day at dawn with Elder Park at 4:00 A.M. This has become a tradition of Korean Christianity.<sup>152</sup> Two months later, a large group of about six hundred to seven hundred people joined in the prayer meeting and prayed for a new revival for Korea.<sup>153</sup> Although the revivals of India and Wales were not directly connected with the Korean revivals, it is clear that they provided a stimulus for the Pyongyang revival. The Jang Dae Hyun Church made a decision to have a regular Bible study during the first two weeks of January each year. In order to participate in the Bible study, normally between eight hundred and a thousand people travelled from ten to one hundred miles on foot to the class. Different Korean teachers and missionaries taught them the Bible for three hours in each session.<sup>154</sup> On January 6<sup>th</sup> in 1907, about fifteen hundred people gathered for evening meetings. As the capacity of the church building was too small to fit everyone, the meeting was rearranged for men only, and women had to meet in four different places.<sup>155</sup> Korean pastors and missionaries led the meetings, and all the people were seeking for “the Spirit’s presence and the necessity of love and

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<sup>151</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, p. 68.

<sup>152</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 38.

<sup>153</sup> Ig-Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 38.

<sup>154</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, pp. 67-8.

<sup>155</sup> G. Lee, “How the Spirit Came to Pyengyang”, *Korea Mission Field* (December) 1907, p. 33.

righteousness”.<sup>156</sup> Apparently, the church was crowded with people and their prayers seemed to be answered. However, William Newton Blair, one of the eye witnesses of the Pyongyang revival, says that there was something hindering the work, and he felt that the devil was present.<sup>157</sup> Graham Lee also wrote, “the meeting seemed dead and God’s Spirit seemed to have departed from us”.<sup>158</sup> From the following Monday night (January 14, 1907), however, the Holy Spirit began to minister to the congregation powerfully. According to Blair, he could feel that the church was filled with the presence of God when he entered the church at night.<sup>159</sup> After a short sermon given by William B. Hunt, the meeting was led by Graham Lee.<sup>160</sup> Lee asked the whole audience to pray together. Then everyone began to pray out loud. Blair describes this audible prayer in the following terms: “the prayer sounded to me like the falling of many waters, an ocean of prayer beating against God’s throne. It was not many, but one, born of one Spirit, lifted to one Father above”.<sup>161</sup> McCune, another eye witness, wrote that “although there were so many voices, there was no confusion at all. It was all a subdued, perfect harmony... and there was perfect concentration in the prayer of

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<sup>156</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, p. 69.

<sup>157</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>158</sup> G. Lee, “How the Spirit Came to Pyengyang”, p. 33.

<sup>159</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, p. 71.

<sup>160</sup> Allen D. Clark, *A History of the Church in Korea*, p. 161; G. S. McCune, “The Holy Spirit in Pyeng Yang”, *Korea Mission Field* (January) 1907, p. 1; and Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 27.

<sup>161</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, p. 71.

each one”.<sup>162</sup> After the prayer, Lee asked the congregation to confess their sins. Everyone cried out *Abouji* (‘Father’ in Korean) loudly and began to confess their sins. Then immediately the audience was filled by the Holy Spirit.<sup>163</sup> Blair described the presence of the Spirit as follows: “it seemed as if the roof was lifted from the building and the Spirit of God came down from heaven in a mighty avalanche of power upon us”.<sup>164</sup> People repented of their sins such as adultery, murder, drunkenness, thieving, lying, robbery, envying, hatreds, spites, and so on.<sup>165</sup> Some of them beat their hands and foreheads against the floor because of the agony of repentance.<sup>166</sup> This unstoppable spiritual phenomenon continued until 2:00 A.M. that night.<sup>167</sup>

In comparison to the Wonsan revival, the Pyongyang revival was significant for three reasons. First, the ecumenical movement was accelerated and extended in relation to issues of denominationalism, gender inequality, and generational divisions. During the early Pentecostal movement in Korea, there was no distinction among Presbyterians and Methodists, missionaries and Korean church leaders, men and women, and boys and girls.<sup>168</sup> Similar outpourings of the Spirit occurred in the young people’s meetings.<sup>169</sup> Second, the Pyongyang revival was the most influential Pentecostal revival in the history of Korean Christianity. About a thousand people

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<sup>162</sup> G. S. McCune, “The Holy Spirit in Pyeng Yang”, p. 1.

<sup>163</sup> G. Lee, “How the Spirit Came to Pyengyang”, p. 34.

<sup>164</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, p. 73.

<sup>165</sup> W. M. Baird, “The Spirit Among PyengYang Students”, *Korea Mission Field* (May) 1907, p. 65.

<sup>166</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *Evangelical Awakenings in Eastern Asia*, p. 28.

<sup>167</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *Evangelical Awakenings in Eastern Asia*, p. 28.

<sup>168</sup> W. B. Hunt, “Impressions of an Eye Witness”, *Korea Mission Field* (December) 1907, p. 38.

<sup>169</sup> G. Lee, “How the Spirit Came to Pyengyang”, p. 36; and Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 29

gathered every day for two weeks, and the Spirit movement quickly spread all over the nation. Third, the revival was the turning point from mission to church in Korean Christianity. The leadership of Korean church leaders matured as a result of the revival. During the Pyongyang revival, Bible studies were mainly led by missionaries, and prayer meetings by Korean church leaders.<sup>170</sup> Before the Pyongyang revival, the major work of Korean Church leaders was to assist missionaries with interpreting their sermons into Korean during the services. The Korean church as well as Korean Christianity was led by the leadership and financial support of missionaries before the revival. However, the nationals gradually began to take over leadership in the church. As the leadership of Korean church leaders matured, meetings and crusades were conducted by Korean ministers, and new churches were founded by them. In the Spring of 1907, soon after the Pyongyang revival, Seon Ju Gil led another revival by himself in Seoul. Chan Sung Kim conducted the prayer meeting at Soong Duk Hak Gyo (Soong Duk School), and about three hundred students repented of their sins at the meeting.<sup>171</sup> Furthermore, the Pyongyang revivals had an influence on the Manchuria revival (1908) in China. Chinese Christians in Mukden, Manchuria, heard about the Pyongyang revival, and two elders came to Korea to witness it for themselves. They met Gil and other Korean church leaders in Pyongyang, 1907.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Ki Young Hong, “Tochakhwa Ghajungeseo Barabon 1907 Pyongyang Dae Booheungwoondong [The Great Revival of 1907 in Indigenization]”, *Seongyo wha Shinhak* [Mission and Theology] vol.18 (2006), pp. 11-2; and Young Hee Park, “The Great Revival Movement of 1907 and its Historical Impact on Korean Church”, presented to PCA (the Presbyterian Church in America) Korean-American English Ministry Pastor’s Conference on 29 January 2008, p. 11.

<sup>171</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], pp. 268-69.

<sup>172</sup> James S. Gale, *Korea in Transition* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1909), pp. 215-16.

Jonathan Goforth, a Canadian Presbyterian missionary to China, also came to Korea in the Autumn of 1907<sup>173</sup> and “carried the revival fire to China”.<sup>174</sup> In February 1908, a Pentecostal revival broke out in Manchuria. The Chinese revival was also a repentance movement. During the Chinese revival, eight to nine hundred people gathered every day and experienced the same Pentecostal phenomena that had occurred during the Korean revivals.<sup>175</sup> The spiritual manifestations in Manchuria, included “public confessions of sin, extreme emotional and physical phenomena”, followed by moral transformations.<sup>176</sup> It is also significant in terms of global Pentecostalism that Pentecostal revivals occurred in Asia during the early 1900s with different spiritual manifestations compared to those occurring during the Azusa Street revival. In other words, the assertion that the Pentecostal movement originated from the Azusa Street revival with an emphasis on speaking in tongues is not acceptable from the perspective of global Pentecostalism.

#### ***4. 3. Analysis of the Korean Pentecostal Revivals***

The Korean revivals were significant, firstly, because they marked the beginning of Pentecostalism in Korea. Through the revivals, Korean Christians were able to experience the baptism in the Spirit. The revivals directly influenced the

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<sup>173</sup> James Webster, *The Revival in Manchuria* (London: Morgan and Scott Ltd., 1910), pp. 9-10.

<sup>174</sup> George T. B. Davis, *Korea for Christ* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1910), p. 41.

<sup>175</sup> James Webster, *The Revival in Manchuria*, pp. 9-25.

<sup>176</sup> Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity: the Great Century in Northern Africa and Asia A.D. 1800 – A. D. 1914, Vol. VI* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode Limited, 1944), pp. 343-44.

explosive growth of Korean Christianity. The Pentecostal movement spread out across the nation after the revivals. One reason that both Japanese Christianity and Pentecostalism has not grown as much as their Korean counterparts, despite the fact that Christianity came to Japan much earlier than to Korea and missionaries to Korea initially stayed in Japan because missionary stations had not yet been established in Korea,<sup>177</sup> is that there was no nationwide spiritual revival in Japan. Korean Christians with Buddhist and Confucian backgrounds learned Christianity from missionaries but did not experience a deepening of their Christian spirituality until the revivals broke out.

Secondly, the revivals marked the turning point from mission to church in Korean Christianity. During the period 1903 to 1910, following each revival, church growth in Korea was remarkable. In 1900, there were 20,914 Protestant Christians in Korea before the revivals broke out.<sup>178</sup> However, by 1905, the number of Protestant Christians had increased to 40,367 and the number of churches to 321. In 1907, soon after the Pyongyang revival, the number of churches went up to 642, and registered Christians and evangelists numbered 119,309.<sup>179</sup> From 1906 to 1910, Korean Christianity produced 79,221 new converts,<sup>180</sup> and by 1910, the number of Korean

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<sup>177</sup> Since there was no Mission Board in Korea as yet, the early missionaries to Korea such as the Methodists Henry Appenzeller and his wife and the Presbyterian Horace G. Underwood left the States for Korea but had to go to Japan where they stayed for a while before they came to Korea in 1885. See Everett N. Hunt Jr., *Protestant Pioneers in Korea*, p. 22.

<sup>178</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 312.

<sup>179</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 281.

<sup>180</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [The Church History of Assemblies of God] (Seoul: Seoul Mal Sseum Sa, 1998), p. 165.

Protestant Christians had increased to about 167,000.<sup>181</sup> Due to the inability of the missionaries to cope with this rapid church growth, the leadership ability of Korean Christians grew. The early Korean church leaders had to rely on the missionaries because of their dependence upon them for financial and theological support. As Korean church leaders did not have knowledge about Christianity, they had to depend upon the teachings and instructions of missionaries. In addition, they imitated the ways of the missionaries uncritically.<sup>182</sup> Yet, after the Pyongyang revival, Seon Ju Gil began to lead crusades and Bible classes all over the country by himself.<sup>183</sup> Furthermore, although they still needed support especially for financial reasons, after the revival, Korean churches began to be self-supporting. As a result, by 1907, 164 out of 642 became self-supporting churches.<sup>184</sup> Until 1906, there was a missionary council in the Jang Dae Hyun Church which was responsible for making major decisions. Yet, after the revival in 1907, the Chosŏn Jasogyo Presbyterian Association composed of missionaries and Korean church leaders was established,<sup>185</sup> which began to make joint decisions on behalf of the church.

Thirdly, the revivals acted as movements of spiritual renewal. In 1888, the Chosŏn government promulgated an edict proscribing the preaching of the gospel and the teaching of Christianity in Korea. This was a response to the actions of the French

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<sup>181</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 41.

<sup>182</sup> Deok Joo Rhie, *Chogi Hankook GidokgyoSa YeonGoo*, p. 170.

<sup>183</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 34.

<sup>184</sup> Horace G. Underwood, *The Call of Korea: Political-Social-Religious* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1908), p. 158.

<sup>185</sup> Gyoung Rho Yoon, "1900 Nyundae Chogi Janglogyohoieu Chili wha Chochanggi Gyoineu Sahoi Gyoungjaejeok Sunghyang [The socio-economic tendency of the early Korean Christians and the governance of the early Presbyterian church in 1900s]," *Hankook Gidokgyo wa Yeoksa*, January (1991), p. 85.



Jesuits, who bought the site for their cathedral secretly in a location where people could look down upon the royal palace. This was considered disrespectful to the government.<sup>186</sup> Although, this action did not directly affect Protestant missionaries, Allen recalled all Protestant missionaries to Seoul. He asked the missionaries to focus only on medical and educational work rather than evangelism for a while.<sup>187</sup> Although missionaries, such as Underwood and Appenzeller, were displeased with the recall,<sup>188</sup> evangelization became limited. Meanwhile, the missionaries became more focused on medical and educational work rather than on developing the spirituality of Korean Christians.<sup>189</sup> Since the revivals, missionaries and Korean church leaders became more concerned about the spirituality of Korean Christians as well as about church growth.

Fourthly, the revivals were ecumenical in character. Through the revivals, denominationalism and the boundary between missionaries and Koreans Christians were eroded. During the revivals, missionaries confessed their mistakes and faults in front of Korean natives and humbly asked for forgiveness. Korean Christians responded in a similar way to the missionaries. There was reconciliation among them, and they began to cooperate in the ministry. Gender and generational divisions were broken down during the revivals. Confucianism was the basic ideology of Korea. Under Confucianism, women's rights and social activities were very restricted. Most women were unable to participate in public education and were not allowed to

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<sup>186</sup> Lillias H. Underwood, *Underwood of Korea*, p. 70.

<sup>187</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 205.

<sup>188</sup> Lillias H. Underwood, *Underwood of Korea*, p. 70.

<sup>189</sup> Roy E. Shearer, *Wildfire: Church Growth in Korea*, p. 56.

express themselves in public.<sup>190</sup> In childhood, they had to follow their fathers, be subject to their husbands in marriage, and had to obey their elder sons in their widowhood.<sup>191</sup> Yet, during the revivals, there was no such restriction for women and school boys and girls. Since the revivals, Christian women have been able to participate fully in church ministries and activities.

Fifthly, the revivals changed the ethics of the Korean people. During the Pyongyang revival, there was a regular hour-long afternoon conference to discuss vital issues regarding the church life. The subjects discussed were related to moral matters.<sup>192</sup> Through public repentance, Koreans confessed not only sins of murder, robbery, violence, theft, adultery, and falsity, but also the things that culturally had been accepted for a long time such as smoking tobacco, playing cards, drinking, and so on. This means that they became conscious of sins not in a legal sense but in its religious aspects. In other words, there was ethical transformation within the Korean Christian community, and Christian ethics began to be contextualized into their daily lives. Missionaries referred to this ethical change as “the new man experience”.<sup>193</sup> Koreans became ready to adopt Christian ethics as their moral standard. They visited neighbours from house to house to confess their sins and returned stolen articles and money to the owners. Blair says that the whole Pyongyang city was stirred by this

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<sup>190</sup> Angus Hamilton, *Korea* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), pp. 105-06.

<sup>191</sup> George Heber Jones, *Korea: The Land, People, and Customs* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1907), p. 40.

<sup>192</sup> J. Z. Moore, “The Great Revival Year”, *Korea Mission Field* (August) 1907, p. 116.

<sup>193</sup> W. G. Cram, “Revival Fires”, *Korea Mission Field* (December) 1905, p. 33.

ethical change.<sup>194</sup> All Korean Christians were required to keep the Ten Commandments strictly. During sermons, texts from the Old Testament were more often used than those in the New Testament. Participation in church activities became more difficult for drinkers of alcohol, smokers and for those who had concubines.<sup>195</sup>

Sixthly, the revivals were movements which focused on repentance. There is no doubt that the Korean revivals were a nationwide Pentecostal movement. However, there were no reports of tongues-speaking during the revivals. In this sense, compared with other Pentecostal revivals that occurred during the early part of the twentieth century, the Korean revivals are significant because they did not include the event of speaking in tongues. Yet, there was also a negative consequence of the emphasis on repentance upon the Pentecostal revival movement in Korea. As this repentance movement began to standardize later crusades and meetings for spiritual revival, missionaries and Korean ministers focused on confession of sins rather than spiritual gifts. This was related to the disposition of the missionaries who were influenced by the North American holiness movement in the 1860s and the revival movement associated with D. L. Moody (1837-1899). About eighty percent of all missionaries who arrived in Korea before 1893 were North Americans who were mostly Methodists and Presbyterians. They occupied about seventy percent of the mission

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<sup>194</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, p. 75.

<sup>195</sup> Harold S. Hong, "General Picture of the Korean Church, Yesterday and Today", in Harold S. Hong, Won Yong Ji, and Chung Choon Kim (eds.), *Korea Struggles for Christ* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1966), p. 15.

territory across the country.<sup>196</sup> It seems that they did not have a concern for spiritual gifts but rather focused on repentance from sins. Presbyterianism became the largest Christian denomination in Korea. Korean Presbyterians followed the thinking of Martin Luther (1483-1546) and John Calvin (1509-64) concerning spiritual gifts and miracles. According to Anderson, Luther believed that “tongues were given as a sign to the Jews and had ceased, and that Christians no longer needed miracles”, and Calvin taught that “speaking in tongues facilitated the preaching of the gospel in foreign language, but God had removed it from the church and miracles had long since ceased”.<sup>197</sup> For this reason, Presbyterianism did not welcome Pentecostalism in Korea at first. However, prayers for divine healing became common in the church soon after the revivals.<sup>198</sup> The spiritual gifts and the manifestations of the Spirit were practiced by early Korean Pentecostal leaders such as Ig Doo Kim, and Yong-Do Yi.<sup>199</sup> About two decades later, the direct connection between the Azusa Street revival and Korean Pentecostalism was established with the arrival of Mary C. Rumsey in March 1928, and Korean Pentecostals were able to understand the perspectives of American Pentecostals about the manifestations of the Spirit.

Seventhly, the revivals brought hope to Korea. Since the late nineteenth century, Korea was confronted with political uncertainty by Western powers and

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<sup>196</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 35.

<sup>197</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 23; and see also Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1987), pp. 116-17.

<sup>198</sup> George T. B. Davis, *Korea for Christ*, p. 17.

<sup>199</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], pp. 170-77.

Japanese imperialism. The Queen of Korea was murdered by Japanese mobs in her bedroom in 1895,<sup>200</sup> and the King feared he would be the next victim.<sup>201</sup> Politically, Korea was in an extremely precarious situation. Confucianism was the basis of the socio-political structure of Korea for a long time, but it later forfeited its functions for the country.<sup>202</sup> At that time, the church became “the most influential single organization in Korea”.<sup>203</sup> C. E. Sharp insisted that the Koreans converted to Christianity mainly for three reasons: their need for economic and political security, their desire for high civilization and culture, and their interest in Christian spirituality.<sup>204</sup>

Due to the political chaos, Koreans had to protect their properties and lives by themselves, and they found security in the churches which were under the protection of Western missionaries. For this reason, many Koreans came to the church and began to have an interest in Christianity. This meant that the church became a shelter for many Korean people who were left without hope at that time. Those interested in Western civilization also came to the church and used the church as a means to learn Western culture. Of course, many other people came to the church out of genuine concern to know more about the Christian faith. Through the revivals, many more people were able to find hope and converted to Christianity. In other words, Koreans

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<sup>200</sup> L. H. Underwood, *Fifteen Years among the Top-Knots or Life in Korea* (New York: American Tract Society, 1904), p. 149; and Lillias H. Underwood, *Underwood of Korea*, p. 147.

<sup>201</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 37.

<sup>202</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, p. 22.

<sup>203</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *Evangelical Awakenings in Eastern Asia*, p. 33.

<sup>204</sup> C. E. Sharp, “Motives for Seeking Christ”, *Korea Mission Field* (August) 1906, pp. 182-83.

who were in religio-political difficulties found hope in Christianity and came to the church. In terms of religion, Koreans had been mainly influenced by Buddhism, Confucianism and shamanism before Christianity came to the country. They could not find hope for eternal life in these traditional religions. Buddhism is based on transmigration; Confucianism is closer to a philosophy than a religion; and shamanism emphasizes this-worldly secular blessings. Through Christianity, Koreans began to have an eschatological hope in the Kingdom of God. Through the revivals, Korean Christianity grew explosively and, as a result, thousands of Koreans began to have hope in the Kingdom of God. Eighthly, Korean Pentecostal practices started from the revivals. Before he converted to Christianity, Seon Ju Gil was a Taoist for about ten years. As a Taoist, he used to practise various ascetic exercises such as fasting, meditation, and prayer. Gil was responsible for starting one of the important Korean Pentecostal practices, the daily dawn prayer. His influence was remarkable in Korean Christianity especially after the Pyongyang revival. He travelled all over the country to preach the gospel. He preached more than twenty thousand times to about 3.8 million people, baptized more than three thousand people, and planted more than sixty churches.<sup>205</sup> Many church leaders and members followed his spiritual practices. Ig Jin Kim insists that Gil used “his Taoistic discipline to express his Christian faith. In one way or another, Taoist spirit influenced Christianity”.<sup>206</sup> Yet, although Gil’s previous Taoistic discipline may have influenced his decision to begin the dawn

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<sup>205</sup> Jin Gyung Gil, *Sun-joo Gil* [in Korean] (Seoul: Jongno, 1980), p. 326.

<sup>206</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 39.

prayer, the dawn prayer as a religious practice of Korean Christians corresponded to the pattern of Christ's prayer practice in the Gospels (Mark 1:35).<sup>207</sup> It was also a traditional Korean religious practice, which had been followed not only by Taoists but also by Buddhist monks, Shamanists and other Korean religious groups for generations. Furthermore, there is no proof that Christianity in Korea is influenced by Taoism because of the Korean Christian practice of dawn prayer. The phenomenon of audible prayer, which occurred during the revivals, is also a unique religious practice of Korean Christians. It was the trigger of the Pyongyang revival. Simultaneous audible prayer is still prevalent in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Korea today. Overnight prayer, dawn prayer, and earnest Bible study have also become the traditional religious practice of Korean Pentecostals since the revivals.<sup>208</sup>

#### ***4. 4 The Contextualization of Korean Pentecostalism under Japanese Rule***

The Chosŏn Dynasty ended in October, 1897, and the name of the country was changed to Dae Han Jae Gook (Dae Han Empire). With the Korea-Japan Annexation Treaty signed by force on August 22, 1910, the Dae Han Empire came to an end and became a Japanese colony. All Korean social, political, economical, cultural, and even religious circumstances changed as a result of the treaty. Korean Christianity as well as Korean Pentecostalism also entered upon a new phase after this political event. In the beginning of Japanese rule, the Japanese authorities did not

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<sup>207</sup> "Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed (Mk.1:35)" - NKJV.

<sup>208</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, p. 37.

persecute Korean Christians, even though Prince Marquis Hirobumi Ito, the administrator and Japanese Resident-General in Korea, was assassinated by a young Korean Catholic named Chung Kun An at Harbin on October 20, 1909, and Durham White Stevens, an adviser to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ito's administration, was also killed by Chang In Hwan, a Protestant Christian, on March 23, 1908.<sup>209</sup> In 1909-1910, there was a second nation-wide revival known as the Million Souls movement. This movement was started by a group of Methodist missionaries in Song-Do. In July 1909, they made a decision to spend a whole week in Bible study and prayer because they felt that the spiritual passion of the church had declined. On the fourth day, the prayer meeting continued until midnight. Among them, F. K. Gamble, C. F. Reid, and M. B. Stokes decided to pray overnight. Around 4 A.M., they were filled with the Spirit.<sup>210</sup> Soon after this event, ten missionaries, including these three, and five Korean church leaders met together and went to a temple in the mountains for a week of prayer.<sup>211</sup> In the afternoon, the Spirit came upon them and their hearts were filled with praise and joy.<sup>212</sup> After the meeting, Stokes made an impassioned plea to the congregation to make 50,000 converts within a year. His eagerness for the lost inspired the congregation to action.<sup>213</sup> On October 9, 1909, the slogan, 'A Million Souls for Christ', was suggested by C. F. Reid, the

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<sup>209</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, p. 361.

<sup>210</sup> George T. B. Davis, *Korea for Christ*, pp. 6-7; Harry A. Rhodes (ed.), *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A. vol. I 1884-1934*, p. 285; and Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, pp. 38-9.

<sup>211</sup> Harry A. Rhodes (ed.), *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A. vol. I 1884-1934*, p. 285.

<sup>212</sup> George T. B. Davis, *Korea for Christ*, p. 7.

<sup>213</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 39.



chairman of the Council, and was adopted by the General Council of Evangelical Missions.<sup>214</sup> Although this Million Souls movement was started by Methodist missionaries, it expanded as a non-denominational movement and spread out all over the country. About one thousand people promised to spend a total of over 22,000 days in personal evangelization in Pyongyang.<sup>215</sup> During the movement, millions of tracts were distributed, and 700,000 copies of the Gospel of Mark were purchased by Korean Christians. Over the nation, Korean Christians spent a total of at least 100,000 days in evangelization. They visited nearly every home in Korea, shared the gospel with non-believers and gave out tracts.<sup>216</sup> However, the movement was over by 1910 without achieving its goal. In fact, it would have been almost impossible to increase the number of Christians up to five times in a year. There were less than 200,000 Christians in Korea at that time. Besides, the movement lost its momentum due to the impact of the Korea-Japan Annexation Treaty. All Korean people, church congregations, and native church leaders were shocked and enveloped in deep sadness because of this unexpected political event. Although there was no direct persecution against the movement by the Japanese government, the Million Souls movement was over by the time Japanese rule began. There were no more nationwide spiritual revivals or movements during the period of Japanese rule. As Korean church members and leaders as well as students became “channels to spread [the

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<sup>214</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 7.

<sup>215</sup> Roy E. Shearer, *Wildfire: Church Growth in Korea*, p. 57.

<sup>216</sup> Korea Mission Field, “The Million Movement and Its Results”, *Korea Mission Field* (January) 1911, p. 5.

independence] movement”,<sup>217</sup> the Japanese government began to persecute Korean Christianity. In this situation, Korean Pentecostalism had two issues to address: firstly, its continuous growth; and secondly, its response to current socio-political matters. However, it was difficult to unite churches even for religious purposes, let alone for political concerns, because the Japanese government did not allow large gatherings of people to take place. Consequently, the Pentecostal movement began to be led not through the cooperation of churches, but by individual evangelists.<sup>218</sup> The responsibilities of the church in relation to socio-political issues were growing under Japanese rule. However, Korean Pentecostals were reluctant to be involved in these secular matters since they preferred to focus on spiritual concerns.

## 5. Early Pentecostals and the Quickening of Pentecostal Hope

### 5. 1. *Seon Ju Gil (1869-1935) and Hope for Eternal Life*

There were three prominent Korean Pentecostal evangelists, Seon Ju Gil, Ig Doo Kim, and Yong Do Yi, who contributed individually to the development of the Pentecostal movement under the Japanese rule. They brought new hope to Koreans who were in deep sorrow and shock after the loss of national sovereignty to the Japanese. Seon Ju Gil stimulated Koreans to have hope for eternal life. The major emphases of his evangelism were “eschatological faith and the imminent return of

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<sup>217</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 33.

<sup>218</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 170.

Jesus Christ”.<sup>219</sup> He read the Old Testament thirty times, the New Testament one hundred times and the Book of Revelation ten thousand times.<sup>220</sup>

Gil had a conservative and fundamentalist faith. He strongly believed in fundamental Christian beliefs such as Christ’ virgin birth and deity, the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible, the substitutional Atonement, the literal and physical resurrection of Christ, and the Second Advent. Moreover, he applied these beliefs to his evangelization.<sup>221</sup> His eschatological emphasis awakened Korean Christians to the hope of eternal life and the future coming of the Kingdom of God. Young Hoon Lee says:

The effect of his [Gil’s] eschatology was to give people the power to overcome persecution and oppression with the spirit of martyrdom, for faith in the second coming would give them real hope and courage. Indeed the Korean church could overcome the persecutions of Japanese rulers by their faith and hope for the second coming.<sup>222</sup>

The eschatological hope was very new to Koreans who had grown up with the ideas, thoughts, and spiritualities of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shamanism. They were used to Buddhist reincarnation and the shamanic spiritual world. In fact, as Confucianism was more focused on the ethical life of individuals than the religious life, its spirituality was not influential. However, ancestor worship, which syncretised the filial piety of Confucianism and the indigenized shamanic influence, had been

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<sup>219</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 41.

<sup>220</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa*, p. 171.

<sup>221</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, pp. 34-9.

<sup>222</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 38.

practiced for generations in Korea. Koreans believed that fortunes and misfortunes were dependent on how they worshipped their ancestors. They believed the emptiness of incarnation and wished for temporal blessings through ancestor worship instead. However, Gil over-emphasized the imminent second coming of Christ, even predicting when it would take place. He predicted that it would occur either in 1974 or in 2002.<sup>223</sup> Due to his excessive focus on eschatology, he and his followers assumed the attitude of onlookers for present problems. Because of their indifference to socio-political matters, early Korean Pentecostals became more concerned about God's future Kingdom rather than present issues. This eschatological hope of early Korean Pentecostals for the future Kingdom has continued among today's Korean Pentecostals.

### ***5. 2. Ig Doo Kim (1894-1950) and Divine Healing***

According to Samuel Hugh Moffett, one of the reasons behind the remarkable church growth in Korea during the early twentieth century was "the earnest and faithful work of the Korean lay evangelists".<sup>224</sup> Ig Doo Kim, a former school teacher in the city of Chairyung,<sup>225</sup> was one of the prominent lay evangelists. Kim's Pentecostal practice was different from the approach adopted by Gil. Kim's ministry focused on divine healing and miraculous signs, while Gil's major focus was on

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<sup>223</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 38.

<sup>224</sup> Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia vol. II: 1500 to 1900*, p. 539.

<sup>225</sup> Harry A. Rhodes (ed.), *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A. vol. I 1884-1934*, p. 288.

salvation and the eschatological hope of eternal life. Kim used to be called the “Billy Sunday of Korea”, and his healing ministry was labelled the “Kim Ig Doo Revival”.<sup>226</sup> He prayed for both the sick and the demon possessed in evangelistic meetings, which were regularly attended by six to seven thousand people.<sup>227</sup> After the Korean Independent Movement in 1919, those who attended his healing revival increased to ten thousand.<sup>228</sup> His healing ministry caused a sensation among Koreans since they had never previously experienced divine healing in their lives. Koreans were used to shamanistic performances by necromancers on behalf of the sick or demon possessed. They believed that the shamanistic cure was dependent on the quantity and quality of the sacrificial offering for the shamanistic ritual regardless of faith or an earnest wish for healing.<sup>229</sup>

Although Korea was a Confucian country, Shamanism was the most popular religion practised among ordinary people at that time. There were many shamans who performed the shamanistic rite to exorcise evil spirits on behalf of the sick and victims of disaster.<sup>230</sup> It was common for Koreans to seek shamans when they had problems in their lives including physical matters. Against this religious background, Koreans experienced the power of the Spirit through Kim’s healing ministry and were

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<sup>226</sup> Harry A. Rhodes (ed.), *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A. vol. I 1884-1934*, p. 288.

<sup>227</sup> Harry A. Rhodes (ed.), *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A. vol. I 1884-1934*, p. 289.

<sup>228</sup> Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM Press, 2007), p. 141.

<sup>229</sup> Jee Byung Gu, *Shamanism Gwha Hankook GyoHoi* [Shamanism and Korean Church], (Seoul: Sae Han Publishing House, 1996), p. 23.

<sup>230</sup> George Heber Jones, *Korea: the Land, People and Customs*, pp. 52-3.

overwhelmed. His ministry was remarkable in the early history of Korean Pentecostalism. Kim preached about 28,000 times and led 776 revival meetings. Through his ministry, about 10,000 sick people claimed to receive healing, 288,000 Koreans converted to Christianity, and two hundred laymen became ministers. Furthermore, 150 new churches were built, and 140 churches enlarged. Kim also contributed to education by establishing 120 preschools and extending one hundred existing schools.<sup>231</sup> Nevertheless, Korean church leaders affiliated with the Korean Presbyterian denomination did not accept Kim's healing ministry.<sup>232</sup> In 1921, the Kyoung Nam [the South Eastern province of Korea] Presbyterian Council made the decision not to perform prayer for divine healing during revival meetings. Moreover, in 1923, a request by the Hwang Hae [the West Midland province of Korea] Presbyterian Council to the Korean Presbyterian Council to remove the clause, 'the spiritual power for sign and wonders has ceased', in the Korean Presbyterian Constitution (Chapter 3, Clause 1 in Politics) was denied.<sup>233</sup> To cap it all off, in 1926, Kim had to resign from the church (Seoul Nammoon Bark Gyohoi) he was pastoring due to his emphasis on the manifestations of the Spirit.<sup>234</sup> Since then, the divine

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<sup>231</sup> Moon Tak Oh, "The Impact of Korea Revival Movement on Church Growth of Korean Evangelical Christianity in 1903-1963", (Ph. D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2000), pp. 126-127; and Sean C. Kim, "Reenchanted: Divine Healing in Korean Protestantism," in Candy Gunther Brown (ed.), *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 273.

<sup>232</sup> Harry A. Rhodes, "Some Results of the Kim Ik Tu Revival Meeting", *Korea Mission Field* (June) 1921, p. 114.

<sup>233</sup> Myung Soo Park, *Hankook Gyohoi Booheung Woondong Yeongoo* [A Study on the Revival Movement in Korea Church], (Seoul: Hankook Gidokgyo Ryeksa Yeongooso, 2007), pp. 90-3.

<sup>234</sup> Myung Soo Park, *Hankook Gyohoi Booheung Woondong Yeongoo* [A Study on the Revival Movement in Korea Church], p. 92.

healing movement was attenuated<sup>235</sup> until Cho's healing ministry started with the theory of the Threefold Blessing in the late 1950s. Kim's contributions to early Korean Pentecostalism was significant in three ways. First, his healing crusade acted as a power encounter and demonstrated the visible victory over the indigenized shamanistic spirituality of Koreans who were used to shamanistic spirituality but had not experienced the spiritual power of Christianity. Second, he gave Korean Christians expectancy to receive spiritual gifts and to experience the manifestations of the Spirit, while Gil emphasized repentance and the eschatological hope of the Kingdom. Third, he also convinced Koreans that God was able to intervene not only in the spiritual dimension but also in the material problems of every day life.

### ***5. 3. Yong Do Lee (1901-1933) and the Baptism in the Spirit***

While Yong Do Lee was a seminary student, he suffered from severe tuberculosis. In 1925, he was told by his doctor that he had only a few months to live. One of his seminary friends prepared a place for him in a village to recuperate from his disease. One day, he was invited to lead an evening service. During the service, it is claimed that he experienced divine healing for himself with other manifestations of the Spirit, including speaking in tongues and "a mysterious experience of a joyous

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<sup>235</sup> Myung Soo Park, *Hankook Gyohoi Booheung Woondong Yeongoo* [A Study on the Revival Movement in Korea Church], p. 93.

living in dying”.<sup>236</sup> Following this, he became a revivalist and began to preach the gospel all over the country. His own experience of suffering from tuberculosis and his subsequent healing became the theological foundation for his ministry. Through his physical suffering, Lee began to deeply meditate upon the suffering of Christ and identified the passion of Christ with the suffering of Christians under persecution as well as that of Koreans under Japanese rule.<sup>237</sup> The slogan of Lee’s spiritual movement was “Jesus-centred enthusiasm and prayer”.<sup>238</sup> He emphasized “eschatological faith, faith in divine healing, and faith in mystical union with Christ”.<sup>239</sup> He believed that Christians could be physically united with Christ in the love of God, and he called this physical union “vascular union”.<sup>240</sup> His dualistic theology was reflected in his belief that religious, spiritual, and immaterial things were good while material and worldly things were bad.<sup>241</sup> He believed that the physical body and the human spirit were “mutually independent and in conflict” with each other.<sup>242</sup> As the term “dying daily” in Christ became the motto of his life,<sup>243</sup> he sold his house to support seminary students financially and often used to return home

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<sup>236</sup> Boo Woong Yoo, *Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 110; and Yeol Soo Eim, “South Korea”, in Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, p. 240.

<sup>237</sup> Boo Woong Yoo, *Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 110.

<sup>238</sup> Young Hoon Lee, “The Korean Holy Spirit Movement in Relation to Pentecostalism”, in Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang (eds.), *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2005), p. 513.

<sup>239</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, pp. 41-2.

<sup>240</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 437.

<sup>241</sup> Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, p. 101.

<sup>242</sup> Boo Woong Yoo, *Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 112.

<sup>243</sup> Boo Woong Yoo, *Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 110.



without his coat after giving it to a beggar on the street.<sup>244</sup> His dualistic view was influenced by three factors. One was *Cheong-Bin- Sa-Sang* (청빈사상, 淸貧思想), which was the idea of honourable poverty within Confucianism. Korean Confucian scholars and *Yangban* (the high class) considered honourable poverty as the sublime value of life. The leaders of society practiced honourable poverty in their lives. Another factor was the influence of the Holiness movement through the missionaries. Lee sincerely wanted to live a Christ-like, holy life. Third, due to his imminent eschatology, he avoided all worldly desires and was opposed to the pursuit of wealth. This perspective on material prosperity, which mixed imminent eschatology and *Cheong-Bin- Sa-Sang*, prevailed among most Korean Christians including early Pentecostals. After the Korean War, when Pentecostal preachers began to focus on this-worldly blessings from God through the Threefold Blessing, mainstream Korean Christianity regarded Pentecostalism as a heretical or shamanistic Christianity because of its emphasis on earthly blessings, despite the fact that most Koreans were struggling with extreme poverty at that time.

Despite Lee's negative perspective regarding material blessings, and his mysterious view of the relationship between God and human beings, his role in giving Korean Christians hope through the work of the Spirit cannot be overlooked. The services he led were always accompanied by visible manifestations of the Holy

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<sup>244</sup> Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, p. 101.

Spirit such as speaking in tongues, divine healings and other supernatural signs.<sup>245</sup>

Without a doubt, his revival movement was one expression of the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement in Korea. Yet, the Korean Presbyterians declared him a heretic in September 1933,<sup>246</sup> as did the Methodists in the same year because of his unorthodox views.<sup>247</sup> Hollenweger insists that Yong Do Lee's "influence on Korean spirituality should not be underestimated".<sup>248</sup> There were two main reasons why the early Pentecostal leaders were accused of being heretics. First, Korean Christians did not understand Spirit manifestations at that time. Second, there was no one to teach Korean Christians about Pentecostalism and the spiritual gifts because Pentecostal missionaries did not arrive in Korea until about two decades after the Korean revivals broke out, and the Protestant missionaries in Korea were generally opposed to them.

## **6. Establishment of Korean Pentecostalism**

### ***6. 1. Arrival of Pentecostal Missionaries***

About 20 years after the Korean revivals, Pentecostal missionaries began to arrive in Korea. The first Pentecostal missionary was Mary C. Rumsey who was a

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<sup>245</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 174; and Yeol Soo Eim, "South Korea", p. 240.

<sup>246</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 438.

<sup>247</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 137.

<sup>248</sup> Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, p. 102.

former Methodist. The reason she has been recognized as the first Pentecostal missionary to Korea is that she was the first missionary to Korea who experienced the Azusa Street revival in April, 1906.<sup>249</sup> In fact, she was not sent by the Apostolic Faith Mission but came to the country as an independent missionary.<sup>250</sup> She received the calling to go to Korea, when she was baptized in the Spirit at the Azusa Street revival in 1906. However, she was unable to leave immediately due to lack of funds.<sup>251</sup> About eighteen years later, she was able to fulfil her calling. With the personal financial support of a man called Denverd, who was a member of her Methodist church, she was able to leave for Korea.<sup>252</sup> Before coming to Korea, as other missionaries did, she stayed in Japan for a while and moved to Korea in March, 1928.<sup>253</sup> After Rumsey, American Pentecostals T. M. Parson and Mrs. Gladys Parson, came to Korea as independent missionaries in 1930. Mrs. Parson requested Pentecostal churches in the States to send more missionaries to Korea. Two British Pentecostals, E. H. Meredith and L. Vessey, responded to his request and came to Korea as independent missionaries in 1933.<sup>254</sup> Mrs. Parson seems to have met them during a visit to England.<sup>255</sup> Following the arrival of Pentecostal missionaries,

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<sup>249</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 197.

<sup>250</sup> Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM Press, 2007), p. 141.

<sup>251</sup> Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 140; Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 57; and Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa*, p. 197.

<sup>252</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 58.

<sup>253</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 66.

<sup>254</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], pp. 198-99.

<sup>255</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 61.

Pentecostalism in Korea entered a new phase. First, the Pentecostal missionaries began to teach Pentecostal faith to Korean Christians. They encouraged Korean Christians to be baptized in the Spirit and to receive spiritual gifts. In her preaching, Rumsey taught the importance of spiritual gifts for the Pentecostal faith. She stimulated Korean Christians to practise speaking in tongues, praying for the sick, and to receive the baptism in the Spirit.<sup>256</sup> Secondly, Pentecostal churches and denominations began to be established in Korea. After the Korean revivals, Korean churches sprouted like mushrooms after rain and grew up rapidly. However, most of these churches were affiliated with the Presbyterian and Methodist denominations and taught Korean Christians according to the beliefs of Presbyterianism or Methodism. Pentecostal missionaries began to cultivate Korean Pentecostal church leaders and, together with them, start Pentecostal churches.

## ***6. 2. Korean Pentecostal Churches and Leaders***

In 1931, Rumsey met Hong Huh (1907-1991) when she visited the office of the Salvation Army in Seoul.<sup>257</sup> At that time, Huh was working there as a secretary. She asked him to help her missionary work since he spoke English well.<sup>258</sup> Soon after, he joined Rumsey's mission as her interpreter and was baptized in the Spirit through

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<sup>256</sup> Yeol Soo Eim, "South Korea", p. 243.

<sup>257</sup> Yeol Soo Eim, "South Korea", p. 243.

<sup>258</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 58.

her.<sup>259</sup> Later, in 1957, he became the first Korean superintendent of the Assemblies of God in Korea.<sup>260</sup> In April 1932, Rumsey and Huh successfully planted the first Pentecostal church named the Seo Bing Go Church in Seoul.<sup>261</sup> However, there was no senior pastor at the church since there was neither a Pentecostal ordained pastor nor anyone who had finished from a Pentecostal seminary. Consequently, Rumsey asked John Juergensen, the president of the Japan Bible School in Nagoya, to send Sung San Park (1908-1956) to Korea.<sup>262</sup> Rumsey had met Park in Japan while she was staying there for a while before she came to Korea. At the time, he was a student of the Bible school in Japan.<sup>263</sup> Soon after graduating from the Bible school, Park returned to Korea and became the pastor of the church in 1932.<sup>264</sup>

In 1933, the second Pentecostal church, Soo Chang Dong Church, was opened by the Parsons and Mrs. Elfreda Offstead with Boo Keun Bae (1906-1970). Bae had also graduated from the Japan Bible School, and had been baptized in the Spirit through Juergensen while studying there. He returned to Korea eager to evangelize his country.<sup>265</sup> Parsons and Offstead paid all the expenses of the church while Bae was focusing on evangelism. He visited people from house to house, preached the

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<sup>259</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 58.

<sup>260</sup> Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, p. 141.

<sup>261</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 203

<sup>262</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 199.

<sup>263</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 68.

<sup>264</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 63.

<sup>265</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, pp. 65-6, 68.

gospel on the street, and led revival meetings.<sup>266</sup> In the same year, these two Pentecostal churches together became the first Korean Pentecostal denomination which was named the Chosen Pentecostal Church. The Chosen Pentecostal Church later became the Korean Assemblies of God in 1955.<sup>267</sup> After organizing the denomination, Park, Huh and Bae were ordained on October 5, 1938, and became the first ordained Korean Pentecostal pastors.<sup>268</sup> Ironically, tens of thousands people gathered for Pentecostal revival meetings conducted by Pentecostal revivalists like Yong Do Lee and Ig Doo Kim, but when the Pentecostal churches were founded Korean Christians did not attend them. In comparison with other churches, the Pentecostal churches grew very slowly until 1937, and then declined in membership from 1938.

**Table 1. The Statistics of Pentecostal Churches and Membership in Korea during 1934-1941**<sup>269</sup>

Year	Churches	Ministers	Members
1934	2	7	99
1935	3	8	113
1936	3	9	130
1937	6	10	173
1938	6	11	129
1939	6	11	99
1940	5	4	80
1941	4	4	80

<sup>266</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 203.

<sup>267</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 66.

<sup>268</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 68.

<sup>269</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 204; and Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 69.

Some Pentecostal scholars have suggested two reasons for this slow Pentecostal church growth: first, religious persecution by the Japanese colonial authorities; and second, the return of Pentecostal missionaries to their home countries due to Japanese persecution.<sup>270</sup> However, these were ostensible reasons. These problems were by no means unique to Pentecostal churches. The worse the Pacific War became for Japan, the harsher the persecution of Christianity by the Japanese government. The Japanese government forced all Korean Christians including missionaries to practice Shinto shrine worship. Anyone who declined was persecuted. This resulted in the imprisonment of Koreans and the expulsion of missionaries. At that time, the intention of the Japanese government was to deport American missionaries not only for religious reasons but also for political reasons in order to prepare for the Pacific War against the U.S.A.

During that time, there were more specific reasons for the lack of Pentecostal church growth. First, Korean Pentecostals did not give hope to Koreans who were struggling with current socio-political difficulties. Korean people were suffering under Japanese colonial rule and had lost hope for the future. Many church leaders were in prison for their involvement in the independence movement. Among thirty three signatories of the Declaration of Independence on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1919, sixteen were Christian leaders. After the event, 3,804 Presbyterian laymen and 134 pastors and elders were arrested. Furthermore, 202 other Christian leaders were put in prison,

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<sup>270</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 72.

forty one were killed by shooting, and six were beaten to death. Twelve churches were also closed down by the Japanese government.<sup>271</sup> Thus, other denominational church leaders shared the sufferings which ordinary people were experiencing. However, Pentecostal church leaders and missionaries focused on spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues, divine healing, and empowering by the Spirit rather than being concerned about the current struggles of ordinary people.<sup>272</sup> Second, as a result, the Pentecostals did not succeed in gaining the favour of Koreans. In fact, as noted, those who experienced the manifestations of the Spirit during Yong Do Lee and Ig Doo Kim's revival meetings did not want to attend the Pentecostal churches. Third, the Pentecostal churches were labelled as heretical by other denominations. From the beginning, Protestantism in Korea expanded based on denominationalism and denominational rivalry. As a late starter, Pentecostalism was constrained by other denominations. Pentecostal churches were confronted with the heresy disputes. The most significant theological dispute was over the gift of tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit. The Pentecostal churches were not prepared for theological disputes, and were unable to refute the claims by other Korean churches that they were heretical.<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 345

<sup>272</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 68.

<sup>273</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 199.



### 6. 3. Conflicts

There were two major factors that caused Pentecostalism to have conflicts with other denominations. First was the tongues-speaking issue. Pentecostal missionaries to Korea were strongly influenced by Pentecostal leaders in America.

At that time, the doctrine of tongues was already widely accepted by classical American Pentecostals as “the initial physical evidence” of being baptized in the Spirit.<sup>274</sup> Since 1901, the Pentecostal doctrine had been taught in public by Charles Fox Parham as “the only evidence of having received the baptism of the Holy Ghost”.<sup>275</sup> This idea was passed on to Parham’s followers. In a sermon based on Acts 2:4 addressed to a Californian congregation, William J. Seymour (1870-1922) preached that those who could not speak in tongues were not baptized in the Spirit.<sup>276</sup> Through the influence of American Pentecostal missionaries, Korean Pentecostal leaders began to teach speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit.

In the 1930s, however, Presbyterian Seminary students at the Theological Seminary in Pyongyang learned pneumatology from a textbook named *Pneumatology: The Work of the Holy Spirit in Salvation* written by Yu Ming Chia

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<sup>274</sup> Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 165.

<sup>275</sup> Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 89.

<sup>276</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 66.

(also known as Ok Myung Ga in Korean name).<sup>277</sup> In this book, he discussed the issue of speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Spirit baptism as follows:

There is an assembly of Christians who say that speaking in tongues is the evidence of the baptism in the Spirit. As Paul the apostle mentioned, there are many other evidences of the Spiritual baptism: the word of wisdom is given to one through the Spirit, to another the gift of healings, to another the working of miracles, and to another the heart of love. Therefore, speaking in tongues is certainly not the only evidence of the Spiritual baptism.<sup>278</sup>

Future Korean Presbyterian theologians and pastors learned about pneumatology through Chia's book in the seminary and became opposed to Korean Pentecostal teaching about tongues-speaking. Korean mainstream churches proclaimed that Korean Pentecostals were heretics and called them the "tongues faction".<sup>279</sup> Presbyterians adhered to Calvin's perspective on tongues-speaking that speaking in tongues had ceased after the first century A.D., and furthermore, tongues-speaking in modern times did not correspond with the phenomenon represented in the Bible.<sup>280</sup> Since then, Pentecostal churches were not welcomed by

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<sup>277</sup> Yu-ming Chia was a Chinese theologian who taught Theology at Nanking Theological Seminary in China. He originally wrote the book in Chinese. Later, Chai Myen Jung translated it into Korean under the oversight of William Davis Reynolds. The Korean translation was used at the Theological Seminary in Pyongyang. See Ok-myung Ga, *Pneumatology*, trans. Jae-yung Jung (Pyongyang: Pyongyang Presbyterian Bible School, 1931).

<sup>278</sup> Ok-myung Ga, *Pneumatology*, trans. Jae-yung Jung (Pyongyang: Pyongyang Presbyterian Bible School, 1931), p. 103 (my translation).

<sup>279</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 199.

<sup>280</sup> Robert Glenn Gromacki, *The Modern Tongues Movement* (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1972), pp. 140-41, 163-64. St. John Chrysostom believed that "tongues had died out and were no longer needed to establish Christianity". Based on the statement of Chrysostom, George W. Dolla, Dallas Theological Seminary, concludes that "the gift of tongues was neither widespread nor the normal Christian experience in the period A.D. 100 to 400" and also insists that "tongue speaking had no part in the Reformation, unless among heretical spiritualists". See E. Glenn Hinson, "The Significance of Glossolalia in the History of

the mainstream of Korean Christianity for a long time. The second factor behind the conflicts was the alleged shamanistic element in Pentecostal practices. Both Methodism and Presbyterianism claimed that Pentecostal practices were the products of shamanistic enthusiasm which were indigenized into Christianity. Because of this accusation during several decades, Korean Pentecostals have become very defensive regarding the theological controversy over shamanistic elements in Korean Pentecostalism. In October 1945, the Prayer Mountain Movement was started by the Methodist Elder Woon Mong Ra.<sup>281</sup> Traditionally, shamans and necromancers went to mountains to be possessed by shaman spirits. As most Buddhist temples were in the mountains, Buddhists also went to mountains to pray for their needs. When he was twenty six years old, Ra went to Yongmun Mountain to pray and to meditate on the Bible. While he was there, he was baptized in the Spirit. Following this, he continued to go to the mountain regularly and held a revival meeting with other Christians there. In 1947, thousands of people gathered for the revival meeting to celebrate the seventh anniversary of the visitation of the Spirit to the mountain. Until 1945, there were just two prayer mountains. However, the number of prayer mountains increased rapidly. There were 207 prayer mountains in 1975, 239 in 1978, 462 in 1988, and 500 in 1994.<sup>282</sup> Speaking in tongues, divine healing and other manifestations of the Spirit were very common there. Although Ra's Prayer Mountain Movement and other ministries greatly influenced the Korean church, he

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Christianity", in Watson E. Mills (ed.), *Speaking in Tongues: A Guide to Research on Glossolalia* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), p. 183.

<sup>281</sup> Yeol Soo Eim, "South Korea", p. 243.

<sup>282</sup> Yeol Soo Eim, "South Korea," pp. 241-43.

was declared a heretic along with Yong Do Lee by the Methodists and Presbyterians.<sup>283</sup> Praying in a mountain was a common practice of shamanism but has been successfully transferred to Korean Pentecostalism. Nevertheless, in its early days, Korean Pentecostalism had to pass through conflicts and theological controversies with other denominations.

#### **6. 4. Persecutions**

Since religious freedom was guaranteed in the Japanese constitution, the Japanese government did not compel Christians to practice Shinto shrine worship in the beginning of Japanese colonial rule.<sup>284</sup> However, after invading Manchuria in 1931, the Japanese government built Shinto shrines all over Korea and enforced Koreans to worship Japanese emperors. The shrine actually was intended as a place to worship Japanese ancestors, the god who they believed founded Japan, and the spirits of great warriors and heroes in Japanese history. Later, the Japanese began to worship their emperor as a living god. Consequently, Shinto shrine worship became a religious rite not only to worship Japanese gods, but to show loyalty and devotion towards Japan.<sup>285</sup> The Japanese had two purposes behind their insistence on Shinto shrine worship. One was “to destroy the spirit of Korea and make the Koreans a

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<sup>283</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 137.

<sup>284</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, p. 94.

<sup>285</sup> Byoung Ho Zoh, *Democratization and Evangelization: A History of the Christian Student Movements in Korea, 1884-1990* (Seoul: Tanggulshi Publishing House, 2004), p. 53.

subject of the Japanese emperor”.<sup>286</sup> The other was to persecute Korean Christians. In November 1935, G. S. McCune, the principal of Pyongyang Soong Shil School, and V. L. Snook, the principal of Soong Ui Women High School, were compelled to worship at the shrine as school representatives. They refused the request because of their Christian faith. The Japanese government gave them another sixty days with the warning that it would close the schools and deport them to the U.S.A unless they complied. As they continued to refuse, they were discharged from their positions and were deported.<sup>287</sup> On June 24, 1941, the Japanese organized 일본 기독교단 (*Ilbon GidokGyoDan*, Japanese Christian Church) in order to control Christian denominations.<sup>288</sup> From 1942, Korean churches were no longer allowed to use their denominational names. Instead, they were forced to use the name, *Gyo Dan*, which was used for the Japanese United Church. Korean Christians who refused to join the organization were placed under house-arrest or imprisoned. As a result, many Korean Christians went underground.<sup>289</sup> Conservative Presbyterians who never attended shrines (comprising of no more than ten percent of all Presbyterians), and other denominations that emphasized the Second Advent of Christ, were severely persecuted. About two thousands lay people, as well as three hundreds pastors and church leaders, were imprisoned and tortured. Also more than fifty Christians were martyred under Japanese persecution. After being released from prison, many people

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<sup>286</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 41.

<sup>287</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], pp. 480-81.

<sup>288</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p 486-87.

<sup>289</sup> Allen D. Clark, *A History of the Church in Korea*, p. 231.

suffered or died because of torture, illness, and malnutrition experienced in prison.<sup>290</sup> In 1943, all church meetings, except Sunday worship services, were prohibited by the Japanese Governor-General of Korea. On February 10, 1937, Rumsey was deported, followed by Vessey and Meredith on December 20, 1940.<sup>291</sup> The absence of the missionaries affected the Pentecostal churches especially with regard to their finances. This had the effect of restricting their activities. With the Korean liberation on August 15, 1945, severe religious persecutions of Korean Christianity by the Japanese government came to an end. Yet, five years after independence, the Korean War broke out on June 25, 1950. During this chaotic period, Korean Christianity struggled merely to survive. After the Korean War, Pentecostalism and Pentecostal churches moved into a new phase and brought new hope to Koreans through the Threefold Blessing.

## 7. Conclusion

Both Christianity and Pentecostalism in Korea were started by Koreans before the arrival of Western missionaries. In the beginning of Korean Christianity, there were severe conflicts between Christianity and the Korean society and indigenous religions. Many early Korean Christians were persecuted and became martyrs even

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<sup>290</sup> William Newton Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Sufferings Which Followed*, p. 130; Ig-Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, pp. 74-5; Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], pp. 486-87; and Allen D. Clark, *A History of the Church in Korea*, p. 202.

<sup>291</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 207.

before Christian missionaries came to Korea. During the time, nonetheless, Christianity was contextualized into the life of Koreans by using the Korean Bible translated in *Hangŭl* which was the language of ordinary Korean people. As a result, Koreans were able to hear the Gospel in their own language and, furthermore, began to have hope for the eternal life which they could not have in indigenous religions.

With the opening of a port in 1876, the persecution of Christians by the Korean government came to the end. Since then, the Western missions focused on medical and educational work until the Korean revivals broke out in the early 1900s. As Pentecostal missionaries did not arrive until later, Korean Pentecostals were unable to understand the manifestations of the Spirit, and Pentecostalism became indigenized in the primal religiosity of Korea. Meanwhile, there were great healing evangelists among the Korean Pentecostal leaders, and many people experienced spiritual gifts and manifestations. However, Pentecostal healings and manifestations were rejected by mainstream Korean Christianity. In the early days of Korean Pentecostalism, as Korean Pentecostals strongly emphasised the imminent second coming of Christ, they were negligent of the suffering of Koreans under Japanese rule and did not concern themselves with issues related to this present life. In other words, they only had eschatological hope for the eternal life. This tendency of Korean Pentecostals continued until the theory of the Threefold Blessing developed after the Korean War. As Korean Pentecostal churches did not give hope to Koreans under sufferings except the eschatological hope, they could not grow up.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE CONTEXTUALIZATION OF PENTECOSTALISM IN KOREA

#### 1. Introduction

With the effective contextualization of Pentecostalism into the Korean context, Pentecostalism was able to grow rapidly in Korea, both numerically and spiritually. In order to understand Korean Pentecostalism, it is necessary to reflect upon Korean Pentecostal ideas about God and the people of God, as well as the cultural, socio-political and economic contexts of Korea. Korean Pentecostals refer to God as *Hananim*. But is *Hananim* the same as the Hebrew God? In the universal sense, the answer would be ‘yes,’ but from a contextual perspective, this must be qualified. For instance, the God of Korean Pentecostals is not understood by them to be in a covenantal relationship with the Korean nation, in the same way that the Hebrew God was in a covenantal relationship with Israel. To Korean Pentecostals, God is neither the God of war nor the punisher of law-breakers, but rather the ‘good God’ who blesses his people. Thus, with respect to contextualization, it is important to understand who God is to Korean Pentecostals. After the Korean War, most Koreans suffered due to severe poverty and sickness. Korean Pentecostalism gave Koreans hope through the Threefold Blessing, and the sick and the poor became the people of Korean Pentecostalism. The theory of the Threefold Blessing was developed and



became deeply rooted in the socio-political, cultural, economic, and religious contexts of Korea. This chapter discusses the contextualization of Korean Pentecostalism and the Threefold Blessing.

## 2. *Hananim*, the name of God for Korean Christians

Traditionally, Koreans believed that there was a god in the sky who controlled all nature. To them, heaven was simultaneously a fearful object and the source of blessings. From an anthropological perspective, worshipping the sky god is a common characteristic of different cultures. For instance, *Amateras* is the Japanese heavenly goddess, and *Sangje* is the Chinese heavenly host.<sup>292</sup> The name of the god of the sky in Korean shamanism is *Hanulnim* or *Haneunim* (hereafter, *Haneunim*). The name for God adopted by Korean Christians is *Hananim*, which originated from the name for the sky god (*Haneunim*) in Shamanism. Interestingly, there are many similarities between the sky god in Korean Shamanism and the

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<sup>292</sup> In Taoism, *Sangje* (in Chinese *T'ien shih*) is the ruler of Heaven and has similar divine characteristics to the Jade Emperor of the Chinese and the Sun goddess of the Japanese. All creatures, including humans and even the realm of hell, are under his power. However, he ranks below the Three Pure Ones: i) The Great Purity (Taiqing) – the Universal Lord of the Primordial Beginning; ii) the Supreme Pure One (Lingbao) – the Universal Lord of Numinous Treasure who produced Yin and Yang; and iii) the Celestial Worthies (Tianzun) – the most personified manifestations of Tao and Virtues. The Japanese Sun goddess *Amaterasu*, one of the principal Shinto deities (*kami*), is the ruler of the Higher Celestial Plain. Also, in sending her grandson named Jimmu, she is directly linked in lineage to the Imperial Household of Japan and the Emperor, who are considered descendants of the *kami* themselves. See Bulcsu Siklos, “Philosophical and Religious Taoism”, in Friedhelm Hardy (ed.), *The Religions of Asia* (London, Routledge, 1990), pp. 14-19; Stephen F. Teiser, “Religion of China in Practice”, in Donald S. Lopez Jr. (ed.), *Asian Religions in Practice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 92-97; and Joseph M. Kitagawa, *Religion in Japanese History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), pp. 7-8.

Christian God. This raises several questions. Firstly, who was *Haneunim* to Koreans before the arrival of Christianity? Secondly, how was *Haneunim* appropriated as God by Korean Christians? Thirdly, is the name *Haneunim* sufficient to be used as the name for God by Korean Christians? Finally, who is *Hananim* for Korean Pentecostals?

## 2. 1. Who is *Hananim*?

The word, *Hanŭlnim* is a compound of *Hanŭl*, meaning “sky” or “heaven”, and the honorific suffix *nim*. Due to palatalization, *Hanŭlnim* is usually pronounced *Haneunim*. Historically, the worship of *Haneunim* is taken from the Dangun myth.<sup>293</sup> In this myth, Dangun, the founding father of the Korean nation, performed a sacrificial rite for *Haneunim* on the high altar in Kangwha.<sup>294</sup> Homer B. Hulbert, an American missionary linguist, simply translated *Haneunim* as the “Lord of

<sup>293</sup> The summary of the Dangun myth is as follows. Hwanin or Hawaneen, the grandfather of Dangun, had a son named Hwanung who had a desire to live on the earth. Hwanin gave Hwanung the power to rule over the earth and allowed him to descend onto Baekdu Mountain, the highest mountain in Korea, along with 3,000 spiritual beings who controlled the rain, the clouds, the wind and other natural phenomena. A tiger and a bear prayed to Hwanung in order to become human. As Hwanung heard their prayers, he decided to give them a chance to become human beings. In order to test them, Hwanung gave them 20 cloves of garlic and a bundle of mugwort to eat, and let them pray for 21 days to become human beings. Soon, the tiger gave up but the bear persisted and became a woman. However, the bear-woman was alone and lonely. She prayed to Hwanung for a child under 신단수(神檀樹), the divine tree. Hwanung heard her prayer and took her as his wife. She gave a birth to Dangun, and he became the founder and first king of Korea, according to the Dangun myth. Dangun has both deity and humanity, and powers to control all nature. See Zong In Sob, *Folk Tales from Korea* (Seoul: Hollym Cor., 1970), pp. 3-4; and Jung Young Lee, “Concerning the Origin and Formation of Korean Shamanism”, *Numen*, Vol. 20, (Aug. 1973), pp. 149-150.

<sup>294</sup> David Kwang Sun Suh, *The Korean Minjung in Christ* (Hong Kong: The Christian Conference of Asia, 1991), p. 112-13.

Heaven”.<sup>295</sup> Worshipping *Haneunim* needs to be understood from a cultural anthropological perspective. Heaven became the object of worship to the ancient Koreans because their economic activities such as sowing and harvesting were dependent on the sky, and they also feared natural phenomena such as lightning, thunder, and other natural disasters. The more they feared nature, the more they came to worship the sky. Although there were other names of nature gods in Korean shamanism, they believed that the god of the sky was the supreme god over all other nature gods. Furthermore, Koreans believed that there was a hierarchical structure in the spiritual world and that all other spiritual beings were controlled by the supreme god. In other words, there was a monotheistic element within Korean shamanism. As a result, most shamanic rituals were performed for *Haneunim*, according to the agricultural cycle.<sup>296</sup> The ancient Koreans believed that *Haneunim* was the supreme being who controlled all nature, including blessings and calamities of human life. This means that traditionally Koreans had a concept of a supreme god in heaven who they worshipped. In fact, this concept of hierarchic polytheism contributed to the contextualization of Christian angelology in the Korean context. It is important to examine how the name of a shamanistic god, *Haneunim*, became the name adopted by Korean Protestants for God, *Hananim*. Linguistically, *Hananim* means ‘one supreme being’, rather than ‘a heavenly god’. In the early period of Christianity in Korea, Koreans often substituted *Haneunim* with *Sangje* (Jade emperor), *Chonju* (the

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<sup>295</sup> Homer B. Hulbert, *The Passing of Korea* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1906), p. 404.

<sup>296</sup> James Huntley Grayson, *Korea - a Religious History* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2002), p. 19.

lord of heaven), or *Hananim*.<sup>297</sup> Since the term *Sangje* was not accepted as the name of God by the Vatican because the deity of *Sangje* was not considered sufficient to represent the character of Jehovah, Korean Catholics preferred the term *Sangju* (the ruler of heaven) or *Chonju*. In fact, *Chonju* had already been used by Chong Yak Chon in his book, *Ship Kyemyong Ka* (Song of the Ten Commandments), as the Korean name of God, in 1789.<sup>298</sup> Since then, *Chonju* was accepted and used by Catholics and Anglicans from the formative era of Korean Christianity. Yet *Haneunim* is more popular among both Korean Roman Catholics and Protestants influenced by progressive theology because they believe that *Haneunim* has been used as the name of the god of Korea throughout Korean history and is sufficient to represent the God of Christians. Korean Protestants prefer using *Hananim* because of the monotheistic characteristic of the name.<sup>299</sup> Both *Haneunim* and *Hananim* mean the sky god, but there is a small difference in their interpretation. *Haneunim* means the lord of heaven while *Hananim* is more accurately translated as one god. The reason Korean Protestants accept *Hananim* as the Korean name of God is not only because *Hananim* means ‘one supreme being’ but also because its divine nature and character are similar to the Hebrew God of the Old Testament.<sup>300</sup> Andrew E. Kim insists that “the power of *Hananim* is considered absolute: he is almighty, omnipotent,

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<sup>297</sup> Charles Dallet, *Histoire de l'église de Corée* (Paris: Victor Palme, 1874), trans. Eung Ryel An and Suk Woo Choi, *Hankook CheonJu GyoHoisu* [The history of Korean Catholicism] Vol 1 (Seoul: Hankook GyoHoiSa YeonGooSo, 2000), p. 210.

<sup>298</sup> Don Baker, “Hananim, Hanunim, Hanullim, and Hannolim: the Construction of Terminology for Korean Monotheism”, *The Review of Korean Studies* vol. 5 No. 1, pp. 116-17.

<sup>299</sup> Don Baker, “Hananim, Hanunim, Hanullim, and Hannolim: the Construction of Terminology for Korean Monotheism”, p. 119.

<sup>300</sup> Andrew E. Kim, “Korean Religious Culture and its Affinity to Christianity: The Rise of Protestant Christianity in South Korea”, *Sociology of Religion* 2000, 61:2, p. 123.

and omniscient”.<sup>301</sup> Ironically, until it was pointed out to them by the missionaries, due to a lack of theological knowledge, Koreans neither recognized the monotheism associated with the name nor comprehended the theological distinction between the deities of *Haneunim* and *Hananim*.<sup>302</sup> When Gale published the first Korean-English dictionary, he translated *Hananim* as “the King of Heaven”, rather than “the One Supreme Being” without making a distinction between *Haneunim* and *Hananim*,<sup>303</sup> because Koreans often used *Hananim* and *Haneunim* interchangeably.

The early missionaries were deeply concerned about whether the names of these heathen deities should be applied to the Christian God and whether this might be considered a blasphemous act against the name of God. Soon, however, they found that when they explained the character of God by using the name *Hananim*, Koreans were able to understand more easily.<sup>304</sup> Consequently, Underwood concluded that not using the term *Hananim* for the name of God was an error because it not only clearly described the only and great One, but it was also the name of an indigenous god who had been worshipped by Koreans for generations just as the Jews worshipped the God of the Old Testament.<sup>305</sup> Gale was amazed that Koreans had an indigenous god with similar characteristics to the Christian God. He wrote, “the Korean talks of God. He is

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<sup>301</sup> Andrew E. Kim, “Korean Religious Culture and its Affinity to Christianity: The Rise of Protestant Christianity in South Korea”, p. 121.

<sup>302</sup> Don Baker, “Hananim, Hanunim, Hanullim, and Hannolim: the Construction of Terminology for Korean Monotheism”, p. 115.

<sup>303</sup> James S. Gale, *A Korean-English Dictionary* (Yokohama: Kelly & Walsh Ltd., 1897), p. 118.

<sup>304</sup> L. H. Underwood, *Fifteen Years among the Top-Knots or Life in Korea*, p. 104.

<sup>305</sup> Don Baker, “Hananim, Hanunim, Hanullim, and Hannolim: the Construction of Terminology for Korean Monotheism”, p. 120.

*Hananim* the one Great One”.<sup>306</sup> Afterwards, *Hananim* became accepted as the name of God in the Korean language by most Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries.<sup>307</sup>

In September, 1939, the Korean Presbyterian Council decided to use *Hananim* as the official name of God in all its publications.<sup>308</sup> In terms of contextualization, using the term *Hananim* as the Korean name for God is significant. First, it meant that God was no longer a foreign deity imported from the West to Korea. In other words, Koreans were able to recognize God as the one who has been part of their lives throughout history. Second, it helped Koreans understand the monotheistic nature of God within their polytheistic religious traditions.

## ***2. 2. Joeushin Hananim (Good God), the God of Korean Pentecostals***

As noted, during the Korean revivals, Pentecostal preachers focused on repentance. They also more often used passages from the Old Testament rather than the New Testament in their sermons. They asked Korean Christians to strictly adhere to the Ten Commandments and focused on the matter of sin, the judgement of God, and the need for repentance in order to obtain eternal life. Due to their eschatological emphasis, God became the righteous God who will punish Koreans unless they repent of their sins. In other words, *Hananim* was contextualized as the fearful God. At that time, Korean Pentecostals did not have a concept of hope for divine blessings in this

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<sup>306</sup> James S. Gale, *Korea in Transition*, p. 78.

<sup>307</sup> L. H. Underwood, *Fifteen Years among the Top-Knots or Life in Korea*, p. 105.

<sup>308</sup> This decision was made during the 28<sup>th</sup> general meeting of the Korean Presbyterian Council (8 -15 September 1939), available from <http://www.kmpnh.com/chonghye26-30.htm>, accessed on 17 November 2012.

life, but only for the life to come. Their eschatological view was dualistic, focusing on either redemption or judgement. Salvation was not extended to other dimensions such as redemption from poverty, political oppression, or sickness. After the Korean War, however, there was a prominent shift in Korean Pentecostal understanding of God. They added an adjective in front of *Hananim* and began to refer to God as *Joeushin Hananim* instead of *Hananim*. The adjective, *Joeushin*, means good. Thus, *Joeushin Hananim* means the good God. This means that Korean Pentecostals attempted to change the character of *Hananim* from the fearful God, who punishes and takes their possessions away from them because of their sins, into the good God who willingly takes care of their difficulties and dispenses blessings. Due to their imminent eschatology, *Hananim* was regarded by early Korean Pentecostals as a fearful God who dispenses judgement. However, the later use of the term *Joeushin Hananim* reflects a transition in their understanding of God in three ways. First, God is perceived not as a fearful God but as a God who wants to give unlimited blessings to His people. For early Korean Pentecostals, God was not the giver of blessings but rather the taker of their belongings if they did not keep His commandments. They believed all natural disasters, misfortunes and diseases were God's punishments for their sins or unfaithful acts. This belief was based on the combination of a shamanic understanding about God and a misunderstanding of the God of the Old Testament by early Korean Pentecostal preachers. Harvey Cox says that the "Pentecostals' God is more lover than judge, more concerned with human affection than with commanding

obedience”.<sup>309</sup> The use of the term *Joeushin Hananim* reflected later Korean Pentecostals’ discovery of the goodness of God.

Secondly, the use of the name was an indication of the change in the attitude of Korean Pentecostals towards prosperity. The use of the name *Joeushin Hananim* does not only reflect their belief in the generosity of God, but also their expectation of receiving blessings from God in this earthly life. Korean Christians believed that, in order to be good Christians, they should not be prosperous. This was due to three influences. The first was the influence of indigenous religion. They believed that “if one desires spiritual comfort, one has to suffer in the flesh”.<sup>310</sup> Korean Christians had a preconceived idea concerning the good life based on the ascetic lifestyle of Buddhist monks. The second influence was cultural. Honourable poverty was accepted as the highest value in Korean Confucian society. It was also almost impossible to become rich in Korean society, which was dominated by poverty, except through corrupt means. Traditionally, Korean Confucian scholars pursued the life of honourable poverty rather than a life of prosperity. Early Korean Pentecostal attitudes to material prosperity were influenced by this cultural orientation. Among early Pentecostals, Yong Do Lee practised honourable poverty until he died.<sup>311</sup> The third factor was the influence of the early missionaries who themselves were influenced by the North American holiness movement. Although their teachings were not directly opposed to prosperity, their teaching did not focus on this-worldly

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<sup>309</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 201.

<sup>310</sup> Boo Woong Yoo, *Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 113.

<sup>311</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 5. 3.



prosperity. They believed that earthly, material things had little value and would eventually pass away. Thus, they had little interest in matters of this life but instead focused on eternal life. Because of these influences, Korean Christians, including early Pentecostals, believed that material prosperity should not be pursued. In contrast, for contemporary Korean Pentecostals, *Joeushin Hananim* is not the God who rebukes and punishes people but the one who dispenses blessings to His people.<sup>312</sup> This cognitive alteration in their understanding of God is based upon the premise that Pentecostals changed their conceptions about material blessings, about the earthly life in God, and about divine intervention in human life. They do not dualistically separate the earthly life from the eternal life. In terms of blessing, the earthly life is regarded as the prolongation of eternal life. For Korean Pentecostals, well-being on the earth is as important as eternal life for the soul.<sup>313</sup> One of their prominent prayers is to receive material blessings along with the salvation and physical health.<sup>314</sup> For early Korean Pentecostals, diseases and poverty were generally accepted as one's destiny regardless of salvation. It did not matter how difficult one's life was as long as one could obtain eternal life. They were even willing to sacrifice their earthly life for the sake of eternal life. However, contemporary Korean Pentecostals do not separate the earthly life and eternal life. They regard diseases and poverty as caused

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<sup>312</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theological Institute], *Yoido SoonBokEum Gyo Hoi Ui Shin Ang Gwah Shin Hak II* [The Theology and Faith of Yoido Full Gospel Church] (Seoul: Seoul Seo Jeok, 1993), pp. 98-9.

<sup>313</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, pp. 204-209.

<sup>314</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Health and Prosperity* (Altamonte Springs, FL: Creation House, 1987), p. 11.

by the devil, sin, and the curse.<sup>315</sup> This means that they do not simply accept poverty and diseases as difficulties in life. They regard both the cause and the solution of poverty and diseases as spiritual, and associate the solution to these problems with Christ's atonement. They believe that Christ was crucified on the Cross not only to save souls, but also to break the curses of poverty and disease. They base this on scriptures such as 2 Corinthians 8:9; Isaiah 53: 4, 5; 1 Peter 2:24; Matthew 8:16, 17; and Mark 16:17. Through the death and resurrection of Christ, they believe that they were set free from demonic curses and acquired the right to receive prosperity and well-being.<sup>316</sup> This means that their major hope no longer rested only on eternal life in the future but extended to a hope to receive blessings in this life on earth. Their ultimate hope for eternal life did not change, but they focused on how to live the good life in Christ on earth after receiving spiritual salvation. Thus, receiving blessings from God includes the belief that God intervenes in matters of human life. It seems that early Korean Pentecostals understood God as only concerned about their souls.<sup>317</sup> Yet modern Korean Pentecostals believe that *Joeushin Hananim* is the God who intervenes in the difficulties of their lives. To them, God is not only the judge on the throne who they will see at the Final Judgment, but he is their Provider (*Jehova-jireh* - Exodus 13: 13-14) and their Healer (*Jehova-raphah* - Psalm 103:1-3; Exodus 15:26)

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<sup>315</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Oh Jung Bok Eum Kwa Sam Jung Chuk Bok* [Fivefold Gospel and Threefold Blessing] (Seoul: Seoul Mal Sseum Sa, 2002), p. 145.

<sup>316</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Soon Bok Eum Ui Jin Ri* [The Truth of Full Gospel] I (Seoul: Young San Chul Pan Sa, 1979), pp. 166-74; and Yonggi Cho, *Oh Jung Bok Eum Kwa Sam Jung Chuk Bok*, pp. 173-92.

<sup>317</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 5.

who will meet their daily needs.<sup>318</sup> In this sense, God is not the Supreme One who only reigns over the eternal life after death but the one who reigns over the earthly life and cares for them on the earth. Furthermore, *Joeushin Hananim* is theologically related to the goodness of God. Rodrigo Tano says that the “message of the three-fold blessing and the fivefold Gospel is nothing less than an exposition and practical application of the Bible truth that God is good and His goodness meets the needs of human beings and fulfils their aspiration for the good, successful and abundant life”.<sup>319</sup> Bae also says that the theological foundation of Cho’s Threefold Blessing is based on the theology of a good God,<sup>320</sup> and “hope is a promise of blessing from a good God”.<sup>321</sup> The hope for the Threefold Blessing is based on the expectation that the unmerited goodness of God will fulfil the needs of Koreans for both the eternal and earthly life. God’s goodness is not only perceived in terms of providing earthly blessings, but also as giving salvation to those who are under eternal condemnation.<sup>322</sup> Thus, the Korean Pentecostal understanding of God as *Joeushin Hananim* is the basis for the hope contained in the Threefold Blessing.

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<sup>318</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Soon Bok Eum Ui Jin Ri* [The Truth of Full Gospel] I, pp. 72-3.

<sup>319</sup> Rodrigo D. Tano, “Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Theology of a Good God”, in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Ministry & Theology I*. (Gunpo: Hansei University Logos, 2008), p. 24.

<sup>320</sup> Hyeon Sung Bae, “Understanding Youngsan’s Theological Horizon and Hope,” in Hansei University Press, *2004 Young San International Theological Symposium* (Gunpo: Hansei University Press, 2002), p. 211.

<sup>321</sup> Hyeon Sung Bae, “Understanding Youngsan’s Theological Horizon and Hope,” p. 214.

<sup>322</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, First Edition, 1958; Reprinted 1960; 1963), p. 71.

### 3. The People of Korean Pentecostalism

From the 1970s, the Pentecostal revival spread nation-wide and developed into an inter-denominational Holy Spirit movement.<sup>323</sup> Two important events were the Billy Graham Crusade held in 1973 and EXPLO '74 (August 13<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>) held in 1974. EXPLO '74 was a mammoth training conference aimed at training 300,000 Christians. On the first night, 1.3 million people gathered in Yoido Plaza in front of the YFGC, and seventy percent of participants received salvation by faith.<sup>324</sup> In 1974, there were about three million Christians in Korea but four years later the Christian population had reached up to seven million. In 1978, six new churches were started every day.<sup>325</sup> This remarkable church growth raises several questions. First, why did people come to the church? Second, what type of people came to church? Third, why were they enthusiastic about Pentecostalism? In order to answer to these questions, it is necessary to understand the meaning of both *Minjung* (민중, 民衆)<sup>326</sup> and the *Han* (한, 恨)<sup>327</sup> of *Minjung*. Regarding the relationship between *Minjung* and *Han*, David Kwang Sun Suh states that “the *minjung* live with *han*, they accumulate *han*, and they

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<sup>323</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, pp. 83-5.

<sup>324</sup> Joon Gon Kim, “Korea’s Total Evangelization Movement”, in Ro Bong Rin and Marlin L. Nelson (eds.), *Korean Church Growth Explosion: Centennial of the Protestant Church(1884-1984)* (Seoul: Word of Life Press & Asia Theological Association, 1983), pp. 26-8.

<sup>325</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 84.

<sup>326</sup> For more on *Minjung*, see chapter 2, section 3. 1.

<sup>327</sup> For more on *Han*, see chapter 2, section 3. 2.

die with *han*”.<sup>328</sup> Without dealing with *Minjung* and the issue of *Han*, no religious or social movement can be successful in Korea. In order for such movements to receive the support of the Korean people, they need to understand *Minjung* and the *Han* of *Minjung*. In order for Pentecostalism to be contextualized into the Korean context, it needed to appeal to the *Minjung* and address issues related to their experience of *Han*. *Minjung* refers to the group of people in Korea who have experienced substantial *Han* through generations. The reason that *Minjung* Theology could develop as a theological movement and become the dominant contextual theology of Korea was that *Minjung* Theology was deeply rooted in matters related to *Minjung* and their *Han*. The main reason that Korean Pentecostalism is different from other Pentecostalism is related to its focus on these issues. This is also one of the reasons why the theory of the Threefold Blessing could be effectively contextualized into the Korean context. If Pentecostalism did not respond to the Korean *Minjung* and their *Hans*, it could not be successful in Korea.

### 3. 1. ὄχλος (*ochlos*) and λαός (*laos*)

The word *Minjung* (민중, 民衆) consists of two Chinese characters, ‘*Min* (민, 民)’ and ‘*Jung* (중, 衆)’. ‘*Min*’ can be translated into English as ‘people’, and

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<sup>328</sup> David Kwang Sun Suh, “Liberating Spirituality in the Korean Minjung Tradition: Shamanism and Minjung Liberation”, in Virginia Fabella, Peter K. H. Lee and David Kwang Sun Suh (eds.), *Asian Christian Spirituality: Reclaiming Traditions* (New York: Orbis Books, 1992), p. 33.

‘*Jung*’ may be translated as ‘the mass.’ Thus, *Minjung* literally means ‘the mass of people’ or ‘the masses’ or ‘a group of ordinary people’.<sup>329</sup> However, it has deeper meanings. It has commonly been used by Korean socialists, nationalists, and even liberal theologians and progressive Christians. *Minjung* theologians do not want to translate *Minjung* as ‘a group of ordinary people’ for three reasons. First, the word ‘mass of people’ is inadequate for their theological intentions. Their concern is not the whole people of Korea but a certain group of people who have been marginalized socially, politically, and economically. The second reason is the political implication of the word. As the term ‘the people’ became part of the vocabulary of communists, nationalists and socialists, the word itself came to have political implications.

During the cold war, *Minjung* theologians intentionally avoided using the term ‘the people’ for reasons of political security. Instead, they decided to use the term, ‘the people of God’ as the translation of *Minjung*.<sup>330</sup> However, ‘the people of God’ does not mean ‘the children of God’ as used in the general sense in Christianity. To *Minjung* theologians, ‘the people of God’ refers to those who have suffered for a long time under difficult conditions of poverty, political oppression, violations of human rights, and injustice. Ahn Byung Mu (1922~1996), the founder of *Minjung* theology, distinguishes the Greek term ὄχλος (*ochlos*) from λαός (*laos*) as follows:

The term *ochlos* is used more often than *laos*. It [*ochlos*] occurs 174 times while the term *laos* occurs 141 times [in the New

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<sup>329</sup> David Kwan Sun Suh, “A Biographical Sketch of an Asian Theological Consultation”, in Yong Bock Kim (ed.), *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, p. 17.

<sup>330</sup> David Kwan Sun Suh, “A Biographical Sketch of an Asian Theological Consultation”, , p. 17.

Testament] ... quite often *laos* and *ochlos* are used interchangeably and carry the same meaning as *ochlos* in Mark.... Luke, however, seems to prefer the term *laos* for Israelites, though understood on the same lines as *ochlos* in Mark.... the *laos* is in a situation of confrontation with those in power. This is similar to the use of *ochlos* in Mark. However, sometimes, Luke takes the *laos* and the ruling class together.... Besides this use of *laos* in Luke, other uses of this word in the New Testament are by and large in quotations from or allusions to the Old Testament and in the language of the rulers. References to Israel as the people of God also have *laos*.<sup>331</sup>

According to Ahn, in the book of Mark, the author uses the term *laos* only twice in Mark 7:6 and 14:2 to quote scriptures from the Old Testament. Apart from these two verses, Mark intentionally uses the word *ochlos* to describe a group of people 36 times.<sup>332</sup> Ahn insists that Jesus of Galilee can only be found with the *ochlos*, and at the same time, *ochlos* cannot be considered apart from Jesus in the four Gospels, especially in the synoptic Gospels. The *ochlos* of Jesus were the tax collectors and sinners (Mark 2:16), the flock of sheep without a shepherd (Mark 6:34), and the multitude in the wilderness having no food whom Jesus fed (Mark 6:35-44).<sup>333</sup> Therefore, Ahn recognizes *Minjung*, the people of Korea, as *ochlos* who were living under dictatorship and suffering from poverty.<sup>334</sup> *Minjung* to him is not the people who became the children of God following repentance in the general Christian sense, but the people who have been marginalized from socio-economic and political

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<sup>331</sup> Byeong Mu Ahn, "Jesus and the Minjung in the Gospel of Mark", in Yong Bock Kim (ed.), *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History* (Singapore: The Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia, 1981), p. 148.

<sup>332</sup> Comparing with the other synoptic Gospels, *ochlos* is used 51 times and *laos* 13 times in the book of Matthew; in Luke's Gospel, *laos* is used 35 times and *ochlos* 40 times. Ahn insists that both Matthew and Luke were influenced by Mark. See Byeong Mu Ahn, *Galilea ui Yesoo* [Jesus of Galilee] (Seoul: Hankook Sinhak Yeongooso, 2008), p. 137.

<sup>333</sup> Byeong Mu Ahn, *Galilea ui Yesoo* [Jesus of Galilee], pp. 136-43.

<sup>334</sup> Byeong Mu Ahn, "Jesus and the Minjung in the Gospel of Mark", p. 150.

affairs.<sup>335</sup> Thus, factory workers working like a machine in very underprivileged work conditions with low wages, the urban poor, and women experiencing sexual segregation over a long period of time in Confucian society became the *Minjung*, ὄχλος (*ochlos*), of *Minjung* Theology. In this sense, those interested in Christianity, who were socially and economically stable, and ordinary people without any interest in socio-political matters could not be the *Minjung* of *Minjung* Theology. This raises a number of questions. Did Jesus bless and welcome only the economically poor or those marginalized socially and politically? Did he discriminate against the rich and those in positions of authority? Who were the *Minjung* of Jesus? Certainly, Jesus' *Minjung* were the people who surrounded him at the Sea of Galilee: the people he healed; the people he fed with the five loaves and two fishes (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John. 6:1-14); the people who cried out "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord" (Matthew 21:9; Mark. 11:9; Luke 19:38; John 12:13) when He came to Jerusalem; the people who cried out, "Crucify Him!" (Matthew 27:23; Mark 15:11-13; Luke 23:21; John 19:15) but for whom he was crucified. But what about Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue who came and asked Jesus to heal his daughter (Matthew 9:18-26; Mark. 5:21-24; Luke 8:40-56)? What about the centurion who came to Jesus and asked him to heal his servant (Matthew 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10; John 4:43-54)? With its dualistic understanding of the relationship between 'the oppressed' and 'the oppressor' and

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<sup>335</sup> Byeong Mu Ahn, "Minjock, Minjung, Gyohoi [Nation, People, and Church]", in Hankook Gidockgyo Gyohoihyubuihoi, *Hankook Yoeksa Sokui Gidokgyo* [Christianity in Korean History] (Seoul: Giminsa, 1985), p. 215.



‘the wronged’ and ‘the wrongdoer’, it is the ‘oppressed’ and the ‘wronged’ who are considered the *Minjung* of *Minjung* Theology. However, the *Minjung* of Korean Pentecostalism include not only the ‘oppressed’ and the ‘wronged’ but also ‘the wrongdoer’ and ‘the oppressor’ who seek for the salvation, such as Nicodemus, a ruler of Jews, who came to Jesus at night (John 3:1-21). Se Yoon Kim argues that “Ahn’s identification of the *ochlos* as the *minjung* is quite arbitrary” because tax collectors who were the enemies of the *Minjung* were also welcomed to Christ, and Jesus says that ‘whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister and mother’ (Mark 3:35).<sup>336</sup> In fact, the *Minjung* with Jesus in Tiberias was a group of people who were seeking for the Kingdom of God rather than for political freedom. Jesus fed the hungry and healed the sick, and gave them hope for the Kingdom of God. Whereas the *Minjung* of *Minjung* Theology is ὄχλος (*ochlos*), for Jesus, the *Minjung* was closer to λαός (*laos*), the people of God, who were not only poor, sick, and neglected from a socio-political perspective, but also were longing for salvation.

In the post-Korean war context, then, the *Minjung* of Korean Pentecostalism was not ὄχλος (*ochlos*) but rather λαός (*laos*), ordinary Koreans who were struggling to obtain food for survival and suffering from the aftermath of the war. During the war, most people suffered the loss of loved ones and property. It seemed that there was no hope for them. During the transition period of rapid economic growth (1960s -1980s), they were exploited by capitalists and suppressed by political dictatorship.

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<sup>336</sup> Se Yoon Kim, “Is *Minjung* Theology a Christian Theology?” *Calvin Theological Journal* 22:2 (1987), pp. 251-274.

Students, workers, intellectuals, journalists and even pastors fought for human rights, freedom of speech and freedom of the Press, as well as for labourers' rights and interests. Many were arrested and tortured in prison. In these circumstances, *Minjung* theologians and churches recognized that their mission was to emancipate the people and Korean society from military dictatorship through Christ.<sup>337</sup> However, the majority of Korean Christians remained politically acquiescent.<sup>338</sup> Korean Pentecostals were also politically inactive. However, they offered Pentecostal hope to their *Minjung* with their theory of the Threefold Blessing based on the biblical text, 3 John: 2. Moltmann refers to the YFGC as a genuine *Minjung* church because seventy percent of church members are from the lower middle class.<sup>339</sup> The Threefold Blessing was effectively contextualized into Korean society because the Three Fold Blessing provided the only real hope for the Korean *Minjung*.

### ***3. 2. Han and Korean Pentecostalism***

*Han* is both an individual and a collective emotion. In general, *Han* can be understood as a person's feeling of suffering. Andrew Sung Park defines *Han* as "frustrated hope", "the collapsed feeling of pain", "letting go", "resentful bitterness",

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<sup>337</sup> Seon Kwang Seo, *Hankook Gydokgyo Jeongchishinhak ui Jeon Gae* [the Development of Korean Christian Political Theology] (Seoul: Yewha Yeoja Dae Hak Chulpanboo, 1996), p. 81.

<sup>338</sup> Hwa Yung, *Mangoes or Bananas? The Quest for an Authentic Asian Christian Theology* (Oxford: Regnum, 1997), pp. 180-81.

<sup>339</sup> Mokhoi wha Sinhak, "Interview with Yonggi Cho (1 September 2009)", in *Mokhoi wha Sinhak* [Ministry and Theology] October (2009), pp. 28-35.

and “the wounded heart”.<sup>340</sup> However his definition of *Han* is inadequate to fully cover its meaning. *Han* is formed in two ways. First, it is formed by personal problems such as personal disease, poverty, and spiritual problems that cannot be solved over a long period of time. Second, it has external elements such as national poverty, social injustice, capitalist exploitation and other socio-political matters. Basically, accumulating *Han* is related to the recognition of one’s inability to cope with continuous sufferings caused by these internal and external elements. *Hans* are developed through human limitations in the face of socio-political ills and personal difficulties which people cannot overcome by themselves.<sup>341</sup> For instance, in order to help understand *Han* from a Western perspective, it is like the bitterness of a bridegroom whose bride is violated by his lord due to the right of the first night (*Droit de seigneur*, in French). Korean females have suffered for generations from male chauvinism. Until at least the early twentieth century, the primary task of a wife was to give birth to a boy. If she failed to produce a son to continue the family line, she might either be discarded by her husband or have to allow her husband to have a concubine or a surrogate mother. Her frustration becomes *Han*. Parents having nothing to do but shed bitter tears for their children who are dying of disease or hunger will develop indelible *Han*. *Minjung* theologians believe that *Han* is formed mostly by unequal social structures or political oppression. They emphasize

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<sup>340</sup> Andrew Sung Park, *The wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), pp. 15-20.

<sup>341</sup> Yvonne Young Ja Lee, “Religion, Culture of *Han* and *Hanpuri*, and Korean Minjung Women: An Interdisciplinary Post-colonial Religio-cultural Analysis of the Indigenous Encounter with the Colonial Religions in Korea”, (Ph. D. dissertation, The University of Denver, 1999), p. 42.

collective *Han* in unjust political or economic structures rather than individual *Han* in the lives of ordinary people. David Kwang Sun Suh states as follows:

The feeling of *han*, however, is not just an individual feeling of repression. It is not just a sickness that can be cured by drugs or by psychotherapy. It is a collective feeling of the oppressed. This sickness of *han* can be cured only when the total structure of the oppressed society and culture is changed.<sup>342</sup>

To *Minjung* theologians, antagonism and inequality within society is the basis of *Han*: the opposition between the rich and the poor, the wrongdoer and the wronged, and the oppressor and the oppressed. There are two kinds of *Han*. The first is the inactive mode of *Han*. In the inactive mode of *Han*, people usually accept unfortunate things which have happened in their lives as their fate. When they have misfortunes, they are used to abandoning themselves to despair and wish those occurrences to quickly pass. The second is the active mode of *Han*. The active *Han* manifests in aggressive ways such as personal revenge against the oppressor and the wrongdoer. *Han* is also manifested as collective acts such as the Donghak Revolution in 1894 against the feudal system, the March First Movement in 1919 against Japanese imperialism, and the April 19th Revolution in 1960 against the autocratic reign of Syngman Rhee. *Minjung* theologians regard *Han* as a socio-political matter rather than personal one and believe that it cannot be solved without a change in society and culture. In contrast, Korean Pentecostalism is more concerned with individual *Han*. Korean Pentecostals do not believe that the *Han* of *Minjung* can be released through a

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<sup>342</sup> David Kwang Sun Suh, *The Korean Minjung in Christ*, p. 50.

social movement or a revolution. Instead, they believe that the *Han* of *Minjung* will only be resolved by blessings from God.<sup>343</sup>

The *Han* addressed by Pentecostals are diametrically opposed to the Threefold Blessing. Examples include the *Han* of the sick such as the *Han* of the woman who had the flow of blood for twelve years and spent all her property on physicians but was not cured (Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:21-43; Luke 8:40-48); the *Han* of mourners such as the *Han* of the widow who followed the crowd carrying the dead body of her only son (Luke 7:11-17); spiritual *Han* such as the *Han* of Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector, who was rich but still had unresolved spiritual issues (Luke 19:1-10); and the *Han* of Koreans struggling with absolute poverty after the Korean War. Korean Pentecostals are not primarily concerned with the *Hans* produced by economic and political conflicts within society. In fact, for Pentecostals, it is not only the poor, the wronged, and the oppressor who have *Han*, but also the rich, the wrongdoer, and the oppressor. The Three Fold Blessing was important for ordinary Korean people regardless of socio-political class in the post-Korean War context. Comparing his own life with that of Cho, Moltmann states that “Pastor Cho began his mission in the Han of the Korean people after the Korean War; I began my life in Christ in the Han of the Second World War and in the ruins of post-war Germany”.<sup>344</sup> Young Hoon Lee says that “Cho, with his belief in a good and sovereign God, presented fresh hope to

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<sup>343</sup> Young Hoon Lee, “The Life and Ministry of David Yonggi Cho and the Yoido Full Gospel Church”, in Wonsuk Ma, William W. Menzies, and Hyeon Sung Bae (eds.), *David Yonggi Cho: A Close Look at His Theology & Ministry* (Gunpo: Hansei University Press, 2004), p. 21.

<sup>344</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life”, p. 149.

despairing people. He proclaimed God as the One who solves *han* in the present and declared a future life”.<sup>345</sup> Cho himself is also the subject of *Han*. He suffered from tuberculosis and extreme poverty for a long time. Cho found hope in the biblical text 3 John 2, which enabled him to release the *Hans* of Koreans, and subsequently developed the theory of the Three Fold Blessing based on this. According to Dong Soo Kim, it is the message of the three-fold blessings (‘hopes’ of Korean Pentecostalism) that helped *Minjung* to escape from their *Hans*.<sup>346</sup> The Threefold Blessing was the theological and contextual hope for Koreans in the post-Korean War context.

### **3. 2. 1. The Weary and Burdened**

After the Korean War, all infrastructures were destroyed, and national functions were paralyzed. Korean society, culture, politics, and economy collapsed, and most Koreans were overwhelmed by heavy burdens of life. At that time, the poor became poorer and also became the sick. Unable to receive medical treatment for simple diseases, their physical conditions deteriorated. Politically, after the 5.16 coup d’état in 1961, the military government infringed upon human rights and freedom of speech. Under these socio-economic and political circumstances, Koreans had no hope for the present or for the future. They could be considered among the weary and

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<sup>345</sup> Young Hoon Lee, “The Life and Ministry of David Yonggi Cho and the Yoido Full Gospel Church”, p. 21.

<sup>346</sup> Dong Soo Kim, “The Healing of *Han* in Korean Pentecostalism”, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 15 (1999), p. 133.

burdened as mentioned in the biblical text Matthew 11:28. Thus, Koreans found hope in the message of the Threefold Blessing. As a result, they began to attend Pentecostal churches. In 1952, after the Korean War, there were only eight Pentecostal churches remaining: Namboo church (Rev. Hong Huh) in Seoul, Soon Chun church (Evangelist Guei Im Park) in Jeon Nam province, Boollodong church (Evangelist Guei Im Park) in Kwang Joo, Busan church (Rev. Sung San Park) in Busan, Mockpho church (Rev. Sung Hwan Kim) in Mock Pho, Jinweol church (Rev. Sung Duck Yoon) in Kwang Joo, Geujae church (Rev. Gil Yoon Kim) in Geoje Island, and Daegu church (Rev. Doo Yeon Kim) in Daegu.<sup>347</sup>

In 1958, Yonggi Cho and Jashil Choi (1915-1989), Cho's future mother-in-law, began a small tent meeting in Dae Jo Dong, a slum area of Seoul. The church building was made of used U.S. military tents, and the church consisted of just five members who were Cho, Choi and Choi's three children.<sup>348</sup> By 1993, this church, called the YFGC today, had become the largest Christian church in the world with 700,000 members and 700 full-time pastors.<sup>349</sup> Like the YFGC, other Pentecostal churches also started on the outskirts of the city among the urban poor. Korean Pentecostalism began and developed among the poor and the sick. There were two reasons that Pentecostalism flourished on the outskirts of the city among the poor and the sick. First, the central part of the city was already occupied by other

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<sup>347</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theological Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God] (Seoul: Seoul Mal Sseum Sa, 1998), p. 214.

<sup>348</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 137.

<sup>349</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 138.

denominations such as the Presbyterians and Methodists. From the beginning of Korean Protestantism, Presbyterians, Methodists and other denominations focused on medical and educational missions in the city. Their national expansion was largely based upon their Christian schools and hospitals in urban areas. Second, Pentecostal ministries and messages, with their focus on healing and blessings, were more effective among the poor and the sick than among the rich or those with vested interests in Korean society. In 1969, there were 39,790 Korean Pentecostals only but this increased to 746,489 by 1982. This means that, in terms of membership, Korean Pentecostalism increased by 1,876 percent during the period 1969 to 1982. During this time, other denominations also grew significantly but not as much as Pentecostalism.<sup>350</sup> In the early years of

**Table 2. The Rate of Korean Churches' Growth (1969 ~ 1982)**<sup>351</sup>

Denominations	1969	1982	Growth Rate
Holiness Church	217,289	463,900	213%
Salvation Army	40,604	90,700	223%
Methodism	300,109	885,650	295%
Presbyterianism	1,415,436	4,302,950	304%
The Baptist	64,191	315,650	492%
Pentecostalism (excluding YFGC)	30,790	491,100	1,595%
YFGC alone	9,000	255,389	2,838%

<sup>350</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theological Institute], *Yoido SoonBokEum Gyo Hoi Ui Shin Ang Gwah Shin Hak* [The Theology and Faith of Yoido Full Gospel Church] II, p. 110.

<sup>351</sup> There are computational errors on the rate of denominational churches' growth in the book, Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theological Institute], *Yoido SoonBokEum Gyo Hoi Ui Shin Ang Gwah Shin Hak* [The Theology and Faith of Yoido Full Gospel Church] II, p. 110. The rates of church growth must be corrected: 79% (Holiness Church) to 213%; 86% (Salvation Army) to 223%; 130% (Methodism) to 295%; 135% (Presbyterianism) to 304%; 240% (Baptists) to 492%; 742% (Pentecostalism) to 1,595%. The numbers were rounded off to one decimal place.



Korean Pentecostalism, most church members were extremely poor,<sup>352</sup> but later, tens of thousand people came to the Pentecostal and charismatic churches regardless of their socio-political backgrounds. In 1999, of the fifteen largest mega-churches in Korea with more than 10,000 adult members, nine were Pentecostal or charismatic churches.<sup>353</sup> This indicates that the explosive growth of the Korean Church was led by the Pentecostal/charismatic movement. Yonggi Cho stated as follows:

Since 1970 I started praying, “Father, give us one thousand members per month.” At first God gave 600, then He began to give more than 1,000 per month. Last year, we received more than 12,000 members in our church. I lifted my goal higher this year, and we are now going to have 15,000 additional members; next year I can easily ask for 20,000.<sup>354</sup>

Why was there this massive influx of people into the Pentecostal churches?

And what attracted them to these churches? The answer is that the weary and burdened people of Korea found hope for the present and the future in Korean Pentecostalism. Through the message of the Three Fold Blessing, they were able to find hope for eternal life, as well as for prosperity and healing in the present.

### **3. 2. 2. An Eagerness for the Holy Spirit**

During the period 1973 to 1980, there were three remarkable crusades. The first was the Billy Graham Crusade in 1973. Every evening, for five days, over one

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<sup>352</sup> Allan Anderson, “The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 115.

<sup>353</sup> Young Gi Hong, “The Backgrounds and Characteristics of the Charismatic Mega-Churches in Korea,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3/1 (2004), pp. 100-102.

<sup>354</sup> Paul Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1979), p. 22.

million people gathered in the Yoido Plaza in Seoul. The second was the week-long EXPLO '74 which took place in August 1974. About 1.3 million people attended the crusade on the first night. The major purpose of EXPLO '74 was to train 300,000 Christians. As the result, 323,400 people from 78 countries were trained and were sent onto the streets to share the gospel during the week of the crusade.<sup>355</sup>

Furthermore, among those trained, about 3,000 people returned to their home countries spiritually renewed.<sup>356</sup> The third crusade was 'Here's Life, Korea', which took place between over the period August 12 to 15, 1980, and was organized by the World Evangelization Crusade. Over ninety percent of the 18,000 Korean churches were involved in the crusade, which was attended by college and high school students, children, doctors, women, teachers, and elders. Each day more than 2.5 million people gathered in Yoido Plaza to take part in rallies. Among them, over 1.5 million people remained from midnight to 4:00 A. M. in the plaza to pray for national evangelization. During the crusade, about 1.8 million people were baptized in the Spirit and one million people accepted Jesus as Saviour. There were about one million people who pledged to be involved in world missions.<sup>357</sup> According to Statistics Korea, 24,970,766 Koreans out of 47,041,434 had some form of religion in 2005. Of these, 22.8 percent (10,856,370) were Buddhists, 18.3percent (8,616,438)

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<sup>355</sup> Joon Gon Kim, "Korea's Total Evangelization Movement", pp. 26-7.

<sup>356</sup> Joon Gon Kim, "Korea's Total Evangelization Movement", pp. 26-7.

<sup>357</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 233.

were Protestants, 10.9 percent (5,146,147) were Catholics, and 0.2 percent (104,575) were Confucianists.<sup>358</sup>

**Table 3. The Participants of '80 WEC-Here's Life**<sup>359</sup>

Meeting	Attendance
Yoido rally	10,500,000
All night of prayer	5,200,000
Morning sessions	250,000
50 Church conferences	240,000
12 Major conferences	160,000
Total	16,350,000

Among Korean Protestants, there were 2,393,749 Pentecostals, 2,020,598 Charismatics, and 3,165,652 Neocharismatics. In addition, there are more than 700,000 Korean Catholic Pentecostals today.<sup>360</sup> In fact, through large inter-denominational and international crusades such as the Billy Graham Crusade, EXPO '74 and 'Here's Life,' the distinction between denominations has become blurred in Korea apart from denominational doctrines. Most churches practice speaking in tongues, audible prayers during services, and other spiritual gifts in everyday Christian life. Then, there are questions concerning why millions of Koreans thronged to these crusades and what they prayed for. Joon Gon Kim points to the political uneasiness and social insecurity as one of the reasons why massive numbers of Koreans came to these crusades and participated in all-night prayer in the

<sup>358</sup> Available from Statistics Korea, [http://kosis.kr/gen\\_etl/start.jsp?orgId=101&tblId=DT\\_1IN0505&conn\\_path=I2&path=](http://kosis.kr/gen_etl/start.jsp?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1IN0505&conn_path=I2&path=), accessed on 23 May 2011.

<sup>359</sup> Joon Gon Kim, "Korea's Total Evangelization Movement", p. 29.

<sup>360</sup> Yeol Soo Eim, "South Korea", pp. 239-46.

open-air plaza.<sup>361</sup> Precisely, however, they wanted to release their life burdens and *Hans* through prayers. Moreover, in their hopeless situations, they wanted to find a means of release from their unbearable present life and a hope for the future, especially for the eternal life in Christ. Also, through the fullness of the Spirit, they were able to release their *Hans*, anger, humiliations and sorrows. Dong Soo Kim insists that Korean Christians could release their *Hans* through singing gospel songs, clapping their hands and praying in loud voices with tears, especially with speaking in tongues.<sup>362</sup> From a psychological perspective, Cyril G. Williams says, “*glossolalia* may be a release mechanism leading to a reorientation which could be of a permanent order. It is an energy discharge which can have therapeutic value as a reducer of tension and resolver of inner conflict”.<sup>363</sup> Furthermore, David Kwang-sun Suh defines ‘tongue-speaking’ as “the language of *Minjung*” and states that *Minjung* can feel the release of *Han* through speaking in tongues.<sup>364</sup> However, it is questionable whether *glossolalia* has this kind of function. Apart from speaking in tongues, *Han* can be released through inner healing by the Spirit. *Han* is something like twisted strings which people cannot unravel by themselves.<sup>365</sup> In order to resolve *Han*, the ministry of the Spirit for inner healing is indispensable to Koreans. Without inner healing, the oppressed cannot forgive what the oppressors did to them, and they also cannot

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<sup>361</sup> Joon Gon Kim, “Korea’s Total Evangelization Movement”, p. 32.

<sup>362</sup> Dong Soo Kim, “The Healing of *Han* in Korean Pentecostalism”, p. 137.

<sup>363</sup> Cyril G. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit: A Study of Pentecostal Glossolalia and Related Phenomena* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1981), p. 166.

<sup>364</sup> David Kwang Sun Suh, “The Korean Pentecostal Movement and its Theological Understanding (Korean)”, in W. Y. Kang (ed.), *A Study on Pentecostal Movement in Korea* (Seoul, Korea: Korea Christian Academy, 1981), p. 77.

<sup>365</sup> Dong Soo Kim, “The Healing of *Han* in Korean Pentecostalism”, p. 127.

release their *Han* without forgiveness. More specifically, their *Han* will not be removed from their hearts unless they forgive their oppressors because the longer they take to forgive, the longer they will be attached to their *Han*. Through forgiveness and reconciliation, a new relationship between two opposing groups can be rebuilt. However, forgiveness and reconciliation are not what Koreans are seeking. Their ultimate goal is to change their unhappy circumstances. Is it possible to release the *Han* of the poor without providing a solution to their poverty? Is it possible to take away the *Han* of the woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years without providing healing? Even though reconciliation and forgiveness might have been achieved, if nothing has changed in their lives and there is no hope for the poor, the sick and the oppressed, it will mean nothing to them. People want to be healed, to become prosperous and find a hope that can give them a new motivation to sustain life for the future. Through the Spirit, they can have hope for the present and the future in Christ. As John Calvin says “Hope is nothing else than the expectation of those things which faith has believed to have been truly promised by God” through the fullness of the Spirit,<sup>366</sup> they are able to firmly believe that the blessed messages would be actualized in their lives.

Jürgen Moltmann says, “faith in Christ gives hope its assurance”.<sup>367</sup> Through the infilling of the Holy Spirit, they came to believe the Pentecostal hope. Koreans prayed hard day and night in order to be free from their problems and struggles in life.

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<sup>366</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), p. 65.

<sup>367</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, p. 20.

Clearly, it seemed to them that there was nothing they could do to change the circumstances but to pray. The sick found that most hospitals were destroyed during the Korean War and doctors were scarce. The poor encountered ruined social and economic infrastructures and few job opportunities. They believed that nobody but God could help them. While they prayed, they were baptized in the Spirit. After Korean indigenous religions collapsed, there was no religion which could comfort Koreans. With spiritual eagerness, tens of thousands of Koreans gathered in large crusades and experienced Spirit baptism. After being baptized in the Spirit, they returned to their own churches where they contributed to church growth.<sup>368</sup>

#### **4. Korean Shamanism and Pentecostalism**

Although there are shamanistic influences on the praxis of Korean Pentecostalism, Korean Pentecostals intentionally have been trying to distance themselves from shamanism. It is impossible to remove indigenized shamanic elements entirely from Korean Pentecostalism. Shamanism has contributed significantly to the indigenization of the higher religions into Korean contexts. In fact, Korean shamanism never disappeared while Buddhism and Confucianism were becoming indigenized into the Korean context. One of the prominent reasons that Korean Buddhism and Confucianism are different from other Asian countries is due to the influence of an indigenous folk religion like shamanism. Korean Pentecostals

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<sup>368</sup> Joon Gon Kim, "Korea's Total Evangelization Movement", p. 28.

have disagreed with the assertion that the spirituality of shamanism is syncretised in Korean Pentecostalism. Yet, if shamanism could be understood as a vessel containing the religiosity of Koreans, there is no reason not to accept the shamanic influences on Korean Pentecostalism. Just as Paul Tillich says that “religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion”,<sup>369</sup> so shamanism has become part of Korean culture. Thus, it is not surprising that Korean Pentecostalism has adopted certain positive elements of shamanism.<sup>370</sup> Korean Pentecostals have insisted that there are neither shamanistic influences on nor shamanistic elements in their movement. Yet, many Pentecostal/Charismatic scholars, including Korean scholars, such as Boo Woong Yoo and Hollenweger, think that shamanic influences have contributed to the extraordinary growth of Korean Pentecostalism. Throughout their history, shamanism has been used by Koreans as a way to express their joy, sorrows, desires and even their *Hans*. In fact, shamanism existed before the higher religions came to Korea and it provided a way for Koreans to express their religiosity. It is clear that for Koreans, shamanism is not only a folk religion but it has also been part of their culture for a long time. Shamanism became both the substance and the vessel for Korean folk culture. Korean Pentecostals have denied that there are shamanistic elements within Pentecostalism not because they do not accept cultural aspects of shamanism but because of their reluctance to accept that Pentecostal spirituality may be syncretistic. In its beginning, Pentecostalism was not welcomed by Korean Christians due to the

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<sup>369</sup> Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 42.

<sup>370</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, pp. 13-14.

similarity between Pentecostal manifestations and those of Korean shamanism. For example, there are similarities between Pentecostal modes of prayer and shamanistic ecstasy, between Pentecostal healing and shamanistic healing, and between speaking in tongues and spirit possession. However, it is important to regard shamanism as a form of Korean primal religiosity rather than compare it with the various ancient Canaanite religions in the Old Testament which were opposed to Judaism. Thus, the influences of shamanism on Pentecostalism and the contributions of shamanism to the growth of Pentecostalism need to be re-examined.

#### ***4. 1. Pentecostal Practices and Shamanism***

After observing passionate Pentecostal services at the YFGC, Cox insisted that Korean Pentecostals overlook “a massive importation of shamanic practice into a Christian ritual”.<sup>371</sup> He also suggests that one of the reasons for the extraordinary growth of Korean Pentecostalism is the “ability to absorb huge chunks of indigenous Korean shamanism and demon possession into its worship”.<sup>372</sup> It seems he does not realize the fact that there is no collective demon possession phenomenon during Korean shamanistic rites. During a Korean shamanistic rite, only the shaman who conducts the shamanistic ritual can be possessed by a spirit and be an intermediary between the spirit and the audience. Although a member of an audience can be

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<sup>371</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 222.

<sup>372</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 226.



possessed by a spirit instead of the shaman, the phenomenon of collective spirit possession does not happen during the ritual. Without having sufficient understanding of Korean shamanism, Cox simply equates Korean shamanistic rituals with the collective enthusiasm of African shamanism. In this sense, it is a theological misunderstanding to equate the manifestations of the Spirit with shamanic enthusiasm in Korean contexts. In fact, to identify the manifestations of Korean Pentecostalism with the shamanistic enthusiasm of Korean shamanism would be like identifying the phenomenon of the Toronto blessing with Canadian shamanism.<sup>373</sup> Nevertheless, there are shamanistic influences present in the practices of Korean Pentecostalism. These influences are evident in the prayers of Korean Pentecostals. Compared with other expressions of Christianity, the most prominent feature of Korean Pentecostalism is its emphasis on prayer. Since the beginning of Pentecostalism in the early twentieth century, Korean Pentecostals have concentrated on prayer. As noted, after the Pentecostal revivals broke out, the practice of daily dawn prayer was started by Seon Ju Gil along with other early Korean Pentecostals.<sup>374</sup> The prayer mountain movement, which was started by Woon Mong La (also known as Elder Ra) in 1952 and greatly contributed to the rapid growth of Korean Pentecostalism, has prevailed over the nation. In 1994, there were about 500 prayer mountains in Korea.

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<sup>373</sup> The Toronto Blessing started in 1994 at the Toronto Airport Vineyard Church led by pastors John and Carol Arnott. They were inspired by Argentinean evangelist, Caludio Freidzon who was an AG evangelist. The Toronto Blessing was a sort of a charismatic movement until late 1994, but it has been denied from conservative Pentecostals because of unusual physical manifestations such as laughing, rolling over, making strange animal sounds and others. Nevertheless about 250 to 300 people attend at weeknight meetings and about 500 are attending on weekends. See M. M. Poloma, "Toronto Blessing," Stanley M. Burger and Eduard M. Van der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, pp. 1149-1152.

<sup>374</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 2. 3.

Approximately twenty six percent of Korean Christians visited prayer mountains in order to pray for problems related to their family, business and personal struggles as well as for spiritual experiences and divine healings.<sup>375</sup> The enthusiastic, audible prayer of Korean Pentecostals is unique. Regardless of denomination, audible prayer and overnight prayers have commonly been practised among Korean Christians. This kind of prayer showed undeniable shamanistic influences. In shamanistic practice, Koreans used to pray early at dawn with a vessel of water drawn from a well as an offering which nobody had touched or drank from. They prayed for the success of their children, in order to have a good harvest, and for the health of their households. They also used to go to a mountain to pray for one hundred days.

Before Christianity arrived, the habit of prayer had been formed in Koreans already through shamanism. There are shamanistic elements in Korean Confucianism and Buddhism as well. These elements were absorbed into the higher religions which made them unique compared with their expressions in other nations. Likewise, through shamanistic influences, the practices of Korean Pentecostalism are unique compared to other expressions of global Pentecostalism. Every religion undergoes the process of indigenization and contextualization when it is exported to other nations from its place of origin. Cox says that certain elements of pre-existing religion must be included and transformed in any growing religion where they will remain as part of the cultural subconscious.<sup>376</sup> However, from its early days, Korean Christianity

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<sup>375</sup> Yeol Soo Eim, "South Korea", pp. 242-43.

<sup>376</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 218-19.

radically de-shamanized all shamanic elements and did not retain them. Korean Pentecostals need to reconsider whether pre-existing religions only had a negative influence upon Christianity and also whether Korean shamanism exerted only negative influences upon Korean Pentecostalism.

Normally Korean Pentecostals are persuaded that there are no shamanistic influences on Korean Pentecostalism.<sup>377</sup> However, David Kwang-sun Suh calls shamanism “the religious soil of Korea”.<sup>378</sup> Nevertheless, Korean Pentecostals disagree with the insistence that there are shamanistic influences or elements within Korean Pentecostalism because they have failed to differentiate between shamanistic spirituality and shamanistic elements. For instance, although the manifestation of divine healing is similar to demonic healing within shamanism, the origins of the healing and the spirituality are different. Those who have experienced divine healing would never agree that their healing originated from demonic spirits or shamanistic spirituality. Harvey Cox points out that “a massive importation of shamanic practice into a Christian ritual”<sup>379</sup> has been denied by Pentecostals. Indeed, Korean shamanism greatly contributed to the way Koreans appropriated Christianity as well as Pentecostalism in at least two aspects. First, Korean people were able to easily understand the sovereignty of God as a supreme being and the spiritual world of his

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<sup>377</sup> Allan Anderson, “The Gospel and Culture in Pentecostal Mission in the Third World,” represented at the 9<sup>th</sup> Conference of the European Pentecostal Charismatic Research Association, Missions Academy, University of Hamburg, Germany, July 1999, p. 4.

<sup>378</sup> David Kwang Sun Suh, “Liberation Spiritual in the Korean Minjung Tradition: Shamanism and Minjung Liberation”, p. 31.

<sup>379</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 226.

subordinate spirits, devil and angels since Korean shamanism had a similar worldview. Second, the aspirations within Korean shamanism for this-worldly material blessings helped to indigenize the theory of the Threefold Blessing for Korean Christians.<sup>380</sup> Korean Pentecostalism successfully adapted these indigenous shamanistic elements into the new movement and merged them into the life of the *Minjung*. Thus, it is important for Korean Pentecostals to reassess these shamanistic influences and not regard them as part of a pagan heritage that should be excluded from their new faith but as the praxis of their religiosity formulated through generations.

#### ***4. 2. Ki-Bock-Shin-Ang [Belief to have blessings through faith and religious practices]***

In the early days of Korean Protestantism, Korean Christians did not focus on this-worldly blessings due to their imminent eschatology. As a result, they neglected to address practical matters of current concern to the Korean people. This changed after the Korean War when Pentecostalism began to respond to these concerns of ordinary people. Young Hoon Lee says that one of prominent influences of

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<sup>380</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, pp. 13-14.

shamanism on Pentecostalism is “its [shamanism] emphasis on the present and material blessings”.<sup>381</sup>

Through their performance of a shamanistic ritual called *Han-puri* (resolution of *Han*), Koreans tried to overcome their bitterness of life. Shamanism was able to give temporary relief of sufferings to ordinary people during the actual performance of the ritual. Although most shamanistic rituals did not provide a permanent solution to their sufferings, Koreans clung to them since they were able to find temporary relief. Pentecostalism, with its emphasis on the divine blessings of health, wealth and eternal salvation, has replaced the function of shamanistic rituals in relation to the sufferings of ordinary people. Messages based on the Threefold Blessing were very appealing to Koreans in three ways. First, the audience of Pentecostal messages were referred to not as sinners but as heirs of God through Christ (Galatians 4:7). Second, it gave hope to those who were concerned about the future. Third, it corresponded to the needs of the times and indigenous shamanistic desires for wealth and health. The deep concern of Pentecostals for practical matters was one reason that Pentecostalism was successful in Korea. Heung Soo Kim, a theological professor at Mokwon University, insists that, due to the Korean War, survival became the primary basis of Koreans’ action and cogitation. In order to satisfy this need for survival, the elements of blessings and prosperity in this world were emphasized in Korean Christianity.<sup>382</sup>

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<sup>381</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 13.

<sup>382</sup> Heung Soo Kim, *Hankook Jeonjaeng gwha Gibokshinang Hwaksan Yeongoo* [a Research for the Korean War and the Expansion of the Health and Wealth Gospel] (Seoul: Hankook Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeongooso, 1999), p. 199.

Cho distinguishes his theory of blessing from the shamanistic desire for blessings. He says that the Threefold Blessing will be dispensed by God when people believe in Jesus as their Saviour, confess their sins and have faith to seek first his kingdom and righteousness.<sup>383</sup>

Although Korean Pentecostalism was able to successfully assimilate shamanistic elements, shamanistic influences have proved to be a double-edged sword for the movement. For instance, most Korean Christians tend to say “if you believe in Christ, you will be blessed” when they evangelize non-believers, instead of introducing Christ as the Saviour. In fact, many Koreans come to Church in order to receive this-worldly blessings.<sup>384</sup> This materialistic belief is called *Ki-Bock-Shin-Ang*. Thus, for many, being blessed in Christ became equated with being rich, healthy, and successful in this life. This was reinforced by the example of Korean pastors. Leading a large church with a high salary and having a luxury car became the standard mark of a being successful pastor.<sup>385</sup> Sebastian C. H. Kim insists that *Kibock sinang* was rooted in shamanism.<sup>386</sup>

According to the Korea Gallup Poll, 39.2 percent out of 328 Korean Protestants and 12.1 percent out of 119 Roman Catholics answered positively to the inquiry “Do you think a person who does an offering will be blessed more than the

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<sup>383</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Oh Jung Bok Eum Kwa Sam Jung Chuk Bok* [Fivefold Gospel and Triple Blessings], p. 42.

<sup>384</sup> Byung Gu Jee, *Shamanism gwa Hankook Gyohoi* [Shamanism and Korean Church] (Seoul: Sae Han Publishing House, 1996), p. 227.

<sup>385</sup> Byung Gu Jee, *Shamanism gwa Hankook Gyohoi* [Shamanism and Korean Church], p. 227.

<sup>386</sup> Sebastian C. H. Kim, “The Problem of Poverty in Post-War Korean Christianity: Kibock Sinang or Minjung Theology?” *Transformation* vol 24 No 1 (January) 2007, p. 43.

amount of offering he made?”<sup>387</sup> This suggests that, regarding the relationship between offering and blessing, Korean Protestant responses demonstrate more evidence of shamanistic influences than Roman Catholic responses. Pentecostal preachers often preach “Tithe, and the Lord will bless you”,<sup>388</sup> and they have a tendency to misinterpret the relationship between offering and material blessing in terms of cause and effect. The Bible neither implies that material blessings are evil nor justifies the accumulation of wealth in the midst of poverty.<sup>389</sup> For instance, the wealth of a tax collector was not acceptable in Jewish society. Rather, it was shameful to the ordinary people of Israel. Tax collectors accumulated their wealth without consideration of the suffering of others and were reluctant to share their wealth with others (Matthew 9:10-13 and Luke 19:1-10).

The shamanistic desire for wealth is self-centred. Although the prayer of Pentecostals for blessing is not necessarily intended as a shortcut means of becoming rich, it can be interpreted as being self-centred. Pentecostals tend to pray diligently in order to resolve their own problems and for personal blessings rather than for the benefit of their neighbours and the wider society.<sup>390</sup> Thus, unless their focus on personal blessings is broadened to include neighbours and the wider society, their beliefs will be criticized as shamanic materialism. It will also be regarded as *Ki-Bock-*

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<sup>387</sup> Available from <http://panel.gallup.co.kr/Gate/Panel/F025.aspx?seq=10919&DaeBunryuCd=02&BunryuGb=D&Bunryu=02&SearchGb=&SearchKey=&PageID=F055&date=Tue May 24 10:27:10 UTC+0100 2011>, accessed 8 June 2011.

<sup>388</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 231.

<sup>389</sup> D. L. Munby, *God and the Rich Society* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 54.

<sup>390</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 13.

*Shin-Ang* if they do not emphasize the future aspects of the gospel as much as earthly blessings.

## **5. Korean Pentecostalism and the State**

In terms of the Korean War, there was no winner but both sides were losers. According to the Ministry of Korean National Defence, during the war, 2,150,000 people including about 900,000 soldiers were killed, injured, or missing in combat and about ten million lost their homes, family members, and properties.<sup>391</sup> In addition, more people died of cholera, frostbite, typhus, and other diseases due to the war.<sup>392</sup> After the war, Korea was in a state of chaos. Economically, Korea could not have survived without the economic assistance of foreign countries, and politically, the nation was extremely unstable. Under the slogan ‘Rebuilding the Nation’, the 5.16 coup d’état took place under the leadership of Chung Hee Park on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1961. Following this, he took control of the country. Park believed that political stability was necessary for the economic growth and that the longer he could remain in power, the more the country would become stable politically and economically.<sup>393</sup> Through a constitutional amendment to the electoral system by *Yushin* (revitalizing) Reforms in

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<sup>391</sup> Ministry of National Defence, “The Korean War”, *The Ministry of National Defence of Korea*, n.d., available from [http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/6war/0625war/0625war\\_3/index.jsp?topMenuNo=2&leftNum=27#](http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndPolicy/6war/0625war/0625war_3/index.jsp?topMenuNo=2&leftNum=27#), accessed on 15 June 2011.

<sup>392</sup> Anthony Farrar-Hockley, “The China Factor in the Korean War”, in James Cotton and Ian Neary (eds.), *The Korean War in History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), p. 9.

<sup>393</sup> Chung Hee Park, *Korea Reborn: A Model for Development* (New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, 1979), p. 47.



1972, he changed the presidential election system from direct voting to indirect election by the incumbent.<sup>394</sup> As the result, he was able to rule the country for 18 years until he was assassinated by Jae Goo Kim on October 26, 1979.<sup>395</sup> During his rule, Korea showed remarkable economic growth in a short period of time. The Korean GNP per capita increased “from \$87 in 1961, to \$532 in 1975, and to \$1,735 in 1981”.<sup>396</sup>

However, Korea was overrun by severe riots and demonstrations. Many intellectuals, professors, students as well as Christian pastors and theologians who were opposed to his dictatorship were imprisoned and even died under torture. Despite this, Korean mainline denominations and Pentecostal churches remained politically acquiescent. As Korean Pentecostalism aligned itself with the political authorities, it was able to grow without undergoing persecutions. However, Korean Pentecostals have neglected their social and political responsibility, and their attention to human rights and freedom of the press and speech, because their understanding of salvation is restricted to the spiritual dimension. This means that the Threefold Blessing has not been contextualized into the socio-political life of Koreans.

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<sup>394</sup> Donald Gregg, “Park Chung Hee”, *Time*, 23 August 1999.

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2054405,00.html>, accessed on 15 June 2011.

<sup>395</sup> The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Park Chung Hee”, *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* vol. 9 15<sup>th</sup> ed.

<sup>396</sup> Andrew C. Nahm, *Korea: A History of the Korean People*, p. 486.

### 5. 1. 국가조찬기도회 (*Kookga Jochan Gidohoi: the National Prayer Breakfast*)

Ten days after the 5.16 coup d'état led by Chung Hee Park in 1961, the Korean Christian community declared its support for the military administration. Most influential Korean pastors, including Kyung Chik Han (1902-2000, the founder of Young Nak Presbyterian Church), Dae Sun Park, Joon Gon Kim (1925-2009, the founder of Korea Campus Crusade for Christ), Chun Han Lee, Sang Geun Lee, Yong Gi Cho and other pastors gathered to pray for the success of Chung Hee Park and his military government.<sup>397</sup> In 1966, a prayer meeting for the president called *Daetongryoung Jaochan Gidohoi* (the President Prayer Breakfast) was started by the most influential Protestant Korean pastors. Two years later, the prayer meeting was renamed as *Kookga Jochan Gidohoi* (the National Prayer Breakfast).<sup>398</sup>

After Park's assassination, Korea was again plunged into political chaos. On December 12<sup>th</sup> 1979, another military coup was carried out by Doo Hwan Chun, who disbanded parliament and quelled democratic demonstrations and assemblies by military force. In May 1980, there was a democratic movement organized against his military administration called 5.18 Gwangju Democratization Movement. During this movement, 170 people (144 civilians, 22 soldiers, and 4 policemen) were killed, 380

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<sup>397</sup> Man Yel Lee, *Hankook Gidokgyo wha Minjocktongil Woondong* [Korean Christianity and Reunification Movement] (Seoul: Hankook Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeongooso, 2001), p. 287.

<sup>398</sup> Han Goo Mu, "Kookga Jochan Gidohoi Moouteul Namgyutna? [What did Kookga Jochan Gidohoi leave behind?]", *Gidockgyosasang*, vol. 48, 2004, p. 28.

people wounded, and 1,740 people were arrested.<sup>399</sup> However, twenty three influential pastors, including Kyung Chik Han, Yoon Shik Kim, Hyang Rok Cho, Jee Gil Kim, Jin Gyoung Kim, Chang In Kim, Bong Sung Lee, and Won Sang Lee attended the *Kookga Jochan Gidohoi*, which was held at the Emerald Room in the Lotte Hotel in Seoul on August 6, 1980, to pray for Doo Hwan Chun and his success.<sup>400</sup> In November, 1972, academic deans of seminaries in Korea, including Jong Sung Lee, Hui Bo Kim, Jung Jun Kim, Jong Nam Cho, Hyun Seol Hong, and forty well known pastors, including Yong Gi Cho, Kyung Chik Han, Chang In Kim, Won Sang Jee, Yoon Chan Kim, and Ho Jun Yoo, officially announced their support for the *Yushin* Regime.<sup>401</sup> This demonstrates how Korean Christianity remained supportive of the state even under the dictatorship. Korean Pentecostals have been indifferent to political matters for four reasons. The first is the conservative inclination of their faith. Korean Pentecostals are very dynamic and active in Christian service but are traditional and conservative in their faith.<sup>402</sup> In accordance with Romans 13:1-2, they believe that they should obey all authorities since the authorities are ordained by God. Furthermore, they believe that to resist the authorities is to be against the ordinance of God. Second, they were unable to properly distinguish between right and wrong in socio-political matters since the

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<sup>399</sup> Bo Young Lee, “5.18 Minjuhwa Woondong Gaheaja wha Phyheajaye Daehan Hyungsabumjeok Byungga [The Criminal Evaluation of Those Responsible and Victim in the 5.18 Democratic Movement]”, *Bubhakyengoo*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (1992), p. 284.

<sup>400</sup> Man Yel Lee, *Hankook Gidokgyo wha Minjocktongil Woondong* [Korean Christianity and Reunification Movement], p. 288.

<sup>401</sup> Man Yel Lee, *Hankook Gidokgyo wha Minjocktongil Woondong* [Korean Christianity and Reunification Movement] (Seoul: Hankook Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeongooso, 2001), p. 288.

<sup>402</sup> Kelly H. Chong, *Deliverance and Submission: Evangelical Women and the Negotiation of Patriarchy in South Korea* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), p. 26.

press was under military government control. Third, economic growth was more important than political issues to the ordinary people. Fourth, for the sake of stable church growth, Korean Christianity, including Pentecostalism, cooperated with the military administration and tried to minimize political friction with the state. This enabled Korean Christianity and Pentecostalism to grow without undergoing persecution.

## ***5. 2. Economic Growth and Pentecostalism***

Ironically, despite the political chaos, the Korean economy continued to grow significantly. Chung Hee Park stated that his economic plans were based on “*the jaju spirit* [self-support spirit]”,<sup>403</sup> and that “the *Saemaul* [new village]” movement has recovered the *jaju spirit*”.<sup>404</sup> On the aspect of the relationship between the proclamation of the Pentecostal message, especially its focus on divine blessings, and its accomplishment, economic growth was more important than political matters to Korean Pentecostals. However, as a result, Korean Pentecostals made the mistake of ignoring the current socio-political matters which ordinary people were struggling with. This meant that the Threefold Blessing did not become contextualized into the socio-political life of Koreans. In contrast, from the perspective of economics, the

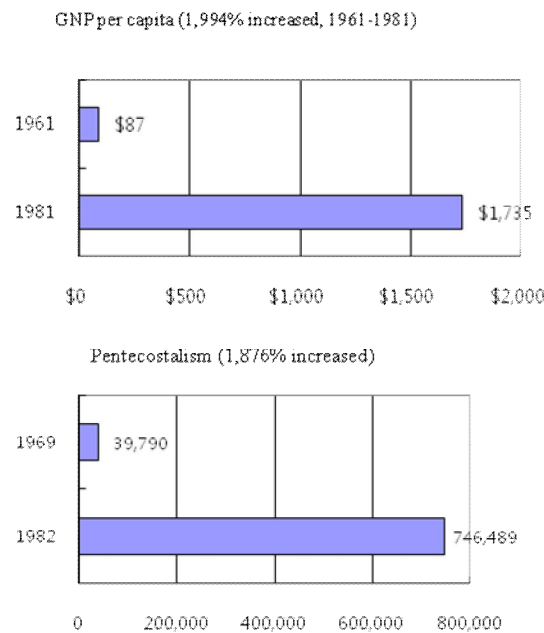
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<sup>403</sup> Chung Hee Park, *Korea Reborn: A Model for Development* (New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, 1979), p. 57.

<sup>404</sup> Chung Hee Park, *Korea Reborn: A Model for Development*, p. 78.

emphasis on financial blessing corresponded with the top priority given by Park's government to the task of overcoming national poverty.

**Table 4. Growth of GNP per capita and Pentecostalism**<sup>405</sup>



After the Korean War, Korea was in great need of economic assistance from foreign countries. Park wanted Korea to become independent economically. In order to bring about change in the whole nation, he believed that each village had to be changed. He was convinced that the *Saemaul* movement could not be successful without a change in the mentality of Koreans. He focused on changing the mind of Koreans from a defeatist attitude to a more self-confident and positive frame of mind. Pentecostal messages were in concert with this key focus of the government. In the post-Korean

<sup>405</sup> Andrew C. Nahm, *Korea: A History of the Korean People*, p. 486.

War context, the ‘cannot-do spirit’ was prevalent across the country because of the desperate situation. At that time, one emphasis of Pentecostal messages was on “changing the thinking attitude from a negative one to positive one”.<sup>406</sup> Cho emphasized the importance of a positive mind-set, the ‘can-do spirit’, the possibility of miracles to overcome human difficulties and of receiving blessings from God.<sup>407</sup> In this sense, the Korean government and Pentecostalism were moving in the same direction. The Threefold Blessing made a close link between the religious life of Koreans and a change in their economic circumstances by emphasizing hard work, saving money and the practice of tithing.<sup>408</sup> It is clear that there was a direct correlation between the growth of Korean Pentecostalism and the economic growth of Korea (see Table 4 above). With the economic growth of the country, Korean Pentecostals were able to experience their prayers for financial blessing becoming a reality and their hopes for prosperity fulfilled. This suggests that the Threefold Blessing was contextualized into the economic life of Koreans and responded to their urgent needs in the post-Korean War context.

## 6. Conclusion

Some scholars attribute the success of Pentecostalism in Korea to its successful indigenization into Korean shamanism. However, Korean Pentecostals

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<sup>406</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, p. 124; and Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 216.

<sup>407</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, pp. 119-124.

<sup>408</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 231.

rediscovered God as *Joeushin Hananim* (the Good God) with the hope that he will bless them in their hopeless situations. In *Joeushin Hananim*, they found not only eschatological hope for the future but also hope for the present life. With this new understanding of the nature of God, the message of the Threefold Blessing was contextualized into the impoverished life of Koreans after the Korean War. As a result, the sick, the poor, and those seeking spiritual blessings were attracted to Pentecostal churches in Korea. Thus, the *Minjung* of Korean Pentecostalism is neither the common people nor those who stand in opposition to the government. Rather, it consists of those people who have similar spiritual experiences and engage in similar spiritual practices in the Spirit, regardless of their social status, wealth or reputation. Furthermore, the *Minjung* of Korean Pentecostalism are those who have hope not only for eternal life but also for life in the present. Although the Threefold Blessing is related to the daily life of Korean Pentecostal *Minjung*, Korean Pentecostals have been reluctant to engage in socio-political action. In fact, because it cooperated with the state, Korean Pentecostalism was able to develop without undergoing persecution by Park's dictatorship. The Threefold Blessing was an effective response to the urgent needs of Koreans after the war. However, it was not sufficiently contextualized into the socio-political life of Koreans.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THE THREEFOLD BLESSING AND HOPE IN THE KOREAN CONTEXT**

#### **1. Introduction**

The theory of the Threefold Blessing was developed by Yonggi Cho in the post-Korean War context. After the War, most Koreans were suffering from absolute poverty and disease. Although the theory was not originally inspired by Cho himself,<sup>409</sup> the theology of the Threefold Blessing was developed based on the hardship of his personal life and his pastoral experiences amongst the urban poor. Thus, the message of the Threefold Blessing could effectively become contextualized into the everyday lives of Koreans. Consequently, the Threefold Blessing became the main theme of Pentecostal messages in Korea and it gave Koreans hope to overcome their hopeless circumstances. In the same era, Moltmann's theology of hope was developed in Germany after the Second World War. However, theological conversations between Moltmann and Korean Pentecostals did not occur until the 1990s. Meanwhile, the Threefold Blessing was understood in terms of its contributions to pastoral care and church growth rather than as a contextual hope.

In this chapter, four historical and theological issues with regard to the relation between the Threefold Blessing and hope in the Korean context will be discussed: 1) the origin of the Threefold Blessing; 2) the Threefold Blessing in the

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<sup>409</sup> See chapter 3, section 2. 3.



Korean context; 3) the hope of the Threefold Blessing; and 4) the Threefold Blessing as the contextual hope in comparison with Moltmann's hope.

## **2. The Origin of the Threefold Blessing**

### ***2. 1. Yonggi Cho and the Threefold Blessing***

On February 14, 1936, Yonggi Cho was born in Ulju county, Gyeongnam province, which is in the southern part of Korea.<sup>410</sup> He was the second child and eldest son among five brothers and four sisters.<sup>411</sup> As he grew up in a typical Korean Buddhist family, he often had to visit a Buddhist temple with his parents. During his boyhood, he went through huge adversities: the oppression of Japanese imperialism, the Second World War, and the Korean War. He suffered the after effects of the War such as extreme poverty and sickness. Whilst enduring Japanese rule and the two major wars, Cho plunged into the depths of despair psychologically, physically and circumstantially. At that time, it seemed that there was no hope for him. He was always weak and often sick.

When he was about nine years old, he had to spend six months in bed due to lack of appetite and a high fever. In 1950, his father, Doo-Chun Cho, failed in the May 30th congressional election despite selling all his property to finance his campaign. As

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<sup>410</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 93.

<sup>411</sup> Nell L. Kennedy, *Dream Your Way to Success: The Story of Dr. Yonggi Cho and Korea* (Plainfield, NJ, 1980), p. 4.

a result, all Cho's family members had to struggle with severe financial problems.<sup>412</sup> When Cho was a teenager, although he was not a healthy boy, he had to work at a harbour doing night shifts to pay his middle school tuitions. In 1952, he entered a technical high school to support his large family after he graduated from the middle school. Because of financial difficulties, he normally had only one meal a day and had to work on the street as a fruit seller. His physical condition and cough became worse. In 1954, when he was eighteen years old, eventually he fell down in the street vomiting blood. He realized that he had pulmonary tuberculosis and was told by his doctor that he could live no more than three months.<sup>413</sup> Although he prayed every day to Buddha to be healed from his disease, his condition deteriorated. Eventually, he stopped praying to Buddha and started crying out *Hananim* instead.<sup>414</sup> At the time, he regarded *Hananim* not as the Christian God but as the supreme god in heaven of Korean shamanism. Nevertheless, he made a sincere promise to God that he would spend the rest of his life serving him if he healed him. Many years later, Cho realized that *Hananim* whom he entreated was the Christian God and he often said that this short prayer changed his life.<sup>415</sup> A few days after his prayer, he was visited by a Christian high school girl named Jong Ae Kim who was a friend of his sister, Hye Sook Cho.<sup>416</sup> At that time, Jong Ae was eighteen years old.<sup>417</sup> She became one of the

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<sup>412</sup> Young Hoon Lee, "The Life and Ministry of David Yonggi Cho and the Yoido Full Gospel Church", p. 4.

<sup>413</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, pp. 120-21.

<sup>414</sup> For more on *Hananim*, see chapter 2, section 2. 1.

<sup>415</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension vol. II* (Plainfield, NJ: Bridge Publishing Inc., 1983), Preface, xiii.

<sup>416</sup> Karen Hurston, *Growing the World's Largest Church*, p. 20.

significant women in his life along with Ja Sil Choe (1915-1989),<sup>418</sup> who was his mother-in-law and the most influential partner in his ministry. Despite Jong Ae Kim not being welcomed by Cho, she continued to visit him after school. Cho firmly told her that he did not want to change his religion since he wanted to die as a Buddhist.<sup>419</sup> Yet she never stopped visiting and telling him about the life of Christ, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. Her zealous evangelism impressed him, and Cho made a decision to convert to Christianity. He began to read the Bible which she had given him and discovered that the sick were healed and sinners were forgiven by Jesus.<sup>420</sup> Cho said “every morning I would pick up my Bible for breakfast and I would feast till dinner”.<sup>421</sup> One day, he sincerely prayed: “Jesus, you even healed lepers, can you heal my tuberculosis?”<sup>422</sup> At that moment, he experienced divine healing. However, while he was cured from his fatal disease through divine healing, his family rejected him because of his conversion to Christianity.<sup>423</sup> Even though he had promised to give his life to God if he was healed, he became a medical trainee at a hospital since he wanted to become a doctor. During his medical training for nearly two years, he did not even

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<sup>417</sup> Nell L. Kennedy, *Dream Your Way to Success: The Story of Dr. Yonggi Cho and Korea* (Plainfield, NJ, 1980), p. 79.

<sup>418</sup> When she was a child, Ja Sil Choe heard the gospel for the first time at a tent revival. However, she did not convert to Christianity until her Buddhist husband left her with three children and the oldest child was on the brink of death. She almost committed suicide due to her hardship. At that time, she had another chance to hear the gospel and fully devoted herself to Christ. Soon after, she moved to Seoul with all her children and began to attend the school where she met Yonggi Cho. See Karen Hurston, *Growing the World's Largest Church*, p. 21.

<sup>419</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension vol. II*, Preface, xiv.

<sup>420</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 122.

<sup>421</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension vol. II*, Preface, xviii.

<sup>422</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 123.

<sup>423</sup> Ig-Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 123.

attend church.<sup>424</sup> At that time, probably he did not realize the implications of his prayer to devote the rest of his life to God or he simply forgot about it after he received divine healing.

From the Spring of 1955, his painful coughing started again. He then began to attend the Full Gospel Mission, led by Rev. L. P. Richard. When Cho's pains and coughing had begun, his parents started attending the mission and converted to Christianity. In the mission, Cho began to build friendships with the Assemblies of God (AG) missionaries. He was taught the Bible by Rev. Richard and met another AG missionary named Kenneth Tice. Cho also began to interpret their sermons.<sup>425</sup> Through studying the Bible with the AG missionaries, Cho came to understand more clearly about divine healing and repented of his former unbelief.<sup>426</sup> In September 1956, after being trained by the missionaries for about a year, he was sent to Seoul to become a seminary student at the *Sunbogeum* Theological Seminary. However, in the winter of 1956, during the first year of the seminary, he became ill with pneumonia. While he was confronted by death for several days, Ja-Sil Choe, an experienced nurse and his future mother-in-law, carefully nursed him, and his classmates prayed hard for him. Several days later, he recovered his health. Since then, Cho and Choe began to work together.<sup>427</sup> Cho's personal suffering from a fatal disease and experience of divine healing made him concentrate on divine healing in his ministry. During every

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<sup>424</sup> Ig-Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 123

<sup>425</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension* vol. II, Preface, xviii.

<sup>426</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 94.

<sup>427</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, pp. 123-24; and Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 94.

service he conducts, he always prays for the sick. In fact, his divine healing ministry is the most significant reason for the remarkable growth of the YFGC, even more so than *glossolalia*.<sup>428</sup>

Many members of the YFGC are convinced that they have experienced healing after being prayed for by Cho.<sup>429</sup> His own experiences of extreme poverty and suffering from disease stimulated him to desire for physical and financial blessings and furthermore became the soil for the development of the Threefold Blessing theology. He shared his hope for prosperity and health in God with his church members who were fish sellers, factory workers and the urban poor. Looking back on the early days of the YFGC, Cho says that the church looked like a house of refuge because the church were filled with fishy odours and many poor children; fish sellers among his church members came to church for Sunday services with their fish baskets and most poor people had many children.<sup>430</sup>

## ***2. 2. The Development of the Threefold Blessing***

Cho developed his own pastoral and theological theory called the Fivefold Gospel and the Threefold Blessing. The Threefold Blessing was the core theological and pastoral doctrine of the YFGC from its tent church era, and Cho started to teach

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<sup>428</sup> Vinson Synan, "Roots of Yonggi Cho's Theology of Healing", in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho's Ministry & Theology I*, p. 284.

<sup>429</sup> Karen Hurton, *Growing the World's Largest Church*, pp. 170-71.

<sup>430</sup> Mokhoi wha Sinhak [Ministering and Theology], "Interview with Yonggi Cho (1 September 2009)," p. 32.

the Fivefold Gospel from 1974.<sup>431</sup> The elements of Cho's Fivefold Gospel are salvation, baptism in the Spirit, divine healing, the Second Coming and blessing. Cho subdivided 'blessing' in the Fivefold Gospel into the Threefold Blessing of salvation from sin, prosperity, and health. In fact, Cho's Fivefold Gospel was inherited from Classical Pentecostal teaching. The term 'the Fivefold Gospel' was already used by American Pentecostals from the Azusa Street Revival as well as the early Holiness Pentecostal denominations such as the Pentecostal Holiness Church, the Church of God in Christ, and the Church of God. Their Fivefold Gospel consists of Jesus as Saviour, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, Healer, and Coming King.<sup>432</sup> Until the late nineteenth century, it was debated whether the baptism in the Spirit was adequate to describe 'the second blessing' of sanctification.<sup>433</sup> Historically, after the Finished Work movement of W. H. Durham,<sup>434</sup> 'sanctification' was omitted from the Fivefold Gospel, and it became the Fourfold Gospel. However, the Finished Work theory was rejected and denounced as a threat to the existence of the Pentecostal movement by Parham, Seymour, and other Holiness Pentecostal leaders. Meanwhile, the AG was organized by independent Pentecostals in 1914, and Durham's teaching was accepted

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<sup>431</sup> Karen Hurston, *Growing the World's Largest Church*, pp. 139-40.

<sup>432</sup> Vinson Synan, "Roots of Yonggi Cho's Theology of Healing", pp. 264-65; Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 140; and Wonsuk Ma, "Dr. Yonggi Cho's Theology of Blessing: New Theological Basis and Directions", in Hansei University (ed.), *2003 Young San International Theological Symposium*, pp. 187-210.

<sup>433</sup> Donald W. Dayton, "The Good God and the Theology of Blessing in the Thought of David Yonggi Cho", in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho's Ministry & Theology I*, p. 44.

<sup>434</sup> By 1911, Durham had fashioned the finished work of Calvary theology. He insisted that sanctification could not be a second blessing or 'crisis experience' because both sanctification and salvation were accomplished in the atonement on the Cross. See Vinson Synan, "The Finished Work Pentecostal Churches", Vinson Synan (ed.), *The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal 1901-2001* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), pp. 123-24; and also see Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, pp. 45-47.

as their official statement of belief, which consisted of salvation, baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues as the initial evidence, divine healing, and the pre-millennial return of Christ. Since then, the Fourfold Gospel was accepted by most Pentecostal churches and leaders as well as the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.<sup>435</sup> After joining the AG, Cho had more opportunities to have fellowship with AG missionaries. Through their influence, he adopted the doctrines and beliefs of the AG. William W. Menzies insists that Cho certainly borrowed the Fourfold Gospel for his Fivefold Gospel from “the American Evangelical Christianity, particularly the cardinal doctrines of the Assemblies of God”.<sup>436</sup> From the beginning of the YFGC, Cho adopted this Fourfold Gospel as the official doctrine of his church, and later developed his Fivefold Gospel by adding ‘blessing’.<sup>437</sup> However, Cho did not accept speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Spirit baptism. Although he accepted the doctrine of the AG in the early years of his ministry, later he changed his perspective with regard to tongues-speaking by considering it as “one of the evidences of baptism in the Spirit”.<sup>438</sup> In his book *The Nature of God*, Cho discusses the evidence of the Holy Spirit, but does not mention ‘tongues-speaking’ as the initial

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<sup>435</sup> Vinson Synan, “The Finished Work Pentecostal Churches”, in Vinson Synan (ed.), *The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal 1901-2001*, p. 124.

<sup>436</sup> William W. Menzies, “David Yonggi Cho’s Theology of the Fullness of the Spirit: A Pentecostal Perspective”, in Wonsuk Ma, William W. Menzies, and Hyeon Sung Bae (ed.), *David Yonggi Cho: A Close Look at His Theology and Ministry*, p. 36; and Thomson K. Mathew, “Oral Roberts and David Yonggi Cho: A Comparative Evaluation of Their Theologies of Healing”, in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Ministry & Theology I*, p. 294.

<sup>437</sup> Wonsuk Ma, “Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Blessing: New Theological Basis and Directions”, in Hansein University (ed.), pp. 188-191.

<sup>438</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Ohjungbokeum kwa Samjungchukbok* [The Five Fold Gospel and the Three Fold Blessing], p. 100.

evidence of the Spirit. Rather, he emphasized the fruit of the Spirit as evidence of Spirit baptism.<sup>439</sup>

This change of Cho's perspective with regard to the theological issue, speaking in tongues as initial evidence, is related to his secession from the Korean Assemblies of God (KAG). There were theological conflicts between Cho and other Korean classical Pentecostals who sincerely followed the classical beliefs and ideas of the AG. At that time, Korean classical Pentecostals had powers in the denomination and wanted to control Cho and the YFGC. They brought up five issues either as a pretext for dismissing Cho from the denomination or just to pressure him into obeying the authority of the KAG: firstly, the illegal ordination of pastors in the Church (at that time, some ordinations in the YFGC were conducted not by the KAG but by the church);<sup>440</sup> secondly, Cho's healing ministry;<sup>441</sup> thirdly, Cho's perspective regarding ancestor worship;<sup>441</sup> fourthly, the mysterious event of a young female who were resurrected from death; and fifthly, the failure of the YFGC to pay the required denominational membership fee. According to the KAG's constitution, affiliated

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<sup>439</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Nature of God* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2001), pp. 183-94.

<sup>440</sup> In 1960, due to Cho's healing ministry Cho's pastoral license was revoked by the committee of the KAG once already at the instigation of Gyu Chang Jeong and Wan Sik Lee. His license was restored next year as they left the denomination. See Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 125.

<sup>441</sup> On November 30, 1979, during his sermon Cho said that "Ancestor worship is nothing but honouring one's parents. I do not understand why people say that it is idol worship.... It is quite all right to prepare food thinking of our deceased parents as if they were present, to erect a cross instead of an ancestral tablet, and to bow down... We honour our parents with bowing down. It is not an idol... Thus, to perform ancestral worship (*Che-sa*) is really a good thing". Myung Hyuk Kim, "Ancestor Worship: From the Perspective of Korean Church History", in Jung Young Lee (eds.), *Ancestor Worship and Christianity in Korea*, p. 29. Since then, the debate about whether Cho was a heretic became more severe and cynical.



churches had to pay three percent out of the income of the church every month. Although the YFGC paid about 20,000 to 30,000 dollars each month, it was much less than three percent of the church's income.<sup>442</sup> Furthermore, they issued a summons to Cho that unless he appeared at the planned committee meeting they would dismiss him from his position in the YFGC. Following this decision of the KAG, on October 13, 1981, Cho and the YFGC decided to secede from the KAG and became an independent church.<sup>443</sup> As a result, on December 7 in same year, the KAG was divided into three groups: the *Chonghoe* [General Council] of the KAG with 237 churches, 306 pastors and about 70,000 members; *Banpo*, the anti-group of the KAG with 233 churches, 330 pastors and 38,000 members; and the YFGC as an independent church. At that time, as the YFGC had 229 pastors and about 200,000 members, it was greater in size to the other two new groups.<sup>444</sup> By this time, Cho did not have to follow all the beliefs of the classical Pentecostals. Furthermore, there was no longer any reason for him to adhere to more contentious doctrines such as tongues-speaking as the initial evidence of the Spirit baptism. Nevertheless, Cho kept his relationship with American Pentecostals and developed his own theology based on their theologies. The Fourfold and Fivefold Gospel of American classical Pentecostals and Cho's Fivefold Gospel are clearly Christ-centred (see Table 4

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<sup>442</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, pp. 176-77; Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon GooWon [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [The Church History of Assemblies of God], pp. 235-36.

<sup>443</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [The Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 235; Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism: Sunbogeum*, p. 178.

<sup>444</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, p. 178.

below). In relation to this, Wonsuk Ma argues against the notion that, as Cho overemphasizes the work of the Spirit, he has minimized the saving work of Christ.<sup>445</sup>

**Table 5. Comparison between the Four/Five Fold Gospel by Classical Pentecostals, the Four-Fold Gospel by A. B. Simpson and the Five-Fold Gospel by Cho.**<sup>446</sup>

The Fourfold Gospel by A.B. Simpson	<b>Jesus is</b> the Saviour	the Healer	the Coming King	the Sanctifier	
Pentecostal Fourfold Gospel	the Saviour	the Healer	the Coming King	the Baptizer in the Spirit	
Pentecostal Fivefold Gospel	the Saviour	the Healer	the Coming King	the Baptizer in the Spirit	the Sanctifier
Cho's Fivefold Gospel	the Saviour	the Healer	the Coming King	the Baptizer in the Spirit	the Blessor

In fact, the Fivefold Gospel is the theoretical basis and the Threefold Blessing is the practical application of the Fivefold Gospel. Cho established the Fivefold Gospel and the Threefold Blessing as the creed of the YFGC from its beginning.<sup>447</sup> According to Vinson Synan, especially with regard to the Threefold Blessing, the YFGC was the first church in the world to adopt “prosperity language as an official

<sup>445</sup> Won Suk Ma, “Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Blessing: New Theological Basis and Directions”, pp. 189-190.

<sup>446</sup> A. B. Simpson published the book, *The Four-Fold Gospel* with four contents: 1. Christ our Saviour, 2. Christ our Sanctifier, 3. Christ our Healer, and 4. Christ our Coming Lord. See A. B. Simpson, *The Four-Fold Gospel* (New York: The Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1925). Ma mistakenly addresses Simpson’s Four-Fold Gospel as “Jesus as Saviour, Healer, Baptizer, and Coming King” on page 189. Other than that, Ma insightfully compares Cho’s Five-Fold theology with the Four and Five Gospel of Classical Pentecostals on the same article on page 190. See Wonsuk Ma, “Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Blessing: New Theological Basis and Directions”, pp. 189-190.

<sup>447</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Ohjungbokeum kwa Samjungchukbok* [The Five Fold Gospel and the Three Fold Blessing], Preface.

doctrine”.<sup>448</sup> Furthermore, Synan evaluates Cho’s theology as “a singularly Korean contribution to the world of Pentecostal theology”.<sup>449</sup> However, although Cho’s theology is unique and creative, it cannot be overlooked that there were many significant teachers who inspired him to develop his Threefold Blessing theory.

### ***2. 3. Theological and Historical Influences on the Threefold Blessing***

It seems that early Pentecostals did not emphasize material blessings until the Second World War. After the war, the idea of the material blessing from God for believers emerged, and the prosperity gospel began to be promoted within the movement.<sup>450</sup> Cho’s Threefold Blessing developed, based on the biblical text 3 John 2, but his theory was originally inspired by Oral Roberts, an American healing evangelist brought up in the Pentecostal Holiness Church. In 1947, Roberts had a chance to meditate on 3 John 2 and was deeply impressed by it.<sup>451</sup> As a result, his ministry was transformed and entered a new phase. He began to emphasize divine healing and prosperity. In 1948, he published a book of sermons entitled *If You Need Healing Do These Things* and, in the mid-1950s, created the ‘Blessing-Pact’ (which later became the Seed-Faith) in order to raise funds for his television ministry. In public, he promised a refund to those who contributed \$100 to his mission but did not receive

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<sup>448</sup> Vinson Synan, “Roots of Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Healing”, p. 284.

<sup>449</sup> Vinson Synan, “Roots of Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Healing”, pp. 265-66.

<sup>450</sup> Simon Coleman, *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 41.

<sup>451</sup> Oral Roberts, *Expect a Miracle: My Life and Ministry* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), pp. 71-4.

blessings from God within one year.<sup>452</sup> In 1955, he published another book emphasizing material welfare entitled *God's Formula for Success and Prosperity*.

Since the late 1950s, Cho was able to obtain Roberts' sermon books and tapes through American missionaries.<sup>453</sup> When Cho opened his tent church named the Daejo Dong Full Gospel Church in Daejo Dong,<sup>454</sup> which was located in a slum area on the outskirts of Seoul, he was discouraged because the church was not growing quickly. At that time, Roberts' books and sermons significantly influenced Cho's ministry. Like Roberts, 3 John 2 became the centre of all Cho's sermons and the foundation of his ministry.<sup>455</sup> Later, Cho and Roberts built up a very close relationship with each other, and Roberts used to call Cho "my beloved friend and brother".<sup>456</sup>

Although the influence of Roberts on the development of the prosperity gospel cannot be overlooked, Roberts actually placed more emphasis on the healing ministry than prosperity.<sup>457</sup> In fact, the early American Pentecostal evangelists such

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<sup>452</sup> Simon Coleman, *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity*, pp. 41-2.

<sup>453</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Healing & Prosperity*, p. 8.

<sup>454</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Successful Home Cell Groups* (North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos, 1999), pp. 1-3. As the name and the boundary of district have been changed, the name of the place Cho started his tent church is often confused between two district names: Pulkwang Dong and Daejo Dong. In his book, *Salvation, Healing & Prosperity*, p. 11, Cho mentions that he started his church in Pulkwang Dong.

<sup>455</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Healing & Prosperity*, pp. 11-2; and see also Oral Roberts, *Expect a Miracle: My Life and Ministry* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), pp. 71-4.

<sup>456</sup> Oral Roberts, *Expect a Miracle: My Life and Ministry*, p. 142.

<sup>457</sup> In 1947, Roberts began a citywide healing ministry in Enid, Oklahoma. In the same year, his first book on healing, *If You Need Healing*, was published, and his healing messages were broadcast on the radio. Also the monthly magazine, *Healing Waters*, was started. In 1955, he initiated a weekly nationwide television programme with which he could reach millions of people with his healing message. By the 1950s, more than 500 radio stations broadcasted his healing message, and he conducted more than 300 major crusades during the period 1947 to 1968. See P. G. Chappell,

as Charles Parham and William J. Seymour were opposed to using medicines, preferring to rely on divine healing. In an issue of the *Apostolic Faith* magazine, published in 1906, Seymour stated “the doctor gives you poison and you die because you dishonour the atonement”.<sup>458</sup> He believed that seeing doctors or taking Western medicine demonstrated a lack of faith in God.

However, Seymour’s perspective was opposed by the Holiness Church. In 1920, both prayer for the sick and using Western medicine were accepted by the Congregational Holiness Church.<sup>459</sup> About that time, the debate over the relative merits of divine healing and Western medicine was brought to an end, and Pentecostals began to practice both.<sup>460</sup> Theologically, the early American Pentecostals emphasized “divine healing as in the atonement”.<sup>461</sup> Basing his thinking on Isaiah 53:4-6, Roberts also believed that divine healing is related to the atonement.<sup>462</sup> Roberts suggests six steps toward healing as follows:

1) Know that it is God’s will to heal you and make you a whole person; 2) Remember that healing begins in the inner man; 3) Use a point of contact for the release of your faith; 4) Release your faith; 5) Close the case for victory; 6) Join yourself to companions of faith.<sup>463</sup>

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“Roberts, Granville Oral”, in Stanley M. Burgerss and Eduard M. Van der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, pp. 1024-1025.

<sup>458</sup> William J. Seymour, “Salvation and Healing”, *Apostolic Faith* (December) 1906, 2.

<sup>459</sup> Vinson Synan, *The Old-Time Power: A History of the Pentecostal Holiness Church* (Franklin Springs, GA: Advocate Press, 1973), pp. 166-171.

<sup>460</sup> Vinson Synan, “Roots of Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Healing”, p. 279.

<sup>461</sup> Vinson Synan, “Roots of Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Healing”, p. 276.

<sup>462</sup> Oral Roberts, *Holy Bible: With My Personal Commentary* (Tulsa, OK: Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association, 1981), p. 64; Thomson K. Mathew, “Oral Roberts and David Yonggi Cho: A Comparative Evaluation of Their Theologies of Healing”, p. 291.

<sup>463</sup> Oral Roberts, *Better Health and Miracle Living* (United States: Oral Roberts Evangelistic Assn., Inc., 1976), pp. 11-19.

There are three prominent differences between Roberts's and Cho's theology of divine healing. Firstly, Cho's theology of healing is anchored in Christ's redemption on the Cross.<sup>464</sup> Cho often states that healing is part of Christ's redemption, but he rarely uses the term 'the atonement' in relation to divine healing.<sup>465</sup>

Cho defines the three origins of disease as the devil, the sin of human beings, and the curse of God as the punishment for their sins.<sup>466</sup> Thus, healing to him is not just a cure of physical difficulties but also includes deliverance from sin, from evil spirits, and from the curse of God. Jesus also connected divine healing to the forgiveness of sins when he healed the paralytic carried by other men (Matthew 9:2; Mark 2:5; and Luke 5:20). Cho believes that "the source of illness is Satan and the cause of illness is sin".<sup>467</sup> This belief in sin as the cause of illness implies the Fall of Humanity and individual sins. According to Cho, there were no diseases in the Garden of Eden, but these came to human beings after the Fall.<sup>468</sup>

For this reason, he thinks that sin and disease are inseparably related to each other. Thirdly, in comparison with Roberts' six, Cho offers five steps toward healing:

- 1) We must have hope of perfect health; 2) We must confess and be forgiven of our sins; 3) We must forgive others, even our

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<sup>464</sup> Yonggi Cho, *How Can I Be Healed?* (Seoul: Seoul Logos Co., Inc., 1999), p. 51.

<sup>465</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Health and Prosperity*, pp. 126-131, 141.

<sup>466</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Ohjungbokeum kwa Samjungchukbok* [The Five Fold Gospel and the Three Fold Blessing], p. 145.

<sup>467</sup> Yonggi Cho, *How Can I Be Healed?*, p. 29.

<sup>468</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Ohjungbokeum kwa Samjungchukbok* [The Five Fold Gospel and the Three Fold Blessing] (Seoul: Seoul Malsseumsa, 2002), p. 14.

enemies; 4) We must have faith; and 5) We must ask God to help us stay holy and sin free.<sup>469</sup>

Thus, repentance is prominent in Cho's healing methodology. Roberts was Cho's main mentor during the early period of his healing ministry. Cho tried to follow Roberts' approach to the healing ministry. Yet from the 1970s Cho's ministry came under other influences, such as those associated with the Word of Faith Movement (hereafter the Faith Movement). Essek William Kenyon (1867–1948) provided the theological basis to the Faith Movement leaders such as Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Fred Price, and Charles Capps. Kenyon strongly influenced Kenneth Hagin (1917 - 2003) who became one of influential American Pentecostal preachers and the father of the Faith movement.<sup>470</sup> Hagin and his followers distinguish between the Greek words *rhema* and *logos* in the New Testament. The *rhema* word is the word of God for specific situations and includes words of prophecy, interpreted messages in tongues, or God's answer to a prayer through the Spirit. The *logos* word, on the other hand, is the unchangeable, written word of God in the scripture.<sup>471</sup> Cho came to follow the *rhema-logos* teaching,<sup>472</sup> referring to the *logos* as "the general Word of God" and the *rhema* as "the revealed Word of God to an individual".<sup>473</sup> According to Faith movement followers including Cho, the promises in the Scripture are personalized through verbal confession since the Lord is

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<sup>469</sup> Yonggi Cho, *How Can I Be Healed?*, p. 52.

<sup>470</sup> Vinson Synan, "Roots of Yonggi Cho's Theology of Healing", p. 281.

<sup>471</sup> Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, pp. 357-359.

<sup>472</sup> Vinson Synan, "Roots of Yonggi Cho's Theology of Healing", p. 284.

<sup>473</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Successful Home Cell Groups*, p. 9.

bound to what He says in the Bible.<sup>474</sup> They emphasize the importance of “positive confession as a literal bringing into existence” of healing for the body and even for financial prosperity.<sup>475</sup> Cho insists that the *logos* word becomes the *rhema* word through the Spirit, and miracles begin with the *rhema* word.<sup>476</sup>

Later, Cho also followed the prayer style of the American faith healer, Kathryn Kuhlman (1907–1976). Kuhlman’s approach was to use ‘words of knowledge’ to identify and call out the sick from the platform. Unlike Roberts, she prayed for the sick from the pulpit without laying hands on them. By using this method, Cho could minister to thousands of sick people from the pulpit during services although he continued to lay hands on the sick individually after the service.<sup>477</sup>

### **3. The Threefold Blessing in Korean Context**

#### ***3. 1. Interpretation of 3 John 2***

It seems that theologians did not pay much attention to the scripture text 3 John 2 until it was brought into relief by Pentecostals in the twentieth century. Although early church fathers such as Tertullian and Augustine interpreted the scripture, their understanding was different from today’s Pentecostals. For instance, Tertullian used the scripture to emphasize separation from the things that could be the

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<sup>474</sup> Vinson Synan, “Roots of Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Healing”, p. 281.

<sup>475</sup> Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, p. 358.

<sup>476</sup> Vinson Synan, “Roots of Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Healing”, p. 284.

<sup>477</sup> Vinson Synan, “Roots of Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Healing”, p. 284.



cause of soul's corruption.<sup>478</sup> On the other hand, Augustine said that "the prosperity of the soul (3 Jn. 2) might be injuriously affected by the prosperity of the body",<sup>479</sup> and "the body's prosperity may testify to the soul's poverty or vice versa".<sup>480</sup> Unlike the dualistic and ascetic perspectives of the early church fathers, Bede the Venerable (673-735) paraphrased 3 John 2, which depicts the Benedictine ideal of prosperity, as follows:

I earnestly long for this, he says, from the Lord in my frequent prayers, that you bring to a good end what you are doing well, and as your soul, that is the inward intention of your mind, now does favorably, that is, makes progress in your works of almsgiving, since you are rich both in the goodness of a generous spirit and in resources of money, that you bestow these on the needy and so with the Lord's help always be able to lead a life full of virtues<sup>481</sup>

According to Landrus, prosperity in the Benedictine ideal is "communal in nature and frees others from want, both spiritually and physically. Spiritual and financial riches are a blessing when they are poured forth to bless those who have need. For it is in giving to others that the soul makes progress".<sup>482</sup> In contrast to Bede, Ambrosius used the term 'success' and 'flourish' instead of 'prosperity'. He translated 3 John 2 as follows: "My dearest, I make speech from all that you walk

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<sup>478</sup> Timothy David Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 136.

<sup>479</sup> Heather L. Landrus, "Hearing 3 John 2 in the Voice of History", *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* Vol.11, 1 (2002), p. 72.

<sup>480</sup> Heather L. Landrus, "Hearing 3 John 2 in the Voice of History", p. 73.

<sup>481</sup> Bede the Venerable, *The Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, trans. David Hurst (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1985), p. 236.

<sup>482</sup> Heather L. Landrus, "Hearing 3 John 2 in the Voice of History", p. 75.

successfully and flourish, thus as your soul successfully leads you”.<sup>483</sup> In 1854, Albert Barnes commented on 3 John 2, based on the KJV translation: “I wish *above all things* that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth”. He insisted that the Greek *περι παντων* (*peri panton*) rendered as ‘above all things’ should have been translated as ‘concerning, or in respect to all things’ since the term ‘above all things’ can be misunderstood to imply that John valued prosperity and health above salvation.<sup>484</sup>

These early thinkers were more concerned to define what the scripture actually meant to the original readers and in its original context. In contrast, modern Pentecostals are more interested in interpreting it for today’s Christians and making it relevant for contemporary society. Undoubtedly, the Threefold Blessing is very relevant to the socio-economic life of Koreans as well as to the issue of salvation. Indeed, the Threefold Blessing was successfully contextualized into the desperate situation after the Korean War.

### ***3. 2. Contextualization of the Threefold Blessing***

Cho and his theology were criticized as being heretical by mainstream Korean Christianity. During the 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of *Tong Hap* (the Korean

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<sup>483</sup> Ambrosius Catherinus, *In omnes diui Pauli Apostoli: et alias septem canonicas Epistolas*, trans. Vas Bakierowski (Parisiis: Apud Claudium Fremy, 1566), p. 596. Quoted in Heather L. Landrus, “Hearing 3 John 2 in the Voice of History”, p. 75.

<sup>484</sup> Albert Barnes, *Notes: Explanatory and Practical on the General Epistles of James, Peter, John and Jude* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1875), p. 369.

Jesus Presbyterian Church) in 1983, they branded Cho a ‘heretic’ because of his teachings and theology, in particular his focus on this-worldly salvation through the Threefold Blessing which they regarded as a mixture of shamanism, radical evangelism, and speaking in tongues. They also accused Cho of threatening the unity of Korean Christianity and churches by stealing other church members.<sup>485</sup> After over a decade of theological controversies, at the 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention in September, 1994, they concluded that Cho’s church was ‘not a cult’. Their official statement stated that “the sermons and theologies of Yonggi Cho coincide with the beliefs of the Apostolic Universal Church although there are dogmatic matters that still persist which we need to consider (my translation)”.<sup>486</sup>

There are Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal scholars who relate Cho and his theology to Korean shamanism. Harvey Cox argues that Cho’s theology is syncretised with Korean shamanism.<sup>487</sup> Boo Woong Yoo identifies Cho’s role in the worship service as “exactly like that of a shaman”<sup>488</sup> in the shamanic ritual. Walter J. Hollenweger, Yoo’s doctoral supervisor, also states that Cho could be considered “a Pentecostal Shaman par excellence”.<sup>489</sup> Charles H. Kraft points out that God’s

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<sup>485</sup> Yeol Soo Eim, “The Influence of Dr. Cho’s Goodness of God Theology upon His Ministry”, in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Ministry & Theology I*, pp. 84-5.

<sup>486</sup> Myung Soo Park, *Hankook Gyohoi Booheung Woondong Yeongoo* [A Study on the Revival Movement in Korea Church], p. 238.

<sup>487</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 221-228.

<sup>488</sup> Boo Woong Yoo, “Response to Korean Shamanism by the Pentecostal Church”, *International Review of Mission* 75 (January) 1986, p. 74.

<sup>489</sup> Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, p. 100. See Footnote number 2 on the page.

revelation comes through culture and considers God as “a perfect communicator”,<sup>490</sup> who communicates with humanity through culture. Kraft says that God takes “not only humanity and human weakness but also human culture into consideration”,<sup>491</sup> Although the truth of the gospel is the same everywhere all the time, the reason each nation’s Christianity as well as Pentecostalism is unique and different from others is that the soils for the gospel, which are the social, cultural, and political contexts, are not the same. Then, there is a question about how to deal with shamanism, whether to regard it as a folk religion with shamanic spirituality or as part of traditional culture. Korean Pentecostals strongly deny that there are shamanic elements in their Pentecostalism not because they ignore the positive contributions of shamanic elements to church growth, but because they do not want to syncretise the shamanic spirituality with their Pentecostalism.<sup>492</sup> In other words, they accept the cultural and traditional aspects of shamanism, but not its spirituality as a religion.

Myung Soo Park argues that Korean Pentecostalism is influenced by external factors like American Pentecostal/Charismatic movements rather than shamanism as the internal religio-cultural context of Korea.<sup>493</sup> In fact, the Pentecostal message of divine healing and prosperity was neither inspired by shamanic faith nor capitalistic desire, but rather originated with Oral Roberts. Furthermore, Hagin’s Faith

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<sup>490</sup> Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), p.169, 257

<sup>491</sup> Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture*, p. 169.

<sup>492</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 240-41; and Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, pp. 13-4.

<sup>493</sup> Myung Soo Park, “David Yonggi Cho and International Pentecostal/Charismatic Movements”, in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Ministry & Theology II* (Gunpo: Hansei University Logos, 2008), p. 333.

Movement influenced Cho's *logos* and *rhema* theory. Since the 1980s, Cho was deeply influenced by Robert Shuller's Positive Thinking. His televangelism was also influenced by American Pentecostal/Charismatic televangelists.

In this sense, Cox's assertion that indigenous Korean shamanism and shamanic spirituality are key reasons for the extraordinary growth of Korean Pentecostalism is not persuasive.<sup>494</sup> Rather than Korean shamanic influences, two other factors explain the extraordinary growth of Korean Pentecostalism: firstly, the effective adaption of those approved and optimized methodologies for evangelism; and secondly, the successful contextualization of the gospel in the current socio-economic context of Korea. According to Stephen B. Bevens, "indigenization focused on the purely cultural dimension of human experience, while contextualization broadens the understanding of culture to include social, political, and economic questions".<sup>495</sup> Unlike Cox, Yoo, Hollenweger and others, Allan Anderson understands Cho's theology from the perspectives of contextual theology. Anderson says that, through contextualization, theology becomes really meaningful to ordinary people and becomes more than written or academic theology, because "the spiritual dimension" cannot be separated from "God's involvement in the whole life".<sup>496</sup> For this, he uses the term "theology in practice".<sup>497</sup> He insists that this sort of theology can be found in

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<sup>494</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, p. 222.

<sup>495</sup> Stephen B. Bevens, *Models of Contextual Theology*, p. 22.

<sup>496</sup> Allan Anderson, *Zion and Pentecost: The Spirituality and Experience of Pentecostal and Zionist/Apostolic Churches in South Africa* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2000), p. 3.

<sup>497</sup> Allan Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Trento, NJ & Asmara, Eritrea: Africa World Press Inc., 2001), pp. 217-243.

Pentecostalism around the world, and Cho's theology of the Threefold Blessing is one example.<sup>498</sup>

When Cho had to preach the gospel to those who were experiencing severe poverty, he was faced with the deep theological tensions between the theology he learned at the seminary and the reality he was facing in his ministry. He was taught about the God of the future at the seminary, but in his ministry, people were looking for the God of the present who cared for them in their sufferings.<sup>499</sup> Traditionally, Buddhists pursued the monastic life, and Confucians valued honourable poverty rather than prosperity.<sup>500</sup> The mainstream of Korean Christianity also ignored the reality of the life of Koreans such as poverty, disease, and socio-political struggles. However, Lesslie Newbigin says that in contextualization "the Gospel comes alive in particular contexts".<sup>501</sup> Bevans suggests that external factors such as historical events, political forces, cultural shifts and intellectual currents "bring to light certain internal factors within Christian faith itself that point not only to the possibility but also to the necessity of doing theology in context".<sup>502</sup> The main reason for the success of Pentecostalism in Korea is that Pentecostal messages based on the Threefold Blessing have addressed the needs of ordinary Korean people. Pentecostalism, in other words, was successfully contextualized into the Korean traditional, cultural and socio-economic contexts after the post Korean War by means of the Threefold Blessing. One

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<sup>498</sup> Allan Anderson, "The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho", p. 109.

<sup>499</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Health and Prosperity*, p. 11.

<sup>500</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 5. 3.

<sup>501</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (London: SPCK, 1989), pp. 152-53.

<sup>502</sup> Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, p. 5.

of Cho's major preaching philosophies is "Find need and meet need".<sup>503</sup> His sermons directly deal with the current problems of Koreans<sup>504</sup> and provide them with hope in the form of prosperity for poverty, divine healing for diseases, and salvation for the Last Judgment.<sup>505</sup> As hope, ironically, always begins in hopeless situations, the Threefold Blessing as hope was contextualized for Koreans who were experiencing hopeless situations. For instance, God as Judge cannot be regarded as a source of hope for Koreans who are victims of poverty and illness because they already feel they are living under judgment. Likewise, pietism is not appealing to the extreme poor, and without Jesus as the Healer the gospel cannot be good news to the sick. The Threefold Blessing became a source of hope for the sick, the poor, and the lost. Through contextualization, the Threefold Blessing has come to engage with the life of Koreans and is one reason why they attend Pentecostal churches in Korea.

### ***3. 3. Reconciliation and the Threefold Blessing***

There are two theological premises undergirding the Threefold Blessing theory: the goodness of God and reconciliation with God. The goodness of God begins with the assumption that any bad thing cannot proceed from a good God, and all that God creates must be good. Thus, poverty, diseases, and sin cannot be the will of God

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<sup>503</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Church Growth vol.3* (Seoul: Youngsan Press, 1983), p. 30; and Boo Woong Yoo, "Response to Korean Shamanism by the Pentecostal Church", p. 73.

<sup>504</sup> Won Suk Ma, "The Effect of Rev. Cho's Sermon Style for Church Growth on the Development of Theology," in Sung Hoon Myung and Young Gi Hong (eds.), *Charis and Charisma: David Yonggi Cho and the Growth of Yoido Full Gospel Church*, p. 162.

<sup>505</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Health and Prosperity*, pp. 11-2.

for Korean Pentecostals. There was neither lack nor hardship in the Garden of Eden, but, after the corruption of human beings, they could not eat without hard work, and the ground produced thorns and thistles (Genesis 3:17-19). The corruption of humanity included both the separation of humankind from God and the withdrawal of blessings. Augustine states that good does not stand in opposition to evil. To Augustine, “evil is nothing but the corruption of natural good”,<sup>506</sup> because, as evil does not exist of itself, it is just non-existence or the lack of existence of good.<sup>507</sup> Thus, the essence of evil can only be removed by the goodness of God.<sup>508</sup> In other words, suffering can be removed by the Threefold Blessing. Sam Hwan Kim says that the Threefold Blessing is “the removal of evil from one’s life”.<sup>509</sup> In regard to this ontological evil, Martin Luther says, “God arranged to take away through Christ whatever the devil brought in through Adam”.<sup>510</sup> Korean Pentecostals are convinced that living under hardship is not the will of God,<sup>511</sup> and the Threefold Blessing is the way to restore “the original state before the fall”.<sup>512</sup> They believe that Christ was crucified under the ontological curse, and evil caused their present sufferings. Cho distinguishes the Threefold Blessing from the blessings in shamanism which is not concerned about the source or the means of blessings. According to Cho, by the grace

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<sup>506</sup> Augustine, “The Nature of the Good”, in John H. S. Burleigh (trans and ed.), *Augustine: Earlier Writings* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1953), p. 325.

<sup>507</sup> Augustine, “The Nature of the Good”, pp. 324-350.

<sup>508</sup> Sam Hwan Kim, “The Question of Good and Evil in Full Gospel Faith: A Study of the Theological Foundation for the Three-fold Blessing of Dr. Yonggi Cho”, in Hansei University (ed.), *2002 Young San International Theological Symposium*, p. 292.

<sup>509</sup> Sam Hwan Kim, “The Question of Good and Evil in Full Gospel Faith: A Study of the Theological Foundation for the Three-fold Blessing of Dr. Yonggi Cho”, p. 282.

<sup>510</sup> Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, trans. Wilhelm Pauck (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1961), p. 179.

<sup>511</sup> Yeol Soo Eim, “The Influence of Dr. Cho’s Goodness of God Theology upon His Ministry”, p. 86.

<sup>512</sup> Yeol Soo Eim, “The Influence of Dr. Cho’s Goodness of God Theology upon His Ministry”, p. 87.



of God, the Threefold Blessing will be given to those who accept Christ as Saviour through true repentance and have the faith to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.<sup>513</sup> This means that, in Cho's understanding, blessings come after a person is reconciled with God. That is the reason that the Threefold Blessing begins with salvation which is prior to financial blessing or physical health.

Traditionally, Koreans accepted physical and financial sufferings as their destinies. However, Korean Pentecostals have come to believe that ontological evil can be removed by the blessing of God through Christ. The biblical texts of Isaiah 53:5 and 2 Corinthians 8:9,<sup>514</sup> are often used by Pentecostals as supporting texts for 3 John 2. With these verses, they assert the appropriateness of the Threefold Blessing. For instance, based on these scriptures, they believe that they can be healed because Christ was whipped and they can be rich because he became poor. In this sense, the Crucifixion is directly related to the Threefold Blessing. Indeed, the Crucifixion was the means of redeeming the soul as well as removing the ontological evil and curse which are the cause of hopelessness in the present life. There is no doubt that the agony of Christ was the will of God to bring about reconciliation with human beings. According to Luther, although God has to sentence all sinners to death, the God on the Cross endured terrible pain in order "to heal our wounds, which were caused by God's

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<sup>513</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Ohjungbokeum kwa Samjungchukbok* [The Five Fold Gospel and the Three Fold Blessing], p. 42.

<sup>514</sup> "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5 – NKJV)." and "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9 – NKJV)."

wrath; this Lord suffers wounds, himself receiving his wrath... The death of Christ is the death of death”.<sup>515</sup> Luther describes Jesus on the Cross as “God fighting with God at Golgotha (da streydet Gott mit Gott)”.<sup>516</sup> In his book *The Crucified God*, Moltmann says that the agony of Christ on the Cross was the event which intervened into the suffering of human life and society.<sup>517</sup> According to Moltmann, “God experiences suffering, death and hell. This is the way he [God] experiences history”.<sup>518</sup> As black slaves who were suffering under inhuman circumstances directly connected themselves to the passion of Christ, Korean Pentecostals relate their sufferings to the affliction of Christ on the Cross. To black slaves, the suffering and death of Christ were the symbol of their own agony, inhuman situations, sufferings, and even fate.<sup>519</sup> James H. Cone says, “When black slaves suffered, God suffered”.<sup>520</sup> Cone says “the liberation of the oppressed is a part of the innermost nature of God...the blackness of God means that the essence of the nature of God is to be found in the concept of liberation”.<sup>521</sup> Korean Pentecostals also directly relate their spiritual, physical and financial difficulties to the suffering of Christ and the Crucifixion.<sup>522</sup> However, unlike black theology and liberation theology, it seems that they are indifferent to communal

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<sup>515</sup> Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, pp. 179-180.

<sup>516</sup> Kazoh Kitamori, *Theology of the Pain of God* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1966), p. 21.

<sup>517</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, trans. R. A. Wilson and John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 2001).

<sup>518</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1977), p. 64.

<sup>519</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, p. 44.

<sup>520</sup> James H. Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues* (New York: Orbis Books, 1995), p. 62.

<sup>521</sup> James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), p. 64.

<sup>522</sup> For more on this, see chapter 3, section 5. 1. 1.

sufferings, injustice, unrighteousness, and inequality. As such, they do not actively engage in social action or address issues related to communal hardship.<sup>523</sup>

According to Korean Pentecostals, before the fall of humankind, there was no harm, hurt, or destruction but prosperity for all creatures. Yet, after the fall, the ecosystem was disrupted and society collapsed. The ground produced thorns, and people killed each other. Thus, for Korean Pentecostals, the suffering of Christ and his resurrection were intended to bring about reconciliation with God and the restoration of divine blessing. However, they do not believe that this reconciliation and restoration extends to the ecological or communal dimensions. It seems that they have great concern about individual healing and prosperity but not for social inequality and injustice or for the destruction of ecosystems caused by human greed. In other words, they are concerned about receiving individual blessing rather than about societal transformation. Although the Threefold Blessing flourished in a context of societal malaise, Korean Pentecostals were less concerned about social matters, political issues, and environmental disruption. For this reason, they have often been criticized for neglecting to address social inequalities and injustice. Therefore, Korean Pentecostals need to broaden the meaning of reconciliation and blessing to include the social and ecological dimensions.

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<sup>523</sup> For more on this, see chapter 2, section 5.

### 3. 4. *Holistic Salvation*

In the trichotomic view, human beings consist of three elements: spirit, body, and soul. Dualists such as the Gnostics, however, understand that the body and the soul are separable, and the body is inferior to the soul. In the Hebrew Scriptures, on the contrary, Jews neither understand humankind in terms of dichotomy nor trichotomy. They do not separate human beings into the body and the spirit, but understand human nature as an integrated unity.<sup>524</sup> Karl Barth also argues that human beings cannot be understood “as merely a soul, merely as body, or as a creature split up into a body and a soul as it were”.<sup>525</sup> He disagrees with psychophysical parallelism because he understands that the body and the soul are inseparable and human beings can only be understood as a unity combining the body and the soul.<sup>526</sup> Traditionally, the mainstream of Korean Christianity has emphasized spiritual salvation. To them, an emphasis on hope for prosperity and blessing is due to shamanic or secular influences. However, Pentecostal world-views are holistic and God-centred.<sup>527</sup> Jackie Johns says that for Pentecostals, “all things relate to God and God relates to all things”.<sup>528</sup> Korean Pentecostals neither polarize the body and the soul, nor demand the sacrifice of the

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<sup>524</sup> Byung In Ko, “Recovery Based on Threefold Blessing”, in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Ministry & Theology I*, pp. 235-36.

<sup>525</sup> Otto Weber, *Karl Barth’s Church Dogmatic: An Introductory Report on Volumes I: 1 to III:4*, trans. Arthur C. Cochrane (London: Lutterworth Press, 1953), p. 159.

<sup>526</sup> Otto Weber, *Karl Barth’s Church Dogmatic*, p. 159.

<sup>527</sup> Cheryl Bridges Johns, “Healing and Deliverance: A Pentecostal Perspective”, in Jürgen Moltmann and Karl Josef Kuschel (eds.), *Pentecostal Movements as an Ecumenical Challenge* (London: SCM Press, 1996), p. 46.

<sup>528</sup> Jackie Johns, “Pentecostalism and the Postmodern Worldview”, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 78 (1995), p. 88

body for the soul. Similarly, Cho does not separate hope into two aspects: hope for eternal life and hope for blessings in this present life. Cho states as follows:

I had such complicated feelings that I could hardly bear it. The people to whom I tried to preach the gospel were living in a spiritually barren state, facing a wall of despair, and were so destitute that they had difficulty finding enough food to eat. While preaching the Word to them and feeding them, I found myself involved in gross self-contradiction, for the God I had learned about at the seminary seemed to be merely the God of the future. I could not find the God of the present to show Him to people who were living in such question stirred in my heart. Introducing the God of the past could hardly make any impression on those people; on the other hand, the urgent situation of their present state kept the Christ of the future from being preached to them. So I cried out to God. I cried out not only for them, but I cried out for myself; ‘Oh, my Lord! Where is the God of the present? With what can I give hope and new life to these people who are in despair, starved and poorly clothed? Oh, Lord! Where are You at this hour-You who are God to them as well as to me? I cried and prayed with tears day in and day out, earnestly seeking. After I spent much time in supplication, God finally spoke to my heart. His words, warm and full of hope, were a revelation to me. The word from God contained the truth of the threefold blessings of salvation, health and prosperity written in 3 John 2.<sup>529</sup>

Cho does not restrict salvation to the spiritual dimension but extends it to include redemption from the hardships of life. Cho states that salvation must include saving “the whole person including spirit, body, and everything in life”.<sup>530</sup> According to Cho, furthermore, salvation not only redeems our souls from mortal death, but also

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<sup>529</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Health and Prosperity*, p. 11.

<sup>530</sup> Byung In Ko, “Recovery Based on Threefold Blessing”, p. 242.

frees us from curses and blessings in life.<sup>531</sup> Cho believes that “God’s desire for all of His people is good health”.<sup>532</sup> Thus, for Cho, salvation encompasses not only the soul but also the body as well as the circumstances of life because spiritual salvation does not address the needs of those who are suffering from severe physical and financial difficulties. The salvation of the Threefold Blessing is holistic, because it not only caters for spiritual blessing but includes physical health and financial prosperity, and is opposed to the idea that Christians have to sacrifice earthly blessings for spiritual salvation.

Theologically, Cho’s holistic soteriology is related to three calamities brought about by the fall of humanity: spiritual death, the curse of poverty and destitution, and the suffering caused by disease and physical death.<sup>533</sup> Cho insists that after the fall, humankind came to live under the influence of threefold corruptions which are spiritual (Genesis 3:17-18), physical (Genesis 3:19) and circumstantial death (Genesis 3:17-18).<sup>534</sup> According to Cho, after the fall, the soul was corrupted, humankind became egoistic, and the body suffered from various diseases and sicknesses. Also the land began to produce thorns and thistles.<sup>535</sup> Thus, salvation must be holistic, which implies spiritual, physical and circumstantial blessing including financial

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<sup>531</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Health, and Prosperity*, p. 16; and Thomson K. Mathew, “Oral Roberts and David Yonggi Cho: A Comparative Evaluation of Their Theologies of Healing”, p. 299.

<sup>532</sup> Thomson K. Mathew, “Oral Roberts and David Yonggi Cho: A Comparative Evaluation of Their Theologies of Healing”, p. 299.

<sup>533</sup> Yonggi Cho, “Three Calamities and Three Blessings” (Sunday sermon on 09 November 2003), available from [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1\\_1.asp?shType=1&code=2003&mm=11](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1_1.asp?shType=1&code=2003&mm=11), accessed on 12 April 2012.

<sup>534</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Story of Fivefold Gospel* (Seoul: Seoul Logos, 1998), p. 47.

<sup>535</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Fivefold Gospel and Threefold Blessing* (Seoul: Seoul Logos, 1998), p. 132.

prosperity through restoration of humanity's relationship with God in Christ.<sup>536</sup> In this sense, salvation and the suffering of Christ on the Cross are not only intended to redeem the soul but also provide deliverance from physical pains and poverty. Cho defines the three calamities as curses from God following the fall and declares that "believers are already redeemed from the curses" through Christ.<sup>537</sup> It seems that Moltmann had a clear understanding of Cho's holistic soteriology. Moltmann says that "Dr. Cho, splendidly, sees here a double meaning: (1) Christ shed his blood and died for our sins, in order to bring us the eternal salvation of fellowship with God; (2) Christ carried our sickness in order not only to redeem our souls, but so as to heal our bodies too from the curse of sickness and to bless us".<sup>538</sup> The Threefold Blessing addresses the question of why believers still have to endure devastating experiences despite all the curses having been removed for believers through the sufferings and death of Christ on the Cross. To Cho, because diseases and poverty are evil, and a curse, salvation includes healing and blessing. However, physical health and prosperity are neither equal, nor prior to, spiritual salvation in the Threefold Blessing. In other words, the blessings of health and financial prosperity are not considered apart from spiritual salvation, and physical health and material prosperity are not emphasized at the expense of spiritual health and prosperity in the Threefold Blessing. In holistic soteriological understanding, health and prosperity follow from the

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<sup>536</sup> Pan Ho Kim, "Paul Tillich and Dr. Yonggi Cho: A Dialogue between Their Respective Theologies of Healing", in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho's Ministry & Theology I*, p. 371.

<sup>537</sup> Yeol Soo Eim, "The Influence of Dr. Cho's Goodness of God Theology upon His Ministry", p. 90.

<sup>538</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life", p. 153.

salvation of the soul, and salvation in the Threefold Blessing is not restricted to spiritual salvation. Thus, to Cho, Christ's suffering is the basis of hope for healing and prosperity, and the Resurrection and the Second Advent provide the hope for eternal life. In other words, Cho understands that the hopes for healing and prosperity are related to the suffering of Christ on the Cross, and the salvific hope theologically relates to his resurrection and the promise of the Second Advent. Jesus is perceived as the Redeemer, the Blessor, and the Healer in the Threefold Blessing. Healing and prosperity, however, are often more considered to Korean Pentecostals without emphasising salvific hope. Needless to say, healing and prosperity without salvation are meaningless in Christian life. As, for Moltmann, eschatological hope is primary and essential for Christian faith.<sup>539</sup> His theology of hope can prevent this theological danger. Furthermore, eschatological hope can help the Threefold Blessing not be secularized or Christian mammonism.

#### **4. The Hope of the Threefold Blessing**

##### ***4. 1. Hope in Hopelessness***

The Theology of Hope and the Threefold Blessing were developed about the same period during the 1960s and 1970s, and contextualized in similar socio-political and economical contexts. The situation of Germany, as a defeated nation following World

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<sup>539</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, pp. 16-18.



War II, was similar to Korea after Japanese rule and the Korean War. The socio-economic and religio-cultural functions of both countries collapsed, and people were suffering from the aftermath of the war. It seemed that there was no hope in both countries. However, ironically, hope always emerges in situations of hopelessness. While Moltmann was in the internment camp as a prisoner of war from 1945 to 1948, he experienced the reality of God. He says that he experienced both “God as the power of hope” and “God’s presence in suffering”.<sup>540</sup> This became the foundation of his theology of hope which he developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>541</sup> Moltmann states, “Hope’s statements of promise must stand in contradiction to the reality which can at present be experienced”.<sup>542</sup> In situations of abundance in all aspects of life, hope will be not necessary. If someone has all they need in life but still desires to have more, this cannot be hope but reflects an attitude of greed. Lack, normally, is accompanied by sufferings, and hope begins in such circumstances. When Christians suffer, they are forced to seek God, and try to find hope to overcome their hardship. The basis for having hope in hopeless situations is the promise of God. However, often Christians find themselves experiencing the contradictions between the experiential life of suffering and the promise of God. Moltmann says that “hope must prove its power” in this contradiction.<sup>543</sup> Hope enables Christians to patiently endure suffering until the promise of God eventually becomes a reality. Hope, however, is not merely an uncertain wait, but an intense expectation based on faith

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<sup>540</sup> Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (London: T & T Clark Ltd., 1995), p. 1.

<sup>541</sup> Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, p. 1.

<sup>542</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, p. 18.

<sup>543</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, p. 19.

that God will replace their sufferings with blessings. According to Moltmann, “Hope is nothing else than the expectation of those things which faith has believed to have been truly promised by God”.<sup>544</sup> Similarly, Cho says that without expectation that God will remove their sufferings, people cannot escape from the tribulation and sufferings which they are facing.<sup>545</sup> Cho is emphatic about the importance of combining expectation with prayer. He says that “when we want to receive something we must set a goal through prayer, and then have a burning desire and great expectation to achieve the goal” in God.<sup>546</sup> In comparison with Moltmann’s hope theology, the hope of the Threefold Blessing is not yet developed well theologically. For instance, if Moltmann’s hope is based on the theology of resurrection of Christ and His second coming,<sup>547</sup> the hope of the Threefold Blessing has developed from one Biblical scripture, 3 John 2. If Moltmann’s hope has eschatological and soteriological perspectives, the hope of the triple blessing is related with prosperous theology which is deeply rooted into the Korean context after the Korean War.

Without expectation that God will give all good things to his children and faith that he can fulfil their needs, hope cannot develop in those who feel hopeless. The hope contained in the Threefold Blessing stood in stark contrast to the dire circumstances in the post-Korean War context. Korean Pentecostals had a hope for the Threefold Blessing with the expectation that God would bless them in their hopeless

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<sup>544</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, p. 20.

<sup>545</sup> Yonggi Cho, *March Forward to Hope* (Seoul: Seoul Logos Co., 2002), p. 12.

<sup>546</sup> Yonggi Cho, *March Forward to Hope*, p. 12.

<sup>547</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, pp. 20-22; and Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, xxi.

situations: alongside spiritual salvation, they expected divine healing of their diseases and the blessing of prosperity in their extreme poverty. As a result, the Threefold Blessing enabled the successful contextualization of the gospel within the desperate socio-economic and religio-political contexts of Korea.

In his sermons, Cho often uses the phrase ‘vision and dreams’ interchangeably with the term ‘hope’. Cho states that these futuristic words are able to overcome present sufferings and “God has been using this [these] language of the Holy Spirit to change many lives”.<sup>548</sup> Indeed, hopelessness can be overcome only by hope. For instance, assuming that there is someone who wants to give up on life out of despair, the only antidote to suicide is to find hope. During the industrialization, urbanization, and democratization of Korea after the Korean War, although Cho was not involved in socio-political acts or movements, he gave hope to Koreans with his message of the Threefold Blessing, and his theology of hope greatly influenced Korean society.<sup>549</sup>

#### ***4. 2. Hope and Faith***

Veil-Matti Kärkkäinen claims that there is a theological resonance between Cho’s Pentecostal theology of hope and Wolfhart Pannenberg’s theology of hope and

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<sup>548</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, p. 46.

<sup>549</sup> Sang Bok Lee, “Youngsan Cho Yonggi Moksa eui Sahoigoowon Ehae [An Understanding of Rev. Yonggi Cho’s Social Salvation]”, *Journal of Young San Theology* vol.14 (2008), pp. 57-8.

faith, because both regard the promise of God as the basis of faith, and faith stands firm in the trust that God will fulfil his promise in the future.<sup>550</sup> Pannenberg understands that faith is naturally connected with hope, and the promise of God is never apart from hope.<sup>551</sup> According to Pannenberg, “hope reaches beyond what is present to something that is not yet visible (Romans 8:24-25; cf 2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1)”.<sup>552</sup> The Bible says that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). Cho reinterprets the verse as follows: “faith is also a certificate of title of things we hope for eagerly”.<sup>553</sup> Although hope is oriented towards the future, it can be substantiated by faith. Cho uses the word ‘certificate’ for the ownership of hope through faith, because hope is not the subject of yearning or futuristic uncertainty any longer, but it is realized in the present by faith. In this sense, hope is oriented both towards the future and the present due to faith.

In the Threefold Blessing, Jesus is the Saviour, the Healer and the Blessor. For Moltmann, Christian faith is primarily and essentially Christian hope.<sup>554</sup> However he points out that without the knowledge of Christ, “hope becomes a utopia and remains hanging in the air” and without hope, faith “become a fainthearted and ultimately a

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<sup>550</sup> Veil-Matti Kärkkäinen, “March Forward to Hope: Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Pentecostal Theology of Hope”, in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Ministry & Theology II*, p. 47.

<sup>551</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology vol.3*, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapid, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), p. 174.

<sup>552</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology vol.3*, p. 174.

<sup>553</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Unleashing the Power of Faith* (Alachua, FL: Bridge-Logos, 2006), p. 16.

<sup>554</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, p. 16; Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann* (London: T & T Clark International, 2003), p. 176.

dead faith”.<sup>555</sup> Without the knowledge of Christ, hope for prosperity in the Threefold Blessing will be similar to aspiration in shamanistic materialism.

Korean Pentecostals are convinced that they can be saved through the Crucifixion of Christ; they can be healed because of his stripes (Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24); and they can become rich because he became poor (2 Corinthians 8:9). Here, there is no distinction between the knowledge of Christ and faith, since the knowledge of Christ does not imply rational knowledge but experiential knowledge of Jesus as Saviour, Healer, and dispenser of blessings through faith. Korean Pentecostals neither search for prosperity and physical health outside of the knowledge of Christ nor do they ignore the idea that the experience of prosperity and physical health hinges on the prosperity of the soul.

The Threefold Blessing pursues spiritual, physical and financial salvation but, without the knowledge of Christ for spiritual salvation, the Threefold Blessing lapses into mammonism or shamanic faith. Veil-Matti Kärkkäinen evaluates Cho’s theology of hope as “bold faith-expectation”.<sup>556</sup> Cho emphasizes hope in the unseen. His concept of hope does not operate in possibilities but is based on unconditional faith. Cho says as follows:

Although you may not see any evidence of it with your eyes or  
hears any sound with your ears, even as your future seems dark,

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<sup>555</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, p. 20.

<sup>556</sup> Veil-Matti Kärkkäinen, “March Forward to Hope: Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Pentecostal Theology of Hope”, p. 43.

when faith energy starts to work within you and makes you think,  
'it's already come about,' then you become a person of faith.<sup>557</sup>

In his sermons, Cho often quotes the story of Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 17: 15-22 as an example of hope and faith. According to Romans 4:18-21,<sup>558</sup> when Abraham and Sarah heard the promise of God, they had a hope for a baby even though Sarah's womb was barren. Hope diverts the present reality into a new phase because with hope people can transfer their concerns over current matters they are struggling with to faith in the promise of God.

The Threefold Blessing was the promise of God to Korean Pentecostals in the desperate situations of Korea. In this context, they had the hope of the Threefold Blessing, which can be called the 'Pentecostal hope in Korean Pentecostal contexts', and faith that God would fulfil this hope in their lives. Faith begins with hope, and hope is grounded in expectation of the fulfilment of the promise of God. Cho says that God's power can be released for miracles through faith.<sup>559</sup> Thus, in this sense, hope and faith are inseparably linked.

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<sup>557</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Unleashing the Power of Faith*, pp. 16-7.

<sup>558</sup> "Who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being full convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform (Romans 4:18-21 – NKJV)."

<sup>559</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Solving Life's Problems*, p. 2.

## 5. The Threefold Blessing and the Theology of Hope

### 5. 1. *Theological Basis of Moltmann's Hope and the Threefold Blessing*

Since the publication of Moltmann's book *Theology of Hope* in 1964, his theology has influenced various types of contextual theology directly and indirectly, including Political Theology, Black Theology, Liberation Theology, Feminist Theology and even *Minjung* Theology in Korea. Due to the theological similarities between Moltmann's theology and *Minjung* Theology, Moltmann was considered a liberal theologian by Korean conservative Christians as well as Korean Pentecostals. Since 1995, however, a theological conversation between Korean Pentecostals and Moltmann has begun.

In September 1995, Moltmann was invited by Cho with his pupil Dr. Jong Wha Park, who was the chair of the Presbyterian Church in South Korea at the time,<sup>560</sup> and had three hours theological dialogue with Cho.<sup>561</sup>

After the dialogue, Moltmann discovered similarities between their biographical and theological journeys. In fact, both the Threefold Blessing and the Theology of Hope were developed based on their personal experiences of faith and the severe hardships of life. This means that both theologies have a common

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<sup>560</sup> Kukmin Ilbo, one of Korean daily News Papers, addresses the position of Dr. Jong Wha Park at that time and reports that Moltmann also gave lectures on his theology of hope to Cho and other pastors at YFGC. See <http://news.kukinews.com/article/view.asp?arcid=0921286513>, accessed on 26 October 2011.

<sup>561</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life", p. 148.

theological denominator. By using the Korean term *Han*, Moltmann identifies himself, as a victim of the Second World War, with Cho who was suffering from extreme poverty and tuberculosis. He also equates the difficult socio-economic circumstances of post-war Germany with the socio-political chaos of Korea after the Korean War.<sup>562</sup> In regard to the relationship between his theology of hope and the Pentecostal movement (including Korean Pentecostalism), Moltmann says as follows:

Pastor Cho began his mission in the Han of the Korean people after the Korean War. I began my life in Christ in the Han of the Second World War in the ruins of post-war Germany. Moreover, the theology of hope and the Pentecostal movement have a common spiritual root as well. This is to be found in the German revival movement that is linked with the name of the Blumhardts, father and son. This revival movement began with a healing and an exorcism which the father, Johann Christopher Blumhardt, experienced in a little village in the Black Forest. The movement continued in the prophetic and healing activity of his son, Christopher Blumhardt, in Bad Boll, near Tübingen. For Blumhardt, 'healing and hoping' belonged together in just the same way as 'praying and watching'-'watching' for the coming of Christ, and the 'hastening to meet' Christ in his coming. Karl Barth called Blumhardt a first 'theologian of hope' and as a young man was deeply influenced by him. Christopher Blumhardt became the spiritual father both of the dialectical theology of Karl Barth and Eduard Thurneysen, and of the religious-social movement of Leonhard Ragaz and Hermann Kutter in Switzerland.... Today, among American Pentecostal theologians we find more and more followers of the forward-looking and proactive hope of Christopher Blumhardt. It is the experience of

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<sup>562</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life", pp. 148-49.



an active hope that transforms life and in anticipation reaches out into the future of Christ.<sup>563</sup>

Moltmann clearly states that “My Theology of Hope has two roots: Christoph Blumhardt (1842-1919) and Ernst Bloch (1885-1977). I was not in Bad Boll; nor was I in Württemberg. But I was first influenced by Christoph Blumhardt before I read Ernst Bloch...”<sup>564</sup> Christoph F. Blumhardt was just a pastor, not a theologian, and did not have any intention to develop his theology or theoretical work even though he studied theology in Tübingen.<sup>565</sup> However, Karl Barth does not hesitate to call Christoph F. Blumhardt a theologian of hope,<sup>566</sup> and Moltmann acknowledges Blumhardt as the first theologian of hope.<sup>567</sup> In his book *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, Barth includes Christoph F. Blumhardt as one of twenty-five most influential philosophers and theologians.<sup>568</sup> The German revival<sup>569</sup> led by

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<sup>563</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life”, p. 149.

<sup>564</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “The Hope for the Kingdom of God and Signs of Hope in the World: The Relevance of Blumhardt’s Theology Today”, *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, Vol. 26 No. 1, Spring (2004), pp. 4-16 (4).

<sup>565</sup> Simeon Zahl, *Pneumatology and Theology of the Cross in the Preaching of Christoph Friedrich Blumhardt: The Holy Spirit between Wittenberg and Azusa Street* (London and New York: T & T Clark, 2010), p. 11.

<sup>566</sup> Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History*, trans. B. Cozens and J. Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1972), p. 646.

<sup>567</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life”, p. 149.

<sup>568</sup> Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History*, pp. 643-653.

<sup>569</sup> While Johann Christoph Blumhardt was ministering in the Schwabian village of Möttlingen, there were two demon possessed sisters, named Gottliebin Dittus and her sister Katharina who experienced an exorcism. For two years, Johann Christoph Blumhardt had been praying for Gottliebin Dittus who had suffered from demon possession for many years. One night in December 1843, the demon was cast out from Gottliebin but entered her sister Katharina. When the demon finally left Katharina, it shouted out ‘Jesus ist Sieger! [Jesus is Victor]. After the exorcism, divine healings also followed. The news of the exorcism and healing spread quickly to other regions, and within weeks, thousands of people came to Möttlingen. They were eager to receive prayer for

Johann Christoph Blumhardt (1805-1880) and his son, Christoph F. Blumhardt, began with exorcism and healing,<sup>570</sup> and its main theme was “Jesus ist Sieger [Jesus is Victor]”.<sup>571</sup> For instance, the foundational song of the Blumhardt revival movement was:

Jesus wears the glorious crown,  
Triumphs over all his foes;  
Jesus conquers; all the world  
Now his domination knows.  
Jesus comes with victors' might,  
Leads from darkness into light.<sup>572</sup>

Blumhardt found hope in the victory of Jesus on the cross, and his hope was not lodged in human needs but in the divine promise.<sup>573</sup> This hope of Blumhardt's significantly influenced Moltmann's theology of hope. Moltmann was also influenced by Ernst Bloch, a Jewish Marxist philosopher. Although Moltmann disagrees with Barth's claim that he (Moltmann) was baptized by Bloch's *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* [the Principle of Hope],<sup>574</sup> he agrees that Bloch's philosophy of hope contributed significantly to the development of his own theology of hope. Moltmann says that Bloch's philosophy of hope provided the basis for his “biblical hope” and his

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healing from Blumhardt. It is interesting that most healings and conversions occurred after confession of sins. Also the revival is referred to as ‘a Bußbewegung [repentance movement]’ like the Korean revivals in the early 1900s. See Simeon Zahl, *Pneumatology and Theology of the Cross in the Preaching of Christoph Friedrich Blumhardt*, pp. 13-5; R. A. N. Kydd, “Healing in the Christian Church”, in Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, pp. 700-701.

<sup>570</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life”, p. 149.

<sup>571</sup> Simeon Zahl, *Pneumatology and Theology of the Cross in the Preaching of Christoph Friedrich Blumhardt*, p. 15.

<sup>572</sup> Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History*, p. 645.

<sup>573</sup> Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History*, p. 648.

<sup>574</sup> Karl Barth, *Letters 1961-1968*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1981), p. 175.

understanding of “Jewish faith in the promise and the Christian resurrection hope”.<sup>575</sup>

Bauckham also argues that Moltmann developed his theology of hope through

“critical dialogue with Bloch’s philosophy”.<sup>576</sup> Through Blumhardt and Bloch’s

theological influences, Moltmann’s theology of hope became eschatological and

deeply related to the Resurrection of Christ and the promise of the Second Advent.

Furthermore, Moltmann understands the Crucifixion and the Resurrection in

Trinitarian terms. He insists that the suffering of Christ on the cross was “the torment

of hell” because the Crucifixion was the suffering of being abandoned by God.<sup>577</sup>

Unlike liberal theologians who understand the death of Christ as the death of God,<sup>578</sup>

Moltmann recognizes the Crucifixion as the death of Christ in God. In other words,

he believes that the event of the Cross involved the inter-relationship between “Jesus

and his God, between the Father and Jesus”<sup>579</sup> and was “the community of will of the

Father and the Son”.<sup>580</sup> Moltmann also says that “by entering into death on the cross,

Christ brings fellowship with God into this darkness and saves those who were

lost”.<sup>581</sup> Clearly, there could be no hope for humanity and the world if the death of

Christ meant the death of God. Thus, for Moltmann, without the Resurrection of

Christ and the promise of the Second Advent, Christians cannot have hope in the

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<sup>575</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Experiences in Theology: Ways and Forms of Christian Theology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 2000), p. 92.

<sup>576</sup> Richard Bauckham, *Moltmann: Messianic Theology in the Making* (Hant, UK: Marshall Pickering, 1987), pp. 7-8.

<sup>577</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, p. 150.

<sup>578</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), pp. 129-177.

<sup>579</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, p. 151.

<sup>580</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, p. 252.

<sup>581</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life”, p. 153.

context of the desperation of death. On the other hand, for Cho, the hopes of prosperity and healing in the Threefold Blessing are related to God's promises not only concerning the second coming Christ but also his promises of healing and blessing contained in the Bible. Therefore, Christ in the Threefold Blessing is not only the one who is coming to judge but also the healer and dispenser of blessing in this life.

### **5. 1. 1. Christ's Suffering and Hope**

To Moltmann, the Cross is nothing but a tragedy for Christ without the resurrection.<sup>582</sup> Moltmann says that "the true Christian foundation for the hope of universal salvation is the theology of the cross, and the realistic consequence of the theology of the cross can only be the restoration of all things."<sup>583</sup> To Moltmann, the event of the Resurrection is "the dialectical event of eschatological promise": death and eternal life, god-forsakenness and the glory of God, the absence of God and the presence of God.<sup>584</sup> Thus, Moltmann's hope is based on the resurrection of Christ and the promise of the Second Advent.<sup>585</sup> In comparison with Moltmann's hope, the hope of the Threefold Blessing begins not with the Resurrection and the Second Advent,

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<sup>582</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Experiences of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1980), p. 53.

<sup>583</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1996), p. 251.

<sup>584</sup> Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark Ltd., 1995), pp. 100-101.

<sup>585</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, pp. 20-22; and Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, xxi.

but with the suffering of Christ. For instance, the hope for healing in the Threefold Blessing is related to Christ's suffering rather than his resurrection and is based on the texts of Isaiah 53:5 and 2 Peter 2:24 ('by his stripes we are healed'). In other words, in the Threefold Blessing, Christ's suffering is the basis for the hope of healing and prosperity, and the Resurrection and the Second Advent are the basis of hope for eternal life. Responding to this Pentecostal perspective, Moltmann states that "He [Jesus] healed them [the sick] not through His superior power but through His suffering".<sup>586</sup> The suffering of Christ is the biblical foundation for healing, and the sick can have hope for healing through his suffering. This means that, in a chronological sense, the Pentecostal hope begins with the suffering of Christ, which is as important as the Resurrection. Furthermore, based on the scriptures Isaiah 53:4 and 2 Corinthians 8: 9,<sup>587</sup> Cho understands that Christians can be rich because Jesus became poor to make them rich.<sup>588</sup> However, Moltmann and Cho understand the gospel's application to the poor and the rich differently. While Cho relates the suffering of Christ to personal blessing, Moltmann extends the scope of the Crucifixion to include socio-political matters. Moltmann says that "to be crucified with Christ is no longer a purely private and spiritualized matter, but develops into

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<sup>586</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life", p. 153.

<sup>587</sup> "He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53: 4); "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

<sup>588</sup> Yonggi Cho, "Is Poverty the Will of God?" (Sunday sermon on 11 June 1989), available from [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/fl/WF1\\_1\\_re.asp?aidnum=20341&page=7](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/fl/WF1_1_re.asp?aidnum=20341&page=7), accessed on 22 December 2012.

political theology of the following of the crucified Christ”.<sup>589</sup> Moltmann understands that Jesus became poor to liberate the poor.<sup>590</sup> However, to Moltmann, the poor are not people who have financial difficulties or are suffering from poverty. Rather, the poor include the “non-person, sub-human, dehumanized, and human fodder”, and the rich as the counter-term to the poor consist of “the man of violence, who makes someone else poor and enriches himself at the other’s expense”,<sup>591</sup> such as the tax collector who cheated the powerless and abused his authority in order to accumulate wealth (Luke 1:46-54 and 19:1-10).

Therefore, to Moltmann, “The God of the rich is Mammon, and he is an unjust god”.<sup>592</sup> Moltmann says that “if the title ‘Christ’ refers to the redeemer and liberator, then practical Christian action can only be directed towards the liberation of man from his inhumanity”.<sup>593</sup> Moltmann seems to understand the rich and the poor in antagonistic terms and connects Christ’s redemption with liberation from unjust circumstances. In contrast, for Cho, the rich and the poor are not antagonistic categories.

Cho does not extend Jesus’ redemption to include liberation from unjust socio-political structures. In his sermons, Cho often mentions the patriarchs,

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<sup>589</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, p. 60.

<sup>590</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, p. 48.

<sup>591</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1999), pp. 99-100.

<sup>592</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 100.

<sup>593</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, p. 18.

especially Abraham, as people who received abundant blessings from God.<sup>594</sup> Rather than the tax collector who accumulated wealth through exploitation, the rich are the Old Testament patriarchs who received blessings from God. Thus, for Cho, the God of the rich is not Mammon but is the same as the God of the poor. Cho does not consider that the matter of poverty can be resolved through social reformation, but instead through the blessings of God. It seems that Cho does not have an in-depth concern about Christian ethic for prosperity. Indeed, he rarely deals with the problems of the rich among the poor theologically. Without an emphasis on the Protestant work ethic, the prosperity gospel has inherent theological problems. First, it can justify any means of accumulating wealth. Second, the purpose of faith can be twisted so that it focuses solely on receiving financial blessings. Third, accumulation of financial blessing can become the main index of faith.

In his book *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Max Weber supports the economic activities of Christians for financial benefits and endows them with spiritual and ethical significance. Drawing on Pietist and Methodist understandings Weber emphasizes that economic activities need to be motivated by religious values.<sup>595</sup> Similarly, it is important that Korean Pentecostals combine an emphasis on prosperity with Christian values. Unless Korean Pentecostals insist that prosperity is not the ultimate purpose of Christian belief, they will make an error in

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<sup>594</sup> Yonggi Cho, "God's Blessing and Abraham" (Sunday sermon on 08 February 2009), available from [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/fl/WF1\\_1\\_re.asp?aidnum=21367&page=1](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/fl/WF1_1_re.asp?aidnum=21367&page=1), accessed 21 December 2012.

<sup>595</sup> Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Stephen Kalberg (Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Co., 2002), pp. 76-80.

judgment leading to circumstances where the rich become richer and the poor become poorer.

### 5. 1. 2. The Kingdom of God

The early missionaries and Christians (including Pentecostals) in Korea placed an emphasis on salvation in terms of what people are saved ‘from’ rather than what they are saved ‘for’.<sup>596</sup> Indeed, their major concern at that time was salvation from sins. In regard to this eschatological emphasis on the future Kingdom, Veil-Matti Kärkkäinen points out that “escapism relegates Christian hope only to the future without relevance to the matters of today here on earth”.<sup>597</sup> However, during the era of industrialization and dictatorship since 1960s, the scope of salvation has broadened to include not only salvation ‘from sins’ but salvation ‘for’ other aspects such as human rights, exploitation, sexism, and so on. Thus, salvation began to include within its scope socio-political acts by progressive Christians. If for Korean progressive Christians, salvation meant liberation for social justice, gender and social equality, for Korean Pentecostals, it expanded to include salvation *from* poverty, sickness, and sins, and *for* spiritual blessing, well-being and prosperity. Furthermore, the concept of the Kingdom of God cannot be understood only as the kingdom which is ‘already but not yet,’ but must be extended as the present kingdom existing ‘here and now’. Then, there will be a question of how the eschatological Kingdom can be

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<sup>596</sup> Harold S. Hong, Won Yong Ji, and Chung Choon Kim (eds.), *Korea Struggles for Christ*, p. 15.

<sup>597</sup> Veil-Matti Kärkkäinen, “March Forward to Hope: Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Pentecostal Theology of Hope”, p. 50.



in the 'here and now.' Volf argues that there must be continuity between the future Kingdom and the present world.<sup>598</sup> On the contrary, Land emphasises both the continuity and discontinuity of the present and the future Kingdoms.<sup>599</sup> Land argues that the future Kingdom will break into the present world, which is the history of humanity.<sup>600</sup> With regards to the continuity of the two Kingdoms, Althouse says, "The Kingdom of God breaks into the present to transform history and create anticipatory hope for the future."<sup>601</sup> Furthermore, he says, "God's Kingdom is 'already' present through the inauguration of Jesus Christ and the activity of the Spirit, but 'not yet' fulfilled, as when the presence of God will be fully revealed. As such, the vision of the future Kingdom has transformative power in the present world."<sup>602</sup> For Moltmann, however, the future Kingdom is not to transform or change the present world for a better life. Also, Moltmann's understanding of the Kingdom of God in the present life is not to fulfil individualistic desires on the earth, but to participate in the suffering of Christ, and to be renewed through the Spirit.<sup>603</sup> He says that "Life according to the spirit is life in love".<sup>604</sup> Therefore, humanity can experience the Kingdom through participating in Christ's suffering with

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<sup>598</sup> Miroslav Volf, 'On Loving with Hope: Eschatology and Social Responsibility', *Transformation* 7.3 (July-September 1990), p. 28.

<sup>599</sup> Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 65.

<sup>600</sup> Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, 65.

<sup>601</sup> Peter Althouse, Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann* (London: T & T Clark International, 2003), p. 195.

<sup>602</sup> Peter Althouse, Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann*, p. 4.

<sup>603</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "Pentecost and the Theology of Life", in Jürgen Moltmann and Karl Josef Kuschel (eds.), *Pentecostal Movements as an Ecumenical Challenge*, pp. 131-33.

<sup>604</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life", P. 156.

eschatological hope and also through sharing the suffering of others on the earth. As Althouse points out, the Christological Pneumatology of Moltmann celebrates “the charismatic indwelling of the Spirit in the people of God, the church, and in creation itself.”<sup>605</sup>

In contrast, the Threefold Blessing embraces not only the hope for the Kingdom to come in the future but also in the ‘here and now’ through the blessings of prosperity and healing.<sup>606</sup> P. H. Kim refers to Cho’s healing doctrine as “an eschatological sign of the kingdom of God that is ‘already’ manifested and conviction of the kingdom of God that is ‘not yet’ completed”.<sup>607</sup> In other words, Korean Pentecostals do not understand the kingdom of God merely eschatologically in relation to eternal life but in relation to matters of this life. However, there are some prominent differences between Moltmann and Korean Pentecostals. Pentecostals seem to want hope for the visible and practical kingdom of God in their present daily lives. Moltmann understands the Kingdom of God from a Trinitarian perspective. Consequently, for Moltmann, the Kingdom of God is idealistic, metaphysical, and theological. To him, the Kingdom of God is imminent in the Trinity and can be understood in the Trinitarian relationship.<sup>608</sup> In this sense, humanity can understand the Kingdom of God only through the economy of God. The Kingdom of God is “an

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<sup>605</sup> Peter Althouse, Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann*, p.195.

<sup>606</sup> Pan Ho Kim, “Paul Tillich and Dr. Yonggi Cho: A Dialogue between Their Respective Theologies of Healing”, p. 362.

<sup>607</sup> Pan Ho Kim, “Paul Tillich and Dr. Yonggi Cho: A Dialogue between Their Respective Theologies of Healing”, p. 368.

<sup>608</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God*, pp. 209-211.

interaction between God and the world, God and human beings or between the Trinitarian divine Persons”.<sup>609</sup> Furthermore, for Moltmann, the Kingdom is “the new Jerusalem” where God will dwell among “the new people of God” which he calls “*the cosmic Shekinah* [the cosmic dwelling]”.<sup>610</sup>

Therefore, the Kingdom is futuristic and eschatological. Nevertheless, in his political theology of hope, Moltmann understands that Christian hope is the expectation of the manifestation of God’s righteousness in an unjust and suffering world.

Moltmann argues that, through Christ and the indwelling of the Spirit, the eschatological future immerses in the present “to revolutionize the present”.<sup>611</sup> Moltmann understands that the gospel brings “hope into an otherwise hopeless present, hope for justice and freedom and peace where injustice, oppression and conflict presently reign”.<sup>612</sup> Moltmann points out as follows:

Pentecostal theology needs to develop the theology of resurrection of Christ, the resurrection of the Spirit, and the resurrection from death in the future. The resurrection of Christ is the cornerstone of Christian faith because without the resurrection of Christ we would know nothing about Jesus. And the resurrection of the Spirit is important to courage to live and to be. The resurrection of the Spirit came upon the Disciples of Christ and formed into a community of sharing in Acts chapter 4, incorrectly called early Christian communists. But the resurrection of hope brings people hope to form a community where there was no differences in gender, income and where they can be

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<sup>609</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, p. 330.

<sup>610</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, p. 317.

<sup>611</sup> Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann*, p. 176.

<sup>612</sup> Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann*, pp. 106-07.

accepted each other as brothers and sisters. Therefore the resurrection of hope is important for life.<sup>613</sup>

However, for Cho, the Kingdom does not only remain as an eschatological or communal hope. It has to be related with personal life and present reality. Cho says that there are two aspects of the Kingdom of God: “the future aspect of kingdom” and “the present reality of the kingdom of God”.<sup>614</sup> Furthermore, he states: “The Gospel deals not only with the hope for the eternal life and the salvation of spirit and soul but also prosperity in life and physical health and wellness that would keep the balance between spirituality and reality”.<sup>615</sup>

Cho’s messages focus on both kingdoms: the future Kingdom for the eternal life and the Kingdom which the people of God can experience in the ‘here and now’ through God’s sovereignty on earth.<sup>616</sup> According to Cho, divine healing is “a sign of the coming of the Kingdom of God to the earth”<sup>617</sup> because the miracle of healing is a sign of God’s sovereignty in this present life.<sup>618</sup> This means that the experience of divine healing is a way to experience the Kingdom of God under his rule in this present life. Thus, in the sovereignty of God, there is continuity between the present and future manifestations of the Kingdom. Due to the influence of Cho, although the

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<sup>613</sup> Personal interview with Jürgen Moltmann on 4 January 2012 at his house in Tübingen, Germany. See, Appendix A. Interview with Dr. Jürgen Moltmann.

<sup>614</sup> Yonggi Cho, *More Than Numbers: Principles of Church Growth* (Collins, Glasgow: Valley Books Trust, 1983), p. 78.

<sup>615</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Story of Fivefold Gospel*, p. 18.

<sup>616</sup> Pan Ho Kim, “Paul Tillich and Dr. Yonggi Cho: A Dialogue between Their Respective Theologies of Healing”, p. 362.

<sup>617</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Praying with Jesus* (Altamonte Springs, FL: Creation House, 1988), p. 50.

<sup>618</sup> Moon Ok Park, “An Eschatological Understanding of Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Idea of Divine Healing”, in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Ministry & Theology I*, p. 332.

eschatological Kingdom remains paramount, Korean Pentecostals want to experience the Kingdom of God in which there is no pain, sadness, and weeping in the ‘here and now’. In this sense, the hope of Pentecostals for the Kingdom of God is not a passive hope awaiting the eschatological Kingdom while enduring current pains and sufferings, but the hope that God’s Kingdom and sovereignty may reach out to them in every aspect of their present lives. As a result, Korean Pentecostals desire to experience the Kingdom of God where God’s sovereignty prevails over their lives and expect that their hardship can be removed by the power of God. Anderson points out that the ‘full gospel’ of Pentecostal and Charismatics contains “good news for all life’s problems”.<sup>619</sup>

Therefore, healing from illness and well-being can be seen “as part of the essence of the gospel”.<sup>620</sup> In contrast, Moltmann’s hope and his expectation of the coming kingdom of God do not correspond to this utopian idea for a better life.

Moltmann states as follows:

The Christian hope is directed towards a *novum ultimum* [ultimate new], towards a new creation of all things by the God of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It thereby opens a future outlook that embraces all things, including also death, and into this it can and must also take the limited hopes of a renewal of life, stimulating them, relativizing them, giving them direction. It will destroy the presumption in these hopes of better human freedom, of successful life, of justice and dignity for our fellow men, of control of the possibilities of nature, because it does not find in these movements the salvation it awaits, because it refuses to let

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<sup>619</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 228.

<sup>620</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 228.

the entertaining and realization of utopia ideas of this kind reconcile it with existence.<sup>621</sup>

For Moltmann, because of God's promises, Christian hope goes beyond the idea of a utopia where one can experience a more successful life, and a peaceable and more humanitarian world.<sup>622</sup> Moltmann says, "The light of the resurrection illuminates the night of the cross and wants to illuminate those who are today consigned to the shadows of the cross. The cross of Christ, the community of the suffering Christ, and the sign of the oppressed creation show up the place of Christian presence".<sup>623</sup> Moltmann's understanding of the Kingdom of God in the present life is not to fulfil individualistic desires for a better life on the earth but to participate in the suffering of Christ and to be renewed through the Spirit.<sup>624</sup> He says that "Life according to the spirit is life in love".<sup>625</sup> Therefore, humanity can experience the Kingdom through participating in Christ's suffering with eschatological hope and also through sharing the sufferings of others on the earth. Moltmann's understanding of the Kingdom sheds light on certain theological difficulties within contemporary Korean Pentecostalism in relation to participation in the Kingdom of God 'here and now' in today's Korean context. Nowadays, there is no national poverty in South Korea, and its National Health Service is as developed as in some European countries.

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<sup>621</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, p. 33.

<sup>622</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, p. 34.

<sup>623</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "Political Theology", *Theology Today* 28:6 (1971), p. 23.

<sup>624</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "Pentecost and the Theology of Life", in Jürgen Moltmann and Karl Josef Kuschel (eds.), *Pentecostal Movements as an Ecumenical Challenge*, pp. 131-33.

<sup>625</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life", P. 156.

Thus, it is important for Korean Pentecostals to think theologically about what the Kingdom means in today's Korean context, and how they can participate in that Kingdom. Undoubtedly, experiencing a more prosperous life on the earth is not the way to participate in the life of the Kingdom, as Korean Pentecostals have already experienced enough material blessings. Instead, they can participate in God's Kingdom on earth by sharing their blessings with others and caring for those who are suffering and in need. In other words, Christian hope must be divorced from a secularized desire for a better life here on the earth which focuses on material prosperity.

## **6. Conclusion**

Scholars such as Cox, Hollenweger, Boo Wong Yoo and others attempt to understand the rapid growth of Korean Pentecostalism and its successful contextualization in relation to the influence of Korean traditional shamanism. However, Korean Pentecostalism has developed through successful interactions with global Pentecostal movements and the effective contextualization of the Threefold Blessing in the desperate socio-economic situations after the Korean War. The theory of the Threefold Blessing was developed in 1960s, based on Cho's experience of personal hardship. As the theory was developed in response to the desperate life of Koreans, it was very appealing to Koreans who found themselves in hopeless situations. Through the influence of Cho, the Threefold Blessing became the major

theme of Korean Pentecostal preachers, and as a result, Korean Pentecostals began to have hope in their hopeless situations. During the same period, Moltmann's theology of hope developed in the German context after the Second World War. Moltmann's theology was initially considered to be liberal by Korean Pentecostals, but since the mid-1990s a theological conversation has been going on between Moltmann and Cho.

There are similarities and differences between the personal lives and theologies of Moltmann and Cho. For both, their perspective on Christian hope is based on the theology of the Cross. Without the death and resurrection of Christ, the spiritual blessing of salvation could not be realized in the Threefold Blessing. Moltmann also finds hope for the desperate through the resurrection of Christ and the promise of His second coming.<sup>626</sup> However, Cho's hope in his theory of the Threefold Blessing begins with the suffering of Christ. Cho's expectation of the Kingdom does not focus only on eternal life, but also on the 'here and now' experience of the prosperous and healthy life in God because he realized that, without the promise of healing and financial blessing, the gospel of the Kingdom was meaningless to Koreans who were severely suffering from sickness and poverty in the post-Korean War context. On the other hand, Moltmann understands the Kingdom in Trinitarian and eschatological terms. Moltmann denies the utopian idea of hope for the Kingdom on the earth. Instead, he understands that humankind can recognize the Kingdom of God 'here and now' only through interacting with God in the Spirit.

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<sup>626</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, p. 20; and Jürgen Moltmann, *Experiences in Theology*, p. 105.



Consequently, if Moltmann's understanding about the Kingdom and Christian hope is centred on the presence of God and his righteousness, the Kingdom for Korean Pentecostals is somehow focused on humanity and their concerns and needs on the earth. Furthermore, although the Threefold Blessing was completely contradictory to the reality of the post-Korean War context, Cho did not develop his theology of the Threefold Blessing in the perspectives of hope theology. Instead, Cho developed his theology in terms of prosperity theology, due to the influences of American evangelists such as Oral Roberts and Faith movement leaders. As a result, Moltmann's christology and pneumatology need to be rediscovered in Korean Pentecostal perspectives in order to develop the theology of the Threefold Blessing in the future. If the old Threefold Blessing was combined with Oral Roberts' theory and the post Korean War context, the new Threefold Blessing needs to be a combination of Moltmann and post- second millennium Korean culture.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **THE THREEFOLD BLESSING AS THE PENTECOSTAL CONTEXTUAL HOPE**

#### **1. Introduction**

Historically, Korea was one of the strongest Buddhist and Confucian countries in Asia, and Protestantism only came to Korea in the late nineteenth century. Due to disillusionment with Korean Buddhism and Confucianism from the early twentieth century,<sup>627</sup> many Koreans came to depend on their ancient shamanism but could not always find spiritual comfort in it. During that time, however, Christianity and Pentecostalism in Korea grew remarkably because Koreans found in them a source of hope for the future in their desperate situations.<sup>628</sup> After the Korean War, Korean society was rife with socio-economic, political, and religious uncertainties. Thus, Koreans found themselves in a state of spiritual confusion. Despite their unfamiliarity to Koreans, Christianity and Pentecostalism have grown very quickly in a short period of time. Many Koreans have converted to Christianity and experienced the manifestation of the Spirit especially after the Korean War. This means that they found in Christianity hope in their hopelessness. For Korean Pentecostals, the Threefold Blessing became a source of hope in the post-Korean War context. This

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<sup>627</sup> See chapter 4, section 1.

<sup>628</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 5.

chapter discusses the nature of this hope and the relationship between the Threefold Blessing and the Korean context from a contextual perspective.

## **2. The Spiritual Blessing**

As a result of undergoing Japanese imperialism and the Korean War, the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism declined. Both had been the traditional religions and ruling dispensation of Korea for about a thousand years - Buddhism during the Koryeo Dynasty (918-1392), and Confucianism during the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392 – 1897) and the Greater Korean Empire (1897-1910).<sup>629</sup> Since its beginning, when it was adopted by the Chosŏn Dynasty as the state philosophy, Confucianism became influential in every aspect of Korean life, including politics, culture, the family and society.<sup>630</sup> Although Buddhism lost its political influence during the Chosŏn Dynasty, it has remained as one of the major religions until now due to its successful appropriation of Korean shamanism. Due to the fall of the Chosŏn Dynasty and the experience of Japanese rule, the influences of Buddhism and Confucianism declined. During the ‘Kabo-Ulmi Reform movement (1894-1895)’, Confucian society carried out one of the biggest changes in its five hundred years history in Korea. In December 1895, a reform cabinet led by Hong Jip Kim

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<sup>629</sup> During the Chosŏn Dynasty, Buddhism lost its political function since 1392 but has sustained its religious function until now, and Confucianism is much less influential in modern Korean society but still deeply rooted in Korean ethics.

<sup>630</sup> Pow Key Sohn, Chol Choon Kim, and Yi Sup Hong, *The History of Korea* (Seoul: Korean National Commission for UNESCO, 1982), pp, 129-132.

promulgated new laws to modernize the country. These included the ‘Short Hair Act’, the use of the solar calendar instead of the lunar calendar, the abolition of slavery, the prohibition of child marriage, and the permission of widow remarriage.<sup>631</sup> According to the Confucian teaching, 身體髮膚受之父母不敢毀傷孝之始也 [*Shinchebalboo Soojiboomo Bulgamheisang Hyojisija* - the body is from the parents so causing no damage to it is the beginning of filial piety], Koreans traditionally did not have their hair cut for the entire length of their lives but instead adopted the topknot. However, because of the ‘Short Hair Act’, they had to cut off the topknot. In fact, the topknot was the symbol of Confucian society as well as of man’s authority in Korea’s patriarchal society. This new decree caused many small scale revolts by Confucian scholars<sup>632</sup> across the country because the topknot had been a sign of their integrity for hundreds of years.<sup>633</sup> By using the solar calendar, social change was inevitable because their farming, their practice of ancestor worship, their system of marriage, and the registration of birthdays and anniversaries were based on the lunar calendar. Consequently, the use of the solar calendar was a significant social transition and was also, a symptom of the decline of Confucianism in Korea. Korea lost its diplomatic sovereignty and became a protectorate of Japan in 1905, and in 1910, its sovereignty was turned over to Japan by force.<sup>634</sup> Although most Koreans were deeply frustrated by these tragic and shameful events, they could not find consolation in the indigenous

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<sup>631</sup> Keith Pratt and Richard Rutt, *Korea: A Historical and Cultural Dictionary* (Richmond Surrey: Curzon Press, 1999), pp. 194-95.

<sup>632</sup> James Hoare and Susan Pares, *Korea an Introduction* (London and New York: Kegan Paul International Ltd., 1991), p. 47.

<sup>633</sup> Keith Pratt and Richard Rutt, *Korea: A Historical and Cultural Dictionary*, p. 479.

<sup>634</sup> James Hoare and Susan Pares, *Korea: An Introduction*, pp. 50-3.

religions despite having practiced them for over five hundred years. In 1950, five years after independence from Japan, the Korean War broke out. Under Japanese colonial rule and during the Korean War, Koreans experienced unmitigated sufferings. Due to political chaos and financial difficulties, there was widespread insecurity and insufficient food for the people. Most suffered from malnutrition after the Korean War. In their distressing situations, they found little hope in the indigenous religions. At the same time, with their imminent eschatology, early Korean Christians as well as Pentecostals focused on the “eschatological hope of the coming of the kingdom of God”.<sup>635</sup> Most messages that Koreans heard in church were focused on the Kingdom of God, which was presented to them as ‘the new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind (Isaiah 65:17)’. With the prospect of the coming Kingdom of God, Koreans obtained hope to overcome the hardships they were facing in daily life because their focus shifted from their present sufferings on to the kingdom of God.<sup>636</sup> As a result, they had new hope for the future in their hopeless situations and were able to forget their current sufferings for a while.

Later, in the socio-economic situation of the post-Korean War period, Pentecostals began to use the term ‘spiritual blessing’ in relation to the Threefold Blessing theory. The term was not understood merely to refer to salvation for the soul, but also to the life in the Holy Spirit after conversion. In other words, its use was not intended to deemphasize the eschatological hope for salvation but rather to emphasize

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<sup>635</sup> Harold S. Hong, “General Picture of the Korean Church, Yesterday and Today”, in Harold S. Hong, Won Yong Ji, and Chung Choon Kim (eds.), *Korea Struggles for Christ*, p. 18.

<sup>636</sup> For more on this, see also chapter 1, section 5. 1.

the experience of life in the Spirit after salvation. In the Threefold Blessing theology, the spiritual blessing includes both regeneration and post-conversion life in the Holy Spirit. Cho distinguishes between regeneration and the baptism in the Spirit as follows:

We can see that regeneration and the baptism with the Holy Spirit are two distinctly different experiences. Regeneration is the experience of receiving the life of the Lord by being grafted into the body of Christ through the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the experience in which Jesus fills believers with the power of God for ministry, service and victorious living.<sup>637</sup>

To Cho, the Holy Spirit is involved not only in the process of salvation (2 Corinthians 12:3) but also in the everyday life of Christians. Cho often uses Acts 19:1-6<sup>638</sup> in order to emphasize the necessity of the baptism with the Holy Spirit after conversion. Cho asserts that believers must be baptized in the Holy Spirit because the experience of new birth is considered insufficient.<sup>639</sup> According to him, Christians must live the Spirit-led life after conversion.<sup>640</sup> Before the modern Pentecostal movement began, the term ‘baptism in the Spirit’ was used by members of the Wesleyan tradition, the Holiness movement and the radical evangelical movement in different ways. The Wesleyan tradition emphasizes ‘the role of the Spirit’ in

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<sup>637</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Holy Spirit My Senior Partner* (Milton Keynes, UK: Word Ltd., 1989), p. 103.

<sup>638</sup> He said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit”. And he said to them, “Into what then were you baptized?” So they said, “Into John’s baptism.” Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied (Acts 19: 2-6, NKJV).

<sup>639</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Born to be Blessed* (Seoul: Seoul Logos Co., 1993), p. 119.

<sup>640</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Sung Ryeoung Lon* [Pneumatology] (Seoul: Seoul Malsseum Sa, 1998), p. 99.

sanctification following conversion. Based on the Wesleyan tradition, the Holiness tradition understands the event of Spirit baptism as an experience of sanctification. Evangelical preachers such as Charles Finny, D. L. Moody, and Reuben Torrey regarded baptism in the Spirit as an “endowment of power for witness and service”.<sup>641</sup> From a Holiness perspective, believers’ hearts can be purified and empowered for service through the baptism with the Holy Spirit.<sup>642</sup> To radical evangelicals, “the gift of the Spirit is subsequent to repentance” and “an additional and separate blessing”.<sup>643</sup> Later, classical Pentecostals adopted Holiness teaching on Spirit baptism. Basically, Cho adopted classical Pentecostal teaching that Spirit baptism is “the empowerment of the Spirit for service”.<sup>644</sup> However, he also insists that the Spirit is more than “the Spirit of being born again” or “the Spirit of power” but “a Person” who wants to have “intimate fellowship and communication” with believers.<sup>645</sup> Cho believes that the Spirit teaches Christians how to follow the Lord as well as empowering them in their Christian lives.<sup>646</sup> Cho says that believers must allow “a greater place for the Holy Spirit” in their lives in order to have deeper fellowship with the Spirit.<sup>647</sup> Furthermore, he insists that the Spirit continues “the work of Jesus Christ”, and believers can

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<sup>641</sup> William W. Menzies, “David Yonggi Cho’s Theology of the Fullness of the Spirit: A Pentecostal Perspective”, pp. 178-79.

<sup>642</sup> Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, p. 94.

<sup>643</sup> A. J. Gordon, *The Ministry of the Spirit* (Philadelphia, PA: American Baptist Publication Society, 1895), pp. 68-70.

<sup>644</sup> William W. Menzies, “David Yonggi Cho’s Theology of the Fullness of the Spirit: A Pentecostal Perspective”, p. 179.

<sup>645</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Successful Home Cell Groups*, p. 116.

<sup>646</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Holy Spirit My Senior Partner*, p. 85.

<sup>647</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Born to be Blessed*, p. 119.

experience “the presence and work of Christ” in their lives through the Spirit.<sup>648</sup>

According to Steven Land, through the Holy Spirit, Jesus could be present in wonders, signs and salvation for both the early church and Pentecostals, and furthermore, living in the Holy Spirit is living in the Kingdom of God.<sup>649</sup> Cho understands the Greek term *κοινωνία* (koinonia) in relation to the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14) as the ‘communion,’ ‘partnership,’ or ‘fellowship’ with the Spirit.<sup>650</sup> Cho says that “We cannot expect church growth without the presence of the Holy Spirit as a living person of God. During the early days of my ministry, I did not know clearly that the Holy Spirit was a person”.<sup>651</sup> He also says that it was when he came to understand the Holy Spirit as his senior partner and counsellor that his ministry became successful.<sup>652</sup> To Cho, having fellowship with the Spirit means mutual recognition between the Holy Spirit and human beings.<sup>653</sup> Consequently, unlike classical Pentecostals and Holiness groups, for Cho, the baptism in the Spirit is related more to personal fellowship with the Spirit than to sanctification as a post-conversion experience. Thus, the spiritual blessing in the Threefold Blessing involves being baptized with the Spirit in order to have a deeper relationship with God. Having a deeper fellowship with God requires the severance of association with indigenous

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<sup>648</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Health & Prosperity*, p. 30.

<sup>649</sup> Steven. J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), p. 64.

<sup>650</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Sung Ryoung Lon* [Pneumatology], pp. 9-10.

<sup>651</sup> Myung Sung Hoon and Hong Young Gi (eds.), *Charis and Charisma: David Yonggi Cho and the Growth of Yoido Full Gospel Church* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2003), pp. 51-2.

<sup>652</sup> Myung Sung Hoon and Hong Young Gi (eds.), *Charis and Charisma: David Yonggi Cho and the Growth of Yoido Full Gospel Church* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2003), p. 51.

<sup>653</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Successful Home Cell Groups* (North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge Logos Publishers, 1999), p. 116.



religions and pagan beliefs. Cho also says that “When we know that the Holy Spirit is a person, our life of faith makes a big leap. Our life changes for the better when we share a deep personal fellowship with the Holy Spirit. I realized that the Holy Spirit wants a deep personal relationship with Christians”.<sup>654</sup> This means that Cho understands the baptism in the Spirit not only as a post-conversion crisis experience but as an ongoing experience in the lives of Christians. Generally, the terms, ‘infilling of the Holy Spirit’ and ‘baptism in the Spirit,’ have been using interchangeably by Pentecostals without distinction. However, Korean Pentecostals influenced by Cho prefer to use the term ‘infilling of the Holy Spirit’ rather than ‘baptism in the Spirit’ because the latter refers to “the initial Spirit-filling” whereas the former implies “the subsequent and repetitive infilling of the Spirit”.<sup>655</sup> In fact, among New Testament scholars, the outpouring of the Spirit has been mainly understood in soteriological and eschatological terms. Robert P. Menzies understands the Pentecostal event in Acts 2 in terms of the fulfilment of “the promise of the Father”<sup>656</sup> with reference to Joel 3:1-5. However, James Dunn criticizes Menzies’s soteriological emphasis on the Spirit event as dubious, suggesting that it overlooks its eschatological significance.<sup>657</sup> Dunn insists that through the descent of the Spirit at the River Jordan, Jesus entered

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<sup>654</sup> Myung Sung Hoon and Hong Young Gi (eds.), *Charis and Charisma: David Yonggi Cho and the Growth of Yoido Full Gospel Church* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2003), p. 52.

<sup>655</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism*, pp. 255-56.

<sup>656</sup> Robert P. Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), p. 203.

<sup>657</sup> James D. G. Dunn, “Baptism in the Spirit: A Response to Pentecostal Scholarship on Luke-Acts”, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 3 (1993), pp. 21-22.

into “the new age and covenant”.<sup>658</sup> To Dunn, the new age means the “the age of the Spirit”, and at that time Jesus was anointed with the Spirit as “Messiah and Servant” (Luke 3:22; 4:18; and Acts 4:27).<sup>659</sup> He insists that Jesus brought the eschatological kingdom into the present through the outpouring of the Spirit at the River Jordan.<sup>660</sup> On the other hand, scholars such as G. Haya-Prats, H. Gunkel, E. Schweizer, and more recently James Shelton and Roger Stronstad, insist that “Luke consistently portrays the Spirit as the source of power for service”.<sup>661</sup>

From a missiological perspective, the empowerment of the Spirit is understood in terms of the *missio Dei*. In his article ‘The Revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles’, Roland Allen describes the work of the Spirit in missiological terms: “His nature is missionary, His work is missionary”.<sup>662</sup> To early Pentecostals, *glossolalia* were regarded as missionary tongues (*xenolalia*) to enable missionaries to communicate the gospel in other nations, and the Holy Spirit was considered the Spirit of power for evangelism.<sup>663</sup> The spiritual blessing in the Threefold Blessing does not involve only the salvation of the soul but also empowerment by the Holy Spirit. The empowerment by the Spirit in the Threefold

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<sup>658</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in relation to Pentecostalism today* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1984), p. 41.

<sup>659</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in relation to Pentecostalism today*, pp. 41-2

<sup>660</sup> James D. G. Dunn, “Baptism in the Spirit: A Response to Pentecostal Scholarship on Luke-Acts”, p. 18.

<sup>661</sup> William W. Menzies and Robert P. Menzies, *Spirit and Power: Foundations of Pentecostal Experience* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), p. 70.

<sup>662</sup> Roland Allen, “The Revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles”, *The International Review of Mission*, vol. 7 (1918), p. 161.

<sup>663</sup> Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, pp. 40-42.

Blessing has been interpreted from a variety of perspectives. It does not adhere merely to the traditional Pentecostal understanding of empowerment for service or witness but includes “physical and other life matters”.<sup>664</sup> In other words, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in the Threefold Blessing influences the physical, mental and emotional dimensions of life. Traditionally, the teachings of mainstream Korean Christianity were sinner-oriented. In contrast, Pentecostals proclaim hope and blessings to those who are experiencing hardships in this life. Furthermore, the outpouring of the Spirit infuses the desperate with new hope to overcome their hardship. For instance, the sick are enabled to start a new life through divine healing, and the desperate are given hope to change their lives through the Spirit. This means that the empowerment of the Spirit influences individual lives to be changed from hopelessness to hope. C. B. Johns says:

Transformation may occur in many forms. It may occur as deliverance from the demonic. It may occur as the new birth to salvation. It may occur as healing. It may occur as sanctification of the affections. And it may occur as being filled with the Holy Spirit.<sup>665</sup>

Menzies says that “the term fullness points beyond that initial moment to the pattern of life that follows. It seems to speak of the Spirit filled life.”<sup>666</sup> In this sense, the spiritual blessing involves having a deep fellowship with the Spirit in everyday life rather than merely to be saved spiritually. Through ‘repetitive infilling of the

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<sup>664</sup> Won Suk Ma, “David Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Blessing: A New Theological Base and Direction”, pp. 196-97.

<sup>665</sup> Cheryl Bridges Johns, “Healing and Deliverance: A Pentecostal Perspective”, p. 47.

<sup>666</sup> William W. Menzies, “David Yonggi Cho’s Theology of the Fullness of the Spirit: A Pentecostal Perspective”, p. 181.

Spirit' in daily life, Korean Pentecostals expect both sanctification and ongoing transformation of their lives. Thus, the messages of Korean Pentecostalism do not merely focus on salvation. Johns says:

For Pentecostals, healing and deliverance are constitutive aspects of the gospel. They are means whereby the 'good news' is proclaimed in both the physical and spiritual dimensions of reality. Such manifestations are reflections of the power of the gospel for the whole person and for the whole of the cosmos.<sup>667</sup>

Certainly, a gospel focused only on spiritual salvation could not be 'good news' to Korean Pentecostals because it would not address the current matters they were struggling with during the post-Korean War period. Baptism in the Spirit merely in its spiritual dimension is not so appealing to Korean Pentecostals. They do not want to experience the empowerment of the Spirit once only but repeatedly and in every aspect of life. They want to have ongoing spiritual experiences and gifts, and live a life of fulfilment in the Spirit. For instance, about four hundred thousand Korean Christians visit a prayer mountain each year, where they pray and fast not only for their physical and financial problems but also to deepen their spirituality.<sup>668</sup>

Through receiving spiritual gifts, they are able to experience the sovereignty of God and the influence of his kingdom upon their lives. The spiritual gifts they practice provide them with evidence of the eschatological coming of the kingdom of God.

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<sup>667</sup> Cheryl Bridges Johns, "Healing and Deliverance: A Pentecostal Perspective", p. 45.

<sup>668</sup> Karen Hurston, *Growing the World's Largest Church*, pp. 58-61.

## ***2. 1. Charismata and the Spiritual Blessing***

In general, New Testament scholars understand the Greek word *χαρίσματα* (*charismata*) as referring to ‘the gifts of the Spirit’. This is the way it has also generally been understood by Christian believers and churches. However, the lexical meaning of *χαρίσματα*, as used in Romans 12:6, is not ‘the gifts of the Spirit’ but simply ‘gifts’. In 1 Corinthians 12: 1 and 14:12, English translations mention ‘spiritual gifts,’ but the Greek word is *πνευματικῶν* [spiritual] rather than *χαρίσματα*. It seems that the English word ‘gift’ was added when the Greek text was translated into English. According to Fee, in Romans 1: 11, the adjective *πνευματικὸν* was translated “spiritual gifting”.<sup>669</sup> Elsewhere, the word ‘gift’ is used in different ways. In Ephesians 4: 7, it is used to refer to ‘the gift of Christ’ (*τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ*), and in 1 Peter 4: 10 it is used to translate *χάρισμα*. Thus, there are many ideas associated with spiritual gifts in the New Testament, but there is no term that particularly translates ‘the gifts of the Spirit’.<sup>670</sup> Fee discusses the Pauline understanding of spiritual gifts. Referring to Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians and Romans, he points out that in 1 Corinthians 12: 4, *χαρίσματα* refers to “Spirit manifestations”, while in Romans ‘gifts’ should be understood as “gifts of God which are effectively brought into the life of the community by the Spirit”.<sup>671</sup> In contrast, for Pentecostals, the term *χαρίσματα* has been widely accepted as referring to the gifts of

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<sup>669</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*, p. 606.

<sup>670</sup> Benny C. Aker, “Charismata: Gifts, Enablements, or Ministries?” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 11.1 (2002), pp. 53-54.

<sup>671</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*, pp. 606-607.

the Spirit. From an ecclesiological perspective, the experience of the Spirit and spiritual gifts were regarded as “the key to the expansion of the early church.”<sup>672</sup> For Pentecostals, however, it is the issue of the gift of ‘speaking in tongues’ that has been controversial rather than the ongoing debate about whether χαρίσματα should be translated as ‘spiritual gifts’ and as originating from the Spirit or from God. When the Azusa Street Revival broke out, participants were convinced that ‘speaking in tongues’ was *xenolalia* or ‘missionary tongues.’ With their new spiritual gift of speaking in tongues, early Pentecostals assumed that they would be enabled to communicate the gospel with foreign populations. As the result, they departed for foreign lands within weeks of the revival breaking out.<sup>673</sup> Indeed, they believed that the gift of speaking in tongues was “the purpose of calling them to a specific people” for spreading the gospel.<sup>674</sup> William Seymour encouraged the Azusa Street Pentecostals to depart for the world immediately.<sup>675</sup> However, it did not take long for them to realize their misconception about speaking in tongues.<sup>676</sup> According to Max Turner, in Acts 2:1-13, Luke considers ‘speaking in tongues’ as “*xenolalia*: the speaking of actual foreign languages” because in Acts 2: 6, Luke mentions that

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<sup>672</sup> Paul A. Pomerville, *Introduction to Missions: an independent-study textbook* (Irving, TX: ICI University Press, 1987), pp. 95-97; Allan Anderson, “Toward a Pentecostal Missiology for the Majority World”, represented in the International Symposium on Pentecostal Missiology at Asia-Pacific Theological Seminary in Baguio City, Philippines during 29-30 January in 2003, p. 3

<sup>673</sup> Daniel H. Bays, “Indigenous Protestant Churches in China, 1900-1937: A Pentecostal Case Study”, in Steven Kaplan (ed.), *Indigenous Responses to Western Christianity* (New York: New York University Press, 1995), p. 128.

<sup>674</sup> A. E. Dyer, “Introduction”, in William K. Kay and Anne E. Dyer (eds.), *Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies* (London: SCM Press, 2004), p. 211.

<sup>675</sup> Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>676</sup> Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, p. 101

everyone heard the gospel in their own dialect.<sup>677</sup> In contrast, it seems that Paul did not understand tongues-speaking as *xenolalia* or recognizable languages. Thus, in 1 Corinthians 14: 13, he mentions the necessity of interpretation for tongues -speaking, and in verse 14, he says that praying in tongues is beneficial for the human spirit but unfruitful for the mind. Furthermore, he states that ‘five intelligible words to instruct others’ are better than ‘ten thousand words in a tongue’ (v. 19). In other words, Paul does not consider tongues as *xenolalia* for two reasons. Firstly, the event of speaking in tongues at Pentecost which broke down the linguistic barrier for evangelism was no longer expected to occur in the early churches. Paul makes no mention of such a comparable ecumenical linguistic event in his letters. Second, Paul is concerned about the individual use and value of the gift of tongues, which is not the main concern of Luke in Acts. Paul points out that the function of tongues is not for evangelism, but to edify believers (1 Corinthians 14: 4). However, early Pentecostals misunderstood tongues in the New Testament as the means “to preach the gospel to the nations”.<sup>678</sup> After the Azusa Street Revival broke out, the early Pentecostals went all over the world for mission. This phenomenon needs to be understood not merely in relation to their misassumption about tongues but also as evidence of their zealous response to the world mission movement in the early twentieth century. Roswell Flower, an American Pentecostal leader in the early era of American Pentecostalism, wrote in 1908 that “When the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts, the missionary spirit comes in

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<sup>677</sup> Max Turner, “Spiritual Gifts Then and Now”, *Vox Evangelica* 15 (1985), pp.7-63 (17).

<sup>678</sup> Frank D. Macchia, “Babel and the Tongues of Pentecost: Reversal or Fulfilment? A Theological Perspective”, in Mark J. Cartledge (ed.), *Speaking in Tongues: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2006), pp. 48-9.

with it; they are inseparable”.<sup>679</sup> The crucial controversy about tongues is whether it is the initial evidence of Spirit baptism or merely one of the spiritual gifts, rather than whether it is *xenolalia* or *glossolalia*. Classical Pentecostals, especially those affiliated with the Assemblies of God, insist that speaking in tongues is ‘the initial evidence of baptism in the Spirit’ even though this article of faith has been criticized even by fellow Pentecostals.

In the early era of Korean Pentecostalism, Pentecostals followed all beliefs of the American Assemblies of God. However, it seems that the KAG (Korean Assemblies of God) no longer accepts tongues as ‘the initial physical evidence of the baptism in the Spirit’. The American Assemblies of God holds to the sixteen non-negotiable doctrines of faith,<sup>680</sup> including speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Spirit baptism. In contrast, after the unification of the three divided groups of Korean Pentecostals on May 20th, 2008,<sup>681</sup> the KAG omitted the clause which specified that tongues-speaking is the initial evidence of Spirit baptism.<sup>682</sup> The American Assemblies of God believes that “The baptism of believers in the Holy

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<sup>679</sup> Gary B. McGee, “Pentecostals and their Various Strategies for Global Mission: A Historical Assessment”, in M.A. Dempster, B.D. Klaus & D. Petersen (eds.), *Called and Empowered: Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1991), p. 206; and Allan Anderson, “Toward a Pentecostal Missiology for the Majority World”, p. 2-3.

<sup>680</sup> The Assemblies of God USA, “Statement of Fundamental Truths”, available from [http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Statement\\_of\\_Fundamental\\_Truths/sft\\_short.cfm](http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Statement_of_Fundamental_Truths/sft_short.cfm), accessed on 27 December 2011.

<sup>681</sup> With regard to the division of the Korean Assemblies of God, see the constitution of the Korean Assemblies of God, pp 14-23 available as a PDF file at [http://www.aogk.org/?mid=aogk\\_law](http://www.aogk.org/?mid=aogk_law), accessed on 27 December 2011.

<sup>682</sup> <http://www.aogk.org/?mid=law0> [the official website of the Korea Assemblies of God] and [http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Statement\\_of\\_Fundamental\\_Truths/sft\\_short.cfm](http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Statement_of_Fundamental_Truths/sft_short.cfm) [the official website of Assemblies of God USA], accessed on 26 December 2011.



Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance”.<sup>683</sup> However, based on Acts 2:4, 10:45-46, and 19:6, the belief of speaking in tongues is referred to in the constitution of the KAG as “the common evidence of the baptism in the Spirit” with the explanation that in the past, on the Day of Pentecost, tongues-speaking manifested as ‘the initial physical sign of the Spirit baptism’.<sup>684</sup> Cho understands tongues as “the typical external sign of the Spirit baptism,” and the purpose of practising tongues daily is to have a deeper fellowship with God.<sup>685</sup> The KAG has become more flexible about tongues-speaking for two reasons. First, as ‘the initial evidence doctrine’ of tongues became one of the major issues in the disputes with mainstream Korean Christian denominations, there seemed no reason to retain the classical doctrine of the AG. Second, Korean Pentecostals have more interest in experiencing the fullness of the Spirit in daily life by practicing the spiritual gifts including tongue-speaking rather than the ongoing debate about whether or not speaking in tongues is ‘the initial evidence of the Spirit baptism’. However, Korean conservatives and non-Pentecostal scholars have compared the enthusiastic praying in tongues of Korean Pentecostals with the ecstatic phenomenon of shamanism.<sup>686</sup> For instance, Cox argues that the positive elements of shamanism influenced Korean Pentecostalism and calls Pentecostalism a form of

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<sup>683</sup> [http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Statement\\_of\\_Fundamental\\_Truths/sft\\_full.cfm#8](http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Statement_of_Fundamental_Truths/sft_full.cfm#8), accessed on 27 December 2011.

<sup>684</sup> Gidokgyo Daehan Hananim eui SeungHoi [the Korean Assemblies of God], *Gyodan Heonbeob* [Denomination Constitution] (Seoul: Eumji, 2008), p. 32.

<sup>685</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Sung Ryoung Lon* [Pneumatology], pp. 166-68.

<sup>686</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 221-24.

Christian shamanism.<sup>687</sup> Despite the objections of Korean Pentecostals themselves, Cox says that “Yoido Full Gospel Church of Seoul involves a massive importation of shamanic practices into a Christian ritual”.<sup>688</sup> His understanding about Korean Pentecostalism is from the perspective of the phenomenology of religion. He regards the shamanistic enthusiasm of Koreans as primal spirituality and suggests that this is deeply immersed in the spirituality of Korean Pentecostalism.<sup>689</sup> However, Moltmann says “there is no a real relationship between Korean Pentecostalism and Korean shamanism. Korean Pentecostalism is more related with the work of the Holy Spirit than shamanism.”<sup>690</sup> Indeed, most ordinary Koreans did not experience any spiritual manifestation or spiritual gifts (χαρίσματα) in the biblical sense in their indigenous religions. In fact, Confucianism is a kind of philosophy rather than a religion, and Buddhism emphasizes meditation rather than focusing on spiritual experience. Both the Buddhist and Confucian scriptures are written in Chinese characters which ordinary Koreans do not understand.<sup>691</sup> Korean Buddhists and Confucians could only listen and follow what Buddhist monks and Confucian scholars taught. As time went by, both religions appropriated Korean shamanism, and subsequently, Koreans experienced shamanic spirituality indigenized in those religions rather than Buddhist or Confucian spirituality. For instance, *gut* [shamanic ritual] was often performed by

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<sup>687</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 226-27.

<sup>688</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 226.

<sup>689</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 222-27.

<sup>690</sup> Personal interview with Jürgen Moltmann on 4 January 2012 at his house in Tübingen, Germany. See, Appendix A. Interview with Dr. Jürgen Moltmann.

<sup>691</sup> Nowadays, there are some portions of Confucian and Buddhist scriptures translated in Korean, but not the entire scriptures.

Buddhist monks as well as by shamans. Korean Confucian rites were influenced by the shamanistic belief that their fortunes and misfortunes were dependent on how they served their ancestors. As Koreans were used to shamanistic spiritual manifestations, Pentecostalism was not welcomed by mainstream Korean Christianity due to the similarity of Pentecostal spirituality with shamanistic enthusiasm. From the early period of Korean Christianity, mainstream Korean Christians tried to deshamanise all ‘shamanic-like’ elements in Korean Christianity. For example, Yong Do Lee (1901-1933), a Methodist minister, was declared a heretic by both Presbyterians and Methodists in 1933 because of his unorthodox practice of spiritual gifts.<sup>692</sup> Furthermore, Korean Presbyterians devotedly followed the teaching of Calvin and the early church fathers such as Augustine, Chrysostom, and Pope Leo the Great who believed that tongues and other spiritual gifts had ceased after fulfilling the purpose of extending the church throughout the nations.<sup>693</sup> As a result, supernatural signs, and other manifestations of the Spirit, were often regarded as mysterious or shamanic elements which should not be practiced in Korean Christianity. Nevertheless, Korean Pentecostals’ eagerness for χαρίσματα did not diminish but spread to other denominations. After independence from Japan in 1945, large crusades, revivals in individual churches, and the ‘Prayer Mountain Movement’<sup>694</sup>

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<sup>692</sup> Gyeong Bae Min, *Hankook Gidokgyo Gyohoi Sa* [the History of Korean Christianity], p. 438; Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 137; and Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, pp. 116-117.

<sup>693</sup> Max Turner, “Spiritual Gifts Then and Now”, p. 51.

<sup>694</sup> In 1945, there were two prayer mountains in Korea: the first prayer mountain, Taehan Christian Prayer Mountain, was established by Jaehun Yoo, and Yongmum Prayer Mountain by Elder Woon

began to prevail throughout the nation. For instance, about 200,000 people come to *Ohsanri Chojisil Ginyeom Geumshik Gidowon* [Ohsanri Ja Sil Choi Memorial Fasting Prayer Mountain], established by YFGC, annually. These include Presbyterians (46%), Assemblies of God (33%), Methodists (10%), Holiness (5%), Baptists (2.4 %) and others (3.6%).<sup>695</sup> As a result, Korean Christians had more opportunities to experience Spirit baptism and spiritual gifts, including tongues-speaking and healing, and other manifestations of the Spirit became more common. The spiritual blessing in the Threefold Blessing has three elements. The first refers to salvation. In his book *Ohjungbokeum kwa Samjungchukbok* [The Five Fold Gospel and the Three Fold Blessing], Cho deals with ‘the Threefold Corruptions’ which are ‘spiritual death’, ‘environmental curse’, and ‘physical death’ caused by the fall of humanity.<sup>696</sup> According to him, these corruptions were produced by humanity’s disconnection with God, and salvation involves the restoration of this relationship with God in order for human beings to become the children of God who deserve to receive his blessings. Therefore, salvation is the most important blessing in the Threefold Blessing and the starting point for receiving other blessings from God.<sup>697</sup> In other words, salvation is the primary blessing which is prior to other blessings in the Threefold Blessing. The second element is the repetitive infilling of the Holy

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Mong Ra. After independence, the number of prayer mountains increased remarkably to 207 in 1975, 462 in 1988, and 500 in 1994. See Yeol Soo Eim, “South Korea”, pp. 240-243.

<sup>695</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theological Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], pp. 271-72.

<sup>696</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Ohjungbokeum kwa Samjungchukbok* [The Five Fold Gospel and the Three Fold Blessing], pp. 254-56.

<sup>697</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Ohjungbokeum kwa Samjungchukbok* [The Five Fold Gospel and the Three Fold Blessing], pp. 253-59.

Spirit. The experience of Spirit baptism was a totally new and sensational experience to Korean Christians who had grown up against the background of Buddhism, Confucianism, and shamanism. They had never experienced the spirituality of Christianity nor the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in these indigenous religions. Through Bible study and messages from preachers, Korean Christians were able to learn about Christianity and have more knowledge of the Bible, but were not able to experience the spiritual empowerment of the Holy Spirit because this could not be theoretically explained or taught. Since the Korean revivals broke out, Korean Pentecostals have eagerly focused on prayers. They have prayed in the early morning and during the night to receive the Holy Spirit. Moltmann says, “the petitions and groanings for the coming of the Spirit are ... the first signs of the Spirit’s life.”<sup>698</sup> In fact, Spirit baptism was normative in the early Church because it was the fulfilment of Christ’s promise (Acts 1: 4-5), and Peter and Paul urged the early Christians to be baptized in the Spirit (Acts 8:12; 11:15-6; 19:6).<sup>699</sup> Like the early Christians, being baptized with the Spirit is normative to Korean Pentecostals. They often go to the Prayer Mountain and practice fasting in order to be filled by the Spirit. This eagerness for the Spirit has become the central feature of Korean Pentecostal spirituality. As Cho has referred to the Spirit as his ‘senior partner’,<sup>700</sup> Korean Pentecostals want not only to experience the Holy Spirit once for all but to cooperate with him in their daily

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<sup>698</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “A Pentecostal Theology of Life”, p. 4.

<sup>699</sup> French L. Arrington, “Indwelling, Baptism, and Infilling with the Holy Spirit: A Differentiation of Terms”, *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* vol. 3 (November) 1981, p. 6.

<sup>700</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Holy Spirit My Senior Partner*.

lives. F. L. Arrington differentiates between the terms ‘indwelling’, ‘baptism’, and ‘infilling’ with reference to the Holy Spirit. According to him, indwelling refers to regeneration through salvation because no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ without the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3); Spirit baptism means a definite spiritual experience following salvation; and infilling with the Spirit is being repeatedly filled with the power of the Spirit.<sup>701</sup> It seems that Spirit baptism means not merely being baptized in the Spirit once but being repeatedly filled with the Spirit. This repeated experience of infilling of the Spirit is the core and one of the prominent characteristics of Korean Pentecostalism.

The third element of the Threefold Blessing is the new life in the Holy Spirit. Unlike other global expressions of Pentecostalism, Korean Pentecostalism began with a repentance movement. Some scholars compare shamanic enthusiasm with the manifestations associated with Korean Pentecostalism. However, one of the prominent differences between Korean Pentecostalism and shamanism is the focus on repentance from sins. As there are no values or ethics for life contained within shamanism, it is impossible to expect moral transformation through repentance there. Koreans came to believe that certain behaviour which had been accepted culturally and traditionally was regarded as sin within the Christian value system. For example, keeping a concubine was widely practised in Korean society based on Confucianism, and was not considered wrong because even their king had multiple concubines.

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<sup>701</sup> French L. Arrington, “Indwelling, Baptism, and Infilling with the Holy Spirit: A Differentiation of Terms”, pp. 1-10.

However, Koreans recognized it as a sin when they encountered Christianity, and deeply repented of it. When overwhelmed by the Spirit, they repented of all kinds of sins.<sup>702</sup> This proved to be an ethical and moral transition for Koreans influenced by the Spirit. Nevertheless, mainstream Korean Christianity did not give a warm reception to the manifestations of Spirit because they did not have sufficient theological knowledge to distinguish between the spirituality of Pentecostalism and shamanic enthusiasm. Moltmann says as follows:

Where the Holy Spirit is, there God is present in a special sense, and we experience God through our lives or through that which is brought forth fully alive from deep within. We experience the abundant, full, healed, and redeemed life with all of our senses.<sup>703</sup>

Korean Pentecostals were able to experience the rule of God physically through the manifestations of the Spirit. By experiencing the manifestations of the Spirit, they are able also to recognize the presence of the Spirit in their lives. To them, in other words, the experience of the Spirit and spiritual gifts such as divine healing and speaking in tongues are the physical evidence that the Holy Spirit is with them. Furthermore, Korean Pentecostals can be more confident of the ministry of the Spirit in their lives when they experience the manifestation of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. Moltmann interprets the *charismata* as “the living energies of the Holy Spirit” and says that *charismata* are “sent by the risen, living and present Christ into

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<sup>702</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 4. 2.

<sup>703</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “A Pentecostal Theology of Life”, p. 4.

the community of his people and into the world”.<sup>704</sup> Hermeneutically, the term ‘Spirit’ and ‘power’ have been used interchangeably. According to Gordon D. Fee, “the presence of the Spirit means the presence of power (1 Thessalonians 1:5; 1 Corinthians 2:4; Galatians 3:5; Romans 1:4; Ephesians 3:16; 2 Timothy 1:7)”,<sup>705</sup> and other scriptures, especially in the epistles of Paul, “refer to the powerful working of the Spirit in the lives of believers”.<sup>706</sup> This means that experiencing ‘χαρίσματα’ is a form of communication with God, and with this communication Korean Pentecostals have experienced a transformation of their lives. For Calvin, the Holy Spirit is the *fons vitae*, the fountain of life.<sup>707</sup>

Based on Titus 3:5, Calvin emphasizes “newness of life” by the Spirit after receiving salvation.<sup>708</sup> Wesley makes a distinction between the first and second salvation: the former is regeneration through repentance and the latter includes “prevenient grace, justification and sanctification”.<sup>709</sup> Unlike Calvin and Wesley, Cho does not separate sanctification and justification.<sup>710</sup> The primary reason for this perspective is that sanctification and justification through the Spirit does not always occur in chronological order. In comparison with Wesley’s soteriology, the spiritual

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<sup>704</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life”, p. 150.

<sup>705</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*, p. 35.

<sup>706</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*, p. 36.

<sup>707</sup> John Calvin, *Institute of the Christian Religion*, pp. 860-63; and Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1999), p. 35.

<sup>708</sup> John Calvin, *Institute of the Christian Religion*, p. 861.

<sup>709</sup> Edward H. Sugden (ed.), *Wesley’s Standard Sermons Vol. I* (London: The Epworth Press, 1951), p. 36.

<sup>710</sup> For Cho’s Fivefold Gospel, see chapter 3, section 2. 2.



blessing in the Threefold Blessing means both salvation and living a new life in the Spirit. Cho says as follows:

The first grace we received when we entered the first room with the sign, 'As Your Soul Prospers,' was the grace of salvation. After breaking our soulish nature, we learned to obey direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The breaking period was painful and difficult, but through that painful process our faith grew and our understanding of the providence of God deepened...By nailing ourselves daily to the cross we can learn the secret of full obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit.<sup>711</sup>

This means that Christians can start a new life by the leading of the Spirit.

Moltmann says that "the mission of the Holy Spirit is the mission of new life, and that is more."<sup>712</sup> He also says as follows:

The sending of the Holy Spirit is the revelation of God's indestructible affirmation of life and his marvellous zest for life. The Synoptic Gospels tell us that wherever Jesus is, there is life: there the sick are healed, those who mourn are comforted, outsiders are accepted and the demons of death are cast out. Acts and the apostolic letters tell us that where the Holy Spirit is present there is life: there joy rules over the victory of life against death, and there one experiences the power of eternal life.<sup>713</sup>

After the Korean War, most Koreans felt powerless physically and spiritually due to their financial hardship, sickness, and the decline of the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism.<sup>714</sup> At that time, Koreans needed the empowerment of the Spirit not only for service or witness but also to enable them to have victory in every aspect of their lives by the leading of the Holy Spirit. Not only during that time but even

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<sup>711</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Health & Prosperity*, p. 49.

<sup>712</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "Pentecost and the Theology of Life", p. 129.

<sup>713</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "Pentecost and the Theology of Life", p. 129.

<sup>714</sup> For more on the decline of the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism, see chapter 4, section 2.

today there are many Christians who live powerless lives. Cho insists that the reason today's Christians are powerless and sick is not because they do not have the experience of being born again, but because they are not filled with the Holy Spirit.<sup>715</sup> Moltmann says, "The Spirit is more than one gift among other gifts: the 'Holy Spirit' is the boundless presence of God awakened in our lives, filled with vitality, and gifted with spiritual powers".<sup>716</sup> Wonsuk Ma identifies four characteristics of Cho's sermons: 1) Bible-centred; 2) spiritual experience-centred; 3) Holy Spirit-centred; and 4) God's sovereignty-centred.<sup>717</sup> In addition, Cho's sermons are also positive and hope-centred. Cho preaches hope to those who are desperate and the 'can do spirit' to those who think they cannot do. In fact, the 'can do spirit' was a socio-economic movement during the period of economic development between the 1960s and 1980s. The propaganda slogan, 할수있다 (*Hal Soo It Da* - can do it), was pasted on the walls in class rooms, public offices, army camps, and everywhere people gathered. Pentecostal preachers including Cho vividly participated in this movement with messages based on Mark 9:23.<sup>718</sup> Theologically, the 'can do spirit' is a response to *Han* in Korean contexts.<sup>719</sup> As noted previously, *Han* is accumulated when people cannot do anything about the problems they are facing. For instance, Koreans used to accept extreme poverty and diseases as their *Han* because they could not do anything

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<sup>715</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Holy Spirit My Senior Partner*, p. 103.

<sup>716</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "A Pentecostal Theology of Life", p. 4.

<sup>717</sup> Wonsuk Ma, "The Effect of Rev. Cho's Sermon Style for Church Growth on the Development of Theology", pp. 160-66.

<sup>718</sup> "If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes (Mark 9:23)". - NIV

<sup>719</sup> For more on this, see chapter 2, section 3. 2.

to solve these problems. Yet Korean Pentecostal preachers including Cho preach that it is possible to overcome these problems through Christ and the Holy Spirit. They preach, in other words, hope to the hopeless, the ‘can do spirit’ to defeatism, and the power of the Spirit to the powerless. Ma says as follows:

...earlier messages of Yonggi Cho to the suffering masses after the devastating Korean War were constructed around two emphases: 1) God’s power to heal and solve human problems through the Holy Spirit; and 2) Human faith in God’s miracle power. He is in fact a product of the miracle-faith principles. This combination resulted in a message of hope even in this world. The "can-do" spirit is the immediate consequence.<sup>720</sup>

Salvation in the New Testament often focuses on the ‘new creation’,<sup>721</sup> and to Cho, the new creation does not mean only eternal life over against death and judgment but also the infusion of the present life with vitality and power through the Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, both the service and life of Pentecostals cannot be dynamic and powerful. Life in the power of the Spirit is set in contradistinction to desperation, lethargy, defeatism and the ‘cannot do spirit’. Empowerment in the Spirit is not restricted to the spiritual dimension but extends to the horizon of practical living. Thus, Korean Pentecostals are given hope to live in the power of the Spirit. In this sense, the powerful life in the Spirit gives Korean Pentecostals a new hope in their hopeless situations, and the new creation is the means for them to become new people with a ‘can do’ spirit through the Holy Spirit. Through practicing the gifts of the Spirit, they can experience the miraculous power of God in daily life.

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<sup>720</sup> Won Suk Ma, “Toward an Asian Pentecostal Theology”, *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* (January) 1998, pp. 9-10.

<sup>721</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “A Response to My Pentecostal Dialogue Partners”, p. 62.

### 3. Prosperity and Hope

After the Korean War, the biggest socio-political concern was how to address the issue of national poverty. Although it is mentioned in Romans 14:17 that ‘the Kingdom is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, joy and peace in the Spirit’, the matter of food was an existential matter and a prime concern to every individual and to Korean society in the post-Korean War context. To Korean Pentecostals, eating well is as important as the prosperity of the soul. Thus, liberation from extreme poverty was a primal hope for them. Pentecostalism is a grassroots movement and is more appealing to the impoverished than the privileged around the world.<sup>722</sup> Pentecostalism has also taken root among the poor and the sick. Cho himself was a typical Korean who was struggling with extreme poverty. Due to Cho’s own experience of poverty, he emphasized prosperity in Christ. In the Threefold Blessing, consequently, prosperity is as significant as healing and salvation. However, Cho’s prosperity theology was criticized for a long time especially by Korean conservative Christians. Korean conservative churches and theologians did not welcome Pentecostalism since they thought that asking blessings from God was unbiblical and reflected shamanistic influences. They called the faith of Korean Pentecostalism ‘*kibock sinang*’<sup>723</sup> and regarded it as heretical. Gordon Fee also criticizes the theology of ‘wealth and health’ as the “alien gospel of the cult of

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<sup>722</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven*, p. 119.

<sup>723</sup> For more on this, see chapter 2, section 4. 2.

prosperity”.<sup>724</sup> In relation to his prosperity theology, Cho has been criticized both as “a preacher of a North American prosperity gospel” and “a Pentecostal shaman”.<sup>725</sup> In fact, prosperity theology was not a part of early Pentecostalism both in North America and in Korea due to its eschatological emphasis. Later, however, it began to take hold through American healing evangelists during 1940s and 1950s. Most prominent American evangelists and those who are involved in the ‘Word of Faith’ (Positive Confession) movement, such as T. L. Osborn, W. J. Baxter, David Nunn, Jimmy Swaggart, Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland and others, were influenced by E. W. Kenyon (1867-1948).<sup>726</sup> They were very active in writing books. For instance, Kenneth Hagin wrote *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness, and Spiritual Death* in 1966<sup>727</sup> and *How God Taught Me about Prosperity* in 1985.<sup>728</sup> Kenneth Copeland wrote *Prosperity: The Choice is Yours* in 1992<sup>729</sup> and *The Laws of Prosperity* in 1995.<sup>730</sup> Other evangelists also published many books about the prosperity gospel. They are convinced that financial blessing for believers is the will of God and is biblical. Furthermore, they teach that financial problems can be solved by faith and that those who donate to Christian missions and ministries, mostly their own missions and ministries, will receive blessings from God in return. For instance, according to

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<sup>724</sup> Allan Anderson, “The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 105.

<sup>725</sup> Allan Anderson, “The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 118.

<sup>726</sup> R. M. Riss, “Kenyon, Essek William”, in Stanley M. Burger and Eduard M. Van der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, pp. 819-20.

<sup>727</sup> Kenneth Hagin, *Redeemed from Poverty, Sickness, and Spiritual Death* (Tulsa, OK: Faith Library Publications, 1966).

<sup>728</sup> Kenneth Hagin, *How God Taught Me about Prosperity* (Tulsa, OK: Faith Library Publications, 1985).

<sup>729</sup> Kenneth Copeland, *Prosperity: The Choice is Yours* (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House, 1992).

<sup>730</sup> Kenneth Copeland, *The Laws of Prosperity* (Fort Worth: Kenneth Copeland Publications, 1995).

the ‘seed faith’ doctrine of Oral Roberts, a donation is a form of ‘seed’ which will grow with God’s favour and then will be given back to the donor. Roberts calls this theory the ‘Blessing-Pact’.<sup>731</sup> Through the influence of the ‘Word of Faith’ movement, positive thinking and speaking also became significant in relation to prosperity theology. Through writings and preaching, American evangelists, consequently, emphasized positive thinking and using positive words in order to solve physical and financial problems.<sup>732</sup> Among them, the influence of Oral Roberts on the prosperity theology of Cho is prominent. Oral Roberts started teaching prosperity theology from 1947. Cho could have obtained Roberts’ books and sermons from American missionaries in Korea.<sup>733</sup> Although the influence of the North American ‘health and wealth movement’ on Cho’s prosperity theology cannot be overlooked, there are at least three significant differences between them. First, Cho’s prosperity gospel is a contextual hope in the Korean context. In its beginning, Cho’s prosperity theology was contextualized among the mostly urban poor and needy. In contrast, the ‘health and wealth’ movement in the USA was promoted by middle class American Christians.<sup>734</sup> Anderson insists that it is inaccurate to interpret Cho’s views about prosperity and poverty from “the context of western wealth and materialism” since Cho’s prosperity theology is based on “his [Cho’s] own Korean context of poverty,

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<sup>731</sup> With regard to the ‘Blessing-Pact’, see chapter 3, section 2. 3.

<sup>732</sup> Kenneth Copeland, “Prosperity”, in William K. Kay and Anne E. Dyer (eds.), *Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies*, pp. 255-58.

<sup>733</sup> For more on this, see chapter 3, section 2. 3.

<sup>734</sup> Simon Coleman, *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity*, p. 28.

Japanese occupation, and the Korean War”.<sup>735</sup> After the Korean War, Korean Pentecostals could only resort to prayer to overcome their financial difficulties. With regard to the relation between the Korean economy and the Pentecostal movement, with its emphasis on prosperity, Cox suggests that Korean Pentecostalism contributed to the economic growth of Korea.<sup>736</sup> Consequently, if prosperity theology in America was a reflection of Christian materialism, prosperity in Christ gave hope to Koreans in their desperate situations. In other words, the American prosperity movement reflects an excessive interest in material wealth, but for Koreans, prosperity was the hope they needed in the post-Korean War context. Anderson, thus, concludes that Cho’s prosperity theology cannot be identified with western prosperity theology.<sup>737</sup>

Second, Cho’s prosperity theology is interwoven with Korean primal religiosity, ‘*kibock sinang*’. One of the goals of Korean indigenous religions, regardless of whether they are high or low, is faith for blessings. Every religion undergoes a process of indigenization and contextualization when they are imported to other nations from their place of origin. Harvey Cox says that certain elements of pre-existing religion must be included and transformed in any growing religion where they will remain in the cultural subconscious.<sup>738</sup> Anderson says, “Pentecostal converts and local preachers began to relate their messages of the transforming power of the gospel to their own religious worlds, creating continuity between certain aspects of

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<sup>735</sup> Allan Anderson, “The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 116.

<sup>736</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven*, p.236; see also Young Hoon Lee, “Influence of Dr. Cho’s God is so good-faith in the Korean Churches”, p. 74.

<sup>737</sup> Allan Anderson, “The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 104.

<sup>738</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 218-19.

the old religions and the new form of Christianity”.<sup>739</sup> Korean Pentecostalism is one example of this. Traditionally, Koreans believed that they could obtain blessings through their religious activities or faith. For instance, they believed that their experience of blessings or misfortunes were dependent on how they practiced ancestor worship in Confucian culture, or upon how they performed shamanic rituals, or how sincerely they prayed to nature gods in shamanism and Buddha in Buddhism. This tendency to integrate religion with the acquisition of blessings is not exceptional to Christianity in Korea. Just as shamanism is more concerned about personal matters, such as wealth, health and success, rather than social matters, so most Korean Pentecostals are more interested in personal matters than socio-political issues. Young Hoon Lee says that due to this shamanistic influence on Korean Christianity, Korean Christians selfishly pray for personal prosperity as well as the solution of personal problems rather than social matters.<sup>740</sup> In this sense, prosperity in the Threefold Blessing is influenced by ‘*kibock sinang*’.

Third, Cho’s prosperity gospel is related to evangelization. Korean Christians are used to saying ‘예수 믿고 축복 받으세요 (*Yeosoo Miteumyeon Chukbok Bateuseyo* – Believe in Christ and be blessed)’ when they evangelize non-believers. Certainly this can be construed as evidence of shamanic influences on Korean Christianity, but at the same time it reflects the relation between blessing and evangelism in Korean contexts. In fact, in his sermons, Cho deals mainly with such

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<sup>739</sup> Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, p. 238.

<sup>740</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 13.



topics as faith, prayer, prosperity, happiness, spiritual growth, all based on the Threefold Blessing.<sup>741</sup> With regard to prosperity theology, Hwa Yung says that for Cho, “prosperity is not just about financial success”.<sup>742</sup> Indeed, Cho’s use of the word ‘prosperity’ includes both financial and spiritual prosperity, and his prosperity message is always linked to the *Kerygma*. Due to their experience of extreme poverty and illness after the Korean War, Koreans were not so much interested in the eschatological message of the gospel but in messages that related directly and practically to their lives.<sup>743</sup> Because Cho’s teaching of prosperity appealed to many Koreans,<sup>744</sup> his Pentecostal messages proved to be successful evangelistically. Consequently, through indigenization with Korean primal spirituality and contextualization into the post-Korean War contexts, Cho’s message gave hope to Koreans and hastened the process of evangelization.

#### 4. Healing and Hope

According to the Korea Gallup Polls, in 1984, 38.1 % of 314 Korean Protestant respondents said that they experienced ‘faith-healing’ personally. In 1989, 37.6 % out of 383 respondents said that they had experienced divine healing.<sup>745</sup> Between 1978 and 1985, pastors at ten major Protestant churches in Korea preached

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<sup>741</sup> Young Gi Hong, “The Influence of Rev. Cho’s Church Growth on Korean Society”, p. 203.

<sup>742</sup> Hwa Yung, *Mangoes or Bananas?*, p. 210.

<sup>743</sup> Allan Anderson, “The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 115.

<sup>744</sup> Hwa Yung, *Mangoes or Bananas?*, p. 210.

<sup>745</sup> Andrew E. Kim, “Korean Religious Culture and its Affinity to Christianity: The Rise of Protestant Christianity in South Korea”, p. 126.

over 1,300 sermons on the topic of divine healing.<sup>746</sup> This suggests that praying for and preaching on divine healing were less controversial and more acceptable to Korean Christians than speaking in tongues.

However, there remains the question as to why Koreans needed divine healing rather than other spiritual gifts. Socio-economically, in the post-Korean War period, most Koreans did not have access to medical care, partly due to the lack of hospitals and doctors, but mainly because of the extremely high healthcare costs.

Thus, divine healing was the only hope that they had at that time. As a result, they came to the church with the hope of experiencing divine healing. Apart from the socio-economic factor, divine healing is significant to Korean Pentecostals from three perspectives. First, divine healing is considered part of Christ's redemption from the perspective of holistic salvation. Because Cho believes that diseases are caused by a curse from God or by the devil, for him, divine healing is an essential aspect of redemption.<sup>747</sup>

Based on his observations of Pentecostal services in Korea, Cox identifies divine healing with disease-curing exorcism in Korean shamanic rituals.<sup>748</sup> Due to the influence of his former doctoral student Boo Woong Yoo, Hollenweger refers to Cho

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<sup>746</sup> Andrew E. Kim, "Korean Religious Culture and its Affinity to Christianity: The Rise of Protestant Christianity in South Korea", p. 126.

<sup>747</sup> Allan Anderson, "The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho", p. 117.

<sup>748</sup> Andrew E. Kim, "Korean Religious Culture and its Affinity to Christianity: The Rise of Protestant Christianity in South Korea", p. 121.

as “a Pentecostal Shaman par excellence”.<sup>749</sup> However, Myung Soo Park argues that both Hollenweger and Cox are making hasty generalization by equating the Holy Spirit with the shamanistic spirit.<sup>750</sup> Dayton also argues that Cho’s healing and prosperity message is not influenced by Korean shamanism but rather is derived from the contemporary and proto-Pentecostal movements.<sup>751</sup>

In the Threefold Blessing, divine healing is based on the suffering of Christ on the Cross. Cho says that “Jesus paid the price for our healing at Calvary”.<sup>752</sup> In Cho’s understanding of holistic salvation, the event of the Cross is not only to save the soul but to save human beings from physical and financial sufferings.<sup>753</sup> With regard to the relationship between divine healing and redemption, Turner states as follows:

For the New Testament writers, the healings were not externally attesting signs, but part of the scope of the salvation announced, which reached beyond merely spiritual to the psychological and physical... essentially the healings belonged as part of the firstfruits of the kingdom of God, and so as part of the message of salvation which the church announced.<sup>754</sup>

Because Cho understands that sickness is caused by Satan or by a curse from God due to sin,<sup>755</sup> salvation is considered a prerequisite for healing. During Pentecostal services, divine healing is always proclaimed alongside salvific messages.

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<sup>749</sup> Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Development Worldwide*, p. 100.

<sup>750</sup> Myung Soo Park, “David Yonggi Cho and International Pentecostal/Charismatic Movements”, p. 221.

<sup>751</sup> Donald W. Dayton, “The Good God and the Theology of Blessing in the Thought of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 48.

<sup>752</sup> Karen Hurston, *Growing the World’s Largest Church*, p. 140.

<sup>753</sup> For more on this, see chapter 3, section 3. 4.

<sup>754</sup> Max Turner, “Spiritual Gifts Then and Now”, p. 37.

<sup>755</sup> Yonggi Cho, *How Can I Be Healed?*, p. 29

Indeed, divine healing is neither independent nor separate from salvation in the Threefold Blessing. Second, healing is an aspect of the gospel and greatly contributes to evangelism. Cheryl Bridges Johns says:

...healing and deliverance are constitutive aspects of the gospel. They are means whereby the 'good news' is proclaimed in both the physical and spiritual dimensions of reality. Such manifestations are reflections of the power of the gospel for the whole person and for the whole of the cosmos.<sup>756</sup>

Pentecostalism is practical and experiential rather than theoretical. Thus, for Pentecostals, the gospel cannot be 'good news' if it does not include this practical and experiential dimension. Through the experience of divine healing, people are overwhelmed by the power of the Spirit and willingly accept the gospel. Through divine healing, they are able to experience the presence of God in their lives and open their hearts to the gospel. For Cho, "healing is central to the Gospel. Healing is normative in the kingdom of God. Healing is a key to evangelization. Miracles and healing can facilitate the spreading of the Gospel".<sup>757</sup> Many YFGC members have experienced healing, and once they do so, they turn into enthusiastic lay evangelists. There are many examples of members becoming lay evangelists after receiving divine healing at the church. For example, during a Sunday service, Cho proclaimed that God was healing a woman who had suffered skin trouble for years. Cho asked the person to stand up in faith. A woman named Inja, who had suffered skin trouble for two years, stood up in faith and received prayer from Cho. After this she testified that

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<sup>756</sup> Cheryl Bridges Johns, "Healing and Deliverance: A Pentecostal Perspective", p. 45.

<sup>757</sup> Yonggi Cho, *How Can I Be Healed?*, p. 101.

she was completely healed. Subsequently, she became a cell group leader and brought sixty non-believers to Christ. In her testimony, she says that the key to her evangelism is “to tell others what Jesus has done” in her life.<sup>758</sup> Like Inja, those who receive divine healing become testimonies of God’s healing power, which leads directly to evangelism.

Third, divine healing in the Threefold Blessing also includes the healing of *Han*. Without dealing with this distinctive national emotion, no religious and social movement can be successful in Korea because Koreans are people of *Han*. Indeed, they live and die with it.<sup>759</sup> In 1978, the rate of conversion to Christianity was four times higher than the birth population rate.<sup>760</sup> This suggests that Koreans have found hope to deal with their *Han*. For Korean Pentecostalism, the Threefold Blessing, as a contextual theology, provides a solution to the *Han* of the people. Anderson argues that Cho’s teaching on the Threefold Blessing is the “theological counteraction to the *Han*” in the post-Korean War contexts.<sup>761</sup> According to Chong Hee Jeong, “shamanism not only gave Koreans a concept of a High God but through its rituals it offered help and salvation from worldly suffering and pain of *Han* and it ensured health, fertility and success”, and “Korean Pentecostalism has a similar ritual function within the same culture of *Han*”.<sup>762</sup> Dong Soo Kim also says that Cho’s message of

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<sup>758</sup> Karen Hurston, *Growing the World’s Largest Church*, p. 171.

<sup>759</sup> David Kwang Sun Suh, “Liberating Spirituality in the Korean Minjung Tradition: Shamanism and Minjung Liberation”, p. 33.

<sup>760</sup> Nell L. Kennedy, *Dream Your Way to Success: The Story of Dr. Yonggi Cho and Korea*, p. 229.

<sup>761</sup> Allan Anderson, “The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 115.

<sup>762</sup> Chong Hee Jeong, “The Formation and Development of Korean Pentecostalism from the Viewpoint of a Dynamic Contextual Theology” (Ph.D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 2001), p. 201.

the Threefold Blessing helped Koreans to escape from their *Han*.<sup>763</sup> Some Korean scholars, including Kim, insist that speaking in tongues is a way of resolving *Han*. David Kwang-sun Suh defines tongues-speaking as “the language of *minjung*” and emphasizes that *Han* can be released through speaking in tongues.<sup>764</sup> From a psychological perspective, Cyril G. Williams states that “*glossolalia* may be a release mechanism leading to a reorientation which could be of a permanent order. It is an energy discharge which can have therapeutic value as reducer of tension and resolver of inner conflict”.<sup>765</sup> However, it is questionable whether tongues-speaking functions as a means of healing the *Han* of Koreans. Perhaps, through Pentecostal practices such as loud praying with tears, singing hymns and gospel songs along with clapping of hands, and sharing personal testimonies in public, Koreans are somehow able to release their *Han*. However, the real solution to the problem of *Han* is not merely temporary release, but permanent healing through receiving blessings from God.

## 5. The Threefold Blessing and *Kerygma*

According to the Old Testament scriptures, due to the fall of humanity, thorns and thistles are produced from the ground, and human beings have to work hard in order to eat. Nonetheless, throughout the Bible, God promises that those who obey him and keep his words will be prosperous and successful on the earth. In the

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<sup>763</sup> Dong Soo Kim, “The Healing of *Han* in Korean Pentecostalism”, p. 133.

<sup>764</sup> David Kwang Sun Suh, “The Korean Pentecostal Movement and its Theological Understanding”, p. 77.

<sup>765</sup> Cyril G. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit*, p. 166.

Threefold Blessing, Korean Pentecostals find this promise of God which provides them with hope in their economically deprived circumstances. In the Old Testament, the gospel is related to the phrase בְּשׂוּרָה טוֹבָה (*besora toba*), meaning ‘good news’ (2 Samuel 18:27; 2 Kings 7:9). It is also referred to as ‘the word of God’, ‘Good is the word’ (Isaiah 39:8), and ‘the mouth of God’ (פִּי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר; Isaiah 40:5).<sup>766</sup> In the Greek text, the word *gospel* is εὐαγγέλιον (*euangelion*), and its cognate verb is εὐαγγελίζομαι (*euangelizomai*), meaning ‘to bring glad tidings.’ In Jewish and rabbinic sources, the word of God proclaimed by the prophets is closely interwoven with the message of God’s salvation.<sup>767</sup> However, in the Synoptic Gospels, the good news is firmly linked by Jesus to the Kingdom of God. On the other hand, Paul uses the word *gospel* in various ways, as the ‘the preaching of Christ’ (2 Corinthians 4:6; 5:16), as the ‘the word of reconciliation’ (2 Corinthians 5:17-21), and as ‘the message of justification’ or ‘the gospel of the righteousness of God’ (Romans 1:16-17).<sup>768</sup> Later, the social aspect of the gospel is emphasized both by Christian socialists and theologians such as C. F. Blumhardt, H. Kutter, L. Ragaz, A. Stoekker and A. von Harnack. In Liberation Theology, the gospel also has an ethical-political aspect.<sup>769</sup> Thus, it is important to consider who Christ is in the Threefold Blessing and what

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<sup>766</sup> Erwin Fahlbusch, Jan Milic Lochman, John Mbiti, Jaroslav Pelikan, Lukas Vischer, Geoffrey W. Broile, and David B. Barrett (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Christianity Vol 2*, “Gospel”, p. 446.

<sup>767</sup> F. L. Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., s.v. “Gospel” (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 697-698.

<sup>768</sup> Erwin Fahlbusch, Jan Milic Lochman, John Mbiti, Jaroslav Pelikan, Lukas Vischer, Geoffrey W. Broile, and David B. Barrett (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Christianity Vol 2*, “Gospel”, pp. 446-449.

<sup>769</sup> Erwin Fahlbusch, Jan Milic Lochman, John Mbiti, Jaroslav Pelikan, Lukas Vischer, Geoffrey W. Broile, and David B. Barrett (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Christianity Vol 2*, “Gospel”, pp. 446-449.

kind of gospel it represents. Certainly, in the Threefold Blessing, Christ is the Saviour, Healer, and dispenser of blessings.<sup>770</sup> With its message of salvation, prosperity, and healing, the Threefold Blessing was responding to the spiritual and contemporary material issues faced by Koreans, and Korean Pentecostals found the hope they needed in their hopeless situations. As hope is contrary to desperation and flourishes in hopeless situations, hope is always related to its absence. Where there is an absence of hope, life loses its meaning and purpose. Thus, unless hope is related to practical matters of this life, it is empty and cannot lead to transformation. The gospel also cannot really be good news unless it addresses the problems people are struggling with. For the poor, the promise of prosperity is ‘good news’ and the hope they need for healing the sick and saving the lost. Thus, in this sense, the Threefold Blessing provided hope for Korean Pentecostals living under desperate circumstances and became ‘good news’ for them.

However, for Korean conservative Christians, influenced by the Confucian beliefs, prosperity is regarded as an inferior value which Christians should not pursue. To them, prosperity is an aspect of shamanism and unworthy of Christianity as a high religion. Furthermore, they placed emphasis on the eschatological hope rather than hope for present matters. Yet it is questionable whether hope can be hope when it is not focused on existential matters of this life. From a Korean Pentecostal perspective, unless hope contains both elements, it is detrimental to Christian growth. As the

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<sup>770</sup> For more on this, see chapter 3, section 2. 2.



soteriology of Korean Pentecostalism is holistic,<sup>771</sup> hope is also holistic. And also, as the hope of Pentecostals is interwoven with present and future soteriological needs, their hope is focused both on the present and the future. In contrast, Moltmann says:

That we do not reconcile ourselves, that there is no pleasant harmony between us and reality, is due to our unquenchable hope. This hope keeps man unreconciled, until the great day of the fulfillment of all the promises of God. It keeps him *in statu viatoris* [on the pilgrimage], in that unresolved openness to world questions which has its origin in the promise of God in the resurrection of Christ and can therefore be resolved only when the same God fulfills his promise.<sup>772</sup>

Due to his eschatological perspective on hope, Moltmann suggests that the life of believers is not set at the high noon of day, but “at the dawn of a new day where night and day” coexist. Thus, “the believer does not simply take the day as it comes, but looks beyond the day to the things which according to the promise of him who is the *creator ex nihilo* [Creator out of nothing] and raiser of the dead are still to come.”<sup>773</sup> However, Korean Pentecostals are not content to look towards the dawn of a new day while they remain cold and hungry, but with the Threefold Blessing they expect to live in the high noon of day. For them, waiting for the dawn of a new day is not enough. Rather, they want to experience the fulfilment of their hope in the here and now. In his Epistles, Paul regards the Kingdom of God as ‘already but not yet’. In contrast, for Korean Pentecostals, the Kingdom is not to be experienced only in its eschatological dimension. It must be both ‘already but not yet’ and ‘here and now’

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<sup>771</sup> For more on this, see chapter 3, section 3. 4.

<sup>772</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, p. 22.

<sup>773</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, p. 31.

because they have an aspiration for the Kingdom to be of practical relevance to their life in the present. They want to experience the power of God not merely for salvation, but also to help them in their present sufferings.<sup>774</sup> Therefore, the *Kerygma* has to be relevant both to the future and the present.

Nevertheless, the focus on the present reality of the eschatological Kingdom has been a matter of controversy between Korean Pentecostals and mainstream Christians, especially in relation to the possible influence of shamanism. With regard to the shamanistic influence on Korean Christianity, Young Hoon Lee says that “Shamanism implicitly drove Korean Christians to focus on blessings”.<sup>775</sup> Korean Shamanism focuses on secular hopes, and its fundamental purpose is to fulfil the earthly desires of its adherents. Shamanistic hope is not concerned with ethical values or matters of eternal life. Koreans solicit the services of a shaman to perform shamanistic rituals in order to fulfil their hopes for material blessing, male children, wealth, health, fame, success, longevity, and so on. The recipients of shamanic rites are different according to the particular situations: they may be ancestors, nature gods, or certain sacred objects. An important issue is how Korean Christians, including Pentecostals, deal with shamanism; whether to regard shamanism as a pagan religion or as an aspect of culture. Two questions arise. Firstly, why are Korean Pentecostals so opposed to the possibility of shamanic influences on their movement? Second, how should Korean Pentecostals relate to Korean shamanism? The reason Korean

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<sup>774</sup> For more on this, see chapter 3, section 4.1.2.

<sup>775</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 14.

Pentecostals are so sceptical about the possibility of shamanistic influences is due to the conservative character of the movement from its beginning.<sup>776</sup> They are reluctant to mix shamanistic spirituality with the spirituality of Christianity and the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. However, it is necessary to approach Korean shamanism not from a religious perspective but from an anthropological perspective since it reflects Korean psyche, tradition, culture, and religiosity formulated through Korean history. In fact, it is difficult to understand why Korean Pentecostalism is different from other expressions of global Pentecostalism without considering this anthropological perspective. Clearly, shamanism contains elements of Korean primal religiosity which was there before Christianity came to Korea. Undoubtedly, Korean Pentecostalism could not have grown in such a short period of time if the contextualization of Pentecostalism into Korean contexts had not been successful. As “the religious soil of Korea”,<sup>777</sup> the contribution of shamanism to Korean Pentecostalism cannot be overlooked because the influences of shamanistic practices on Korean Pentecostalism is apparent in such practices as dawn prayer, praying on mountains, and the emphasis on blessings in this present life.<sup>778</sup> This means, in other words, that shamanism has influenced Korean Pentecostalism.

However, at the same time, Pentecostalism has been contextualized into Korean religiosity without inheriting shamanistic beliefs such as polytheism and

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<sup>776</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 2.

<sup>777</sup> David Kwang Sun Suh, “Liberation Spiritual in the Korean Minjung Tradition: Shamanism and Minjung Liberation”, p. 31.

<sup>778</sup> For more on this, see chapter 2, section 4. 1.

ancestor worship. The Threefold Blessing theory was contextualized successfully into three major Korean contexts: spiritual, socio-economic, and well-being. The Threefold Blessing itself reflects what Koreans need most, and the theology of the Threefold Blessing is a response to these needs. With the successful contextualization of the Threefold Blessing in these three areas which most Koreans were struggling with, the message of the Threefold Blessing gave hope to Pentecostals in the post-Korean War context. In other words, the Threefold Blessing was successful because it was deeply immersed in the Korean context after the war. Young Hoon Lee argues that the instability of Korean society was one of the factors that led people to accept the Holy Spirit movement while they desperately searched for spiritual satisfaction and stability in life.<sup>779</sup> Thus, the *Kerygma* of the Kingdom has to be relevant both to the present and the future.

Due to the fact that the rule of God is not restricted to the eschatological Kingdom but predominates over heaven and earth, the whole universe and even time and space, God's dominion and Kingdom have to be a present reality. Korean Pentecostals seek for the Kingdom where they can find rest in the here and now in the context of their sufferings.

The Kingdom 'here and now' needs to be understood in relation to soteriology and eschatology. In fact, the present reality of the Kingdom can be better

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<sup>779</sup> Young Hoon Lee, "the Korean Holy Spirit Movement in Relation to Pentecostalism", in Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang (eds.), *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, p. 520.

understood from a soteriological rather than eschatological perspective. Nevertheless, the Kingdom in the 'here and now' cannot be understood apart from the future Kingdom because the present reality of the Kingdom is an expression of the eschatological Kingdom of God and its focus on righteousness, justice and blessing. J. D. Johns say as follows:

At the core of the Pentecostal worldview is affective experience of God which generates an apocalyptic horizon for reading reality. In this apocalyptic horizon the experience of God is fused to all other perceptions in the space-time continuum. The fusion holds all things in a dialectic tension between the already and the not yet.<sup>780</sup>

In other words, the power and presence of the Spirit makes it possible to experience God's future Kingdom in the here and now. Through the Spirit, Pentecostals can experience the rule of God and his presence in their lives. Cho believes that through the Spirit, the Kingdom of God can be realized in people's lives not only spiritually but also existentially. Thus, the Kingdom in the here and now offers a new soteriological hope for this present life. Soteriology in the Threefold Blessing needs to be understood in two aspects: salvation for the soul and salvation from contemporary hardships in this life. Korean Pentecostals accept the fact that salvation through the atonement is ongoing in the here and now through the Spirit.<sup>781</sup> However, this Pentecostal soteriology is not identical to that of radical Christians. Unlike the radicals, Korean Pentecostal soteriology does not focus on social change

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<sup>780</sup> Jackie David Johns, "Pentecostalism and the Postmodern Worldview", *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 7 (1995), p. 87.

<sup>781</sup> Young Hoon Lee, "Influence of Dr. Cho's God is so good-faith in the Korean Churches", p. 72.

or political reform. Instead, Korean Pentecostals believe in salvation from their hardships through receiving blessings from God. They are convinced that as children of God, they are qualified to receive blessings on the basis of the atonement. The present reality of the Kingdom in the Threefold Blessing is based on the idea of ‘*Joeushin Hananim* (Good God)’.<sup>782</sup> In his sermons, Cho often quotes Hebrews 13:8 – ‘Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever’ - to emphasize that the “good God is not only the God of yesterday but also the God of now and here” who wants to bless his people.<sup>783</sup> This idea of a good God raises an existential question as to why such a God ignores the sufferings of his people. Hope for the Kingdom in the here and now is also interwoven with contemporary matters and faith that the good God will intervene. Then there is the question of how the good God can intervene in the suffering of his people. Korean Pentecostals are convinced that the good God will intervene in their hardships by dispensing blessings such as prosperity for those suffering poverty and healing for those experiencing sickness.

The blessings of health and prosperity were what Koreans hoped for in the post-Korean War context. Moltmann says that, as hope is not “the reality which exists, but the reality which is coming”, it has to be sustained “in contradiction to the reality which can at present be experienced” and consequently can lead “existing reality towards the promised and hoped-for transformation”.<sup>784</sup> The Threefold Blessings of salvation, prosperity, and health were not the reality for Koreans in the post-Korean

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<sup>782</sup> For more on this, see chapter 2, section 2. 2.

<sup>783</sup> Young Hoon Lee, “Influence of Dr. Cho’s God is so good-faith in the Korean Churches”, p. 72.

<sup>784</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, p. 18.

War context and also were inconsistent with reality throughout the history of *Han* the Koreans had passed through. However, the Threefold Blessing was proclaimed as the promise of God to Korean Pentecostals and was a contextual theology of hope in such a desperate situation. Anderson insists that “for Cho, the message of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit was a personal contextual message that gave hope to a suffering and destitute community”,<sup>785</sup> and his message of hope solved the *Han* of Koreans.<sup>786</sup> Through the message of the Threefold Blessing, Korean Pentecostals could have hope for the future and were able to change their negative and defeatist mentality.<sup>787</sup> Moltmann says that “the hope of the gospel has a polemic and liberating relation not only to the religions and ideologies of men, but still more to the factual, practical life of men and to the relationships in which this life is lived”.<sup>788</sup> As there are no sufferings nor sorrow but only joy and prosperity in God’s Kingdom, the hope of Korean Pentecostals is focused on the present experience of the Kingdom. Consequently, without hope for the present reality of the Kingdom, the eschatological Kingdom can offer merely a future hope to enable the endurance of present suffering. Thus, for Koreans, the Threefold Blessing is the present experience of the coming Kingdom and the present expression of the gospel of the Kingdom in the here and now.

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<sup>785</sup> Allan Anderson, “The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 115.

<sup>786</sup> Allan Anderson, “The Contextual Pentecostal Theology of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 114.

<sup>787</sup> Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theology Institute], *Hananim euy Sunghoi GyoHoiSa* [Church History of Assemblies of God], p. 258.

<sup>788</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, p.330.

## 6. Conclusion

For generations, Koreans were influenced by Buddhism, Confucianism and shamanism in many aspects of life. They were accustomed to the spirituality of these low and high religions. However, Koreans found no hope for eternal life in these religions. With the eschatological hope of the coming Kingdom of God, Koreans could temporarily mollify their sufferings under Japanese Rule. However, the spiritual blessing contained in the Threefold Blessing does not mean only spiritual salvation but includes being repeatedly filled with the Spirit. In other words, the spiritual blessing involves having a deeper, personal fellowship with the Spirit on a daily basis.

Thus, the *χαρίσματα*(*charismata*) are critical to the spiritual life of Korean Pentecostals since, through practicing *χαρίσματα*, they can sense firmly and practically that the Spirit is interacting with them. Furthermore, the infilling of the Spirit extends to living life empowered by the dynamic energy of the Spirit.<sup>789</sup> In this sense, the spiritual blessing is not only to be saved from sins but to enable recipients to live a new life in the Spirit. Prosperity and healing in the Threefold Blessing have to be understood against the background of the post-Korean War context and the personal life of Cho. In other words, the Threefold Blessing was directly related to the devastating experience of life for Koreans after the Korean War. Cho, as a victim of Japanese Rule, the Korean War, and national poverty, was caught up with the

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<sup>789</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, p. 36.



needs and problems of ordinary Koreans in post-war Korea. To Cho, divine healing and financial prosperity are as prominent a part of the gospel as salvation. Cho understands that the event of the Cross was intended not only to save the soul but also to save God's people from suffering hardships in life. Since, as a contextual hope, *Kerygma* has to be 'good news' in both spiritual and material dimensions.

Nonetheless, the present Kingdom is not prior to the coming Kingdom at the Second Advent. In the same vein, although healing and prosperity are indispensable parts of the gospel, they are not superior to salvation in the Threefold Blessing.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE THREEFOLD BLESSING IN PRESENT AND FUTURE

#### PERSPECTIVES

##### 1. Introduction

Young Hoon Lee divides the history of Pentecostalism in Korea into six periods. According to him, the movement is now in its sixth period which began in 2000.<sup>790</sup> There are several reasons why he suggests that the sixth period began from 2000. First, the beginning of the new millennium brought many changes in Korea.<sup>791</sup> Indeed, there were remarkable changes in Korean society, its politics and economy, as well as within Korean Christianity itself. For example, politically, there was a dramatic reversal in diplomatic approaches towards North Korea from 1998, two years before the new millennium began. From 1998, the diplomatic policy of South Korea towards the North changed from a hard-line policy to an appeasement policy called ‘Haet Byet Jeong Chaek (the Sunshine Policy)’. On April 4, 1998, Kim Dae-jung (1924-2009), who was President of Korea from 1998 to 2003, delivered a speech at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, in which he used the term ‘Haet Byet Jeong Chaek (the Sunshine Policy)’ for the first time. The policy contained three fundamental diplomatic principles: 1) “Non-tolerance of military threat or armed provocation”; 2) “the official abandonment of the idea of unification by

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<sup>790</sup> The first period (1900-1920), the second (1920-1940), the third (1940-1960), the fourth period (1960-1980), the fifth period (1980-2000), and the sixth period (2000- present). See Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*.

<sup>791</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 119.

absorption and the negation of any other measure to undermine or threaten North Korea”; and 3) “the promotion of exchanges and cooperation through resumption of the 1991 Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-aggression and Exchanges and Cooperation”.<sup>792</sup> With this decision, the national system had to be changed, including the national military system, trade, diplomatic policies not only for the North but for other neighbouring countries, the matter of North Korean refugees, and so on.

Secondly, the first decade of the new millennium saw a change in YFGC’s leadership from Cho to his successor, Young Hoon Lee. From 2005, in a series of interviews and official statements, Cho had officially begun to announce his imminent retirement, which was planned for 2008.<sup>793</sup> In November 2006, Young Hoon Lee was elected by the elders’ council in a secret ballot, and he officially succeeded Cho on May 21, 2008.<sup>794</sup> Thirdly, the role of the church, especially in terms of social responsibility, world mission, its leadership for Korean Pentecostalism, and even its response to the environment has changed since the new millennium.<sup>795</sup>

In addition, the remarkable changes that have taken place within the Korean context must not be overlooked. Due to the development of the economy and the welfare system, there is no more national poverty, and the national health care has

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<sup>792</sup> Chung In Moon, “The Sunshine Policy and the Korean Summit: Assessments and Prospects”, *East Asian Review* Vol. 12, No. 4 (Winter) 2000, pp. 6-7.

<sup>793</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 126.

<sup>794</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 126. For the date of Lee’s installation, see [http://pastorlee.fgtv.com/p3/02\\_view.asp?NUM=35&page=5&vnum=34](http://pastorlee.fgtv.com/p3/02_view.asp?NUM=35&page=5&vnum=34), accessed on 15 June 2012.

<sup>795</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 120.

been well developed.<sup>796</sup> As mentioned previously, the Threefold Blessing developed in the post-Korean War context which is very different from the contemporary Korean context. As the Threefold Blessing was successfully contextualized into the context of the urban poor and those suffering from ill-health, the YFGC was able to grow rapidly. While the Threefold Blessing was taking root in Korean soil, most Koreans were the victims of extreme poverty and ill-health due to the Korean War. They were “war-torn, broken, destroyed, and poverty-stricken”.<sup>797</sup> However, the majority of today’s Korean Pentecostals do not belong to the lower socioeconomic class. Thus, it is necessary for the future prospects of Korean Pentecostalism that the theology of the Threefold Blessing be re-contextualized in response to changing contexts. The Threefold Blessing cannot continue to give hope to Korean Pentecostals unless it is reinterpreted from an ecclesiological, eschatological and soteriological perspective.

When the Threefold Blessing was contextualized into the post-Korean War context, it gave hope to Korean Christians to overcome their suffering through faith in Christ. In other words, it was not just a case of seeking after blessings but it represented ‘good news’ to Koreans who were suffering under extreme hardship. As a result, it brought about remarkable church growth. In today’s Korean socio-economic context, however, pursuing blessings is a form of Christian materialism. With regard

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<sup>796</sup> According to the World Bank, Korea’s GDP reached \$ 1.116 trillion in 2011. For more on the economic growth of Korea, see the World Bank, “Korea, Rep,” available the World Bank [database on-line]: <http://data.worldbank.org/country/korea-republic>, accessed on 19 March 2013.

<sup>797</sup> Yonggi Cho, *My Church Growth Stories* (Seoul: Seoul Logos Co., 2006), p. 157.

to this tendency, Wonsuk Ma points out that Pentecostals need to think whether their pursuit of blessings is “self-serving” or “kingdom-serving”.<sup>798</sup> Therefore, the Threefold Blessing can no longer function as a hope to Koreans unless it is re-contextualized into the contemporary Korean context. In this chapter, the ecclesiological and soteriological changes in the Korean context will be discussed, as well as the implications of this for the recontextualization of the Threefold Blessing.

## **2. Ecclesiological Change and Hope**

Traditionally, Pentecostals have avoided socio-political issues. As a result, there has been a tendency for them “to accept present oppressive conditions or to promote a health and wealth gospel that makes material gain a spiritual virtue.”<sup>799</sup> However, this tendency does not prevail all over the Pentecostal world. In Latin America, although participating in socio-political matters is not always welcomed by Pentecostal leaders due to concerns about losing their spiritual focus, Pentecostals have sometimes addressed socio-political matters. For instance, Manoel de Mello, the founder of the Pentecostal denomination ‘Brazil for Christ’, stated that “the gospel cannot be proclaimed fully without denouncing injustices committed by the

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<sup>798</sup> Wonsuk Ma, “Dr. Yonggi Cho’s Theology of Blessing: New Theological Basis and Directions”, p. 191.

<sup>799</sup> Allan Anderson, “A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho”, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 21 (2012), pp. 152-167 (153).

powerful.”<sup>800</sup> In Chile, Pentecostals, who resisted Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship, were “harassed, tortured, and even killed”.<sup>801</sup> In the Philippines, Eddie Villanueva, the founder of ‘Jesus is Lord Church’, the largest Pentecostal church in the country, is very active in political matters. He was one of the strongest political opponents of the Gloria Arroyo government and led a petition for Arroyo’s impeachment. Furthermore, he became a presidential candidate in 2004 and 2010.<sup>802</sup> However, Cho’s social theology is “more implied than expressed”.<sup>803</sup> Although it appears that Cho does not focus on socio-political issues in his writings and sermons, the contributions of Cho and the YFGC on behalf of the community may be greater than any other Christian organization in Korea.

## ***2. 1. Ecclesiological Responsibility for Society***

Since the 1980s, Cho and the YFGC have supported social welfare centres and engaged in international relief work around the world. For instance, during the period 1982 to 1986, they built a church, a gymnasium, and houses designed for the

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<sup>800</sup> Murray W. Dempster, “Pentecostal Social Concern and the Biblical Mandate of Social Justice”, p. 129; and Allan Anderson, “A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 153.

<sup>801</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, p. 67.

<sup>802</sup> Allan Anderson, “A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 157.

<sup>803</sup> Allan Anderson, “A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 159.

disabled, which he donated to Holt Children's Service Inc.<sup>804</sup> Between 1984 and 1997, they developed a medical programme for patients with cardiac disease, which enabled them to have surgery free of charge. During this time, 2,358 cardiac patients underwent successful surgical operations. In 1990, they raised funds for children with cardiac problems to receive surgery by running a paper recycling scheme named 'Peji Soojip Oondong [campaign for recycling collection]', which most YFGC church members participated in. In December 1985, Cho made a decision to start another relief scheme for underprivileged teenagers and marginalized senior citizens. In January 1986, he established a special committee, named 'Elim Bokji Yisahoi (The Board of Directors of Elim Welfare)', and in July 1988, he completed the 'Elim Bokji Town (Elim Welfare Town)' which included a vocational school for the youth and a nursing home for senior citizens. He added the 'Elim Sungyowon (Elim nursery)' in 1994 and the 'Elim Yoyangwon (Elim Sanatorium)' in 1997. In 1992, through the food aid program called 'Eunhaeeui Bbang Nanoogi Oondong (Bread of Grace Sharing Campaign)', he provided foodstuffs for Cambodia, Vietnam, Mozambique, Bangladesh, and other undeveloped countries around the world.<sup>805</sup> In January 1999, Cho established the 'Hankook Sunhan Samaliainhoi (Korean Good Samaritans)' which was renamed 'Sunhan Salamdeul (Good People)' in June of the same year.

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<sup>804</sup> In 1955, Holt Children Services Inc. was begun by Bertha (1904–2000) and Harry Holt (1904–1964) with the adoption of eight Korean War orphans in Korea. It has become a world-renowned and professional organization in terms of international and domestic adoption as well as provision of social welfare. Its official website is available from [http://www.holt.or.kr/holten/main/view.jsp?c\\_no=001001](http://www.holt.or.kr/holten/main/view.jsp?c_no=001001), accessed on 14 February 2013.

<sup>805</sup> The official website of the YFGC provides the entire history of the church with describing detail monthly events from its beginning in 1958 up to now, available from [http://yfgc.fgtv.com/y1/04\\_0301.asp](http://yfgc.fgtv.com/y1/04_0301.asp), accessed on 24 May 2012.

Through this organization, Cho focused more on international relief work including relief for refugees from North Korea. The sudden development of the North Korea Mission was related to the radical change of the political situation in the Korean Peninsula from 1998. Through various campaigns including the broadcast media, the South Korean government tried to change the stance of the whole country toward North Korea from archenemy to siblings. Due to its teaching on love for one's neighbours but also for one's enemy, the church became "the best agent" to bring about this change among South Koreans.<sup>806</sup> The YFGC also responded positively to this new political climate (the Sunshine Policy). This soft-line policy, in fact, initiated a radical change in the YFGC's mission to the North. For instance, in the year 2000, 1,500 tonnes of fertilizer and ninety five tonnes of corn seed were sent to North Korea through the organization. In December 2000, Cho opened a hospital named 'Kyoungshinjin Byoungwon (Kyoungshinjin Hospital)' on the border between China and North Korea. In order to help refugees from North Korea settle in South Korea, 'Jayoo Simin Daehak (Free Citizen College) was started in February 2002.

## ***2. 2. New Church Role and Hope for the Reunification of Korea***

The reunification of South and North Korea will be one of the biggest challenges for Korea in its history, although no one knows if or when it will happen. However, it is clear that the Korean church will have an important role to play,

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<sup>806</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 120.



similar to that played by the German church during the reunification of Germany. The YFGC's mission to the North is significant in at least three respects. First, it reminds Christians in the South that North Koreans are not their enemies but their brothers and sisters. In the past, especially during the Cold War era and the military dictatorship in South Korea, North Koreans were regarded as major enemies by South Koreans. Yet, through YFGC's mission to the North, it seems that South Korean Christians have opened their hearts to recognize North Koreans as their siblings and furthermore restore brotherly love to them. Secondly, it is an attempt to bring about reconciliation between the North and the South through Christ. During the Korean War, they killed one another and destroyed each other's properties. Thus, the reunification of Korea cannot happen without reconciliation. Comparing the Korean situation with Germany, Moltmann points out that churches in East and West Germany were reconciled before reunification was achieved. In addition, he suggests that Korea can learn some lessons from the example of Germany but has to find its own way to make its reunification a reality due to the contextual difference between Germany and Korea.<sup>807</sup>

Based on the reconciliation and the restoration of love, German Christians as well as the people of Germany generally were able to re-build their relationships before reunification took place. However, unlike the German church and government, it is clear that the Korean church as well as both Korean governments are not ready

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<sup>807</sup> Personal interview with Jürgen Moltmann on 4 January 2012 at his house in Tübingen, Germany. See, Appendix A. Interview with Dr. Jürgen Moltmann.

for reunification at present. If this is so, what is the responsibility of the Korean church at this point in time? It will be to express their love in practical ways and to attempt to re-build confidence between the two communities through Christ. Lee says that the Korean church must be the “the best agent”<sup>808</sup> to bring about this historical event. In February 2004, the YFGC built a soybean oil factory in Pyongyang, the capital city of North Korea, not to make profits for the church but to offer job opportunities to North Koreans.<sup>809</sup> This illustrates that there is something that the government of South Korea cannot do because of political reasons, but the church can do.

Thirdly, the North Korean mission gives hope for the evangelization of North Korea. Korean Pentecostalism began when revival movements broke out in North Korea.<sup>810</sup> However, North Korea became a communist state soon after independence from Japanese rule, and Christians in North Korea were persecuted by communists. Since then, the Korean War broke out in 1950, and the North and South have been engaged in a fierce arms race. The North Korean nuclear weapon issue has not yet been resolved despite diplomatic efforts. There are still occasional regional conflicts near the border between the North and the South. Thus, this ecclesiological change, which has taken place since the beginning of the new millennium, especially with regard to the North Korea mission, gives hope to Korean Christians concerning the possibility of peace as well as the future reunification of Korea.

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<sup>808</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 120.

<sup>809</sup> [http://www.goodpeople.or.kr/goodple/goodple\\_history.asp](http://www.goodpeople.or.kr/goodple/goodple_history.asp), accessed on 24 May 2012

<sup>810</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 4.

### ***2. 3. New Church Role and Social Transformation***

Considering his strong Confucian background, Cho's social influence, not only in terms of his social relief work but also in terms of the transformation of women leadership in the church, is significant. Following the suggestion of Jashil Choi, from the early 1960s lay women began to be trained by Cho and then appointed as cell group leaders.<sup>811</sup> This transformation in the social status of women in the church especially in a strong male-oriented society like Korea is "revolutionary".<sup>812</sup> Indeed, prior to this women leadership was not even considered in the Korean church, and most Korean churches were entirely led by men. In this, they were influenced by the biblical reference 1 Corinthians. 14:34 ('women should remain silent in the churches – NIV) and the male-dominated cultural background. In contrast, in January 2009, there were 14,888 home cell units in the YFGC,<sup>813</sup> and most cell leaders were women. Anderson regards this social transformation in terms of women leadership as "a ground-breaking change".<sup>814</sup> This is a significant social transformation in a male-oriented society and is also an indication of the ecumenical character of Korean

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<sup>811</sup> Allan Anderson, "A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho", p. 162.

<sup>812</sup> Allan Anderson, "A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho", p. 162.

<sup>813</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 107.

<sup>814</sup> Allan Anderson, "A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho", p. 162.

Pentecostalism.<sup>815</sup> As Anderson says, Cho's social theology is not explicit but rather implicit.<sup>816</sup>

Although his social theology and concerns about social matters are not as prominent as those associated with Minjung theology, due to its financial capacity and its large membership, YFGC's social relief work surpasses the work of other Christian churches or groups in Korea. Cho and the YFGC continue to lead the way in social transformation and give hope to the Korean people. Nevertheless, Cho has been criticized for allegedly giving priority to evangelization and church growth over concern for social matters. This assessment is because Cho's social theology has not been developed systematically, and the theology of the Threefold Blessing is still focused on personal blessings.

### **3. Soteriological Change and Hope for the Ecosystem**

Indeed, the scope of Cho's Threefold Blessing theology is not broad enough to include society or the environment as a whole. Thus, healing in the Threefold Blessing does not include a social element; blessing is limited to individual prosperity; and well-being is understood as individual, rather than environmental, welfare. In his writings and sermons, Cho emphasizes divine healing, well-being, and blessings for individuals. Anderson says "Pentecostals do not always separate the

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<sup>815</sup> For more on this, see chapter 1, section 4. 3.

<sup>816</sup> Allan Anderson, "A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho", p. 159.

spiritual from the physical, but they integrate them in a holistic whole that leads to involvement in social issues and politics”.<sup>817</sup> Although Cho’s theology claims to be holistic,<sup>818</sup> he has not developed a soteriology that includes socio-political issues. However, since 2005, he has begun to expand the scope of his theology of salvation to include human society, nature, and even the whole ecosystem. According to Moon Chul Shin, Cho began to recognize the necessity for salvation to include the environment from 2005.<sup>819</sup> During a New Year service on the 4th January 2005, Cho acknowledged that his ministries were focused on personal salvation and were not concerned about social matters. At that time, he promised that he would show more concern for relief of the poor, support for senior citizens who live alone, and assistance for child breadwinners.<sup>820</sup> During his sermon, Cho stated: “We have had a narrow perspective so far. With open heart and faith, we need to work hard to remove the social evil in our society and to start a movement in order to protect our environment as well as evangelize the lost this New Year” [my translation].<sup>821</sup> Furthermore, he confessed: “I did not pray enough for the politics of my country. I have understood the theology of the cross from a narrow perspective. I have

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<sup>817</sup> Allan Anderson, “A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 154.

<sup>818</sup> For more on this, see chapter 3, section 3. 4.

<sup>819</sup> Moon Chul Shin, “Young San eui Saeng Tae Shin Hak [Yonggi Cho’s Eco-Theology]”, in Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theological Institute], *Young San eui Mokhoiweya Shin Hak I* [Yonggi Cho’s Ministry and Theology] (Gunpo: Hansei University Press, 2008), p. 398.

<sup>820</sup> Heung Kil Jang, “Youngsan Cho Yonggi Moksaewi Sahoi Goowonae Gwhanhan Shiyak Sungseo Yoonlijeok Pyungga [Ethical Critic for the perspective of Rev. Yonggi Cho about Social Salvation based on the New Testament],” *Journal of Young San Theology*, vol. 17, pp. 93-133 (67).

<sup>821</sup> Moon Chul Shin, “Young San eui Saeng Tae Shin Hak [Yonggi Cho’s Eco-Theology]”, p. 398.

disregarded social vices and had no concern about natural disasters” [my translation].<sup>822</sup>

During the first Sunday service of 2005, Cho preached that salvation is not only for humanity, but includes the world, society and even the environment.<sup>823</sup> Moltmann evaluates this change in Cho’s soteriology as a “marvellous turning point”.<sup>824</sup> Moltmann thinks that “the theology of Pentecostal experience must lead to a theology of creation in the Holy Spirit”.<sup>825</sup> Traditionally, Christians have understood creation from a Trinitarian perspective, that all things are created by God the Father “through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit” and exist in God.<sup>826</sup> Moltmann, however, argues that, in order to emphasize God’s transcendence, the Western church merely stressed the first aspect that all things are created by God rather than the latter, that they exist in God and God also is in them. As a result, Moltmann says that they distinguish and separate “God the Creator from the world as His creation.”<sup>827</sup> Moltmann emphasizes both God’s transcendence and immanence in His creation. He insists that “the presence of God [is] immanent in the world and present in all

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<sup>822</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “Salm Eul Wooi Han Sinhak, Sinhak Eul Wooi Han Salm [Theology for Life, Life for Theology]”, *Kukmin Ilbo*, 12 May 2009, available from *Kukmin Ilbo* database on-line; <http://news.kukinews.com/article/view.asp?arcid=0921286513>, accessed on 26 October 2011.

<sup>823</sup> Yonggi Cho, “New Year’s Resolution” (Sunday sermon on 02 January 2005), available from the YFGC database on-line; [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1\\_1\\_re.asp?aidnum=21162&page=1](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1_1_re.asp?aidnum=21162&page=1), accessed on 12 May 2012.

<sup>824</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “Salm Eul Wooi Han Sinhak, Sinhak Eul Wooi Han Salm [Theology for Life, Life for Theology]”.

<sup>825</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “A Response to My Pentecostal Dialogue Partners”, p. 62.

<sup>826</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life: The Holy Spirit and the Theology of Life*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1997), p. 115.

<sup>827</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life*, p. 115.

things”.<sup>828</sup> In relation to this, Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson criticize Moltmann for underscoring “the perichoretic relationship between God and the world – a relationship of fellowship, mutual need and mutual interpenetration” by overemphasizing “God’s immanence with history”.<sup>829</sup> To Moltmann, however, God is not merely “the Creator of the world” but also “the Spirit of the universe”.<sup>830</sup> This means that God’s transcendence is not debased by the immanence of God in His creation. Moltmann states: “Through the powers of and potentialities of the Spirit, the Creator indwells the creatures he has made, animates them, holds them in life, and leads them into the future of his kingdom. In this sense the history of creation is the history of the efficacy of the divine Spirit”.<sup>831</sup>

To Moltmann, the idea of God as the Creator and the world as His creation are inseparable. He believes that the presence of the world is in God, and the presence of God is in the world through the Holy Spirit.<sup>832</sup> As the world was created by God, it represents His divine nature and attributes. Moltmann says that all things are from “God’s living breath and that breath holds them together in a community of creation” and they are “mutually dependent; they live with each other and for each other, and often enough symbiotically within each other”.<sup>833</sup> For this reason, “if they cut

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<sup>828</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life*, p. 115-16.

<sup>829</sup> Stanley J. Grenz & Roger E. Olson, *20<sup>th</sup> Century Theology: God & the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), p. 184.

<sup>830</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1985), p. 14.

<sup>831</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation*, p. 14.

<sup>832</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation*, p. 13.

<sup>833</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life*, p. 24.

themselves off from that community, they lose the living Spirit”.<sup>834</sup> Moltmann’s ecological theology is based on his understanding of God’s immanence in creation and his pneumatology. In contrast, Cho’s ecological theology is based on his Christology. Referring to the text John 3: 16, Cho understands ‘the world’ saved by Christ on the cross to mean not only humanity but also the whole universe including the ecosystem<sup>835</sup> Cho says as follows:

Just recently I found out many insufficiencies of myself in the forty-seven years of ministry. The Bible says, ‘For God so loved the world that He gave His son and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.’ However, I misinterpreted it; I understood that God so loved ‘humans,’ not ‘the world,’ that He gave His one and only Son. What is the world? In the world, there are all things such as people, society, sky, land, ocean, plants, insects and animals. The Bible says that God so loved ‘the world’ that He gave His only Son; it does not limit and say that God so loved ‘human’ that He gave His only Son... When Jesus died upon the cross, he redeemed for nature also... the power of blood that Jesus shed on the cross saves nature.<sup>836</sup>

With regard to this change in Cho’s soteriology, Lee states that “When Jesus died upon the Cross, He redeemed nature also”.<sup>837</sup> This can be understood as a response to the realization of the necessity to restore the ecosystem which was destroyed by the industrialization and urbanization of Korea due to her rapid economic growth. However, it also represents a turning point in Cho’s soteriology.

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<sup>834</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life*, p. 24.

<sup>835</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Pastor! How Can I Be Healed?* (Seoul: Seoul Logos, 1997), pp. 149-151; and Young Hoon Lee, “Influence of Dr. Cho’s God is so good-faith in the Korean Churches”, p. 77.

<sup>836</sup> Mun Cheol Shin, “Eco-theology of Young-san”, *The Holy Spirit and Theology* 22 (2006), p. 115.

<sup>837</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 128.



The longer his soteriology remains focused on individual salvation, the more the Threefold Blessing will be understood in an individualistic sense.

Cho's changing perspective on soteriology offers the possibility that the scope of the Threefold Blessing can be expanded to include the salvation of society as well as the ecosystem.<sup>838</sup> The social aspect of Cho's understanding about the Christian life is reflected in the themes of his sermons such as the 'life of sharing,' the 'life of loving,' and the 'life of helping others'.<sup>839</sup> Cho has often preached sermons about showing love towards others. Examples include a sermon entitled 'religion or love?' based on the scripture Luke 10:30-36.<sup>840</sup> Other sermon titles include 'four elements of love' based on 1 John 4:7-12,<sup>841</sup> 'life of sharing' (Ephesians 2:5-6),<sup>842</sup> 'born to give' (Luke 6:38),<sup>843</sup> 'bonanza of blessing' (2 Corinthians 9:6-9),<sup>844</sup> 'true

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<sup>838</sup> A. J. Swoboda approaches ecotheology in Pentecostal perspectives in his Ph.D thesis entitled "Tongues and Trees: Towards a Green Pentecostal Theology". He develops a Pentecostal ecotheology through dealing with "a pneumatology of the Spirit baptized creation", "the charismatic creational community", "the holistic ecological Spirit", and "the eschatological Spirit of ecological mission". See Aaron Jason Swoboda, "Tongues and Trees: Towards a Green Pentecostal Theology", (Ph. D. thesis, University of Birmingham, 2011).

<sup>839</sup> Heung Kil Jang, "Youngsan Cho Yonggi Moksaewi Sahoi Goowonae Gwhanhan Shiyak Sungseo Yoonlijeok Pyungga [Ethical Critic for the perspective of Rev. Yonggi Cho about Social Salvation based on the New Testament]", p. 104.

<sup>840</sup> Yonggi Cho, "Religion or Love?" (Sunday sermon on 01 July 1984), available from [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1\\_1\\_re.asp?aidnum=20886&page=1](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1_1_re.asp?aidnum=20886&page=1), accessed on 24 March 2012.

<sup>841</sup> Yonggi Cho, "Four Elements of Love" (Sunday sermon on 22 September 1996), available from [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1\\_1\\_re.asp?aidnum=20510&page=1](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1_1_re.asp?aidnum=20510&page=1), accessed on 25 March 2012.

<sup>842</sup> Yonggi Cho, "Life of Sharing" (Sunday sermon on 18 July 2004), available from [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1\\_1\\_re.asp?aidnum=21139&page=1](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1_1_re.asp?aidnum=21139&page=1), accessed on 28 March 2012.

<sup>843</sup> Yonggi Cho, "Born to Give" (Sunday sermon on 16 January 2005), available from [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1\\_1\\_re.asp?aidnum=21164&page=1](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1_1_re.asp?aidnum=21164&page=1), accessed on 25 March 2012.

<sup>844</sup> Yonggi Cho, "Bonanza of Blessing" (Sunday sermon on 06 August 2006), available from [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1\\_1\\_re.asp?aidnum=21239&page=1](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1_1_re.asp?aidnum=21239&page=1), accessed on 04 April 2012.

neighbour' (Luke 10:25-37),<sup>845</sup> and 'sharing happiness and love' (John 3:16).<sup>846</sup>

However, with the shift in his soteriology, he began to focus more on society and the nation. For example, Cho set the annual goal of YFGC for the year 2006 as 'Loving Neighbours and Loving Nature'.<sup>847</sup>

In early 2008, Cho established the 'Salangghwa Hangbok Nanoom Jaedan (Sharing Love and Happiness Foundation)' which assists low-income families by providing assistance with medical bills, basic living expenses, fixing house problems, and legal matters.<sup>848</sup> Nonetheless, it seems that his new focus on social work has not been accompanied by a theological reinterpretation of the Threefold Blessing for contemporary Korean Pentecostals.

Kärkkäinen criticizes Cho's Threefold Blessing theology, firstly, for placing too much emphasis on the victorious life, and, secondly, for neglecting social concern while proclaiming the promises of physical and financial blessings.<sup>849</sup> Hwa Yung says that Cho lacks "a deeper grasp of the sociopolitical implications of the gospel of Christ"<sup>850</sup> in his theology of the Threefold Blessing. Dayton discusses Korean Pentecostalism in relation to early modernist-fundamentalist controversies, which

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<sup>845</sup> Yonggi Cho, "True Neighbour" (Sunday sermon on 11 November 2007), available from [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1\\_1\\_re.asp?aidnum=21304&page=1](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1_1_re.asp?aidnum=21304&page=1), accessed on 28 March 2012.

<sup>846</sup> Yonggi Cho, "Sharing Happiness and Love" (Sunday sermon on 18 May 2008), available from [http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1\\_1\\_re.asp?aidnum=21330&page=1](http://www.fgtv.com/fgtv/F1/WF1_1_re.asp?aidnum=21330&page=1), accessed on 04 April 2012.

<sup>847</sup> Moon Chul Shin, "Young San eui Saeng Tae Shin Hak [Yonggi Cho's Eco-Theology]", p. 398.

<sup>848</sup> Sang Bok Lee, "Yongsan Cho Yonggi Moksaeui Sahoigoowon Yihae [Understanding about Rev. Yonggi Cho's Social Salvation]", p. 67.

<sup>849</sup> Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "March Forward to Hope: Yonggi Cho's Pentecostal Theology of Hope", p. 255.

<sup>850</sup> Hwa Yung, *Mangoes or Bananas?*, p. 211.

polarized the church into two parties: one emphasizing “personal salvation of the individual” and the other “the social dimension of the gospel”.<sup>851</sup> Dayton suggests that Korean Pentecostalism, as well as Korean Christianity in general, has tended to emphasize personal salvation over the social gospel, but these need to be integrated.<sup>852</sup> For Moltmann, body and soul are inseparable because they are “embedded in nature.”<sup>853</sup> Indeed, the theology of the Threefold Blessing needs to enlarge its scope to include an altruistic dimension which shows concern for neighbours, society, and the ecosystem.

#### **4. Re-contextualization of the Threefold Blessing**

In order to recontextualize the Threefold Blessing for contemporary Korean Pentecostals, there are at least three prerequisites that need to be taken into account. The first is the need to realise that the context of Korean Pentecostalism has changed considerably since its inception. Contemporary Korean Pentecostals do not suffer from absolute poverty although they may experience relative poverty. In May 2012, South Korea joined Germany, France, Japan, the U.S.A., Italy, and the United Kingdom as the seventh member of the ‘20-50 club’. To be a member of the club, the GDP per capita of the country should exceed \$20,000, and its population should be

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<sup>851</sup> Donald W. Dayton, “The Good God and the Theology of Blessing in the Thought of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 53.

<sup>852</sup> Donald W. Dayton, “The Good God and the Theology of Blessing in the Thought of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 53.

<sup>853</sup> Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann*, p. 189.

50 million or more.<sup>854</sup> This shows that the Korean context has undergone major changes since the post-Korean War period.

The second prerequisite is the need to recognize the demands of today's Korean Pentecostals. In the post-Korean War context, these demands were simple: to be free from abject poverty and sickness. However, as the Korean society is westernizing rapidly, the values of Korea are changing. As a result, the demands of Korean Pentecostals are no longer limited to overcoming poverty or being healed from physical sickness. Due to the complex structure of the society, and the socio-economic development of Korea, their demands are not as simple as they were in the post-Korean War context. In the current highly competitive society, with its focus on material success, Koreans are losing their sense of communal responsibility and caring for others. Furthermore, social problems such as the increasing gap between the rich and the poor, and family breakdown, have deepened in the Korean society.

The third prerequisite is the need to recognize the nature of the problems Korean Pentecostals are struggling within the current context. One of the problems of contemporary Korean churches is the issue of leadership succession. In many cases, the leadership of a church has been turned over to its founder or senior pastor's son. Furthermore, due to moral and financial misdemeanours, including sexual scandals,

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<sup>854</sup> Park Sung Seek, "Korea in the 20-50 club: Where should it go from here?" *The Korea Herald*, 11 June 2012, available from <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20120611000997>, accessed on 25 June 2012.

pastors are being forced to resign, sometimes ending up in prison.<sup>855</sup> The church also has other problems such as excessive competition between churches and an overemphasis on church growth.

Due to Korea's economic prosperity, Korean Pentecostals have prospered financially. However, in November 1997, Korea received a bailout package from the IMF (the International Monetary Fund). During this crisis, many companies went bankrupt, and many Koreans lost their jobs. The Korean economy came under the supervision of the IMF. The polarization of wealth has become more serious since the IMF crisis. It has become increasingly important for Korean Pentecostals to practice sharing their financial blessings with others rather than focusing on themselves. They need to remember that they were once marginalized financially when the theology of the Threefold Blessing was first introduced to the Pentecostal movement after the Korean War. They ought to have more concern toward neglected social groups and share their blessings with the poor, the needy, and the politically marginalized. In fact, they have begun to sense the necessity for the scope of the Threefold Blessing to be extended to the whole of society. In 2008, the Christian president Myoung Bak Lee was elected with great support from Korean Christian communities. Lee's election to the presidency demonstrates the increasing influence of Korean Christianity in the nation.<sup>856</sup> President Lee's cabinet included many Christians from SoMang GyoHoi [Hope Church], the church he was attending. In 2009, Christians made up fifty seven

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<sup>855</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 121.

<sup>856</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 120.

percent of his ministers, fifty percent of the Chong Wha Dae's [the Blue House] senior secretaries, and thirty nine percent of his secretaries.<sup>857</sup> However, many of them had serious ethical problems and were involved in a series of corruption scandals. Many were arrested and forced to step down, including his older brother Sang Deuk Lee, an elder in the church, who was suspected of having taken a bribe.<sup>858</sup> This happened due to a lack of Christian ethics in relation to the accumulation of material blessing. Contemporary Korean Pentecostals think that one reason why non-believers are disappointed in Christians is due to the immoral lifestyles of Christian leaders in the church and nation.

In fact, Christian ethics in relation to the handling of wealth has not been considered important by Korean Pentecostals compared to the pursuit of prosperity. Indeed, many Pentecostal preachers around the world, including Cho, have preached about prosperity in Christ but not about Christian ethics. They often preach that prosperity is the will of God, but do not clarify how Christians should deal with financial matters from an ethical standpoint. This can bring the theological danger of falling into the dualistic fallacy that prosperity is good and the will of God for his people, while poverty is bad and not God's will. Regarding the relation between Christianity and wealth, Methodists understand the sources of Christian wealth as

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<sup>857</sup> Ho Woo Yoon, "Lee Myoung Bak Jeongkwon Seo Joongyong Doin Gidokgyo Shinja Deul [Christians appointed in President Lee's government]", *Joo Gan Kyoung Hyang* [Weekly Kyoung Hyang], 07 April 2009, available from *Joo Gan Kyoung Hyang* [database on-line]; [http://newsmaker.khan.co.kr/khnm.html?mode=view&dept=113&art\\_id=19621&fid=&sort=sym](http://newsmaker.khan.co.kr/khnm.html?mode=view&dept=113&art_id=19621&fid=&sort=sym), accessed on 15 July 2012.

<sup>858</sup> BBC NEWS, "South Korean President's brother Lee Sang-deuk arrested," *BBC NEWS*, 11 July 2012, available from *BBC* [database on-line]; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-18792840>, accessed on 15 July 2012.

diligence and frugality.<sup>859</sup> From a holiness perspective, John Wesley says that “religion [Christianity] must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches”.<sup>860</sup> In contrast, due to their belief that prosperity comes entirely from God, many Pentecostals have come to believe that it is the wealthy, rather than the poor, who are blessed by God. As a result, they tend to ignore Christian ethics in relation to wealth, as in Sang Deuk Lee’s case. The prosperity gospel without an emphasis on Christian ethics can result in Christian materialism and cause Pentecostals to justify any means for the accumulation of wealth.

Korean Christianity, including Pentecostalism, has to face up squarely to the fact that the Korean church has stopped growing since the early 1990s.<sup>861</sup> There was a remarkable change in the YFGC at the beginning of the new millennium. Although it was anticipated that the membership of the YFGC should have declined by around 400,000 from 760,000 after the independence of its daughter churches,<sup>862</sup> Lee declared on 7 January 2010 that the process of rendering YFGC’s 20 daughter churches independent had been completed.<sup>863</sup> This suggests that the YFGC needs a new theological orientation in response to this change. In order to hasten the

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<sup>859</sup> Personal interview with Vinson Synan on 16 August 2011 at Regent University, VA, USA. See Appendix D. Interview with Dr. Vinson Synan.

<sup>860</sup> Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, p. 175.

<sup>861</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 120.

<sup>862</sup> Sung Shik Cho, “face to face with Young Hoon Lee”, *Shin Dong A*, 01 May 2009, available from [http://shindonga.donga.com/docs/magazine/shin/2009/05/08/200905080500060/200905080500060\\_1.html](http://shindonga.donga.com/docs/magazine/shin/2009/05/08/200905080500060/200905080500060_1.html), accessed on 27 June 2012.

<sup>863</sup> Moon Hye Sung, “Yoido Soon Bok Eum Gyo Hoi, 20 Ga Jae Ja Gyo Hoi Dok Lip Seon Eon [Yoido Full Gospel Church, the Declaration of the Independence of 20 YFGC’s Daughter Churches]”, *Holiness Newspaper*, 07 January 2010, available from <http://www.kehcnews.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=6211>, accessed on 27 June 2012.

reunification of Korea, the Korean church has to develop a theological basis for reconciliation even though no one knows when reunification will happen. Needless to say, if it does occur, the reunification of Korea will be the most significant event of the twenty-first century not only politically for the nation but also from a theological, ecclesiological, and missiological perspective for the Korean church. The event will change every aspect of Korea: its society, culture, politics, economy, and even the everyday lives of Koreans. The function and mission of the church will also be transformed by the new paradigm of unification and reconciliation. Two significant characteristics of Pentecostalism are ecumenism and reconciliation, which broke down denominational and racial barriers within Christianity. When compared with the German experience of reunification, the situation of Korea is more complicated and offers less favourable conditions for reunification. Due to the Korean War, both sides were deeply hurt as family members were either killed or lost. Since the war, both sides have continued to build up their armaments. Military duty is mandatory on both sides, and sometimes young soldiers are killed in regional conflicts near the border. Thus, somehow reconciliation between the South and the North must be carried out before reunification can happen. Frank Bartleman testified that through the Pentecostal event at Azusa Street “the color line was washed in the blood [of Jesus]”.<sup>864</sup> The revival challenged racial segregation. Since then, the effort of Pentecostals for reconciliation between ethnic groups, sexes, denominations and races

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<sup>864</sup> Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street: The Roots of Modern-day Pentecost* (South Plainfield, NJ: Logos, 1980), p. 54; and Wonsuk Ma, “Asian (Classical) Pentecostal Theology in Context”, in Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang (eds.), *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, p. 82.



has continued. Through the Memphis meeting in October 1994, the PFNA (Pentecostal Fellowship of North America) and its members apologized to the black Pentecostal bodies for the racial segregation they perpetuated in the past, and dissolved the PFNA. They then established the PCCNA (Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America) with a governing board consisting of six African-Americans and six whites.<sup>865</sup> Manuel Gaxiola-Gaxiola argues that the Memphis meeting did not merely dissolve racial segregation by the white Pentecostal bodies but allowed all ethnic groups of Pentecostals in the world, including Blacks, Latinos, Anglo-Saxons, and Asians, to be “a part of the [Pentecostal/Charismatic] movement”.<sup>866</sup> Korean Pentecostalism must follow this Pentecostal tradition of reconciliation in order to hasten the reunification of Korea. Throughout the history of Korean Pentecostalism, the movement has broken down the strong class and gender barriers of Confucian society. For the sake of reunification, Korean Pentecostalism must provide a hope which goes beyond the focus on personal material blessing or physical health. Unless hope renews itself in new contexts, it will lose its function. Through a theological reinterpretation of the Threefold Blessing, Korean Pentecostalism needs to recontextualize the Threefold Blessing for today’s Korean context. If not, the Threefold Blessing cannot continue to give hope to Korean

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<sup>865</sup> Frank D. Macchia, “From Azusa to Memphis: Evaluating the Racial Reconciliation Dialogue among Pentecostals”, *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, Vol 17. No. 2 (Fall) 1995, p. 203.

<sup>866</sup> Manuel Gaxiola-Gaxiola, “Roundtable: Racial Reconciliation - From Azusa to Memphis: Where Do We Go from Here? Roundtable Discussion on the Memphis Colloquy,” *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, Vol 18. No. 1 (Spring) 1996, p. 125.

Pentecostals. The question is how the Threefold Blessing can be reinterpreted and recontextualized?

#### ***4. 1. Re-contextualization of Spiritual Prosperity***

The phrase in 3 John 2, ‘as your soul prospers’, is the biblical basis for the spiritual blessing in the Threefold Blessing. Traditionally, the spiritual blessing is often simplified as spiritual salvation. However, this raises two questions. First, does the phrase only refer to spiritual salvation? Secondly, is the salvation in the Threefold Blessing restricted to the spiritual dimension? One of the major concerns of classical Pentecostals was how to define sanctification and the baptism in the Spirit. They agreed that sanctification and salvation should be separated or combined together as one experience.<sup>867</sup> To them, salvation was not the ultimate goal but marked the beginning of their faith. In fact, the spiritual blessing does not merely refer to spiritual salvation, but also to the empowerment by the Spirit for service as well as for daily life.<sup>868</sup> While liberation theology understands salvation as having social implications, conservative evangelical Christians have traditionally understood it as referring to ‘soul-salvation’. Some Pentecostals, on the other hand, have extended the understanding of “God’s work of the atonement” to include health and prosperity in

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<sup>867</sup> For more on this, see chapter 3, section 2. 2.

<sup>868</sup> See chapter 4, section 2.

this life.<sup>869</sup> Cho's Threefold Blessing reflects this perspective. However, Cho has recently begun to recognize the importance of social and ecological redemption. Cho's holistic soteriology is based on the threefold fall of Adam which corresponds with the triple corruption of humankind: "the spirit, the body and the environment".<sup>870</sup> Thus, one would expect Cho's theology of the redemptive work of Christ to have addressed these three categories including environmental redemption. However, until 2005, his soteriology was restricted to the spiritual and individual aspects.<sup>871</sup> To him, Christ's salvation saves the soul and changes the way human beings live "from being a curse to being a blessing".<sup>872</sup> In other words, before 2005, it seems that he did not think that Christ's redemption can be applied to society and the ecosystem even though Cho's understanding of salvation had been extended to include existential matters for believers. When Christianity arrived in Korea, the most urgent theme of mission was to save souls. Spiritual salvation gave the hope of the Kingdom of God to Koreans who used to practice shamanism or indigenous high religions. Theologically, however, it is questionable whether redemption only refers to spiritual salvation in the Bible. Dayton insists that redemption needs to include "social redemption that eradicates social depravity and environmental redemption for the sake of the whole groaning creation (Romans 8:22)" since the redemption of Christ is

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<sup>869</sup> Donald W. Dayton, "The Good God and the Theology of Blessing in the Thought of David Yonggi Cho", p. 54.

<sup>870</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, p. 129.

<sup>871</sup> Moon Chul Shin, "Young San eui Saeng Tae Shin Hak [Yonggi Cho's Eco-Theology]", in Gook Jae Shin Hak Yeon Goo Won [International Theological Institute], *Young San eui Mokhoiweya Shin Hak I* [Yonggi Cho's Ministry and Theology], p. 398.

<sup>872</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Health, and Prosperity: Our Threefold Blessing in Christ*, p. 16.

holistic.<sup>873</sup> If Christ's redemption is restricted to spiritual salvation for individuals, the Kingdom of God cannot be experienced in the 'here and now'.<sup>874</sup> In other words, the Kingdom of God can be only an eschatological hope to Korean Pentecostals. To Moltmann, the Kingdom of God is present through living in the hope for the Kingdom of God.<sup>875</sup> In this sense, his eschatological hope is both future and present. In contrast, for Korean Pentecostals, the Kingdom of God is not merely the subject of their eschatological hope. They believe that, alongside spiritual salvation, they are saved from the curse and from the evil causes of poverty and disease through the redemption of Christ. This means that salvation in the Threefold Blessing has both eschatological and practical implications for the Christian life in the present. Thus, the salvation of the Threefold Blessing needs to be extended to include the social and ecological dimensions. In fact, restricting it to the spiritual dimension is contradictory to Cho's holistic soteriology. Nevertheless, it seems that Korean Pentecostals mostly understand the spiritual blessing as referring to the experience of Spirit baptism and the reception of spiritual gifts.<sup>876</sup> However, this raises another question, whether the phrase 'as your soul prospers' refers only to the experience of Spirit baptism and spiritual gifts. In other words, does spiritual prosperity refer only to the experience of baptism in the Spirit without concern for the ethical dimension or the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)? Korean Pentecostals tend to place more emphasis on

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<sup>873</sup> Jun Hee Cha, "The Anthropology of Rev. Yonggi Cho's Threefold Blessing Theology: In the Light of the Old Testament", in Young San Theological Institute (ed.), *Dr. Yonggi Cho's Ministry & Theology I*, 2008), p. 155.

<sup>874</sup> For more on this, see chapter 4, section 5. 1. 2.

<sup>875</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life*, p. 29.

<sup>876</sup> For more on this, see chapter 4, section 2. 1.

spiritual gifts than on producing the fruit of the Spirit for Christian maturity. Certainly, the spiritual gifts and fruits cannot be simply equated. According to William and Robert Menzies “Paul’s fruit of the Spirit or his ethical language” cannot be linked to “Luke’s Pentecostal baptism in the Spirit” in a causal relationship.<sup>877</sup> According to them, compared with Luke, Paul includes a larger spectrum of activities within the ministry of the Spirit. To Paul, the Spirit is more than simply “the source of inspired speech and charismatic wisdom” and brings “ethical transformation” and “life-changing power into every believer”.<sup>878</sup> In other words, for Luke, the spiritual gifts relate to “the missiological dimension of the Spirit’s work”, but for Paul, they are concerned with the ethical dimension and the regeneration of the Christian believer.<sup>879</sup>

With regard to the relationship between the fruit and gifts of the Spirit, Parks says that they are “the two wings of a bird. The wings must work in harmony if the bird is to fly”.<sup>880</sup> However, Korean Pentecostals indeed have more emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit than the fruit of the Spirit. As a branch can bear fruit when it remains in the vine (John. 15:5), the spiritual fruit will be produced when people are led by the Spirit. Nevertheless, it seems that Korean Pentecostals are more concerned about being baptized in the Spirit than about producing the fruit of the Spirit. Dunn

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<sup>877</sup> William W. Menzies and Robert P. Menzies, *Spirit and Power*, p. 205.

<sup>878</sup> William W. Menzies and Robert P. Menzies, *Spirit and Power*, pp. 205-206.

<sup>879</sup> William W. Menzies and Robert P. Menzies, *Spirit and Power*, p. 206.

<sup>880</sup> H. Parks, “Charisma: What’s in a Word?” *Renewal* 52 (August/September 1974), p. 21; and Paul Elbert, “Calvin and the Spiritual Gifts,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (September 1979), pp. 237-238.

says that “through the washing of regeneration and renewal effected by the Spirit” Christians are saved and can be transformed into “the very image of the Lord”.<sup>881</sup> The spiritual life of Korean Pentecostals is based on the being filled with the Spirit repeatedly, which involves not only having a spiritual experience, but continuing to live in the Spirit.<sup>882</sup> The work of the Spirit in Christians cannot only be assessed in terms of the reception of spiritual gifts. Similarly, living in the Spirit does not merely mean practicing spiritual gifts on a daily basis but involves individual transformation into the image of Christ. How then can this change in lifestyle through the Spirit be realized? The cultivation of the fruit of the Spirit should follow the baptism in the Spirit. Thus, it is necessary to reconsider the meaning of spiritual prosperity, whether it only involves Spirit baptism or whether it should include ongoing life in the Spirit leading to Christian maturity. The concept of spiritual blessing in the Threefold Blessing has to be reinterpreted and recontextualized from an ethical perspective in order to include a focus on the fruit of the Spirit alongside Spirit baptism.

#### ***4. 2. Re-contextualization of Healing***

The early faith-healing ministers such as E. W. Kenyon believed the reasons that people are not healed was due to lack of faith or hidden sins blocking divine

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<sup>881</sup> James D. G. Dunn, “Spirit and Kingdom”, *The Expository Times* (January) 1970, p. 37.

<sup>882</sup> For more on this, see chapter 4, section 1.1.

healing.<sup>883</sup> Cho mostly agrees with this. However, he provides more reasons why people are not healed and how they can overcome obstacles to healing. These include the following: 1) they need to wait for God's time; 2) healing may be hindered by sin; 3) the need to wait for *rhema* words from God; and 4) sometimes there is a higher purpose than healing.<sup>884</sup> However, it is clear that in the New Testament account not all the sick were healed. For example, the Apostle Paul prayed three times for the removal of his 'thorn in the flesh' (2 Corinthians 12:7), which many scholars consider was a physical weakness. Instead of receiving divine healing, he was told: 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9, NKJV)'. This raises pastoral questions concerning how to help those Pentecostals who fail to receive divine healing after extended periods of prayer. There is also the question how the Threefold Blessing can give hope to those who are disabled or suffer from an incurable disease, or to those who have never received material blessings despite praying to receive the Threefold Blessing. The fact is that Korean Pentecostalism has failed to provide satisfactory theological responses to those Pentecostals who do not receive healing or blessings. In James 5:14-15,<sup>885</sup> the author emphasizes that prayer for healing is not only the responsibility of the sick person but also that of the elders of the church. This means that the sick person needs the help of

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<sup>883</sup> D. R. McConnell, *A Different Gospel: A Historical and Biblical Analysis of the Modern Faith Movement* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), ch. 9; and C. Peter Wagner, *How to Have a Healing Ministry in Any Church: A Comprehensive Guide* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1998), p. 110.

<sup>884</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension*, pp. 100-104.

<sup>885</sup> Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. (James 5:14-15, NKJV).

the church as the body of Christ. The role of the church in healing will be based on sacrificial love on behalf of others. Pentecostal ministers and church leaders tend to be silent about those who have not received divine healing in the church. However, these people need even more pastoral care as well as prayers instead of being subject to criticism regarding the possibility of sin or unbelief hindering their healing. The disabled are suffering not only from their physical handicap but also social prejudice and discrimination, which in many cases may cause them more hardship than their disability. Thus, the ultimate goal of healing for the disabled may not be physical healing but rather healing of the social system which allows them to be stigmatized. Yong says that it is both a problem to pray for the disabled with Down's syndrome "to be healed of their chromosomal aberration" and also a problem when people fail "to recognize the human person in the image of God" beyond their physical difficulties.<sup>886</sup>

Healing in the Threefold Blessing has been considered only in its personal and physical dimension, but its scope needs to be enlarged to include society, the family, and the church. For instance, the suffering of the disabled cannot be alleviated without the issue of social prejudice being addressed.<sup>887</sup> Indeed, the matter of disability and incurable sickness is still mainly perceived in "biological, medical and

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<sup>886</sup> Amos Yong, "Disability and Gifts of the Spirit: Pentecost and the Renewal of the Church", *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 19 (2010), p. 77.

<sup>887</sup> Personal interview with Amos Yong on 16 August 2011 at the Regent University in Virginia, the U.S.A. See, Appendix C. Interview with Dr. Amos Yong.



individualized terms” rather than in its social dimension.<sup>888</sup> Richard Shaull points out that Pentecostal theology has not made many efforts to develop “a theology of social responsibility clearly integrating the personal and the social, a number of things are happening in their communities in which this integration is a reality”.<sup>889</sup> The social dimension of healing in the Threefold Blessing has also not been considered. Moltmann says, “the modern concept of person is the social concept: ‘person’ no longer means the all-sufficing, self sufficient, universal and reflective figure”.<sup>890</sup> Human beings are social creatures. Thus, ‘person’ cannot be understood outside relationships with others. For this reason, healing should not be limited to personal matters. In the synoptic gospels, Christ was encountered by people as “the healing power of the divine Spirit”, and Jesus met people not as sinners but as those who were “sick, suffering and in need of help.”<sup>891</sup> Healing occurred in “the interaction between Jesus and expectation, a person’s faith and His will”.<sup>892</sup> To Moltmann, healing is “the sign of the new creation and the rebirth of life”,<sup>893</sup> and, furthermore, healing consists of “the restoration of disrupted community, and the sharing and communication of life”.<sup>894</sup> To European theologians like Barth, Moltmann, and Tillich, the Kingdom of God is an agent “to heal social evils as well as disease” in the

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<sup>888</sup> Amos Yong, “Disability and Gifts of the Spirit: Pentecost and the Renewal of the Church”, p. 81.

<sup>889</sup> Richard Shaull & Waldo Cesar, *Pentecostalism and the Future of the Christian Churches: Promises, Limitations, Challenges* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), p. 214.

<sup>890</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 251.

<sup>891</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 189.

<sup>892</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 190.

<sup>893</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 189.

<sup>894</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 191.

present.<sup>895</sup> To them, healing is not only concerned with the matter of physical and mental illness but with the individual circumstances which people are struggling with, the communal society they are involved in, and the natural ecosystem.<sup>896</sup> Healing will be incomplete unless it addresses these areas. For instance, doctors believe that many diseases are caused by stress in contemporary society. If this is so, then there will be the possibility of recurrence for those who are cured from a disease if their stress remains. In other words, as physical and mental illnesses are often related to social and environmental circumstances, healing has to be understood from a broader perspective. For instance, in 2002, Korea ranked second behind the USA in terms of its divorce rate,<sup>897</sup> and, according to Statistics Korea, in February 2011, there were 23,600 marriages and 8,300 couples divorces.<sup>898</sup> This means that there are many victims in Korean society, including children, who are suffering not from poverty or disease, but from family breakdown. For family problems between spouses, and between parents and their children, inner healing of the emotions has to be considered the preferred approach. However, healing in the Threefold Blessing has focused more on physical healing than on inner healing. This means that healing in the Threefold Blessing remains narrow in its scope. Anderson says that “healing is more than

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<sup>895</sup> Donald W. Dayton, “The Good God and the Theology of Blessing in the Thought of David Yonggi Cho”, p. 55.

<sup>896</sup> Pan Ho Kim, “Paul Tillich and Dr. Yonggi Cho: A Dialogue between Their Respective Theologies of Healing”, p. 360.

<sup>897</sup> Caroline Gluck, “Koreans learn to live with divorce”, *BBC NEWS*, 8 May 2003, available from BBC database on-line; <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/3011119.stm>, accessed on 25 June 2012.

<sup>898</sup> The Statistics Korea [database on-line]; [http://kostat.go.kr/portal/korea/kor\\_nw/2/2/1/index.board?bmode=read&aSeq=246945](http://kostat.go.kr/portal/korea/kor_nw/2/2/1/index.board?bmode=read&aSeq=246945), accessed on 25 June 2012.

curing” and healing has to be holistic for the today’s suffering world.<sup>899</sup> Yong also distinguishes between the terms ‘healing’ and ‘curing’, preferring to use ‘curing’ for the healing of physical illness since ‘healing’ has a broader and more holistic meaning which includes the social and psychological dimensions.<sup>900</sup> For example, the term ‘curing’ is not normally used in instances when broken relationships in the family and society have been resolved. Yong insists that healing for the disabled is not merely to improve their physical conditions but rather to bring about conceptual change in society on their behalf.<sup>901</sup> In fact, the healing of social prejudices and discrimination, which they face every day, is important to them. These can be resolved through ordinary people showing concern towards them. This raises the question whether the theology of healing in the Threefold Blessing can sufficiently respond to people’s suffering in today’s world. Cho’s understanding of healing does not only mean ‘physical curing’, but is related to Christ’s redemption and ‘good news’ for suffering people.<sup>902</sup> Cho understands that healing has been accomplished through the event of the crucifixion of Christ.<sup>903</sup> Does the crucifixion only relate to the healing of physical diseases? Certainly, physical healing is included in the healing ministry of Christ, but Christ’s healing should be understood as embracing all his creation. Thus, healing needs to be understood in a broad sense as integrating social

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<sup>899</sup> Allan Anderson, “Pentecostals, Healing and Ecumenism,” *International Review of Mission* vol. 93 (July/October) 2004, pp. 494-95.

<sup>900</sup> Personal interview with Amos Yong on 16 August 2011 at Regent University, VA, USA.

<sup>901</sup> Personal interview with Amos Yong on 16 August 2011 at Regent University, VA, USA.

<sup>902</sup> Allan Anderson, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Theology”, in David F. Ford and Rachel Muers (eds.), *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology since 1918* (Malden, MS: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2005), pp. 601-03.

<sup>903</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Fivefold Gospel and Threefold Blessing*, pp. 128-129.

and ecological aspects. To Moltmann, “healing and salvation are related”.<sup>904</sup> Similarly, Cho makes no distinction between healing and salvation. Clearly, the crucifixion of Christ was intended to bring about the holistic recovery of the whole universe, and his healing addresses not only physical illness but the whole of humanity, the ecosystem and the universe. Thus, healing in the Threefold Blessing needs to be extended to include the whole of humanity, society, the ecosystem and even the whole universe. Nevertheless, it seems that healing in the Threefold Blessing is still largely limited to the physical dimension. Due to urbanization, industrialization and modernization, there are many social problems in Korea, including environmental problems, family breakdown, human rights abuses, gender discrimination, and the increasing gap between the rich and the poor. In these social situations, Korean Pentecostals have to consider if healing focused on the individual can give hope to Korean society.

Pannenberg says, “Christians do not hope just for themselves, which would mean only too often the hope of one would be at the cost of the hopes of others. In Christ they share in a universal hope for humanity”.<sup>905</sup> Indeed, it is questionable whether healing in the Threefold Blessing can continue to give hope to Korean society and church if it remains limited to the physical and personal dimensions. Furthermore, in relation to healing, there is another matter that needs to be addressed,

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<sup>904</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, p. 189.

<sup>905</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology* vol.3, p. 177.

the issue of *Han*. As already discussed, Koreans are people of *Han*,<sup>906</sup> and *Han* is the national sentiment which has implications for every aspect of Korean life.

*Han* is normally accumulated as a result of external, rather than internal, factors. This means that *Han* will not be resolved unless these external elements of *Han* are removed. Korean shamanic rituals were focused on releasing people's *Han*.<sup>907</sup> This is one of the primary reasons why shamanism has survived until today.<sup>908</sup>

Koreans experienced the *Han* of poverty and sickness which left them frustrated because they could not handle it by themselves. Dong Soo Kim insists that if Korean Pentecostalism had been unable to release *Han*, it could not have grown so rapidly in a short period of time.<sup>909</sup> Indeed, the Threefold Blessing, with its message of divine blessings, was able to effectively respond to the *Han* of the Korean people. As a result, the Threefold Blessing was very appealing to Koreans. However, the Threefold Blessing focused on individual *Han* in the life of ordinary people rather than the collective *Han* in the socio-political and economic structures of society, such as the inequality between the rich and the poor and the injustice perpetrated on the oppressed by the oppressor. To address this collective *Han*, the meaning of healing in the Threefold Blessing has to be expanded. If the healing of the Threefold Blessing previously focused on individual and physical *Han* due to poverty and illness, it now

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<sup>906</sup> Dong Suh Nam, "Towards a Theology of Han", in the Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (eds.), *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History* (London: Zed Press, 1981), p. 50.

<sup>907</sup> David Kwang Sun Suh, "Liberating Spirituality in the Korean Minjung Tradition: Shamanism and Minjung Liberation", p. 33.

<sup>908</sup> Dong Soo Kim, "The Healing of *Han* in Korean Pentecostalism", p. 127.

<sup>909</sup> Dong Soo Kim, "The Healing of *Han* in Korean Pentecostalism", p. 124.

needs to consider the issue of collective *Han* caused by social factors such as injustice, inequality between the rich and poor, gender and racial discrimination, inequality of opportunity, and capital exploitation. Through its history, Korean Pentecostalism has not actively engaged in initiatives geared towards social transformation. However, healing in the Threefold Blessing can continue to give hope to Koreans regarding change in their current circumstances through reinterpreting healing for contemporary society. It should be noted that the healing of relationships between the oppressor and the oppressed, and the wrongdoer and the wronged, cannot be achieved without reconciliation through forgiveness. This means that this new understanding of healing in the Threefold Blessing has to be accompanied by a new theological perspective. Both sides of Korea have been antagonistic towards each other for a long time. Indeed, the division of the Korean peninsula is a major causal factor behind the *Han* of the Korean people.

How can Korean unification come about? It is clear that the unification of Korea cannot happen without each side extending the hand of forgiveness to each other. In other words, without healing of wounded hearts, even this political and diplomatic matter cannot be solved. Thus, forgiveness between social and political groups, and between individuals, has to precede the healing of *Han*. In fact, there is biblical precedence for this in Matthew 5:23-24 and 6:12, which teaches that the inner healing of those who are wronged cannot take place without the offering of forgiveness to the wrongdoer. Thus, the healing of the Threefold Blessing needs to be

reinterpreted theologically for contemporary Koreans. If previously healing focused on ‘physical curing’, but not it has to be extended to include ‘inner healing’ for individuals and healing of communal discord, recovering of the ecosystem, and even reconciliation between North and South Koreans.

#### ***4. 3. Re-contextualization of Prosperity***

The theory of the Threefold Blessing developed within a context of poverty. As already mentioned, Cho regards poverty as “a curse from Satan”.<sup>910</sup> He often says that he himself is also a victim of poverty and knows well what it means to have nothing to eat.<sup>911</sup> Most members of the YFGC were extremely poor at that time, and Cho’s prosperity message through Christ gave them hope.<sup>912</sup> However, few members of YFGC today think that they are suffering from poverty. This suggests that they have received the benefits of financial blessings, and their hope for prosperity has been realised. During a personal interview with Vinson Synan, I asked him how the Threefold Blessing can be applied to today’s Korean Pentecostals who no longer live in poverty and have a good national health care system. He answered that in every generation, there will be the poor and the sick, just as Jesus said ‘you will always have the poor among you (John. 12:8)’, and they will need the gospel of the

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<sup>910</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension II*, p. 137.

<sup>911</sup> Yonggi Cho, *The Fourth Dimension II*, pp. 137-38.

<sup>912</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Salvation, Health and Prosperity*, p. 11; Yonggi Cho, *The Holy Spirit, My Senior Partner*, p. 8.

Threefold Blessing.<sup>913</sup> However, hope can only function properly if it focuses on conditions that are contrary to the current situation. With regard to the current Korean context, this is not the case unless the Threefold Blessing is reinterpreted and recontextualized. In today's Korean context, Pentecostals need to think about what prosperity means to them, taking into account their obligation to their neighbours. Moltmann is not opposed to the prosperity of Christians but is strongly critical of rich Christians who further impoverish the poor or cheat others for their personal benefit.<sup>914</sup> In the New Testament, the tax-collectors were Jews and surely knew about the God of Israel. However, as they oppressed the powerless, who were their compatriots, and abused their power in order to accumulate wealth, their god became 'Mammon' and an 'unjust god'. To Korean Pentecostals, 'prosperity' in the Threefold Blessing did not originally mean the selfish pursuit of wealth but instead was a source of hope in their desperate situations. However, it seems that currently this hope has turned into a self-centred desire to have more prosperity without being accompanied by a willingness to help others.

In a personal interview, Young Hoon Lee told me that today's Koreans are suffering not from financial poverty but from symptoms of 'spiritual poverty' such as spiritual malaise, emptiness of life, and lack of love. Therefore, for it to be relevant today, the Threefold Blessing must include an emphasis on loving concern for others, and Korean Pentecostals need to discover a new hope based on sharing 'blessings' with

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<sup>913</sup> Personal interview with Vinson Synan on 16 August 2011 at Regent University, VA, USA.

<sup>914</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, pp. 99-100.



others in the wider society.<sup>915</sup> He also stated that Korean Pentecostal churches have tended to focus on the spiritual manifestations of the Spirit as described in the book of Acts, but they should not overlook their responsibility to engage in charitable works on behalf of their neighbours as these were also an aspect of the early church's ministry.<sup>916</sup> Korean Pentecostals need to think theologically about what the Kingdom in the 'here and now' means in the contemporary Korean context and how they can participate in that Kingdom. Having a more prosperous life on earth, when they already have enough blessings, is not the way to be a part of the Kingdom. Instead, they can participate in God's Kingdom on earth by sharing their blessings with others and caring for those who are in need with the love of Christ. With regard to the relationship between the Threefold Blessing, especially its emphasis on prosperity, and Korean shamanism, many theological controversies have arisen over past decades and are still on going. One reason why these controversies are not over yet, is that Korean Pentecostals have not applied Christian values to their emphasis on prosperity. For instance, they have not reflected upon the purpose of prosperity in the contemporary Korean context. Korean Pentecostals believe that blessings come from God. There is nothing wrong with this belief from a biblical and theological perspective. However, if they persist in asking God to provide them with financial prosperity when they already have enough, their concept of God becomes similar to the idea of god in shamanism. In the same way that Moltmann points out that the

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<sup>915</sup> Personal interview with Young Hoon Lee through the email on 15 November 2012. See, Appendix B. Interview with Dr. Young Hoon Lee

<sup>916</sup> Personal interview with Young Hoon Lee through the email on 15 November 2012.

concept of ‘person’ needs to be understood in social terms,<sup>917</sup> so the prosperity of Christians also needs to be understood in terms of the community and responsibility to society. Althouse insists that Moltmann’s political theology is deeply engaged in the fulfilment of basic human needs and the protection of human dignity and rights.<sup>918</sup> The new Threefold Blessing has to deal with those social and political matters theologically. Blessing in theological and biblical understandings does not mean to have more than others. If the Threefold Blessing does not embrace the fulfilment of basic human needs for neighbours, it can no longer give hope to Koreans. To be biblical, the prosperity of the Threefold Blessing must involve sharing blessings with the poor. Korean Pentecostals need to reconsider what prosperity means to them in today’s Korean context. They also need to realize that it is time to focus on ‘sharing’ instead of ‘receiving’, and to recognize that blessings are not for the personal benefit of the individual, but for the welfare of the community. Thus, the understanding of prosperity has to be changed in order to include this communal dimension in such a way that Pentecostals learn to share community burdens and make sacrifices on behalf of others. Althouse says, “A revision of Pentecostal theology can revitalize the social-political dimensions of the Pentecostal message as a prophetic call to church and society.”<sup>919</sup> Love without sacrifice is deficient. The love of God for humanity was made manifest in the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. In the same way, sacrifice is an

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<sup>917</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, p. 251.

<sup>918</sup> Peter Althouse, Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann*, p.181.

<sup>919</sup> Peter Althouse, Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann*, p.179.

essential element of Christian love. Thus, it is important to provide a new theological basis for prosperity in the Threefold Blessing that focuses on love for neighbours and the wider society. Althouse says, “the dialectic of cross and resurrection is the moment of the inbreaking of eschatological future into the present.”<sup>920</sup> As noted, in the post-Korean War context, prosperity was focused on hope for personal blessings, but in contemporary Korea, it needs to be recontextualised and given a new theological meaning based on altruistic love for others. How, then, should the different theological terms, ‘hope’ and ‘love’, be understood in relation to each other? Pannenberg says “Hope and love belong together. Only those who hope with and for others, can also love them, not in the sense of egotistical desire to possess the one who is loved (*amor concupiscentiae*), but in the sense of a benevolent love that helps the other on the way to fulfilment of his or her specific human destiny (*amor amicitiae*)”.<sup>921</sup> In order to achieve ‘communal prosperity’, the focus of hope needs to shift from being self-centred to being community-oriented. In the interview with Young Hoon Lee, he suggested that the Threefold Blessing needs to represent a model of blessing which favours the distribution of wealth to marginalized people and a balanced form of development involving all social classes in contemporary Korea.<sup>922</sup> As long as the hope of prosperity remains self-centered, it lacks a strong Christian ethical base. It also needs to be understood as a hope for and with others,

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<sup>920</sup> Peter Althouse, Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jürgen Moltmann*, p.178.

<sup>921</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology* vol.3, p. 182.

<sup>922</sup> Personal interview with Young Hoon Lee through the email on 15 November 2012.

such that it produces joy and fulfilment as Korean Pentecostals pursue this hope in community. The Threefold Blessing has to give a new hope to contemporary Korean Pentecostals who already have personal blessings. The hope already achieved can no longer be a hope for the future. Hope must be contradictory to the present matters and transformative into the present. Moltmann says that hope has to be forward looking, forward moving, and transforming the present.<sup>923</sup> Moltmann's theology hope can remedy the theological disadvantages of the Threefold Blessing.

Cho says as follows:

In order to live the life of true joy and happiness, we must love and sacrifice for our neighbours. If we would yield and sacrifice a little more sharing love for the happiness of our neighbours, the exploits of the love and sacrifice come back to us as joy and happiness like a boomerang. If we try to make others happy, then we also become happy. When freed from an egocentric mind, we live for the joy and happiness of our neighbours, greater joy and happiness come to ourselves.<sup>924</sup>

It is significant that the emphasis of Cho's message has changed from a focus on personal blessing, especially prosperity and healing, to a focus on the pursuit of joy and fulfilment in Christ through expressing sacrificial love on behalf of others. Commenting on this change in Cho's social theology, Anderson argues that "the social theology of Cho is based on this concept of the love of God that fills the life of the Christian through the Holy Spirit and enables the Christian to share this love with others, thereby meeting Jesus in daily life through serving poor and disadvantaged

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<sup>923</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, p. 16.

<sup>924</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Albeit We Shall Love* (Seoul: Seoul Logos, 2008), pp. 267-91.

people in the immediate society as well as in other countries”.<sup>925</sup> The Apostle Paul writes that the Kingdom is not ‘a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17)’. In the post-Korean War context, without resolving the problem of eating and drinking, it was not easy to experience the Kingdom as ‘righteousness, peace and joy in the Spirit’ in the ‘here and now’ for Korean Pentecostals.<sup>926</sup> However, in the contemporary Korean Pentecostal context, the Kingdom needs to be recognized no longer as ‘a matter of eating or drinking’ for one’s own benefit, but as God’s righteousness for an unjust society, and peace and joy with others in the Spirit through acts of love towards others. In other words, in the post-Korean War context, Korean Pentecostals could not afford to express their love to others financially because of their poverty. But today’s Korean Pentecostals have received financial blessings and can afford to act generously towards others by sharing their financial blessings with the marginalized and disadvantaged. Thus, the message of the Threefold Blessing needs to focus on communal prosperity as much as personal prosperity. Furthermore, prosperity in the Threefold Blessing has to be recontextualized as prosperity for the whole of society rather than for individuals alone. If not, contemporary Koreans who do not have financial problems will lose interest in the message of the Threefold Blessing. As a result, the Threefold Blessing will no longer continue to function as a source of hope for them.

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<sup>925</sup> Allan Anderson, “A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho”, pp. 152-167 (167).

<sup>926</sup> See chapter 3, section 5. 1. 2.

## 5. Conclusion

The theory of the Threefold Blessing was developed in the ruins of the Korean War about sixty years ago. Since then, life in Korea has changed significantly, socio-politically, economically, and culturally. The life of Koreans has become westernized. Compared with Korean's life in the post-Korean War context, the values and expectations of Koreans today are very different. The church and its responsibilities for the society have entered a new phase. Anderson suggests that, on the surface, Cho's social theology is not very active.<sup>927</sup> However, the YFGC's social relief work around the world is larger than any social and religious organization in Korea in terms of scale and budget. This ecclesiological change in relation to the church's social responsibility has developed since the 1980s. The YFGC has built hospitals, homes and nursing homes for disadvantaged people and senior citizens, a welfare town, and schools to help North Korean refugees. Furthermore, the YFGC is helping North Korea in various ways. Thus, it is clear that the YFGC is to some extent fulfilling its responsibilities on behalf of the nation and society. In 2005, there was also a remarkable change in Cho's soteriology, which has become broader in scope. He began to emphasize the necessity of a soteriology that embraces society, the ecosystem, and the whole universe.<sup>928</sup> Nonetheless, it seems that the theology of the Threefold Blessing does not reflect these ecclesiological and soteriological changes nor the change in the Korean context. Scholars have argued that the theology

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<sup>927</sup> Allan Anderson, "A Time to Share Love: Global Pentecostalism and the Social Ministry of David Yonggi Cho", p. 159.

<sup>928</sup> Moon Chul Shin, "Young San eui Saeng Tae Shin Hak [Yonggi Cho's Eco-Theology]", p. 398.

of the Threefold Blessing remains focused on the personal pursuit of a victorious and healthy life rather than social concerns,<sup>929</sup> or has limited socio-political relevance.<sup>930</sup>

Chan points out that Cho's "practical pneumatology" is in a danger of becoming a "pragmatic pneumatology."<sup>931</sup> Chan's concern will become a reality unless the

Threefold Blessing is recontextualized and reinterpreted for today's Korean

Pentecostals. Moltmann points out as follows:

Pentecostalism originated as a result of the experience of the Holy Spirit. According to this experience, the Holy Spirit has to do with the soul and the body, with salvation and healing. Because people are linked bodily to the entire creation, it follows that the Holy Spirit has also related to all other creatures, in regard not only to their future salvation but also to their present preservation.<sup>932</sup>

Indeed, the theology of the Threefold Blessing remains focused on personal concerns such as financial prosperity and well-being, and needs to enlarge its scope, allowing for practical expressions of altruism on behalf of neighbours, society, the ecosystem, and the universe. This requires a deeper understanding of Christology. After researching Cho's theology, Moltmann concluded that Cho's Christology was not developed.<sup>933</sup> In the Threefold Blessing, Jesus is the saviour, the healer, and the dispenser of blessings. This raises a number of questions. Firstly, does this mean that salvation in the atonement is limited to humanity or does it embrace all creation?

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<sup>929</sup> Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "March Forward to Hope: Yonggi Cho's Pentecostal Theology of Hope", p. 255.

<sup>930</sup> Hwa Yung, *Mangoes or Bananas?*, p. 211.

<sup>931</sup> Simon K. H. Chan, "The Pneumatology of Paul Yonggi Cho", p. 95.

<sup>932</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "A Response to My Pentecostal Dialogue Partners", p. 62.

<sup>933</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "Salm Eul Wooi Han Sinhak, Sinhak Eul Wooi Han Salm [Theology for Life, Life for Theology]," *Kukmin Ilbo*, 12 May 2009, available from *Kukmin Ilbo* database on-line; <http://news.kukinews.com/article/view.asp?arcid=0921286513>, accessed on 26 October 2011.

Secondly, is Christ's healing only for human beings or does it include the ecosystem? Thirdly, is the message of prosperity only intended for the financial blessing of individuals? Furthermore, Korean Pentecostalism has to ask itself how the Threefold Blessing can continue to give hope to contemporary Koreans. This thesis has argued that this is impossible without the reinterpretation and recontextualization of the Threefold Blessing. The message of the Threefold Blessing has been very influential among Korean Pentecostals and has been a source of contextual hope. However, for this to continue in contemporary Korea, it needs to be reinterpreted and recontextualized from this new perspective. The scope of its message of salvation, healing, and prosperity needs to be expanded to include salvation for all creation, healing for a fractured society, and prosperity for all through sharing in the love of Christ.



## CONCLUSION

The Threefold Blessing was developed in the post-Korean War context and gave hope to Koreans in the midst of their suffering. However, the Threefold Blessing has not been considered from the perspective of a theology of hope, although commentators agree that the Threefold Blessing was a source of hope for Koreans in their desperate situations after the war. Scholars such as Harvey Cox, Walter Hollenweger, and Boo Wong Yoo have attempted to understand the rapid growth of Korean Pentecostalism and its successful contextualization into the Korean context in relation to the influence of indigenous Korean shamanism. Some non-Pentecostal scholars have argued that the Threefold Blessing is based on Korean shamanism rather than Biblical sources. From a phenomenological perspective, it is assumed that the theory is deeply immersed in the cultural background of Korean shamanism. However, this thesis has argued that the Threefold Blessing has functioned as a contextual hope to Koreans, and that it has effectively contextualized in the desperate socio-economic situation after the Korean War is one factor behind the remarkable growth of Pentecostalism. The Threefold Blessing was developed as a response to the question why believers in the post-Korean War context should continue to suffer despite the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross. The thesis has examined the Threefold Blessing as the Pentecostal contextual hope in five chapters.

Chapter one discussed the historical context of Korean Pentecostalism. Significantly, Christianity was not introduced to Koreans by Western missionaries

but by Korean Confucian *Silhak* scholars, who had an academic interest in Western civilization and hoped to reform the Chosŏn Dynasty through practical methodologies. Their interest in Christianity was out of academic curiosity rather than spiritual concern. They went to China and brought back evangelistic leaflets. They were also responsible for translating the Bible into the Korean language. Consequently, they became the missionaries who introduced Christianity to the nation although initially they were not interested in becoming Christians. Subsequently, their academic interest led to their Christian conversion, and they became the early leaders of Korean Christianity. Because of the pressure exerted by the Western powers to open a door for trade, Christianity was a symbol of Western powers to the Chosŏn government. The hope of Christian *Silhak* scholars to westernize the Chosŏn Dynasty was regarded as a threat to the dynasty and a dangerous challenge to Confucian society. As a result, many Korean Christians and missionaries from the West suffered persecution and were martyred. The contribution of Korean Confucian scholars to Korean Christianity has been overlooked. At the same time, the relationship between Korean Christianity and shamanism has been magnified. As noted, these Korean Confucian scholars were spontaneous missionaries to Korea, they translated the Bible into the Korean language, they were among the early leaders of the Korean church, and some became martyrs on behalf of Korean Christianity. Their contribution to and influence upon Korean Christianity is a subject for further research. With the Kanghwa Treaty in 1876, persecution of Christians came to an end, and the dynasty opened its doors to the world. Protestant missions in Korea began in 1884 with the

arrival of H. N. Allen, an American medical missionary. The adoption of a new name, Dae Han Empire, in 1897, coincided with the dynasty's efforts to reform the nation. But this ended in 1910 when Korea came under Japanese occupation. Due to the fall of the Chosŏn Dynasty, Korean society was plunged into confusion since the fall of the dynasty meant the collapse of Confucianism which was the nation's foundation in terms of socio-politics, ethics, religion and culture. Koreans experienced a great sense of loss and despair concerning the future. During this chaotic period, many Western Protestant missionaries came to Korea and began to engage in evangelism. Many churches were founded all over the country, and many Koreans became Christians. For the first time, Koreans came to the church not only for the sake of their Christian faith, but also to gain economic and political security under Japanese rule.<sup>934</sup> In the early days of Japanese rule, the Japanese government wished to avoid conflict with the churches under the care of the missionaries. Many Koreans came to the church and were actively involved in Bible studies and prayer meetings. This suggests that Koreans found Christianity a source of hope in their desperate situations.

Following the Korean Pentecostal revivals in 1903 (Wonsan) and 1906 (Pyongyang), the Korean Pentecostal movement spread across the nation. It is significant that Korean Pentecostalism began before Western Pentecostal missionaries arrived in Korea. Through the revivals, Korean indigenous church leaders emerged and became leaders of the Pentecostal movement in Korea. Before

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<sup>934</sup> C. E. Sharp, "Motives for Seeking Christ," *Korea Mission Field*, August 1906, pp. 182-83.

the revivals broke out, they worked as helpers and translators for the missionaries, but subsequently, they became as influential as the missionaries. From an ecclesiological perspective, it marked the transition from mission to church in Korean Christianity. During this early era of Korean Pentecostalism, there were two significant developments.

Firstly, Koreans experienced the manifestations of the Spirit before becoming aware of the global Pentecostal movement. Rumsey, the first Western Pentecostal missionary to Korea, arrived in March, 1928, about ten years after the Pyongyang revival. Second, Pentecostalism was contextualized into the Korean primal religious culture, Korean shamanism. Some of the early practices of Korean Pentecostalism such as the dawn prayer, the mountain prayer, and the overnight prayer, were influenced by Korean primal religiosity. Before Christianity came to Korea, there were three Korean indigenous religions: Confucianism, Buddhism, and shamanism. Among them, Confucianism and shamanism have significantly been influential to Koreans; Confucianism for the high class, and shamanism for ordinary people. Confucianism was more a philosophy of politics and ethics than a religion. It emphasized meditation as a means of achieving a moral and good life rather than religious practices.

In contrast, Koreans were seeking a prosperous life through shamanistic practices. However, these religions did not give Koreans a belief about the afterlife or hope for eternal life. Their concept of the afterlife was based on the doctrine of

reincarnation within the Buddhist tradition but this was not eternal life in the Christian sense. Koreans could not acquire hope for eternal life nor experience manifestations of the Spirit through these indigenous religions. During the Korean revivals, however, many Koreans came to have a hope for the Kingdom of God and eternal life. Furthermore, they were able to experience some manifestations of the Spirit. The influence of shamanism on the contextualization of Pentecostalism in Korea was a double-edged sword. As scholars have argued, there are shamanic elements in Korean Pentecostalism. In spite of deshamanization, shamanism has been transformed and indigenized in Korean Christianity as well as Pentecostalism in both positive and negative ways. Korean Pentecostals have objected to the attempt to identify shamanistic enthusiasm or practices with Korean Pentecostalism.

However, it is apparent that shamanism, not as a folk religion but rather as the primal spirituality of the Korean people, provided a favourable soil for Pentecostalism to grow in Korea and contributed to the unique spiritual practices of Korean Pentecostalism. In fact, the aspect of Korean shamanism, which emphasized the acquisition of present material blessings, helped to prepare the ground for the Threefold Blessing to flourish.<sup>935</sup>

Before the theory of the Threefold Blessing was introduced, Korean Pentecostals mainly focused on salvation for the soul, although healing and manifestations of the Spirit such as speaking in tongues were practiced by early

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<sup>935</sup> Young Hoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, pp. 13-4.

Korean Pentecostal leaders like Ig Doo Kim (1894-1950) and Yong Do Lee (1901-1933). However, many of these early Pentecostals were rejected and declared as heretics by mainstream Korean Christians.

In chapter two, the contextualization of Pentecostalism in the Korean context was discussed. In the chapter, three major areas in which the Threefold Blessing was successfully contextualized into the Korean context were examined; the God of Korean Pentecostals, the people, and the biblical text 3 John 2 for the contextualization of the Threefold Blessing into the Korean context. As *Hananim*, which originated from the name of the shamanic deity, became the name of the Christian God in Korea, the nature of *Hananim* influenced the shape of Korean Christianity. As a result, to some extent, the Korean Christian understanding of the character of God was influenced by their concept of *Hananim* in Korean shamanism. Korean Pentecostals understood that their fortune and misfortune were strongly dependent upon how they served God since they believed that God is in control of life and death, as well as fortune and misfortunes. As a result, *Ki-Bock-Shin-Ang* [the belief that blessings come through faith and religious practices] became an important aspect of Korean Pentecostalism due to their understanding of the character of the Korean God, *Hananim*. Subsequently, due to the shamanic belief that *Hananim* was the dispenser of blessings, the theory of the Threefold Blessing was quickly assimilated into the Korean contexts. Furthermore, shamanism also helped Koreans understand the Christian spiritual worldview and the manifestations of the Spirit.

During Japanese rule, Korean Pentecostal leaders focused on the eschatological hope of the Kingdom of God rather than blessings for this present life. The message of the Kingdom of God gave comfort to Koreans who had lost their country and were experiencing suffering under Japanese imperialism. To Korean Christians, the coming Kingdom and the second coming of Christ were associated in their thinking with the freedom of their country from Japanese imperialism. With the eschatological hope for the Kingdom, Korean Christians were able to endure the political and religious oppression and persecutions instigated against them throughout Japanese rule.

However, in the post-Korean War context, hope for the Korean Pentecostals was not limited to the eschatological dimension. Soon after liberation from Japan in August 1945, Korea was divided into the North and the South due to political ideology. Five years later, the Korean War broke out in June 1950 and continued until 1953. The Korean War devastated the whole country. After the war, the Korean people suffered severe poverty, diseases, and sorrows for the loss of beloved ones during the war. Most were the victims of the war and living in conditions of hopelessness. Ironically, hope always begins in hopeless situations and becomes the motivation of the desperate to overcome their devastating circumstances. The Threefold Blessing was developed by Cho in these hopeless conditions in the post-Korean War context. In this context, Korean Pentecostals reconceptualised *Hananim* as *Joeushin Hananim* (the good God) who will provide them with blessings to overcome their current sufferings. Through rediscovering the character of God, the

Threefold Blessing was able to be contextualized more effectively for Koreans, giving them hope not only for eternal life after death, but also for the good life here on the earth. *Minjung* theology was also developed in this context. However, the perspectives of *Minjung* theology and the Threefold Blessing are different in terms of the relationship between the people and hope. In the *Minjung* theology, the *Minjung* are ὄχλος (*ochlos*), socio-politically marginalized people, whereas the *Minjung* of Korean Pentecostalism were λαός (*laos*), ordinary Koreans who were spiritually lost, financially poor, and physically sick. In other words, the people of Korean Pentecostalism are not a social class or those who are marginalized due to socio-political concerns, but those who seek hope in God for spiritual salvation, and physical and financial blessings in their hopeless situations. As a result, the lost, the poor and the sick became the people of the Threefold Blessing.

With the Threefold Blessing, Cho provided much needed hope to Koreans based on the biblical text 3 John 2: hope of prosperity for the poor, divine healing for the sick, and salvation for the lost. Korean Pentecostals began to have hope through the message of the Threefold Blessing. Thousands of people attended Pentecostal churches every week and began to pray day and night for healing and prosperity. The Threefold Blessing as a contextual hope and the context of the Korea after the war were a perfect match in terms of contextualization. As a result, the growth of Pentecostal churches was remarkable compared with other Christian groups in Korea, and the YFGC, which started with Cho and Jashil Choi's four family members on the



outskirts of Seoul, eventually grew to become the largest church in the world. Due to rapid economic growth, the matter of national poverty has now been resolved.

Chapter three began with a discussion of the theological and historical influences on the origin and development of the Threefold Blessing. The chapter then compared the concept of hope in the Threefold Blessing with Moltmann's theology of hope. Before the Threefold Blessing originated, mainstream Korean Christianity focused on spiritual salvation and regarded seeking material blessings from God as evidence of shamanic influence. However, the Threefold Blessing, which was based on a holistic understanding of humanity, enlarges the scope of salvation to include non-spiritual aspects. Soteriology in the Threefold Blessing is no longer limited to the spiritual dimension but embraces the physical and material realm. Cho does not regard Christ's atonement as efficacious for the redemption of the soul alone but also for the body and life's circumstances. For him, poverty and disease are the curses derived from the fall of the humanity. Thus, the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross is also intended to save God's people from these curses. To him, healing and blessings for this earthly life are as important as the promise of eternal life. Due to Cho's influence, Korean Pentecostals do not hope only for eternal life but also for a healthy and prosperous life on earth through Christ. The hope contained in the Threefold Blessing is focused on eternal life for the soul as well as health and prosperity on earth. Thus, hope within the Threefold Blessing is oriented both towards the present and the future. At the same time that the Threefold Blessing

emerged in Korea, Moltmann's Theology of Hope was being developed in the ruins of post-war Germany. Like Koreans during the post-Korean War period, it seemed that there was no hope for Germans at that time. Because Moltmann was introduced to Korea by *Minjung* and liberal theologians who were mostly his pupils or had studied in Germany, the socio-political aspects in Moltmann's theology were magnified to Korean Christians. As a result, Moltmann and his theology were at first not welcomed by Korean conservative evangelicals and Pentecostals. However, as Moltmann began to have conversations with Korean Pentecostals from the 1990s, the latter gradually began to understand his theology from a broader perspective. In 1995, he was invited to Korea by Korean Pentecostals where he conducted a seminar in the YFGC. As a consequence of this dialogue, Moltmann does not hesitate to define the Threefold Blessing as a source of hope for Koreans in the post-Korean War context.<sup>936</sup> Cho's Threefold Blessing and Moltmann's theology of hope have much in common. They developed in similar contexts, and both Cho and Moltmann experienced personal hardships which influenced their theologies.<sup>937</sup> However, there are theological differences between them. Moltmann's hope begins with the event of the resurrection and the promise of the Second Advent. To liberal theologians, the death of Christ on the cross involves the death of God, but for Moltmann, the event of Christ's crucifixion is not God's death but the death of the Son of God.<sup>938</sup> The desperate can have hope in the midst of their suffering due to the resurrection of

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<sup>936</sup> Personal interview with Jürgen Moltmann on 4 January 2012 at his house in Tübingen, Germany.

<sup>937</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, "The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life", p. 149.

<sup>938</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, pp. 129-177.

Christ from the dead and the promise of his second coming. Moltmann's hope is not based on "human needs" but instead is strongly dependent upon "the divine promise".<sup>939</sup> For Moltmann, the poor are not those who have financial problems but rather those who are suffering from dehumanization and exploitation.<sup>940</sup>

In contrast, the hope of the Threefold Blessing begins with the suffering of Christ and to some extent is related to present human needs. It is focused on the expectation of prosperity in this life as well as future hope of eternal life. Thus, hope in the Threefold Blessing cannot be disconnected from 'human needs,' but is also dependent upon faith that God is the one who will fulfil these needs. Cho understands poverty and disease from a spiritual and theological perspective. To him, poverty and disease are not just financial and physical difficulties but are the consequence of God's curse, and Christ's salvation is not only for the soul but also to redeem his people from the curse. If Moltmann's hope is based on the resurrection of Christ, the hope of the Threefold Blessing is rooted in the suffering of Christ and His salvation. In other words, the atonement of Christ is the theological foundation of hope in the Threefold Blessing. His salvation redeems humanity from God's curse, brought about by the fall of the humanity, enabling the sick to be healed. Korean Pentecostals base their theology of healing in the atonement on Bible texts such as Isaiah 53:5 and 2 Peter 2:24. Moltmann concurs with this perspective. He understands that the sick can

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<sup>939</sup> Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 648; and Jürgen Moltmann, *Experiences in Theology*, p. 92.

<sup>940</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, pp. 99-100.

be healed not through the superior power of Christ but through his suffering.<sup>941</sup>

However, for Moltmann, salvation and healing are not merely personal but have a socio-political dimension. For Moltmann, Christ is the redeemer and liberator not only in relation to personal salvation but also in relation to “the liberation of man from his inhumanity”.<sup>942</sup> In contrast, in the Threefold Blessing, Christ is the saviour, healer and dispenser of blessings for individuals. The crucifixion and resurrection of Christ are understood as the theological basis for spiritual salvation, healing and prosperity.

In chapter four, the Threefold Blessing is interpreted in terms of a contextual theology of hope. One of the contributions of Korean Pentecostalism to Christianity in Korea is its emphasis on the experience of the Spirit and spirituality. To Korean Pentecostals, spiritual blessing does not only mean spiritual salvation but also the infilling of the Spirit and the experience of Spirit manifestations. However, in the Threefold Blessing, spiritual blessing has often been understood simply as salvation or has been emphasized less than healing and financial prosperity. Traditionally, mainstream Korean Christians have understood the Kingdom of God in eschatological terms. However, the Threefold Blessing is more concerned with experiencing the Kingdom in the ‘here and now’ through physical and financial blessings. Cho understands the Kingdom both in eschatological terms and as a present reality in this life. For him, the present reality of the Kingdom of God means

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<sup>941</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, “The Blessing of Hope: The Theology of Hope and the Full Gospel of Life”, p. 153.

<sup>942</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, p. 18.

the expectation of a prosperous life in God on earth and is the antitype of the future Kingdom in heaven.<sup>943</sup> However, for Moltmann, the Kingdom is eschatological and theological. Moltmann understands the Kingdom as immanent in the Trinity. The Kingdom can be understood in terms of the communication between the three persons of the Trinity and the interactions between God and the world, and God and humanity.<sup>944</sup> For Moltmann, the Kingdom is not a utopia in this world. In fact, the more people have hope for this world, the more hope will become secularized and the less interest they will have in the Kingdom of God to come. The eschatological hope for the Kingdom must not be eclipsed by having hope for this world. Thus, the Kingdom can be realised not by focusing on human demands but through communication with God by the Spirit.

Lastly, chapter five discusses the necessity of recontextualizing and reinterpreting the Threefold Blessing for today's Korean Pentecostals. Throughout this dissertation, it has been suggested that the theory of the Threefold Blessing was a response to the socio-economic difficulties after the Korean War and was contextualized into the post-Korean War contexts as a source of hope. However, today's Korean context has changed remarkably. It is doubtful whether the Threefold Blessing can continue to be a source of hope for Koreans without it undergoing a process of reinterpretation and recontextualization. As Moltmann points out, hope

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<sup>943</sup> Yonggi Cho, *More Than Numbers*, p. 78.

<sup>944</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, pp. 209-211.

must be contradictory to the reality that is being experienced in the present.<sup>945</sup> Thus, the Threefold Blessing represented the opposite of what was being experienced in the post-Korean War context. However, there is no longer national poverty in Korea, and the National Health Care system of Korea is well developed. Unlike in the post-Korean War context, the majority of today's Korean Pentecostals neither belong to the lower socio-economic class nor are they struggling with absolute poverty or sickness. This means that hope in the Threefold Blessing needs to be renewed for the new context. In fact, as we have noted, there have been soteriological changes in Cho's theology as well as ecclesiological changes in the YFGC in response to the contemporary Korean context. However, it seems that the Threefold Blessing still overemphasizes hope for physical and financial blessings. This tendency has often led to it being labelled Christian shamanism or Christian mammonism. In other words, from the early period of the new millennium, Cho began to respond to the current concerns of contemporary Korean Christians over ecological issues and the need to share the love of Christ with others through social welfare initiatives. However, the Threefold Blessing has not been reinterpreted for this new Korean context.

The issues that today's Korean Pentecostals are facing are not a matter of 'having' but 'being' as Christians. Blessing and healing have to be understood from a broader perspective than merely their personal and physical dimensions. Salvation in the Threefold Blessing needs to be reconceptualised to include social and ecological

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<sup>945</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, p. 18.

aspects. In the post-Korean War context, most Koreans encountered two major problems, poverty and illness, which could be resolved by receiving physical and financial blessings from God. In today's Korean context, however, Korean Pentecostals face more complex dilemmas that cannot be solved through receiving financial prosperity and healing for the body. In modern Korean society, there are many people who are suffering from social problems such as family breakdown, broken relationships, sexual discrimination, inequality between the rich and the poor, as well as from the effects of environmental devastation. Furthermore, many Koreans have suffered from the national emotion of *Han*. As *Han* is normally accumulated by external, rather than internal, elements, the matter of *Han* cannot be completely resolved unless its external causes are removed. Thus, healing in the Threefold Blessing has to integrate various elements including socio-political issues for the healing of *Han* to take place. If the focus of healing remains limited to the body, it can be a source of hope for the sick but not for society as a whole. Healing of the ecosystem also must not be overlooked. During the war, and as a result of the modernization, industrialization, and urbanization of Korea, the nation's ecosystem was severely damaged. In fact, as eco-theology has not been developed in Korea, healing of the ecosystem has not been a feature of the Threefold Blessing. However, it is important that healing in the Threefold Blessing is expanded to include not only the physical dimension but also 'inner healing' and healing of society and the ecosystem. In recent years, Christian ethics has been an issue in Korea due to concern over the moral standards of Christian leaders. In the early period of Korean

Christianity, many Christians were martyred because of their faith. However, today, Korean Christians are a significant influence in the nation. Nevertheless, the moral standard of today's Korean Christian leaders in the society is a matter of concern. While, the Threefold Blessing has focused on financial prosperity and success in this life, its focus on the whole of society has not been accompanied by an emphasis on Christian ethics and *noblesse oblige*. As a result, Korean Christian leaders have been scorned by non-believers, and their scandals have often become the basis for criticism of Christian mission and evangelism by opponents in Korea. Thus, healing in the Threefold Blessing needs to be reinterpreted from a broader perspective and recontextualized into the various social and individual contexts of contemporary Koreans.

Prosperity also needs to be reinterpreted for today's Korean people. The Threefold Blessing has focused on self-centred financial blessing. However, considering the current Korean economy, it is time for Korean Pentecostals to consider how to share their financial blessings with their neighbours rather than accumulating prosperity for themselves. Due to the extreme poverty, financial blessing from God was a contextual hope for Korean Pentecostals in the post-Korean War context, but it cannot be a source of hope for contemporary Korean Pentecostals unless they learn to share their blessings with others. Thus, there needs to be a shift from an emphasis on personal blessings towards an orientation focused on the community. This transition requires a new theological foundation based on love and



sacrifice. As prosperity in the Threefold Blessing is based on the suffering and sacrifice of Christ on behalf of his people, this should be reflected in the practice of sharing blessings given by God and making financial sacrifices on behalf of the less privileged. Consequently, in order for it to continue to give hope to Koreans, the Threefold Blessing must be recontextualized. Furthermore, as Moltmann points out, the Threefold Blessing has not developed enough theologically in relation to systematic theology despite it being the main theme of Korean Pentecostal messages. Thus, the theory of the Threefold Blessing also needs to be theologized systematically in the future.

### **1. Contributions of the Thesis**

This research has made four significant contributions to the theology of the Threefold Blessing. First, it is the first theological study to understand the Threefold Blessing in terms of a contextual hope in the Korean context. In this thesis, the Threefold Blessing is defined as the contextual Pentecostal hope in relation to the post-Korean War context and the contemporary Korean context. Unlike the prosperity gospel in North America, prosperity and healing in the Threefold Blessing were a source of hope that enabled Korean Pentecostals to overcome their experiences of sufferings after the Korean War. Secondly, this research has introduced a direct theological dialogue between the Threefold Blessing and Moltmann's theology of hope. Although Moltmann began to have conversations with Korean Pentecostalism

from 1995, no theological analysis has been carried out of the Threefold Blessing in relation to his theology of hope. For this thesis, I was able to have a personal interview with Moltmann at his house in Tübingen, Germany. Needless to say, there are many theological differences between Moltmann's theology of Hope and Cho's Threefold Blessing, and it is difficult to make comparisons between Moltmann's systematically developed theology and the Threefold Blessing. However, this thesis has revealed certain similarities and differences between the two theologies in relation to the concept of hope.

Thirdly, this thesis has shown the necessity of reinterpreting and recontextualizing the Threefold Blessing for contemporary Koreans and Korean Pentecostals. The Threefold Blessing was a significant influence upon Koreans who experienced financial and physical hardship in the post-Korean War context but not so much for subsequent generations who have known little of these difficulties. Today's Korean Pentecostals need a new understanding of hope which focuses not only on individual salvation but also on societal transformation and environmental issues.

Lastly, with theological considerations for today's Korean context, this thesis also suggests future ways for the Threefold Blessing to be interpreted. For its continued growth in the future, Korean Pentecostalism also needs a new hope for new Korean Pentecostal contexts. Thus, this thesis points out that the Threefold Blessing has to be re-theologized based on a new theological understanding. Due to the fact

that the atonement of Christ was not only on behalf of humanity but also the whole universe, the soteriology of the Threefold Blessing cannot remain limited to the personal and spiritual dimensions. In response to socio-political and ecological concerns, healing has to be understood in broader terms to include not only the body but society, and the ecosystem. This means that, in order to continue to give hope to Korean Pentecostals, the Threefold Blessing has to be re-theologized and re-contextualized in response to socio-political concerns and ecological matters.

Prosperity also has to be reinterpreted so that its meaning shifts from personal to societal prosperity. This cognitive change in understanding of the concept of prosperity needs a new theological foundation based on sacrificial love on behalf of others through Christ. In other words, prosperity in the Threefold Blessing needs to be re-theologized based on the theological references, ‘love’ and ‘sacrifice’, for communal prosperity. Salvation and healing also need to be understood in holistic terms.

## **2. Suggestions for Further Studies**

This thesis also gives pointers for future studies for deeper christological and soteriological understanding of the Threefold Blessing such as the relationship between healing and Christ’s suffering, and holistic and eco-theological understanding of salvation for the whole universe. In this thesis, I discussed the

similarities and differences of Moltmann's theology of hope in comparison with Cho's theology of the Threefold Blessing. However, Moltmann's christology and pneumatology needs to be rediscovered in Korean Pentecostal perspectives in order to develop the theology of the Threefold Blessing in the future. If the old Threefold Blessing was combined Oral Roberts' theory and the post Korean War context, but the new one needs to be a combination of Moltmann and post-2000 Korean culture.

In addition, the influences and contributions of Korean shamanism on Korean Pentecostalism have been researched widely. However, in contrast, the influence of Korean Confucianism, such as those Korean Pentecostal leaders with Confucian conservative tendencies, has been overlooked. Thus, Korean Confucianism as an indigenous religion like shamanism needs to be rediscovered and considered for the contextual theology of Korean Pentecostalism in future studies.

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#### **INTERVIEWS with:**

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- 2) Jürgen Moltmann on 4 January 2012 at his house in Tübingen, Germany.
- 3) Vinson Synan (16 August 2011) at Regent University, VA, USA.
- 4) Yong Hoon Lee through the email on 15 November 2012.