



## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

#### **6.1. A Discussion and Evaluation of Korean Missionary Activity in Southern Africa**

To recapitulate: the Korean missionaries have been involved in their various ministries in Southern Africa since 1980. In Korea, Africa is known as the “Dark Continent”. At the end of the 1970s or early 1980s, Africa was introduced to Korean missionary candidates as an option for missionary service. During the last three decades, over 250 Korean missionaries have committed themselves to the great commission of the Lord in Southern Africa.

Even though they grew up knowing only one culture and language with limited cultural experience in Korea, they attempted to learn the host language and culture because they understood the importance of cultural diversity in the mission field. This was a result of their training at the “Missionary Training Institute” or other training centres, where they learnt of their roles and challenges and how to achieve their mission. Above all they functioned in cooperation with local pastors, leaders, and mission agencies.

In the foregoing study, I described the missionary endeavours of the home-based Korean Church, offering an overview of Korean missionary activity in Southern Africa, challenges in the mission field, and the Korean solutions to challenges in Southern

Africa. It is hoped that this has enabled one to understand the various facets of the Korean missionary's work. This should furnish insights to the Korean missionaries or mission agencies in order to discuss and evaluate their policy, strategy, training, supervision and missionary movement.

## **6.2. Conclusion Evaluated According to Methodology**

### **6.2.1. Literature study**

I carried out an extensive literature study in South Africa. In doing so I collected all available resources in Korea and in Southern Africa. I visited Korea in order to search for all published resources which related to the history of Korean missionaries or activities in Southern African countries at bookshops, and the library of Chongshin Theological Seminary in Seoul. However, I could not find much material since there were few resources. I relied on research on the internet and websites on which various prayer letters of the Korean missionaries were placed by Korean mission agencies and newspapers. Above all, I contacted my friends who lived in Korea, requesting that they search for books which I needed for my research. Lastly, over a period of three years, I obtained useful books and information which relate to missions at the library of the University of Pretoria.

## **6.2.2. Comprehensive questionnaires**

I wanted to gain information on the Korean missionaries who were involved in 17 kinds of comprehensive ministries in Southern Africa. In this regard, I developed two comprehensive questionnaires in 2006. These proved to be one of the most useful methods for my study. I wanted to contact two different groups: the first being the Korean missionaries and the other, the AEC pastors and leaders.

Firstly, I contacted the Korean missionaries on three different occasions between 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2006 and 31st March, 2007. Initially I attended a conference of the Korean Missionary Fellowship in Central and Southern Africa from 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> July, 2006 at the Wigwam Hotel in Rustenburg. Subsequently I distributed questionnaires by e-mails all the Korean missionaries who were working in Southern Africa. On the third occasion I personally contacted the Korean missionaries who live in Pretoria and Potchefstroom. Finally, I collected 49 responses from them; this represented approximately 25% of the 252 Korean missionaries who worked in Southern Africa.

Secondly, I contacted pastors and leaders with regards to completing the questionnaire at AEC Pretoria Circuit, located in Rustenburg, Limpopo, Mamelodi, and Soshanguve near the North of Pretoria. This took place between the 15<sup>th</sup> July and the 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2006. I obtained 19 answers.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of my thesis analysed these results.



### **6.2.3. Participant observer**

The researcher, as a member of the Global Mission Society (GMS) and Serving In Mission (SIM), has been involved in various ministries such as church planting, church building projects, leadership development and discipleship training for pastors and church leaders, children's ministry and ecumenical co-operation in South Africa since 1997. The researcher was not merely an observer in the present undertaking, but rather a participant. He lived in a black rural area so as to learn the local language, culture, customs and history on the street for a year. When he began to become deeply involved in the ministry of church planting, he visited house to house, proclaimed the Gospel, trained local pastors and leaders, and interviewed key local pastors mostly in the AEC Pretoria circuit regarding many of the issues which he was researching.

The researcher also interviewed key Korean missionaries concerning various issues in Pretoria, Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Durban, Potchefstroom, and Rustenburg.

## **6.3. The Hypothesis**

### **6.3.1. Understanding their message well**

Before I began my research, I suspected that one of the specific problems which the Korean missionaries faced was a misunderstanding of the content of their message and context.



However, as a result of my questionnaire, 61.22% of the Korean missionaries responded that they understood the context very positively. While they were adjusting to the field, they learnt its unique context because their objective is to obey the great commission, to share the Gospel with the host people. They knew that if they ignored the learning or adjustment process called for by the new context, they would not reach this goal.

### **6.3.2. Adapting to the local culture and acquiring the local languages**

It became clear that if the Korean missionaries desire to succeed in their ministry to the local pastors or leaders, or to work with them effectively, they will have to adapt to the local culture and acquire the local languages of the people they serve, because language is the basic tool of communication among people and language learning is essential to the whole cultural learning process.

As a result of my research, it appeared that 61.22% of the Korean missionaries' language acquisition was sound, while 68.09 % felt they had adapted to the local culture very positively.

Even though they grew up within a mono language and culture, they experienced a very difficult time learning the languages and adapting to the cultural differences in the field. They continually tried to adapt and understand the culture and are still in the process of so doing. This is a very affirmative aspect of the Korean missionaries' activity.



### **6.3.3. Partnership with other churches and missionary organizations**

It also became evident that if they were able and willing to co-operate with other churches and missionary organisations in the field, they would fulfil the great commission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The results of my research indicate that 34.69% of the Korean missionaries worked independently while 61.22 % operated in relationship with others. They well understood that partnership plays a very important role in missions. The majority of them enjoyed excellent relationships with local pastors, the national people and fellow missionaries from other countries. However, although 20.40% were positive about their working relationship with local churches, almost 60% had experienced difficulties. This was a slightly different result from that of the working relationship of the Korean missionaries with pastors or leaders.

### **6.3.4. Proclaiming the Gospel of Christ and building up His church**

From the results of the current study, it was evident that the Korean missionaries understood the mission of both God and the Church. Most of them grew up with an evangelical background in Korea, and had experienced theological training which enabled them to proclaim the Gospel. Approximately 33% of Korean missionaries were involved in church planting ministries while 14% of them were involved in leadership development and discipleship training from the beginning because Korean churches sent pastor missionaries into mission fields. Their activities were not only those of



planting churches but also of strengthening, encouraging, motivating, and empowering the local churches and pastors. Above all, the Korean missionaries did their best to carry out missions comprehensively, according to their calling and preparation.

## **6.4. Conclusion to the Field Study**

I was able to draw several conclusions from the present research.

### **6.4.1. The missionary endeavours of the home-based Korean Church**

Korea's evangelization is part of God's providential work. By almost any measurement, the growth of Christianity in Korea during the last century is one of the most amazing stories of our time. The Korean church has rapidly and significantly altered from being a mission field to a sending field over the last 100 years. Above all, the Western mission agencies and missionaries opened the door to the Korean Churches to share in the rich experience of world missions, the Korean Churches and leaders received it and became deeply involved. This has demonstrated that the missionary movement is moving from the Western churches to the Third World churches. The development of the Korean churches is not only the fruit of the ministry of western missions but also a result of the fervent commitment of Korean pastors, mission leaders, and church members.



A special feature of the Korean mission movement is that it involved not only denominations but also the mission agencies of international mission organizations.

Korean Churches were involved in God's great commission in the past and are still taking part in it today, and missions programmes in these churches will continue until the second coming of Jesus our Lord.

#### **6.4.2. An overview of Korean missionary activity in Southern Africa**

Korean missionaries began their ministries in Southern African countries about the middle of 1980. Korean missionaries belong to four categories, namely, mission organizations, Korean denominations, international mission agencies and independent Korean missionaries.

I mentioned several names of people who were actively involved in missions in Southern African countries; however, I will not forget the other Korean missionaries' names, their sacrificial life and ministries because they committed their lives to God and obeyed God's calling to the mission fields.

They understood missions comprehensively, that is, both those of God and the church. They were involved in 17 types of ministry such as, children's ministry, youth ministry, Church planting ministry, leadership & discipleship, theological education, educational ministry, charity ministry, Muslim ministry, Korean church ministry, and medical





ministry, AIDS orphans ministry, sport ministry, church partnership, church building project, harbour ministry, job creation & development and language training.

Approximately 54% of Korean missionaries have been involved in church planting ministry, leadership development and discipleship and church partnership since 1980. This is greater than the 47 % who took part in church planting and discipleship ministry, because most of the Korean missionaries who were involved in these ministries are pastors. Their priority in ministry is church planting in terms of their background.

Above all, to evaluate the Korean missionary's ministry would be premature because 40.43% of the Korean missionaries have lived in the mission field for only four years. Approximately 70% of them live in South Africa because of the need for education of their children, proper living conditions in well developed areas and a lack of missions policy or supervision.

### **6.4.3. Challenges in the mission field**

The results of the study yielded the following findings with regards to the challenges in the mission field.

Firstly, after some time the Korean missionaries well understood the context of the country which they were serving. They overcame their mono cultural background.



Secondly, their language acquisition appeared sound. However, in my questionnaire I did not make a distinction between English and the local language. More detailed questions might have yielded a different result. The Korean missionaries clearly must overcome language and cultural difficulties in order to attain a deep understanding of the culture and to effectively communicate as well as enjoy a good relationship with others.

Thirdly, the Korean missionaries experienced problems relating to the expectations of the local people in various respects.

Fourthly, the Korean missionaries need to build very close relationships with their sending churches and supporters. They must thoroughly understand the expectations of the Korean sending churches.

Fifthly, over 60% of the Korean missionaries worked with the local churches and organizations to establish good relationships in the field. When they did collaborate with local churches, up to 60% of them encountered difficulties. I consider that, when they responded to the questionnaires concerning understanding the context, language and cultural acquisition, they answered positively. But when they dealt with the local pastors or indigenous people, they faced miscommunication and misunderstanding because they had not learned to accept the language and culture properly.



Sixthly, the most important personal problems of the Korean missionaries were family concerns, maintaining their spiritual life, health problems, financial concerns, frustration and unfulfilled ideals.

#### **6.4.4. Korean solutions to Southern African challenges**

Mission is not a one-sided approach to ministry. God's mission must be approached comprehensively in the church's outreach today. In history, mission is defined as a comprehensive missionary programme encompassing kerygma, diakonia, koinonia and leitourgia. The Korean solutions to Southern Africa challenges are summarised below.,

Firstly, the Korean missionaries have demonstrated a very positive comprehensive ministry in the field. They proclaimed and preached the Good News by planting churches, and training pastors, leaders and new believers to become faithful disciples of Jesus. Korean missionaries not only proclaim the Gospel but also practise their faith. They are involved in charity ministry, education ministry, job creation, medical ministry, sports ministry, and AIDS/HIV ministry. They continually seek ways to proclaim the Gospel effectively.

Secondly, the Korean missionaries knew that the five major challenges were those of leadership development and discipleship training, AIDS/HIV ministry, Bible school, children's ministry, and church planting (church building project).



However, the Korean missionaries responded that they were also involved in ministry which presented additional challenges such as Muslim ministry, the prayer mountain ministry, Chinese student ministry, and the Korean diaspora church ministry today.

Thirdly, the Korean missionaries and mission organizations must develop support programmes such as better care for the missionary, and offer a missionary evaluation programme, networking programme, annual spiritual life conference, a mission forum for the Korean missionary, a lifelong learning programme for the missionary, and a partnership mission for maturing and effective missionary movement in the contemporary context.

Fourthly, seven further challenges facing Korean missionaries attitudes are those of being, listening, learning, understanding, respect, communication, and transformation in the field. The Korean missionaries should build integrity into their relationships with the local people through being with them. They have to learn their language, culture, world-view, customs, lifestyle, history, habits, and value systems. They must have acquired an understanding, flowing from that which they have learnt. This knowledge is required for continual communication with the local people in order for their lives and community to be transformed.

Fifthly, the Korean missionaries must be like servant leaders, Bible teachers, coaches, mentors and spiritual fathers. These qualities are necessary for their important missions in the context of the Southern African countries.



## **6.5. Further Areas for Research**

During the current undertaking, many possibilities for further research into the Korean missionary's history, activities and lifestyle were revealed. These are mentioned below.

### **6.5.1. Children's ministry**

This ministry is one of the main targets of Korean missionaries because children represent the future of the church. Such missionaries encourage, challenge, guide, help, and train not only children but also teachers. They eagerly embody God's love to children and communities. Above all, they have opened the eyes of pastors and church leaders to the value of children in the church.

However they do not even offer a specific curriculum or designated programmes and also face the obstacle of not knowing the local language and culture deeply. So, while they are involved in this ministry, they have often experienced miscommunication, misunderstanding, and difficulties in the education of the children.

Therefore, if proper ministry for the children is to be carried out, careful research is needed for this purpose.

### **6.5.2. Church planting ministry**

One of the features of the Korean missionaries is their planting of churches not only in Southern African countries but also the entire mission world. However, no proper research has been conducted regarding the said ministry in the field. I believe it is time



for research, discussion and evaluation of such a ministry. Researchers in future must study the achievements, difficulties, goals, strategies, the reason for planting new churches and consider who will plant the new church. When they establish the latter, they should investigate how to develop local leadership, how to train local pastors, how to build local relationships, and the point at which they hand over their leadership to the local people in Southern African countries. Above all, they must conduct research into how to erect church buildings together with the local people.

### **6.5.3. Leadership development and discipleship training ministry**

The Korean missionaries have taught the local people to be disciples of Jesus, developed leadership, fostered relationships like those of a father and children, and brought about changes in thought and life through the Word of God, amongst other results of their work.

However they have experienced several kinds of difficulties such as lack of commitment, willingness, sacrificial life, enthusiasm, and a non Biblical life style amongst many local people.

Therefore they must attempt to understand the indigenous culture, world-view and life style, encourage a close relationship and motivation, devote all their energy and zeal to the trainees, devise a long term plan, follow the principles of Jesus as regards discipleship, develop formal or informal leadership programmes and discipleship training materials, and focus on developing the local leadership.



In future, more detailed research in this respect is necessary.

#### **6.5.4. Partnership**

To enter partnerships with local people, with Korean colleagues, and with Western missionaries and mission agencies for the purpose of effective mission strategies is a very important role of mission today. Since many Korean missionaries have faced difficulties while they were working with these different groups, it is necessary to research the matter of “partnership” in future as regards the Korean missionary movement.

#### **6.5.5. Theological Education**

The Korean missionaries who are involved in theological education targeted the black pastors or leaders who were not well trained in scripture or theology. I discovered that the most common difficulties which the Korean missionaries experienced were cultural, linguistic and those of the context. For example, approximately 70-80 % of the pastors had jobs and this affected the effective training of these people.

As I have already mentioned regarding the theological ministry in chapter 5, the Korean missionaries must solve difficulties related to theological education. In future, this aspect should be researched thoroughly.

### **6.5.6. Medical ministry**

Several Korean missionaries are involved in a medical ministry in Southern African countries. One Korean missionary has a plan to spend around \$10 million to institute the Medical College in Swaziland, and another Korean missionary spent around \$3million to build a hospital in Malawi. I believe that research into such projects is needed in the future.

### **6.5.7. AIDS/HIV ministry**

Currently, the AIDS/HIV pandemic is one of the burning issues not only for missionaries but also for secular governments worldwide. However few Korean missionaries take part in in this ministry (see chapter 3: table 6). They are becoming interested in this ministry rather than already being involved in it. Future research into this ministry, in terms of the involvement of the Korean missionaries, is much needed.

### **6.5.8. Adapting to local culture**

According to the responses of the Korean missionaries, they understood the local culture very well. However, while they were involved in their ministries, they faced difficulties working with the local pastors or leaders because of their lack of understanding of the culture. Thus, further study of the process of the Korean missionaries in connection with cultural adaptation is essential in future.





### **6.5.9. Missionary lifestyle**

There are up to 300 Korean missionaries serving in Southern African countries. They were called, committed, prepared and dispatched to the mission fields. They are involved in various comprehensive ministries to achieve the great commission. But they experience frustration in their attempts to maintain a spiritual balance, owing to a lack of prayer time. I believe that it is time for research into, and discussion and evaluation of their calling, commitment, and lifestyle in order to encourage a more effective, positive contribution.

### **6.5.10. Children of missionaries**

This aspect has not yet been well researched in terms of their education, identification and difficulties in Southern African countries. The issue of such children is one of the causes of missionary attrition, not only amongst the Korean missionaries but in terms of missionaries worldwide. Therefore proper research is essential.

### **6.5.11. Developing missionary evaluation**

Korean mission agencies apply an evaluation programme only to missionaries on furlough. However, they should develop an annual personnel review policy and adjust it for their missionaries. This will cause them to maintain a balance between healthy ministry and their spiritual life in the field. Consequently, this also constitutes one of the important research areas in Southern Africa.



### **6.5.12. Supervision programme**

The Korean mission agencies maintain a policy to supervise their missionaries in the mission field. Each mission agency operates a field office to ensure effective administration, management, service, and supervision. However, currently, this is not functioning effectively in the field. In future, research regarding such a supervision programme is needed for a healthier Korean missionary movement.

### **6.5.13. A non residential missionary**

Several Korean missionaries do not live in their host country. A non residential missionary is a full time, professional foreign career missionary who is matched with a single unevangelized population segment for the purposes of concentrating on priorities of initial evangelization and eliminating gaps and inadvertent duplications with other agencies. The non residential missionary lives outside the targeted assignment because legal residence for a missionary is either prohibited or highly restricted (Garrison 1990: 13). This possibility calls for further research with regards to the Korean missionary movement in South Africa.

### **6.5.14. MT 2020 (Million Tentmakers) and the Target 2030 Project**

This is a project to assign 1 million tent-making missionaries by 2020, and also to send 100 thousand full time missionaries from the Korean Church all over the world by 2030 . Korean mission leaders challenge and mobilize missionary candidates, pastors, lay



Christians, and local churches to participation in the great commission. They influence lay Christians to be tent-making missionaries. They also challenge everyone to be a missionary, even lay Christians who are retired and those in early retirement, because they have set a target of 1 million missionaries. For example, since 2003 GMS has appointed honorary missionaries who have been involved in missions for many years and those who want to be connected with GMS. Currently there are over 20 honorary missionaries at GMS. This is a worthwhile opportunity for retired pastors who are willing to be involved in missions. However, concerns have been raised with regards to mission strategy, supervision of missionaries and team ministry and possible harmful effects in the mission fields. This area likewise needs to be researched in the future.

This is the first research undertaken into the Korean missionaries' activities and evaluation of their ministry in Southern Africa. It is my desire that this thesis will have made a useful contribution to encouraging and equipping Korean missionaries in Southern Africa, indicating the way forward for them and other missionaries to proclaim the Gospel in this region.