

Mega Prayers

For one church in South Korea, meeting only once a week on Sundays is hardly enough. Myungsung Church in Seoul gathers for early morning prayer every day, and it's been doing it for 35 years.

In the early morning, thousands of people stream out of the downtown church, passing the thousands of others who are waiting in the cold and the dark to go inside. When the signal comes, they stream inside and scurry down the street to arrive on time. Myungsung Church holds four early morning services on a daily basis.

[Download PDF](#)

```
[responsivevoice_button voice="US English Male"
buttontext="Listen to this Feature" buttoncolor:"blue"]
```

"Christians cannot live without faith and prayer, even for a moment," says church elder Seon Gyoo Kim. "I believe morning prayer is God's blessing for us, so I am joyfully attending to the gathering, even though the church is far and it takes long."

Recently, the church celebrated 35 years of early-morning prayer. Since Rev. Samhwan Kim started the church in 1980, it has grown to more than 120,000 members. He credited that success to prayer and an unyielding commitment to historic Christian truths.

"The power of church is from the gospel in the Bible and the tradition that we inherited from the ancestors," Kim says. "If we preserve those values, the world will follow us, and we can lead this era."

Prayers That Aim for Reunification

Well into his 70s, Pastor Kim still leads two morning services. Myungsung Church has planted 24 churches and supports more than 500 missionaries in 63 countries. The church also supports a children's home, a hospital and other social ministries.

Pastor Kim says it's prayer that has made this ministry possible. He and his church believe that if they ask, God will do the same for their kinsmen in North Korea.

"North Korea is in despair, but at the same time, it is very hopeful in Christ," Kim says. "Isaiah 9 says, 'The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.'"

"I believe the time of gospel must come to them. We need prayer to save North Korea," he says. "God will work on them through our prayer. He must liberate the land and perform the miracle to open the way in the desert for the unification of North and South."

North and South Korea have been separated for 65 years. Since the armistice was signed, South Korea has grown into a modern state with a booming economy.

North Korea is one of the most isolated nations on Earth, ruled by a family of dictators who repress its people and threaten the world with nuclear holocaust. On the border of North and South Korea, people come to look into the "Hermit Kingdom" and to leave messages for their families on the other side.

At Myungsung Church, the people pray passionately for reunification.

Among them is a group of North Korean refugees now living in the South. Though they're free, it's hard to escape the grip of the totalitarian regime just across the border.

“Actually, North Korean defectors have a trauma by the North Korean regime,” says Wonjoon Sung, who escaped North Korea. “We often have a nightmare of being taken to the North. Whenever I wake up in the morning, I feel the freedom but become sorrowful thinking (of) my family, who are living perilously without freedom in the North.”

These refugees came to Christ after escaping the North, but they saw firsthand the government’s persecution of Christians.

“In the North, the Christians were singled out for torture,” says Hyejin Lim, another North Korean escapee. “They were found because of their knees, because they have (to) sit kneeling to pray. The Christians were separated and right away sent to other places such like concentration camp.”

How the Word Runs Swiftly

Still, the church in North Korea is growing. A woman named Yunsun Lee says some North Koreans who visit China are converted to Christianity by missionaries on the border.

Despite the risk of imprisonment or even death, some of them return to North Korea to preach the gospel.

“After they go back to the North, they evangelize others one by one in (the) basement, and then the newcomers bring their families or friends as well,” says Yunsun Lee. “In this way, the gospel is being spread secretly. If this comes out, (the) whole family will be murdered. So the churches are performing in (the) basement in secret but actively.”

Meanwhile, those who have found safety in the South cry out for their families in the North, believing that these fervent prayers will avail much for the people of North Korea. “I really pray, ‘God, may His gospel enter to the North so that the people there can live like decent men enjoying freedom.’ Every human being has the right to freedom, but in the North, this most basic right is being restricted,” says Wonjoon Sung.

"I am praying to God earnestly to allow this blessing for the people in the North."

Steve Little produces *Christian World News*, CBN's weekly news program featuring stories about the global church.

Heather Sells covers wide-ranging stories for CBN News that include religious liberty, ministry trends, immigration, and education.