

Why You Need to Pray for North Korea Right Now

Next week, the on-again off again June 12 summit between U.S. President Trump and North Korean Dictator Kim Jong Un appears to be on again. At stake are the peace of Korea and the end of the long suffering of the Korean people.

That suffering began in 1910, when the Japanese conquered Korea and used it as a springboard for their ambitions in China. The Koreans were treated brutally and many of their women were kidnapped and forced to serve as prostitutes for the Japanese army. There were about 68,000 Christians in Korea in 1910, (51,000 in the South and 17,000 in the North), and they were persecuted along with the other Korean people.

The defeat of the Japanese in 1945 did not end the suffering of the Korean people. The Russians, who had entered the war in its closing days, were allowed to collect the surrender Japanese troops north of the 38th Parallel. The Russians prevented the unification of Korea and instead set up a vicious Communist dictatorship under Kim Jong Un's Grandfather. Hundreds of Christians in North Korea were martyred, most fled to the South, and the remnant went underground. Even so, today there are about 500,000 Christians in North Korea.

In 1950 Stalin and Mao Tse Tung of China felt that South Korea would be an easy military conquest and the North Koreans launched a *blitzkrieg* attack on South Korea. The U.S. and the United Nations came to aid of South Korea and after being driven back to the southeast corner of Korea, defeated the North Korean army and drove deep into North Korea. Mao then sent Chinese troops into Korea, driving the allies back to about the original starting point on the 38th Parallel. The see-saw war devastated the Korean peninsula and brought

suffering and death to soldiers and civilians alike. Christians were especially targeted by the Communists and thousands were martyred before the war ended with an armistice in 1953. Today, after 65 years, the opposing armies still face each other over the so called Demilitarized Zone.

After the war, South Korea remained free and became prosperous as a result. The church also grew, with the country housing the world's largest church under Paul Yonggi Cho which grew to 500,000 members from 1958 to 1987. Today there are over 20 million Christians comprising over 40 percent of the population of South Korea. Yet the threat of war still hangs over South Korea as there are said to be 10,000 North Korean artillery pieces within range of Seoul's 10 million inhabitants.

The North followed the path of Communism to poverty and totalitarian terror. Millions have starved to death as the regime spends its money on the military and personal luxuries of the elites. Dissidents and their families are disappeared into concentration camps. And now the North's pursuit of atomic weapons and long range missiles has raised the specter of nuclear war with the United States.

We are thankful that there has been progress in bringing peace to Korea and for the meeting between Trump and Kim. Now we must pray that God will give wisdom to those two leaders to reach a workable agreement to denuclearize Korea and end the Korean War.

Let us pray blessings on Kim Jong Un, not for his evil past, but that he will find the path to true peace through Jesus Christ. Bless him to be a blessing to his people and the Church, allowing them to experience prosperity and freedom.

We pray that the South Koreans will see the threat of war removed. May they show mercy to their brothers in the North and bless them after peace comes to Korea. And let them work

with the Christians in the North to bring revival to the whole Korean peninsula.

Pray for the peace of Korea. {eo}

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