SPIRITUAL STRUGGLES OF GREAT MISSIONARIES.

John 1:14– The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

A. Missionaries in God’s word (Introduction)

**God sent Jesus as the first missionary**. Incarnation is the basic principle of mission. Jesus did not govern from a throne; He came and lived among us. [Philippians 2:5]. “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus...”

**The first missionary, Jesus, was humble**. He was sacrificial. He was prayerful. Jesus struggled to obey God and complete his mission. [Hebrews *5:7]*

**Jesus, the first missionary, sent his disciples to be missionaries like him**.[John 20:21*] Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you!* As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” “Go and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey the things I taught you.” He said, “If anyone would come after me he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

**The apostle Paul** was a great missionary. We learn about spiritual struggle from him. Paul’s goal was to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings. (Php3:10). He was burdened by his concern for all the churches. (2Co 11:16-33)

B. Missionaries in our times–

Missionaries in more modern times struggle because of cultural differences, language, food, self-support, depression and other health problems, co-working, fruitlessness, loneliness, children’s education (and later, marriages), concern about old parents.

I went to Korea in 1955 as a missionary under the Board of the Southern Presbyterian Church. I want to introduce you to two missionary colleagues whom I respect. In my early days as an evangelistic missionary in Korea I was mentored by **Miss Florence Root**. She came to Korea as an educational missionary in 1930. She was principal of Speer Girl’s school in Kwangju. She met Jesus on the mission field and from then on, every weekend she visited country churches and taught the Bible. In the days of Japanese occupation, she struggled. She refused make students bow to the Japanese shrine, rather, chose to close Speer school. During the communist invasion, she hid out in the mountains. Throughout her life time she helped many widows and orphans and needy people. She had the image of Jesus.

I also greatly respect **Dr. Herbert Codington**. He was the director of the Kwangju Christian hospital. He was not understood by fellow American missionaries because he was so generous with hospital supplies. When I was a country evangelist, several times I brought to Dr. Codington people who were sick. He never turned anyone down who needed help. Once I brought a young man who was dying of tb to Dr. Codington. He was a criminal who had been released from prison in Seoul and sent home to die. He didn’t die, but lived. He met Jesus and became a pastor.

C. UBF Missionaries- There are many examples of men and women of spiritual struggle among UBF missionaries. I can only mention a few. Many others should be included, but there is not time for this.

\*First, **Dr Samuel Lee Was a Man of Spiritual Struggle.**

I knew Dr Lee well because we worked together for 40 years in the UBF ministry. He was a missionary to the world. He saw the poverty and despair of Korean students after the Korean war. He saw their anger and lack of direction after the student rebellion (4-19) of 1960 and the military coup d’état of 5/16. He sought to plant the gospel of Jesus and the word of God in the hearts of the Kwangju students. When Korea was suffering from poverty, he taught the students that God’s people must be a giving people, not a getting people. He planted missionary vision in their hearts. Because Jesus commanded it, he challenged Korea UBF to pray for world mission. In 1964, the Kwangju UBF sent its first missionary, **Han Ok Kim**, overseas to Cheju University. We supported her in prayer and materially. Students had no money, so they offered their five loaves and two fish. God blessed our loaves and fish. UBF became a self-supporting movement. There was opposition and misunderstanding from the Mission and the Church. So we prayed. We could not send and support missionaries in the traditional way because students had no money. But we could pray and seek open doors. And we became self-supporting lay missionaries. **Dr Lee and Grace Lee** came to **America** as a missionary in 1977. He studied English until he mastered it. He ate a Big Mac everyday for lunch to learn the American spirit, and he tried to give up Kimchi. He came to understand and love American students. Then, an unexpected problem arose. Some parents did not like it that their children followed Jesus instead of the American dream. They did not like it that they learned from Korean missionaries. Some paid money, kidnaped and deprogrammed (brainwashed) their children. When we saw how much this hurt the young students, we were heart-broken. Samuel Lee did not give up. He did not fight back with worldly weapons. He studied the Bible more and prayed more and God raised up his own disciples and continued to spread the gospel and raise disciples in campuses all over America. The attacks continued for 20 years–until several deprogrammers went to jail and the deprogramming company was sued and went broke. This was a time of great spiritual struggle. We won the victory in Jesus. Samuel went to be with the Lord in January 2002. He was a disciple maker. He raised up Ron Ward, Dr. Jim Rabchuk, Mark Vucekovich Dr.Joseph Schafer, Teddy Hembekides, Kevin Albright, Dr. Alan Wolff, Jim and Dr. Helen Rarick, Yvonne Timlin, Dr. Ben and Christy Toh, Missionary John and Maria Peace and many other national shepherds who are leaders in campus evangelism. We miss Dr. Lee’s faithfulness to God’s word, his shepherd heart, his courage and his never-give-up spirit.

\* Second, Korean Self-supporting Lay Missionaries Overcome the Impossible

Jesus is risen. It is he who overcomes the impossible. The Bible is the word of the Creator God. It is his command that we obey when we go as missionaries. We found that we could give his word to college students through one to one Bible study. Group Bible study is also good. The Sunday message is important. God works through his word to change lives.

In 1982, I visited **Canada** with Dr. Samuel Lee. We met 22 women who had come as missionaries to Canadian campuses. They came into Winnipeg, Canada, as sewing machine operators. Except for 2, they were all college graduates. One had completed a masters course in SNU in French. They gave their futures, including marriage, to God in order to accept Jesus’ world mission command. When we first met them, they didn’t know how to make a phone call or call a taxi. Dr. Lee gave them a key verse: “If you can,” Jesus said. “Everything is possible to him who believes.” (Mk 9:23) Canada UBF is laid on the foundation of their faith sacrifice.

Self Support is not easy for most. When missionaries go to another country, they must find a way to be self-supporting. Many of our missionaries work in Korean Embassies. **Ambassador Pablo Oh** is in El Salvador. He has been a fruitful UBF missionary throughout his diplomatic career. Embassy workers can get into to difficult places: **James Ahn** is in Tajkistan. **Maria Sohn** is in Israel. **Studd Cho**, **Joseph Kim, Moses Yoon, Pansuk Park** arein other sensitive countries. Most missionaries support themselves as nurses, or doctors, some have their own businesses, some have jobs with Korean companies, like LG, Samsung, and Hyundai, others go as students supported by their parents or by stipends from universities. Once some missionaries went to America as chicken killers.

Self-supporting missionary nurses went to **Germany in 1968.** They studied the Bible in their dorms with other Korean nurses. Soon young men with missionary calling went to join them in Germany. They married, established house churches and began Campus ministry.

**Abraham and Sarah Hwang** of **Mexico** struggled to become self-supporting. When they first started their business, they pushed a cart on the street. They were once robbed at knife point. Later, after God blessed their ministry, they bought a Bible house in a Mexican coworkers name. He demanded the building. They struggled with him. They wanted to sue him. Then they struggled in prayer and gave it to God and took the loss. Since then, God blessed their clothing business and their ministry. They have raised national leaders, like **Sergio Lemus**, who spoke at the International Conference. They have also sent out missionaries, like **Efrain Atanacio** and **Isidro and Edith**, to other South American countries.

Self-support was difficult in **Serbia**, **Daniel Koh** sold choco pies, gym shoes and finally Chindo dogs. He also taught Alexander the Bible and raised one disciple.

**Paul and Sarah Hong** came as missionaries to **America**. He is a graduate of Yon Sae University. She is a nurse. They first lived in Atlanta. They were self-supporting lay missionaries. Paul worked in a hotel as a cleaning man and in the restaurant as a butcher. He worked, studied and raised disciples at the same time. Dr. Hong is now a professor in Toledo University and director/pastor of the Toledo UBF church.

**Isaac Kim** of the Downey UBF in Los Angeles, an SNU law school graduate, was a judge in Korea. He accepted God’s call to the mission field and came to California. He supported his family, his wife and 2 children, by delivering newspapers. Rebecca worked in MacDonalds. It was not easy for an artistic lady. God blessed their sacrifice. His Downey UBF ministry is fruitful.

Self-support in Africa is really a struggle if one is not in the Embassy and does not work for a Korean company. **Andrew and Mercy Lee** run a photo shop. They are very poor materially, but rich spiritually. They have a large and growing chapter of African students in Johannesburg. James and Josephine Lee of Pretoria have extended their hands to Capetown and raised Andres Coitse. He married a Korean missionary, Annie, and is the director of Capetown UBF.

 **Timothy Chung** of **Botswana** supports his family as a Tae Kwon Do master. Before coming to Botswana, they pioneered the French-speaking **Cameroon**. They established native leadership there before they left.

In **Zambia, Nehemiah and Rebecca Kim** support themselves and the ministry by making and selling wigs. He has suffered a lot, even being put in jail because of a visa problem. But now, God has blessed their business.

Among UBF missionaries, there are times when some receive financial support when it’s needed. I was moved by the humble life-style of **Andrew and Hope Kim**, UBF missionaries in Khartoum, **Sudan**. In the early days of mission life, Andrew and Hope worked for the Korean Embassy. But they weren’t reaching the students. So they resigned and moved into the city and opened a Korean Restaurant. When they lived humbly among the students, God blessed their ministry and it grew. They met many students and had an active ministry, but the restaurant didn’t go well. Also, living was dangerous in that Muslim country. So they planned to leave Sudan. The Korean UBF asked them to stay and agreed to give them minimal financial support. This ministry is mostly made up of students from Southern Sudan, where English is spoken. They raised **Oyor Moses**, a professor who has gone as a professor missionary to **Cairo, Egypt**. I met him and prayed with him for the students of Cairo. There are several outstanding Sudanese leaders among the members in Andrew’s chapter. But working with the Sudanese students is a constant spiritual struggle. It is hard to establish a trust relationship. Only the grace of God could enable Andrew and Hope to stay in Sudan and share the gospel with Sudanese students. UBF USA sent Moses and Iris Marji to minister to Arab-speaking students. Their work is dangerous, so we pray for them.

\* Third, Incarnational Missionaries

God sent Jesus as the first missionary. Incarnation is the basic principle of mission. Jesus did not govern from a throne; He came and lived among us.

I visited **Nigeria** in 2003 to attend an international conference. **Peter and Monica Park** live in Nigeria. Once they lived in Victoria Island, a relatively safe foreigners’ compound in Lagos, but they could not contact the students. So, they prayed and moved off the compound into the village and rented a building to use as a Bible house and their home. Children cried because the electricity didn’t work and it was hot. It was dangerous. God blessed the Park’s sacrifice. He heard their prayer. He made their ministry fruitful. **Andrew and Rebecca Yoon**  pastor the Yaba Tec UBF. They also live among the students and have a fruitful chapter

Incarnational mission is also reflected in young people who give their marriages to God and immerse themselves in the culture of their mission land. **Christine** is a beautiful woman. She graduated from Ewha University in Korea. She gave her marriage and her life to God for his work in **India**. They say that many young men cried when she married an Indian Shepherd, Dr. Joseph Pottakal. He is a research scientist in the JNU university. They have three children. Another faithful Korean missionary married Sh. Samuel. They are pioneering DU. They serve the students of India with the word of God. They dress like Indian ladies and cook Indian food and raise their children in the Indian culture. There are others, both men and women, who have done this. I am always moved by **Rebecca Bai** is the wife of Matthew, UBF director in **Papua New Guinea**. Incarnational mission is sacrificial–for both parties.

Essential to incarnational mission is learning the language. **Paul Kwon** of **Mongolia** is an intellectual. He teaches in the university, in addition to running an import business to support himself and his ministry. He mastered the Mongolian language and wrote a Korean-Mongolian dictionary. He, with **Matthew Lim**, translated Genesis into the Mongolian language. Matthew Lim also studied law in Mongolia, passed the bar and is practicing law there. Learning the language opens the door to self-supporting. **Aquila Shin** first worked as a chauffeur in the Korean Consulate. He mastered the language and rose to serve as vice consul.

**James and Kathy Kang** are missionaries to **Bulgaria**. James works in the Korean Consulate. Kathy entered the university of Sophia and mastered the Bulgarian language. She is an excellent tour guide. They have raised several disciples. One Shepherd, Georgi Kumanichliev, delivered his life testimony at the 2008 international conference.

Other missionaries have overcome the language barriers and have become doctors and professor shepherds in mission lands. **Grace Ju** in Sweden passed the pharmacy exam in Swedish. **Caleb Lee** in Denmark tried seven times to pass the qualifying exam to get into graduate school. **Dr. Joshua Kim** teaches in a university in Indonesia; **Dr. Ezra Park** teaches in Waseda U in Japan

\* Fourth, Coworking

In any ministry, it is always difficult to learn how to work together. In some cases, co-working problems lead families to establish separate chapters, and I believe God still used these separate chapters. But Jesus commanded us to love one another. There are also some exemplary examples of coworking. In every case, coworking produces a fruitful ministry. Where missionaries and nationals can cowork together, there is a work of God. **Stephanus Park** coworks with **Dr. Peter Chang** and God has blessed the Bonn UBF. Among our missionaries in America, I especially respect **Esther Lee**. She makes an environment for coworking in the Washington UBF. She is a good co-worker to her husband, Jacob Lee and also with the senior missionaries in Washington. Their coworking spirit is exemplary.

Establishing house churches is an important part of God’s work. We pray for native leaders to marry and establish Christian homes–house churches. We pray for our 2nd gens to marry and raise godly children. Coworking begins in a missionary family.

 \* Fifth, Loneliness

In the early days of UBF mission, frequently wives or husbands and wives had to be separated because of visa or other problems. Dr. Hannah Zun waited 5 years for Dr. Sam Zun to get out of the army and come to America. Sometimes missionaries had to send children to parents in Korea. God opened the way for **Joseph Ahn** to be a diplomat-missionary. He and Maria gave their family to God and lived apart, off and on, for 9 years as he pioneered campuses in Spain, Guatemala, Mexico. She did not follow him because she was needed in the Korea UBF. Sometimes he looked at the full moon and thought about his wife’s round face and sang sorrowful love songs. In 1990, He resigned his high-level diplomatic job and came to Chicago to be a full-time ambassador for Christ.

**Sunji Jun** is a missionary to America. God used her in pioneering Kwangju and Seoul during her student days. She married Dr. John Jun and now they have come as missionaries to America. At 65, she goes to a community college to study English. She can’t drive or use a computer. But her hardest struggle is not being with her children and grand children. She undergirds God’s work with prayer and never misses dawn prayer meeting. She is a sacrificial missionary. So is her husband, **Dr. John Jun.** He gave up his medical career to take the helm of UBF when Dr. Lee came to America in 1977, and he now serves as the international director.

\* Sixth, Overcoming fear and health problems

Many times missionaries struggle to overcome fear. Fear is overcome by struggle. Sometimes we must do something. When I visited **Campinas, Brazil,** I met **Paulo and Sarah Kim**. I went with them to the campus to pray for the students and was shocked at the godless and evil graffiti painted on the buildings. The Kims and their coworkers prayed a lot. Then, one night, Paulo got a bucket of paint and went to the campus and painted over the most obscene pictures. He trembled as he did it, but he did it anyway. In a few days the university caught the idea and had beautiful pictures painted on the buildings and the campus atmosphere was changed. Paulo overcame fear with prayer and action. **David and Pauline Byun** live in the Muslim country of Kazakstan. He is a business man. He runs an internet café and she, an accessary shop. They have been robbed and threatened many times. Last August they brought 15 Kazak students to our Purdue International conference. They have established 3 house churches. Azil and Anara’s families are from strict Muslim backgrounds. (Picture)

Another country in which missionaries struggle to overcome fear with faith is **Indonesia.** I visited Indonesia in 2002. **Peter and Sarah Lee, Peter and Rebecca Kim** and about 20 UBF missionary coworkers live there. They are students, businessmen, and teachers. Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world. The 4 a.m. Muslim call to prayer sends chills down ones spine. They kill Christians at the slightest provocation. Indonesia has a tropical climate. Missionaries and their children fight diseases like Malaria and Dengue fever and other debilitating diseases. **Professor Joshua and Grace Kim** are struggling in prayer because she was diagnosed as having a brain tumor.

**Dr. Peter and Sarah Kim** were among the UBF pioneer missionaries to Russia. They went out to pioneer **Ukraine** before it had become an independent country. It was not long after that the Chernobyl nuclear incident polluted the land. Sarah Kim had 3 miscarriages. Other missionaries left. But God blessed their faith and sacrifice. He used them to raise up many native leaders as disciples of Jesus.

**Andrew Kim** was in Belgrade when bombs started falling. He wanted to stay with his Bible students. Dr. Lee ordered him to leave with his family, so he obeyed and left. He left his family in Germany and returned. He was there during the difficult days of rebuilding. He then turned the ministry over to Daniel Koh and went to pioneer Hungary. **Studd Cho** remained in Lebanon while bombs were falling all around him.

\*Seventh, Raising National Leaders

One goal of a missionary is to raise national leaders. Missionaries are supposed to work themselves out of a job. But missionaries struggle when nationals take over. They tend to hang on to leadership as long as possible. However, we must raise disciples who can become leaders of the ministry. This is a great and hidden spiritual struggle on every mission field.

**James and Petra Lee** of **Zimbabwe** first pioneered **Namibia.** They entrusted the ministry to **Abraham Victor and Betty** when the Korean Government moved James Lee to the Zimbabwe Embassy. Abraham and Betty continue a fruitful student ministry. There is an oppressive political situation in Zimbabwe. James suffers along with the African leaders whom he has raised as disciples. **James and Josephine Lee** of **Pretoria** raised **Andres Coetse**. He married **Annie**, a Korean missionary and they are pioneering **Capetown**.

God raised able and spiritual shepherds from among the Indian students through the JNU ministry led by **Jimmy and Maria Lee**. The Indian government does not welcome foreign missionaries. Jimmy Lee is a businessman, so he had no problem staying in India, but it became increasingly difficult for him to be the visible leader in the Church. In this way, God himself intervened to establish national leadership. Indian Shepherds took over the leadership, and India UBF grew. They pioneered other campuses in India; they sent missionaries to America, Portugal, and Ethiopia. They began to have worship services in Hindi as well as in English. God in his sovereign wisdom, put **Indian leaders** in charge of India UBF. Jimmy Lee and his missionary coworkers found their role as Bible teachers and prayer warriors.

In Kiev, Ukraine UBF sent out two families to pioneer other chapters in the Ukraine. They also sent **Sh Point and Rebecca Levitsky** to Turkey, to put a foot on Muslim soil. They sent two missionaries to the USA to establish house churches.

**Joseph and Deborah Kim** of **Qatar** UBF raised **Renee Montefalcon**. He married Evelyn of Philippine UBF and their house church is pioneering **Dubai, UAE**. The **Philippine UBF** was pioneered by a medical student from Chicago. They are now a missionary sending chapter.

Health problems are sometimes God’s way of making a more fruitful ministry. **Moses and Sarah Yoon** went to London. Moses established a successful computer business in London. They met students in the University of London. God sent **Louise Wicken**, **Paul Ridge and Ian Kaier**. Other missionaries from Korea joined them and the ministry grew. Two families from the Philippine UBF also joined the ministry in London. Then, Sarah Yoon became sick . She couldn’t endure the cold atmosphere in London and longed for Korea. Moses entrusted his business to Joshua Kim and the ministry to the national shepherds, Ian and Paul. He returned to Korea and helped the London ministry at a distance. The Ian and Paul grew. They married Korean missionaries, established house churches and became responsible leaders of the ministry. God turned a great spiritual struggle into a fruitful ministry. The London UBF under national leadership has become exemplary.

One of the most fruitful, growing ministries is in **Hong Kong**. **Angela Kim** gave her life to God and overcame many health problems to pioneer Hong Kong U and raise Chinese shepherds and establish house churches like that of Hayes and Dr. Maria Tang.

Conclusion: John 1:14–the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

Jesus, the first missionary, is the Word who became flesh and made his dwelling among us. He made disciples and sent them out. He calls us to follow him into the life of mission, into joy and sorrow, struggle and prayer. The problems we encounter are opportunities to know Jesus and grow in him. God himself works through those who depend on him in prayer. May God continue to raise up disciples who follow Jesus and obey his commands.