

North Koreans Must Worship, Give Thanks to Kim Il Sung Every Day

Thanksgiving is fast approaching—a day every year when Americans stop to give thanks. But in the country of North Korea, thanksgiving to the nation’s “eternal president” Kim Il Sung must be given at every meal.

“The best wall on every house in North Korea must have well-cared-for photos of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il,” explains Seoul USA CEO Eric Foley. “At every meal, families look up at the picture and pray, ‘Thank you, Father Kim Il Sung, for this food.’”

While most Americans view the hermit kingdom as an atheist nation, Foley says in reality it is perhaps the most religious nation on earth because 100 percent of its citizens are required to worship Kim Il Sung. North Korea is the world’s only “necrocacy”—ruled forever by its deceased eternal president.

“This is challenging to Christians, who refuse to worship anyone other than God,” Foley says. “Those seen bowing their heads in prayer are considered seditious citizens and are persecuted.”

Overcoming this idolatry is the most pressing issue for the North Korean church. The way they’ve done this is to rely on four pillars: the 10 Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, the Lord’s Supper, and the Apostles’ Creed. Each of these is a protection against idolatry and helps them navigate through North Korea’s state religion known as Juche.

“As Americans thank God for our blessings and prosperity this Thanksgiving, let’s also consider our need to combat idolatry in our own lives,” Foley says. “We can grow stronger in this overcoming faith by learning from the example of our North Korean brothers and sisters in Christ. Reliance on the four pillars of worship is the key.”

The four pillars are integral to Christian life. That’s why they’re featured in Seoul USA’s 100 Days of Worship campaign running through Dec. 31.