# Theological Journal of KIMCHI

Korean Church as a Receiver and Transmitter of the Gospel

K I M CH I

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### Contents

Theme	1:	Korean	Church	as	a	Receiver	of	the	Gospel

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I. Evangelistic Tracts in the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. and Their Contributions to the Korean Great Revival 1903-1907
Prof. Hong Man Kim, Ph.D.
II. The Rebuilding of the Korea Mission by the Board of Foreign Mission of the PCUSA Immediately after August 1945 23
Dr. Jong Man Lee, Ph.D.
III. A Missional Apologetics in the Confucian Context
IV. The Impact of the Theological Thought of the Early Missionaries on Korean Church Growth 73
Prof. Chang Sub Shim, Th.D.
V. Christian Mission with Medicine in Korea: The History of the Severance Medical Center 96
Prof. Hyun Hye Yang, Ph.D.
VI. An Illustrative Interpretation of the Western Protestant Mission Works in Korea during the Twentieth Century
Rev. Jong Hyuk Kim, Ph.D.

Theme 2: Korean Church as a Transmitter of the Gospel
VII. Missiological/Theological Central Truth for the Korean Missioners
Prof. Hung Ho Chong, Ph.D.
VIII. The Overseas Missionary Works of Korean Church as a Missionary Nation
Prof. Hun Tae Chang, Ph.D.
IX. Can Lausanne Cooperate with WCC as Partner in Mission?
Rev. Dr. Jong Yun Lee, Ph.D., D.D.
Theme 3: Mission and General Subjects
X. A Dialogue Between Cultures in the 21st Century and the Idea of Culture Transforming Theology
Prof. Yung Han Kim, Ph.D.
XI. A Biblical Concept of Mission according to Isaiah 42:1-9: Mission as Doxology ————————————————————————————————————
Prof. Eun Soo Kim, Ph.D.
XII. Mission as Pilgrimage in Biblical Perspectives
Prof. Jung Sik Cha, Ph.D.
Contributors' Profile
Editorial Purpose of Theological Journal of KIMCHI 268

## Evangelistic Tracts in the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. and Their Contributions to the Korean Great Revival, 1903-1907

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#### I. Introduction

It is commonly held that the Korean Great Revival started at Won San under Hardie's work in 1903,¹ and then finished with a movement called the Million Movement of 1910.² This view accords with Charles Finney's way of interpreting revivals, which looks at the outward emotion and decision as the evidence of true conversion.³ Most Korean Historians recognize the Bible conferences as a major cause of the Korean Great Revival. However, they do not consider the characteristics of the missionaries' teachings at these Bible conferences. These types of evaluations are theologically incorrect and superficial. Their assessments lack a theological understanding of the nature and characteristics of revival. These shallow interpretations are based not on reformed theology, but on today's evangelical perspective.⁴ Before the Won San revival (August, 1903), the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (hereafter referred to as KMPCUSA) reported the initial

Myung Soo Park explains the Korean Great Revival in the line of the Holiness movement and Wesleyan revivalism, focusing on R. A. Hardie's revivalism. Cf. Myung Soo Park, Han-Kook-Kyo-Hoi-Bu-Heung-Un-Dong-Yun-Ku, in A Study on the Revival Movement in the Korean Church (2003).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Young Kyu Park, Pyeng-Yang-Dae-Bu-Heung-Un-Dong (Seoul: Life Books, 2000), 20 and 39.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 219

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Today's evangelical historians, Mark Noll and David Bebbington do not regard the theological differences between John Wesley and Jonathan Edwards, but merely look at their outward revival activities and appearances. This superficial understanding of revivals is characteristic of today's evangelicalism. Cf. Mark Noll, The Rise of Evangelicalism (2003); David Bebbington, The Dominance of Evangelicalism (2005).

stage of revival to the Board of Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. as follows:

The work of the Spirit of God has not been diminished in extent or power; on the other hand, His blessed energy has been more abundantly manifest. The constant effectiveness of Gospel truth seen in the steady and rapid increase of believers in Christ, indubitable marks of radical change in the lives of many of these Korean confessors, and their very obvious growth along the best line of Christian character, all bear most refreshing testimony to the abiding power of the old, old story of Jesus and His love.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, in February 1903, the Pusan station of KMPCUSA experienced the initial stage of revival. The missionaries of the KMPCUSA disagreed with both Hardie's and Finney's way of revival.7 C. E. Kearns stated that "we have carefully avoided conventional revival methods."8 Therefore, for a right appraisal of the Korean Great Revival in the KMPCUSA, the historical and theological backgrounds of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (hereafter referred to as PCUSA) must be considered. The PCUSA had already experienced the First Great Awakening, the Second Great Awakening, and the Great Revival of 1857-58. From the history of the PCUSA, the KMPCUSA had a rich theological heritage of revivals. Consequently, the KMPCUSA applied the principles that it inherited from the PCUSA to evangelism in Korea. The KMPCUSA knew what to teach and preach, perceiving the connection between doctrinal teachings and revival. To spread the doctrinal teachings in Korea, the KMPCUSA developed evangelistic tracts that contained the teachings and sermons of the First Great Awakening, the Second Great Awakening, and the Great Revival of 1857-58.9 In this paper, the researcher will theologically examine how the evangelistic tracts contributed to the Korean Great Revival in the KMPCUSA.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "The Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA" (1898), 153.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Herbert Blair, "Fifty Years of Development of the Korean Church," in *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.* (Seoul: YMCA Press, 1934), 131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Most of the missionaries of the KMPCUSA came from the Old School's background. Cf. Lewis Cheeseman, Differences between Old and New School Presbyterians (1848).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> C. E. Keams, Itineration, The Korea Mission Field (Oct., 1906), 2 and 226.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> For sermons from the Great Awakenings, see Jonathan Dickinson, *The True Scripture Doctrines* (n.d.); James Alexander ed., *The New York Pulpit in the Revival of* 1858 (Chicago: Audubon press, 1860); Richard Roberts, ed., *Salvation in Full Color* (Wheaton: International Awakening Press, 1994).

#### II. KMPCUSA's Policy of Evangelistic Works and **Evangelistic Tracts**

The Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. A. started with the arrival of Horace Charles and his wife on September 20th, 1884. In the following year, 1885, Horace Underwood arrived on April 5th, and J. W Heron and his wife on June 21st. One year later, Underwood baptized the first converts of KMPCUSA. In 1887, Underwood inaugurated itinerant tours, which became the crucial means for the spread of Christianity throughout Korea. 10 The next year, James Gale arrived in Korea. In January of 1890, Samuel Moffett and F. S. Miller arrived in Korea.11 These missionaries initiated personal evangelism.12 Finally, in 1890, John Nevius who had twenty five years of mission experience in China visited Korea and introduced his missions principles to the KMPCUSA's missionaries. 13 Based on Nevius' teachings, the KMPCUSA established principles and methods for evangelizing Kore a.14 In its evangelistic work, the KMPCUSA's goal was to get genuine conversions of sinners and not mere professions of faith.15 To accomplish this purpose, they clearly declared the Gospel because they believed in the power of God's message and earnestly expected God to bring about regeneration through the preaching of it.16 Therefore, KMPCUSA's evangelistic work was doctrine-centered. They saw the usefulness of stating doctrine from the Bible.17 They stressed the doctrines of sin, repentance, faith, and salvation. Daniel Gifford gave an account of the KMPCUSA's doctrinal evangelism as follows:

That Pyeng Yang work which I saw last winter, and which is still going

<sup>10</sup> Samuel Moffett, "Evangelistic Work," in Quarto Centennial Papers Read before The Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. A. at the Annual Meeting in Pyeng Yang (Aug. 27, 1909), 15.

From February of 1885 to November of 1906, the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. sent sixty eight missionaries to Korea. Ibid.,

<sup>12</sup> Moffett, "Fifty Years of Missionary Life in Korea," in The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. A. (Seoul:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Moffett, Evangelistic Work, 18.

Until 1937, the KMPCUSA completely followed the Nevius principle and method. Cf. Charles Clark, The Nevius Plan for Mission Work (Vienna, Virginia: Christian

<sup>15</sup> Richard Baird, William Baird of Korea (Oakland: Richard, 1968), 46.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Moffett, "Fifty Years of Missionary Life in Korea," 40.

<sup>17</sup> Charles Clark, "Fifty Years of Mission Organization Principles and Practice," in The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church

on in much the same way, is the most impressive mission work I have seen in any part of the world. It shows that the Spirit of God still moves on the earth, and that the old truths of sin, judgment to come, of the divine justice and love, of the atonement, and of the necessity of holiness, have the same power as in the apostolic days to transform the lives of men.<sup>18</sup>

Even in street evangelism, they taught doctrine. They explained God and his attributes, then moved on to man's sinfulness, and then the necessity of forgiveness from God through Jesus Christ. 19 Clark also evaluated the KMPCUSA's doctrinal evangelistic work writing that "the missionaries in their teaching have always laid strong emphasis upon the sinfulness of men, and the paramount need of getting rid of sin, and upon salvation through the blood of Christ alone."20

With doctrine-centered evangelism, KMPCUSA focused on spiritual experience by the Holy Spirit in their evangelistic work. Moffett explained,

The reality of sin, of its exceeding sinfulness and the awfulness of its punishment, the wrath of God; the reality of repentance and the absolute remission of sin to the truly penitent; the reality of regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, of Faith in Christ as the one and only way of Salvation - the supernatural, divine reality of this message vividly and abidingly grasped as a profound conviction that this Gospel is the power of God unto salvation and that God is able and willing to save any and all who come to Him, is pre-eminently the *sine qua non* for the missionary in order to affect profoundly any people for their salvation - for evangelization.<sup>21</sup>

They emphasized the reality of the regenerating and transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, they saw the necessity of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their evangelistic work.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to their principles for evangelism, the KMPCUSA used itineration and distribution of tracts as their methods of evangelism.<sup>23</sup> The missionaries traveled through cities and villages to preach the Gospel. On all itineration trips, the missionaries and the Colporteurs,<sup>24</sup>

Daniel Gifford, Everyday Life in Korea (Chicago: Student Missionary Campaign Library, 1898), 225- 226.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 151.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Clark, "Fifty Years of Mission Organization Principles and Practice," 56.

Moffett, Policy and Methods in Evangelization of Korea, The Korea Mission Field (Nov., 1904), 1 and 193.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Clark, "Fifty Years of Mission Organization Principles and Practice," 56.

S. V. Moore added more evangelistic methods such as "street chapel," "Sa-rang room evangelism." The Church Home and Abroad. 21 (1897), 120.

sold simple tracts,25 copies of the gospels. Rather than giving these printed material for free, they sold them so that readers would regard the truth in them as valuable.26 These long itinerating trips with the distribution of hundreds of thousands tracts27 were the first means in the KMPCUSA's evangelistic work.28 The overflowing of tracts in the mission field was an important strategy in the KMPCUSA stations.29 Missionaries called it as wide seed sowing. Extensive distribution of tracts had been carried out not by salaried workers, but by volunteer workers.30 Korean helpers of missionaries eagerly distributed tracts to people.31 Missionaries also endeavored to distribute tracts. For instance, Miller described his itineration work with distribution tracts as follows:

I have taken my exercise by taking 500 or 1000 leaflets and accompanied one or both our older children. I went from house to house and group to group, through the byways and lanes of the eastern part of the city. The children were a great help, as the women would accept tracts from the children when I could not approach within ten yards of them. And the Korean love for children broke the ice that blocked the way to many a heart. We saw hundreds reading the Gospel every trip.32

Moffett regarded the use of tracts as a crucial method in evangelism. He stated that "I believe in the use of tracts, but primarily as a means to explaining Scriptures and to lead to a study of Scriptures." To this end I should advocate the use of such tracts as "The Nevius Catechism,"

<sup>24</sup> Colporteurs were Korean lay persons who distributed and sold Bibles and tracts. In the early Korean Church, their role in evangelism was crucial. Their works were described as that of pioneer, preparing the way for others to reap where he sown. Cf. George Heber Jones, The Bible in Korea (New York: American Bible Society, 1916), 11.

<sup>27</sup> Moffett, "Fifty Years of Missionary Life in Korea," 40.

<sup>31</sup> C. E. Sharp, "Famine along the River," The Korea Mission Field (Aug., 1902), 1 and 59.

In 1890, J. W. Heron suggested to the Chairman of the KMPCUSA that all the missionaries in Korea meet at Seoul. These meetings resulted in the formation of the Tract Society. The organization published various tracts including the early tracts of Underwood, 'The Two Friends' and 'Discourse on Salvation' by Moffett, the tracts of Miller, and those of Griffith John. Cf. Harry Rhodes, Fifty Years of Christian Literature in the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Moffett, "Evangelistic Work," 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> George Gilmore, Korea from its Capital: with a Chapter on Missions (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, 1892), 302. <sup>29</sup> James Adams, "First Report from Taiku Station 1897-1898," in 40 Years in Korea, ed., by Calra Bruen, 9.

<sup>30</sup> Stanley Soltau, Korea: The Hermit Nation and Its Response to Christianity (London: World Dominion Press, 1932), 38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> F. S. Miller, "Tract Distribution," The Korea Mission Field (Aug., 1902), 1 and 64.

"Discourse on Salvation," "The Two Friends," "The Guide to Heaven." Gale remembered that the distribution of tracts played a crucial role in the KMPCUSA's evangelistic work. He said that "the struggle to have the printed page [tracts] keep pace with the proclamation and the loud demand have gone on for twenty years and today [1908]." 34

The distribution of tracts was a means to reach the Korean people. In street evangelism, after the missionaries had preached, the Koreans were interested in doctrine. So, they bought tracts to take home for further reading and studying.<sup>35</sup> Missionaries saw that the Korean people were remarkably open to the Gospel through street preaching<sup>36</sup> and tracts.<sup>37</sup> Even when people applied for baptism, they had to read six important doctrinal tracts concerning salvation.<sup>38</sup>

#### III. Characteristics of the Evangelistic Tracts in the KMPCUSA

The major tracts which were used by the KMPCUSA before 1907 were Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri (Doctrines of Christianity, 1890), Sang-Je-Jin-Ri (Truth of God, 1891), Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron (Two Friends, 1893), Jung-Seng-Ji-Do (Doctrine of Regeneration, 1893), Chun-Ro-Ji-Ki (Precious Heavenly Road, 1894), Chun-Ro-Yuk-Jung (Pilgrim's Progress, 1894), Ku-Se-Jin-Ju (Jesus Savior of the World, 1895). These tracts emphasized and expounded cardinal doctrines from the principles of KMPCUSA's evangelism. Tracts dealt with the subjects such as the forsaking of idols,<sup>39</sup> repentance of sins and faith in Christ,<sup>40</sup> the work of the Holy Spirit,<sup>41</sup> and the necessity of holiness. These tracts also had several characteristics based on the KMPCUSA's theological

<sup>33</sup> Moffett, "Policy and Methods in Evangelization of Korea," 195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> James Gale, Korea in Transition (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1909), 174.

During those times, nearly every man in the country, and many women, could read Korean.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Charles Clark, The Nevius Plan for Mission Work (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 1937), 116-117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Adams, "First Report from Taiku Station 1897-1898," 9.

Woodbridge Johnson, "Dr. Johnson's Itinerating Trip December 13, 1906," in 40 Years in Korea, ed., by Calra Bruen, 115.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> The tract, Sang-Je-Jin-Ri, taught the people that they needed to not only forsake idols but also only worship the true God.

William Baird, "History of the Educational Work," in Quarto Centennial Papers Read before The Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. at the Annual Meeting in Pyeng Yang (Aug. 27, 1909), 72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> W. D. Reynolds, "Christian Literature for Korea," *The Korea Mission Field* (Nov., 1904), 1 and 202.

perspectives.42

First of all, these tracts sought to reveal sins and to confirm the sinfulness of man. Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri states that all human beings transgress God's law, so that they are under God's judgment and deserve hell.43 Ku-Se-Jin-Ju also explains Adam's fall and its effects on all human beings. It shows from the Bible that after the fall, all human beings have been wickedly violating God's law. It teaches that God justly punishes man with disease and death so that man's miserableness is increasing. The conclusion of the tract is that man cannot save his soul and continues powerlessly in sin.44 A tract focusing on the doctrine of regeneration, Jung-Seng-Ji-Do stresses human sinfulness and depravity. The tract points out that the corrupted mind cannot discern what is right. Thus man cannot realize his sins. Rather, man pursues his sinful nature.45 Another tract, Chun-Ro-Ji-Ki lists sins pervading in the Korean culture and religions: because of their corrupted nature, they forsake God and worship demons. So, they become more devilish and wicked. Their ordinary lives are full of lying, robbery, adultery and even disobedience to their parents. Most people worship idols and devils instead of seeking the highest God. They all turn away from God.46 This tract clarifies the necessity of realizing their sins and their sinfulness. Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron states that the most urgent thing is realizing sins. Most people cannot recognize their sins because their hearts are hardened. Consequently, they cannot repent.47 Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri also emphasizes that before repentance, a deepened realization of sin is necessary and required.48

Arthur Brown evaluated that the KMPCUSA's theological position was heavily influenced by puritan theology. He said that: "the typical missionary of the first quarter century after the opening of the country was a man of Puritan type. He kept the Sabbath as our New England forefathers did a century ago. He looked upon dancing, smoking, and card-playing as sins in which no true follower of Christ should indulge ··· The Korean converts naturally reproduced the prevailing type. The result was a Christian experience like that of Bunyan's Pilgrim." Arthur Brown, *The Master of the Far East*, 540.

<sup>43</sup> Griffith John, Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri, trans., by H. G. Underwood (Seoul: Cho-Sun-Ye-Su-Kyo-Suh-Hoi, 1890), 4.

John, Ku-Se-Jin-Ju, trans., by W. M. Baird (Seoul: Cho-Sun-Ye-Su-Kyo- Suh-Hoi, 25), 2.

John, Jung-Seng-Ji-Do, trans., by H. G. Underwood (Seoul: Cho-Sun-Ye-Su-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> A. Judson, Chun-Ro-Ji-Ki, trans., by W. M. Baird (Seoul: Cho-Sun-Ye-Su-Kyo-Suh-Hoi, 1894), 3- 4.

W. Milne, Jane W. D.

<sup>47</sup> W. Milne, Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron, trans., by S. A. Moffett (Seoul: Cho-Sun-Ye-Su-Kyo-Suh-Hoi, 1893), 4.

John, Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri, 7

Secondly, the tracts expounded the state of conviction of sin.

Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron illustrates the state of conviction of sin in the following way:

As soon as Mr. Won [inquirer] read a book, he got into deep thoughts. He remembered sayings of his friend, Mr. Jang [Christian]. Then, his mind was very uneasy. He was worried that he would not receive forgiveness of his sins from God in his earthly life, and that when he dies, he will be cast away. Furthermore, he does not know when he will die. Therefore, his mind became more uneasy. He cried out, "what if tomorrow I die and do not have forgiveness!49

One of the most popular tracts, *Chun-Ro-Yuk-Jung*, depicted the state of the conviction of sin. In the first part, a man is convicted by the Holy Spirit. He is heavily burdened, because he realizes his sins. He cries out to God in order to escape His judgment.<sup>50</sup> This real picture of the conviction of sin was easily understood by readers. *Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri* demands that people who were in a state of conviction of sin read the Bible and ask God to convert their minds.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, *Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron* gives an example of a sinner's prayer in a state of the conviction of sin: in my life, there is nothing good, but only sins. How can I wash my sins and get to heaven! If my hands and body are dirty, I can wash them with water. However, how can I wash my mind and soul with water? If a man does not have to face any judgment when he dies, then there is no predicament. However, when a man without forgiveness dies, he must go to hell and receive endless punishment. Oh, it is very sorrowful!<sup>52</sup>

This tract also demonstrates how to seek forgiveness and shows the necessity of Jesus in the midst of the conviction state. The tract recommends that an inquirer study the Bible as a means of forgiveness, and to ask for the illumination of the Holy Spirit. This tract clarifies true repentance and saving faith.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, *Chun-Ro-Ji-Ki* advises that those who are under the conviction of sin seek the Lord for forgiveness. This tract warns that, "anyone who does not seek the grace from Jesus has again violated God's commandments and has despised Him and his grace. If he continuously rejects God's grace, he will be thrown into hell."<sup>54</sup> This tract requires the reader to study the word

<sup>49</sup> Milne, Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron, 30.

John Bunyan, Chun-Ro-Yuk-Jung (Pilgrim's Progress) vol. 1, trans., by J. S. Gale (Seoul: Cho-Sun-Ye-Su-Kyo-Suh-Hoi, 1894), 2.

<sup>51</sup> John, Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri, 7.

<sup>52</sup> Milne, Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron, 27.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 9.

of God in hope that he may understand the truth. In addition, this tract presents a sample prayer for illumination as follows: Our righteous heavenly father, I have sinned against you. And now, I don't know how to obtain salvation. Please be merciful to me and lead me to the way of salvation... O Lord, teach me my duties and your will. More importantly, I really want to be your son. I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus.55

Tracts expounded not only the conviction of sin and the need to seek forgiveness but also that these works were wrought by the Holy Spirit. Thus, tracts explained the works of the Holy Spirit, especially the regenerating work in detail. Chun-Ro-Ji-Ki underscores the necessity of regeneration. This tract explains that natural men are so prideful that they hate the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting them of their sins. In addition, these natural men, realizing their sins to a small degree. would continue in their sinful ways and never ask for grace.56 Furthermore, this tract describes a Christian who had been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. It states that "a Christian has a renewed mind, can mortify their sinful nature and flesh, live in holiness, all through the Holy Spirit."57

Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri specifically explains that "the Holy Spirit transforms the mind, changes the heart, and renews the conscience. As a result of the working of the Holy Spirit, man can repent and believe in Jesus Christ."58 Jung-Seng-Ji-Do also deals with the doctrine of regeneration. This tract stresses the renewed mind or the recovered conscience by regeneration. Through regeneration, the Holy Spirit affects the mind and allows the man to discard evil doing, to reform his former sinful life, to pursue right things, and to keep his conscience clean.<sup>59</sup> This tract explicates that man is unable to change his own mind and that only God can accomplish this work. Thus, this tract recommends that those who want to be regenerated ask God for the Holy Spirit.60 Likewise, Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron advises the reader to ask for the illumination of the Holy Spirit and to seek the true knowledge of

<sup>54</sup> Bunyan, Chun-Ro- Ji-Ki, 10, 55 Ibid., 14.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>58</sup> John, Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri, 6.

<sup>59</sup> John, Jung-Seng-Ji-Do, 10. 60 Ibid., 9.

<sup>61</sup> Milne, Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron, 8.

In addition to explaining the works of the Holy Spirit, the tracts expounded the experience of forgiveness and conversion. In the conversion process, after the conviction of sin and the sinner's prayer, the experience of forgiveness by grace is the culminative element. Therefore, the tracts gave an account about the conversion experience. Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron gave a pattern of the conversion experience as follows:

While reading the Bible, Mr. Won realized that he is a sinner. Then, Mr. Won fell into deep thoughts of his numerous sins and God's judgment after his death. He could not sleep. He thought about how he may escape from God's judgment. Unable to do anything else, he resolved to read the Bible every night. In reading the Bible, he understood that Jesus came on earth and gave himself to save sinners. After he came to this conclusion, Mr. Won eagerly prayed that the Lord would forgive his sins and grant Jesus' merits to him. After praying, Mr. Won perceived that his sins were forgiven and he had a sense of peace and joy.<sup>62</sup>

In portraying the conversion experience, *Chun-Ro-Yuk-Jung* is one of the best tracts.<sup>63</sup> The main character named Christian mounts up on the hill and when he looks up to the cross, his burden of sin falls down off his back.<sup>64</sup> This scene represents the forgiveness of sin. *Jang-Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron*, moreover, gave an example of a prayer of thanksgiving just after conversion: "I deserve God's righteous judgment for my sins. However, through Jesus' sacrifice God forgives me and receives me as one of His sons. Furthermore, God enlightens my mind and purifies my thoughts. From now on I will follow God's commandments and discard my former evil behavior. I also yearn to go to heaven after my death."<sup>65</sup>

Lastly, the tracts advised their readers to search the Scriptures. The missionaries prayed that the Holy Spirit would work upon souls as they read the Bible. They knew the Spirit could work upon the inquirer as he sought the truth from the word of God. Therefore, all of the tracts suggested that the readers study the Bible, and attend Bible studies. For example, *Chun-Ro-Ji-Ki* mentions that in studying the Bible, it is possible to experience conversion. 66 *Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri* concludes by

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> James Gale translated the Pilgrim's Progress and wrote a preface. In the preface, he introduced Bunyan's life, and described his conversion process and experience.

<sup>64</sup> Bunyan, ChunRo YukJung, 39.

<sup>65</sup> Milne, Jang- Won-Rang-U-Sang-Ron, 24.

<sup>66</sup> John, Chun-Ro-Ji-Ki, 14.

stating that "the reasons to believe and the way to do so are in the Bible. This tract reveals God's will. If anybody who reads this tract and wants to know more about Christianity, please ask the teachers in churches."67

#### IV. Effects of Evangelistic Tracts in the KMPCUSA

Gifford clearly saw the effects of the KMPCUSA's evangelistic work, and he confirmed that "the Holy Spirit ever continues to bless the faithful, persistent, personal presentation of the teachings of the Bible upon these great themes of sin and salvation through the blood of Christ."68 The general effect of distributing tracts is that "the idea of sin and salvation through Christ seem to be the dominant ideas of the native Christians."69 Therefore, those who want to believe in Jesus clearly realize their sins and hope for the washing of their sins. Speer reported this effect by recording people's reasons for believing in Jesus Christ. The common answers were: "because of my sins; Jesus as Son of God could alone deliver me from sin and hell; Christ is the only one to be depended upon; our minds were weak, and were not able to meet them. In Jesus we feel secure."70

One of the specific effects of reading tracts was that readers were encouraged to learn more doctrines by studying the word of God. As they studied, most of them fell into an inquiry state. Learning more doctrines led to deepened desires to find the truth. Seeing the effect of tracts, Adams stated that "Taken home, someone could be found who read them. When a missionary visited the village, questions were usually asked about the Jesus doctrine."71 In the same way, the purpose of Moffett's work of distributing tracts in Pyeng Yang was to bring people into an inquiry state.72 The Annual Report of Foreign Mission of PCUSA stated: he [Moffett] had been invited into a number of houses to talk to groups of people who, having read one of the tracts, desired to know more of the truth... there has been a constant stream of inquirers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> John, Sung-Kyo-Chal-Ri, 10. 68 Gifford, Everyday Life, 211.

<sup>69</sup> Robert Speer, Report on the Mission in Korea of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Mission (New York: The Board of Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian Church

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Adams, "Evangelistic and Personal Report," in 40 Years in Korea, ed., by Calra Bruen, 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> In other wise, distributing tracts made Moffet more widely known in Pyeng Yang.

There are now in this region hundreds of people reading the tracts and discussing the Gospel story.<sup>73</sup>

Tracts gave people a keen desire for more teaching. During the inquiry state, while reading tracts and studying doctrines, people were convicted of their sins. Those who read tracts found their sins, and they admitted themselves as sinners. They felt their sins as a burden upon their backs. Thus, they wept over their sins and cried for forgiveness.74 This spiritual phenomenon had been taught in the tracts. Through reading the tracts, the people experienced what was described in them. Furthermore, by reading the tracts and studying the doctrines, those who were under the conviction of sins experienced conversion. W. B. Harrison reported a conversion through the reading of a tract: Mrs. Chai from outside the North Gate knew little of the foreigners and care less about their strange doctrine, She and her husband did not get along very well, for he would sometimes come home drunk and beat her. About two years ago he got a tract at the market and was converted. His changed life proved to her the truth of the Gospel. She accepted it for herself, and is now an earnest Christian.75

Johnson also witnessed a conversion by the reading of a tract at Taiku. He recounted the story of a father of his patient named Mr. U who had never before heard the Gospel. Mr. U came to the hospital to talk with Johnson about Christianity. At first he thought that Christianity was not applicable to him. However, he had bought a tract and took it home. He read it and a year later read it again. Afterwards, he was spiritually awakened. Another example of a conversion through the reading of a tract is the famous story of Kil Sun Tyoo. He was converted by reading a sheet tract. Afterwards he became one of the leaders of the Korean Great Revival and also ministered to the Central Church in Pyeng Yang for twenty-five years. Therefore, it was not strange that conversion occurred through the reading of tracts.

In many of the cases of conversions by the reading of tracts, the converts bought the tracts for their neighbors and then explained the doctrines of the gospel. In one instance, one man after reading a tract, without anyone teaching him, called his neighbors and discussed

<sup>75</sup> W. B. Harrison, "Notes from Chunju," The Korea Mission Field (May, 1902), 1 and 34.

<sup>77</sup> Clark, "Fifty Years of Mission Organization Principles and Practice," 117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> "Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA 1894," 158.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Robert Speer, Report on the Mission in Korea of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Mission, 9.

W. O. Johnson, "Dispensary Converts," The Korea Mission Field (Nov., 1903), 1 and 132.

doctrine. As a result, a little company of believers was formed.78 Underwood reported this event:

He had previously known nothing of the Gospel. He read the tracts, bought Christian books and read them with care, conversed with and questioned Christians, and became a soundly and enthusiastically converted man... He bought a strong donkey, and dozens of Christian books for him to carry, and so loaded down with good tidings, he hastened to Eul Yul, where he lost no time in telling his neighbors of the treasure he had found. The books were widely distributed, and ere long a company of believers was writing to Dr. Underwood to come and examine a large number who sought baptism.79

Witnessing a similar case, Miller also reported that, "the group at An Song, by the way, is the result of a leaflet given by a school-boy to a soldier at the palace gate in Seoul and it is the largest group we have in this portion of the field. God blesses and uses our tracts."80

According to the weighty distribution of tracts, the experiences of conversions and spiritual quickening were increasing and deepening, which brought forth spiritual awakening. In the circuit of Seoul station, over a hundred people visited Underwood to apply for baptism. Thus, Underwood examined their spiritual condition. He found that all of them had studied the tracts and knew the cardinal doctrines of the gospel.81 By studying these tracts they were spiritually awakened. In another instance, in the circuit of Syen Chun, an old man, who was converted by reading some tracts, distributed tracts to his neighbors, and through his distribution many were spiritually awakened. After his conversion, he endeavored to awaken his old acquaintances. He brought together a group of 102 people to his house. Eventually, 25 of them were spiritually awakened and could be received as catechumens.82 Sharp also reported the effects of distributing tracts by a sincere convert:

80 F. S. Miller, "Sowing the Seed," The Korea Mission Field (Nov., 1903), 1 and 140.

<sup>78</sup> C. F. Reid, "How the Word reached Koksan," The Korea Mission Field (May, 1902), 1 and 38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Lillias Underwood, Underwood of Korea (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1918), 166. The Annual Report of Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA of 1900 also reported this incident: "they have now a gathering of earnest students of the Bible, with an average attendance on church services of from 75 to 100." Cf. "The Sixty-Third Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA 1900," 160.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Lillias Underwood, Fifteen Years among the Top-Knots or Life in Korea (Boston: American Tract Society, 1904), 86. 82 Keams, "Itineration," 2 and 226.

He hears the new doctrine preached in the metropolis, is impressed by it, spends his money for a load of Christian books, and takes them home to sell his friends. Many of them become interested, and they put themselves in charge of missionary, and so this group is formed. Another man is given a small book on Christian religion. He and an intimate friend study the book together, and the two become so interested that one of them goes up to the capital of the province to buy other books further explaining Christianity. There he meets some Christians, is further instructed by them, and the two men become the nucleus of another good group.<sup>83</sup>

Adams had experienced the awakening in the east of Taiku. He saw that this awakening was primarily the result of years of evangelistic work through the distributing of tracts.<sup>84</sup>

#### V. The Evangelistic Tracts' Contribution to the Korean Great Revival

Personal evangelistic works and the wide distribution of tracts by the KMPCUSA were significant factors that led to the Korean Great Revival. Just before the Korean Great Revival, the hearts of many people who had read the tracts were spiritually cultivated. Most of those who read the tracts spent time studying the doctrines of the gospel. The distribution of tracts made the Korean people ponder the truth and ask about the doctrines of the gospel. The overflow of tracts caused the Korean people to discuss gospel doctrines at home, country-yards, and even besides village brooks. Missionaries heard their conversations about sin, forgiveness, and salvation and recognized the work of the Holy Spirit upon their souls.85 These spiritual phenomena were signs that a revival could be emerging. According to the Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Mission of PCUSA of 1901, there was a premonition of revival in the KMPCUSA's evangelistic work. This Annual Report documented that "there are abundant evidences that the Spirit of God is working powerfully upon the minds and hearts of the people... the Spirit continues to awaken a spirit of inquiry in multitudes."86

Adams, "Letter to Dr. Brown, November 30, 1905," in 40 Years in Korea, trans., by Calra Bruen, 112.

86 "The Sixty-Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> C. E. Sharp, "The Developing of a Church," *The Korea Mission Field* (March, 1907), 3 and 45.

Herbert Blair, "Fifty Years of Development of the Korean Church," in The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. A. (Seoul: YMCA Press, 1934), 124.

At those times, missionaries of the KMPCUSA accelerated their evangelistic work with the distribution of tracts with an expectation of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As result of these works, more people were gathered, and more tracts were sold. These activities were a precursor for the revival. Kearns witnessed that

The great evangelistic movement which began about year and a half ago has only gained strength as the months passed. A wonderful ingathering has been going on all over province. Not a group but has grown, many have doubled, and eighteen strong new groups have been formed. Nor is this growth mere numbers only. The revival has meant a deepened spiritual life for the whole church. Books are now sold from eight stores. total sales for the year were 44,008, including 3092 New Testaments and 4048 hymn books. It has been impossible to supply the demand.87

These spiritual phenomena occurred in Taiku as well. Adams stated that "several hundreds of tracts, gospels, and hymn books have been sold by the women and helpers to those women who are becoming interested. There is great demand for books." Moffett elucidated the role of evangelistic tracts as preparing the Korean Great Revival: this [Tracts] Society has published thousands of evangelistic tracts; among them, the simple tracts early prepared by Underwood, 'The Two Friends' and 'Discourse on Salvation' prepared by Moffett, and the sheet tracts of Miller together with Griffith John's tracts in Chinese have been of incalculable influence in preparing for the rich harvest of souls which has been reaped. The tracts ploughed the hearts of the Koreans spiritually, and prepared the way for the Korean Great Revival.

The second contribution that the tracts made to the Korean Great Revival is that they gave the inquirers a clear view of their sins and of true repentance. In 1905, Ross perceived a revival in the northern part of Korea. He reasoned that "the amount of Christian literature purchased in the north by the Koreans… what I saw convinced me that Koreans can and do have a sense of sin fully as deep as anything I have seen in other parts of the world." Moreover, inquirers already

<sup>1901,&</sup>quot; 201-202.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> C. E. Kearns, "More and yet More," The Korea Mission Field (July, 1906), 2 and 171-172.

James Adams, "Among City Women at Taiku," The Korea Mission Field (Oct., 1906), 2 and 225.

Samuel Moffett, "Evangelistic Work," in Quarto Centennial Papers Read before in Pyeng Yang (Aug. 27, 1909), 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> C. Ross, "Cause for Rejoicing," The Korea Mission Field (Jan., 1906), 2 and 44-45.

knew the necessity of the conviction of sin by the work of the Holy Spirit through the reading of tracts. This factor was practically manifested in the Korean Great Revival. Thus, when a revival broke out in Seoul on January 26, 1906, there was a hearty confession of sin by the people.91 An even greater manifestation of the Holy Spirit occurred in Pyeng Yang in 1907. Graham Lee reported the conviction of sins and the confession of sins on the first day of the Pyeng Yang Revival, January 14, 1907, that After prayer, confessions were called for, and immediately the Spirit of God seemed to descend on that audience. Man after man would arise, confess his sins, break down and weep, and then throw himself to the floor and beat the floor with his fists in a perfect agony of conviction.92 On the next day, conviction of sins and confession of sins became even stronger. Blair witnessed that Every sin a human being can commit was publicly confessed that night. Pale and trembling with emotion, in agony of mind and body, guilty souls standing in the white light of that judgment, saw themselves as God saw them. Their sins rose up in all their vileness 'till shame and grief and self-loathing took complete possession.93

Depicting the conviction of sins at Pyeng Yang revival of 1907, George McCune stated that "some were crying and pleading God's forgiveness for certain sins which they named to Him in prayer." McCune observed this conviction of sin wrought by the Holy Spirit: "many have said that the heathen could not come into the church with a realization of sin... but we are seeing what man could not imagine, the work of the Holy Spirit." These phenomena continued for some time. Baird reported the revival in Union College of Pyeng Yang in January: they would spring to their feet and with terrible sobs and crying, pour out their confession of sin. It was like hell uncovered. Everything from murder, adultery, and the most inconceivable abominations of uncleanness, through arson, drunkenness, robbery, thieving, lying, down to hatreds, spites, and envyings, was emptied out, and with what shame and loathing! The revival of Pyeng Yang reached Tai Ku. Conviction of sins occurred in a similar manner. Bruen reported that "the confessions were

<sup>91</sup> S. F. Moore, "Revival in Seoul," The Korea Mission Field (April, 1906), 2 and 116.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> Graham Lee, "How the Spirit came to Pyeng Yang," The Korea Mission Field (March, 1907), 3 and 34.

<sup>93</sup> William Blair, Gold in Korea (Topeka: H. M. Ives, 1957), 68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> George McCune, "The Holy Spirit in Pyeng Yang," The Korea Mission Field (Jan., 1907), 1 and 3.

<sup>95</sup> McCune, "The Holy Spirit in Pyeng Yang," 3 and 44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> William Baird, "The Spirit among Pyeng Yang Students," The Korea Mission Field (May, 1907), 3 and 65.

largely the same, not meant for the public ear, but in the soul's agony for his sin, one could no longer keep back his confession."97

The third contribution of tracts to the Korean Great Revival was that the inquirers knew what happened in conversion. For in the Korean Revival, a conversion experience was not unusual. Rather, those who were convicted of sin were eagerly hoping for a conversion experience. Those convicted knew the way to obtain forgiveness of sins because the tracts had already taught them. So naturally, those who were under the conviction of sins cried out for forgiveness. And after being convicted of sin, they eventually experienced conversion by grace. The missionaries of the KMPCUSA closely examined the soundness of their conversion. McCune depicted the conversion experience in the revival as these men and women [Kok San circuit] arose and confessed their sins with deep crying, some of them in real agony. Before these men and women enter the church they are showing a deep realization of sin and a wonderful knowledge of Christ Jesus and His sacrifice for them.98 Witnessing the conversion experience in the revival of the Pyeng Yang students, Baird reported that "terrible agony for sin, lasting often several days, was followed by a sense of pardon, peace, and then a great influx of joy, followed by a baptism of power in intercessory prayer."99

#### **VI.** Conclusion

The evangelistic tracts in the KMPCUSA were heavily doctrinal. They taught total depravity, true repentance, saving faith, regeneration, conversion, and sanctification. The teachings in the evangelistic tracts were the same doctrines contained in the sermons of the First and the Second Great Awakening and of the Great Revival of 1857-58 in the PCUSA. The preaching of these doctrines had a crucial role in the Awakenings and revivals in the PCUSA. It became the means to convict sinners through the work of the Holy Spirit. By expounding these biblical doctrines, the evangelistic tracts in the KMPCUSA brought about a similar result, namely the Korean Great Revival. Knowing that revivals do not occur overnight, the KMPCUSA continuously distributed evangelistic tracts long before the Korean Great Revival actually happened.

<sup>97</sup> H. M. Bruen, "The Spirit at Tai Ku," The Korea Mission Field (March, 1907),

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>98</sup> McCune, "Ever Extending Blessings," The Korea Mission Field (March, 1907), 99 Baird, "The Spirit among Pyeng Yang Students," 3 and 65.

Presbyterian historian, Trinterud explains the nature of revivals, stating that "long periods of conviction and struggle were more common... revivals were not sudden outbursts." The doctrinal evangelistic tracts of the KMPCUSA also prevented a merely fanatical and emotional revival from occurring. Furthermore, the tracts contributed to the Korean Great Revival by explaining the works of the Holy Spirit. The tracts expounded how the Holy Spirit brought about conviction of sin, regeneration, and conversion. Through these teachings, the Korean people understood the necessity of the Holy Spirit and were eager to experience conversion by Him. Therefore, the Korean Great Revival occurred as a result of the KMPCUSA's doctrinal teachings through the evangelistic tracts. If the Korean Church is to experience another revival, she must return to the evangelistic method and message of the KMPCUSA.

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<sup>100</sup> Leonard Trinterud, The Forming of an American Tradition (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1949), 77.

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#### Abstract

The institution of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (Northern) was one of the largest mission organizations in Korea from 1884 to 1907. Before its mission in Korea, the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. had experienced the First and Second Great Awakening and the Great Revival of 1857-58. Therefore, it knew how to prepare for a revival from its theological heritage. With this historical and theological background, the missionaries of the KMPCUSA started their evangelistic work in Korea. In their evangelism, they used evangelistic tracts which focused on true repentance, conviction of sins, regeneration, saving faith, justification and sanctification. These doctrinal teachings were from the sermons of the First and Second Great Awakenings, and the Revival of 1857-58 of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. There was a great depth of doctrinal teaching in the evangelistic tracts. Through reading these tracts, many Koreans experienced conviction of sin and conversions even before the Korean Great Revival. From the time the missionaries first distributed tracts in 1890 until the Korean Great Revival, the evangelistic tracts plowed the Korean hearts. Through the tracts, Koreans clearly knew the means of grace and the work of the Holy Spirit upon sinners.

Key Words: Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.; Evangelistic Tracts; Doctrinal Teachings; Korean Great Revival; Con-