

Kingdom Report

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Part 2 : Kingdom Jubilee for Healing a Dying Nation Lesson Example : South Korea

South Korea population is 30% Christian and most of those are Pentecostals. South Korea is the second largest missionary sending nation after America. South Korea is an economic miracle of 60 years of growth. South Korea is dying with the lowest birthrate in the world. An object lesson of a nation that needs healing by the Church.

If you turn to the last two chapters of the Bible in Rev. 21&22 we are presented with a vision and a challenge. The vision is a picture of the Church described as the Bride of Christ, a Tabernacle of God that contains the presence of God and it is described as a city called New Jerusalem. The city is located in a world that outside the city is composed of “dogs, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters and liars.” (Rev. 22: 15)

The church of Jesus Christ is in the midst of a lost and wicked world but with a mission. For out of this city flows the river of life from the throne of God and fruits and leaves of righteous trees to be used to “heal the nations” around them. (Rev. 22 :2)

The result of this mission to heal dying nations is so that “nations in darkness will see the light of the Church/City and change their ways and walk in that light (Rev. 21: 24) and be saved and those nations will bring their honor and glory to the City of God (Rev. 21: 26).

Here is my point for us to ponder:

The church is not only called to save and disciple individuals. We do that by teaching individuals how to walk or conduct their lives according to the light of the Gospel. People are sick and need healing. Not just their bodies but their souls and their spirits.

In similar manner there is a call from God to His church to the nations of the world. Nations get sick and die. Nations have a purpose in God’s plan for the earth. Nations need to be taught to conduct their ways according to the light of God’s revealed Word, in scripture.

So let’s consider as example South Korea. It is easy to look at our fellow nations in Africa and see they obviously need healing. But South Korea is different. They are rich and powerful. They have an advanced prosperous economy built up from nothing after the Korean war of 1953 and a brutal Japanese colonization in the 1940’s.

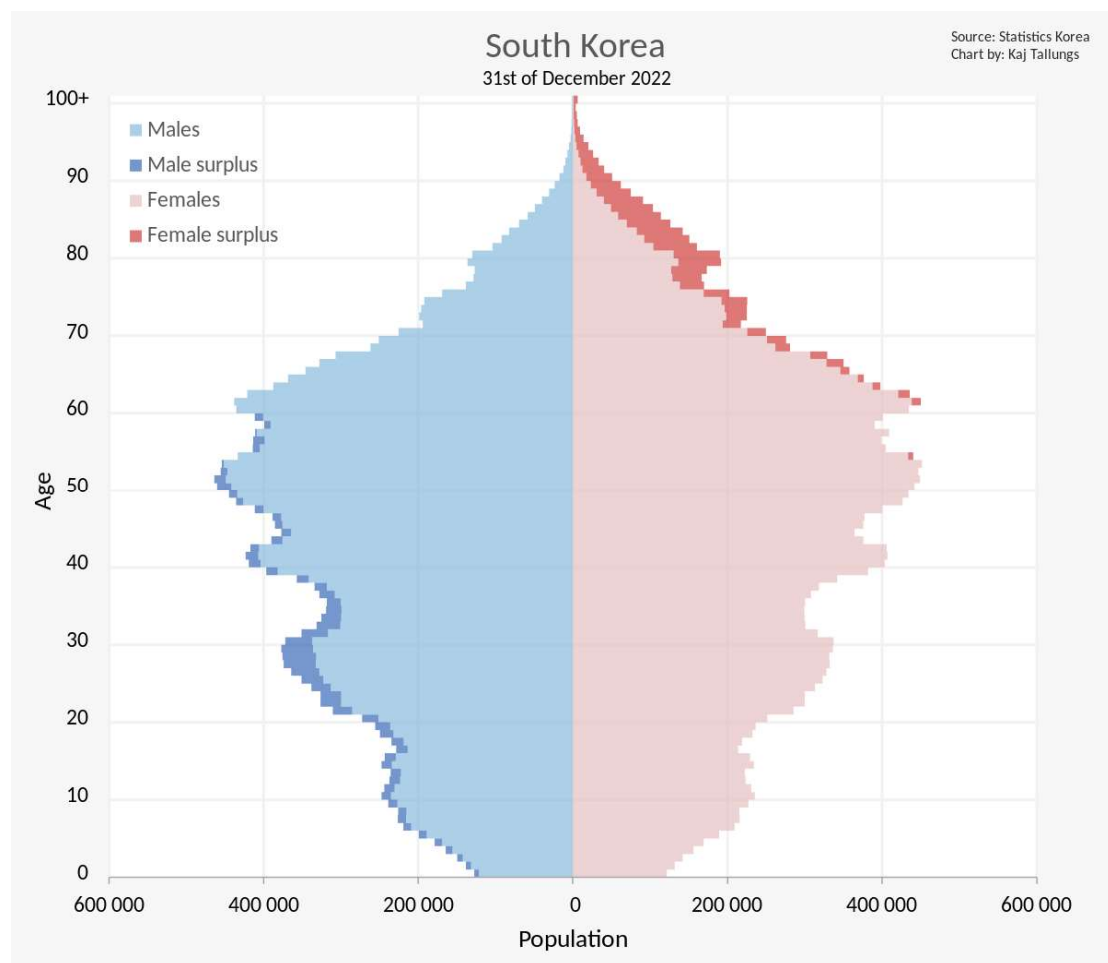
About 30% of South Korea's population is Christian with most of those being Pentecostals or evangelicals like the very large Presbyterian church. Pentecostal and charismatic movements have had a profound impact on the religious landscape of

South Korea. These movements are characterized by a focus on the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, and vibrant worship practices. South Korea is home to some of the world's largest Pentecostal congregations, with Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul being the most notable example, boasting a membership of approximately 1 million. These movements have significantly contributed to South Korea's status as a major missionary-sending country, second only to the United States. South Korean missionaries are active worldwide, often working in challenging and sometimes dangerous environments to spread their faith.

What could be wrong here that needs healing? The terrible truth? South Korea is in advanced stages of dying as a nation and on current trajectory will do so irrecoverably before 2050. There are no babies, or not enough to maintain South Korea as a nation.

Consider this. Imagine you are a soul winning evangelism centered church, you send out missions to save the lost. Until back home there are no more lost to be saved...because there are no more children to grow up to be saved and discipled. And the economy collapses and there is no more economic wealth surplus to be used to finance missions.

Let me give you a graphic to illustrate the point. It is a visual of the demographic structure of South Korea. How many there are of males and females in the nation from age 1 – 100.



Demographics of South Korea

Population : 51.6 million (2022 est.)

Life Expectancy : 82.97 years (male: 79.88 years, female: 86.24 years)

Fertility Rate 0.68 children born/woman (2023-4)

Economy : 11th largest economy in the world.

Look at the size of the age group from 1-20. Now look at the size of the age group 40-60. In 20 years the 1-20's must support with work, taxes, economy, the needs of a retiring 60-80's. There aren't enough. There are not enough female wombs in the 1-20 age group to ever birth the children to repopulate the nation and pay the taxes and do the industrial work and be the consumers and take care of the millions of aging parents and grandparents.

The problem? Each woman in Korea will only produce .68 children in her lifetime. She needs to produce 2,1 to replace a man and a woman to keep the population stable. You need 3 children to grow the population.

The South Korean government has identified 2 basic problems they cannot overcome that is causing this dearth of children.

- 1) The economic crisis. Half the Korean population lives in the Seoul region and the price of the average dwelling there costs 15 times the annual salary. Second highest in the world. And the average household debt is 200% of disposable income. People just cannot afford to have children.
- 2) Cultural Crisis. Korean young women are far more liberal than their male friends and men are far more conservative than female friends. Result there are 42% fewer marriages today than 10 years ago. Young women just do not want to get married and would rather have income and careers and personal freedom. Korean young men are caught up in an electronic fantasy world.

These statistics you can repeat with similar graphs for Japan, Europe, Asia, America.

Korea and all these other industrialized nations of the world have the same problem:

- They know how to form and develop corporations, they don't know how to form homes and families.
- They know how to efficiently produce products at lower and better quality year by year but they don't know how to produce children.

Listen to the international news media. Look at the international discussions that animate world affairs: Money and more money, profits and endless economic growth, investment and supply chains security, new markets and new products, international trade and currencies and GNP and interest rates.

All of it is illusion and myopic delusion. If you cannot produce families and children there is no economy and no future. And once you have entered into a demographic death spiral you cannot pull out.

If your culture has produced a population of young women who value career and consumerism and who want to avoid the burden of children so they can live as they want...you have lost the future.

If your culture produces a population of young men who idle their lives away in an electronic fantasy world of Warcraft battles and pornography and don't want to bear the tough struggle of wife, children and home....then you have lost the future.

You have a sick nation and a sick culture that needs healing.

This healing can only come when the Charismatic/Pentecostal church in both Korea and around the world realize that the gospel is also for a nation and must also now include the social and economic needs of a nation. A lost and dying nation needs as much the light of the Word of God as a lost and dying sinner.

That is why the need for an economic Biblical program that re-orientes a nation from growing corporations and government bureaucracies to growing families. That is the Jubilee Economic program.

This crisis is already getting the attention of Pentecostal scholars but it needs to get the attention of the church leaders. The Asia Pacific Theological Seminary in the Philippines did a special study on the problems facing the Korean church and the economy and the future. It was a lengthy study on the history and the impact of the Pentecostal movement in Korea and the future problems they face. I will quote the last paragraph of their study when they conclude what the new direction of the church needs to be:

The Korean Pentecostal Movement: Retrospect and Prospect for the New Century, Part I.

Wonsuk Maa, , Asia Pacific Theological Seminary (Baguio City, Philippines)

Leading Asian scholar, Wonsuk Ma, looks at developments and challenges for a Korean Pentecostal movement which can no longer simply look to growth as its prime legitimization and energizing force.

Concluding paragraph....

Pentecostals need to propose a uniquely Pentecostal model for social transformation. They are equipped to put forward a unique transformational model based on genuine change in individual lives, broadening bringing it to the group, the society and finally to the nation. Many historical models are available especially in missiology. The success of the educational ministry in Latin America is an example⁴ In a sense, this is an active social service and contribution. As more voices are raised urging social services by Pentecostals, the Pentecostal churches need not only to actively take part in eliminating causes for social ill, but also to propose valid models that are uniquely Pentecostal.

Amen to that Prof. Wonsuk. And if you recommend that we Pentecostals need to be proposing a “uniquely Pentecostal model for social transformation” of our societies then I cannot think of anything more unique than Biblical economics of the Jubilee

Economy. Communism has been tried, Socialism is failing where it is tried, international finance capitalism is demographic death everywhere it is applied. If we Pentecostals want to take a new direction into the social and economic healing of the nations then there will also have to be an additional sign that distinguishes us. We are famous for “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me” as proven by the fact I speak in tongues.

How about this as the new characteristic sign of a Spirit filled church called to heal not just lost sinners but sick and lost nations....

Luke 4:18-19

For the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he sent me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind,, to set at liberty those that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord (i.e. proclaim Jubilee)”

If you ever wondered how the meek are going to inherit the earth as Jesus said (Math. 5:5) It is simple. Form families and have children. If the Church applies the Jubilee Economic model to ourselves and our communities then we inherit all the assets of the world that the wicked have built but have no children to inherit it.