



Korean Christians Americanized

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Abstract

With the introduction of zoom and cell group Bible study and fellowship gathering with church members from 6 to 10, congregation members of each Korean church have come to appreciate the diversity within each consistory encompassing multigenerational American born Koreans, foreign expats, diplomats, immigrants from middle class and up from the greater Seoul, South Korea area, political refugees and migrant workers who categorically entered this country with Republic of Korea visa but who originally were able to date back their earlier life from Communist Regimes such as Siberia, China, Vietnam and North Korea (Ibuk chulsin) and other Asian of color looking foreigners and mix-breeds with Korean heritage and other combinations. The focus of their Christian practice has been more passive concept of God's grace grounded on John Wesley tradition rather than their yoking and making progress in lineal fashion into the future with and by believers out of Christian love. A premium is placed in smooth transitioning from static Confucianism and Christianity embracing education, meritocracy, social harmony and order.

Keywords: Koreans; Christianity; Religion; Teaching

Introduction

Historically, Koreans have adhered to the traditional layman definition of "Anti-Christ," to mean those who edit the Bible sayings or alternatively add derivative stories out of any Bible characters that detract and change the passages of the Bible. Specifically, Koreans are aware of the last temptation of Christ in which Christ had a brief mundane life of marriage with a "prostitute," meaning a working girl and a girl opposing the existing governance and government, an outlaw; and Judah and his lady landlord in which the sin categories of lust and greed collide to disguise as a secretive and unspeakable crime is glossed over as a contract because of unequal bargaining power of the contracting powers and betraying hierarchical layers of inequities and oppressions to be considered as competing factors when determining fairness, meaning "arm's length [1]."

South Korea alone is placed as thirteenth populous nation in Asia [2] (with 29% Christians) while North Korea is placed at 21st populous nation among the tally of forty-eight countries named as Asian nations. Of the top fifteen populous Asian nations all nations in some way celebrate Christmas holiday regardless of faith in Christianity or any church membership. They are as follows in the order of population from largest to smaller in numbers as of year 2020, meaning the top 15 [3]:

- Mainland China (inclusive of dependent in many ways of Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan): x-mas as a holiday (Hong Kong with previous British influence, Macao with previous Portuguese influence and Taiwan as previous Japan influence.)
- India: x mas as a holiday except in the state of Chandigarh, bordering Punjab in Northwest India

- Indonesia: x-mas as official APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Public holiday
- Pakistan: x mas as a holiday, a popular celebration despite 97% Muslim majority
- Bangladesh: x mas as a holiday, but not a national holiday
- Japan: x mas is celebrated but not recognized as a holiday. Emperor's birthday celebration as the national holiday is far more popular claiming the original Emperor of Japan was related to Sun god and China's Tang Dynasty, the latter version of which seems to be in accord with the original textile history of kimono and mourning ritual ceremonies since the antiquity.
- Philippines: x-mas is a national holiday according to APEC listing.
- Vietnam: x-mas is a national holiday according to APEC listing.
- Turkey: x-mas celebration is trumped by Islamic majority tradition such as Feast of Sacrifices meaning cows.
- Iran: x-mas celebration is trumped by Muslim majority tradition encompassing Ramadan fasting and repentance and introspection in late April. Also of great importance of Martyrdom of various holy prophets who courageously saved the nation [4].
- Thailand: x-mas celebration is trumped by Buddhist practice such as Vesak Day which is the Buddha's day or birthday in May on days of full moon. Buddhism is still prevalent in South Asia, Southeast Asia as well as Tibet and Mongolia.
- Myanmar (f/k/a Burma) x mas is a popular holiday.
- South Korea: x-mas is a national, public holiday according to APEC listing.
- Iraq: x mas is a Public holiday. But the nation as a whole is a Islam nation with more than 95% of citizens are practicing Muslims [5].
- Afghanistan: Muslim state, although x-mas is celebrated.

Of significance in understanding Muslim religion that parallels Christianity is the cyclical calendar of religious observance days encompassing Ramadan holidays consisting of fasting, introspection and prayers at the end of April then Arafat Days at the end of June during which prayers and utterances for the sake of forgiveness by Allah, their God. So Ramadan days are days of repentance and Arafat days are days of confession. Confession ritual also entails study of their history. Generally, feasts and family visits then follow as a family celebration which is akin to personal pilgrimage for thanksgiving.

The forty-eight Asian nations are categorized into [6]:

- Eastern Asia, for example, Mongolia, Korea;
- Western Asia, for example, Jordan, Armenia, Georgia;
- Southern Asia: Bhutan, Iran, Pakistan;
- South Eastern Asia: Indonesia, Singapore.

Other Christian states in Asia are as follows:

- Kazakhstan celebrates Russian Orthodox Christmas on January 7.
- Singapore celebrates x-mas as a national holiday according to APEC listing.
- Armenia celebrates Eastern Orthodox Christmas on January 6.
- Georgia celebrates Orthodox Christmas on January 6.
- Brunei celebrates x-mas as a national holiday according to APEC listing.
- Philippines was a former Spanish colony then later occupied by the USA before National Independence. Of historical significance from the perspective of Old World Europe is the bone china, porcelain and ceramic trade and later inclusive of other furnishings including furniture initially cornered by Spaniard traders whose dishware both decorative and functional were said to have been originated from the present day Mainland China.

Those nations to the east of Southeast Asia are labeled as nations of Oceania.

They are:

- Australia and New Zealand, both of which celebrate Christmas as official national holiday because of English colony legacy;
- Micronesia inclusive of for example, Guam, Marshall Islands and Mariana Islands where Koreans are populous and so they celebrate x-mas.
- Melanesia for example, Fiji.
- Polynesia situated south of Hawaii such as Samoa and Cook Islands with French inhabitant legacy.

Celebrating religious holidays with those you customarily party with associate or limiting to host choosing with is in sync with the US Constitutional Law First Amendment under freedom of assembly which includes gathering for partying, protest, conference or other meetings of various associations. That is to say, for instance, one does not have to be an equal opportunity party goer. Generally speaking, you don't have to date, party, marry with a category of people you don't have to or want to.

In one Johnny Carson show a mystery book author alluded to how trauma and murder stories draw crowd together and form a community. Korean church history in New York is a case in point. Generally, Koreans who choose to attend a Korean speaking church consider the following denominations:

- Presbyterian or the Dutch version, Reformed Church
- United Methodist or Methodist depending on stance with gay marriage
- Pentecostal or Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints [7].

This paper is confined to trend and pattern in certain Korean churches [8] I attended and Korean community gossip in both local Korean news and mainstream media, discussing dialectical elements of grace and presence of Satan vis-à-vis Jesus's teaching of love others, neighbors as yourself.

Koreas are sandwiched among the big whale international players such as Russia of USSR, Mainland Communist China and Japan. During routine news commentary or political analyst on air in TV in South Korea or else in other public forum, speaker posits a scenario then articulates and prefaces the discussion, China is not going to like this, Japan would do this, Russia will tell us so and so etc. etc. meaning stepping into the shoes of Korea's neighboring countries. Very few Korean ladies or otherwise dubbed as *ajumma*, a sardonic phrase conjuring up pudgy women with noticeable packing in waist area regardless of marital status would begin their utterance with, "I think that ..." But instead, they would say, "They/He is not going to like this but ..." This phenomenon is a variation branching out habit out of NOONCHI business model that Koreans have lived by as a course of dealings in commerce and trade tracing back to Dynastic days before modernization into modern states.

Dialectic Tension and Element

- Tension and fact consideration between grace (passive) and Loving neighbors (active/aggressive);
- Pioneering effort in the spirit of progress, moving forward, that is, yoking up and outward verses "As is" posture and taciturn diplomacy, alluding to the intrusive and unexpected visits in our spiritual life by SATAN;
- Liberty and publication and journal keeping v sweeping things under the rug and let the big honcho above review instead Korean original work with the big bully "neighboring" name stamped as originator for credit;
- Getting some color by gifting not knowing at times gifting took place, meaning there was NO donative intent by Koreans in possession of goods, property, asset and so forth.

Grace v love

As Christians we are not required to condone, forgive, love bad actors whose conducts are culpable by penal codes, for instance. During the forty day fasting and temptation, Jesus in the end after the Satan tempted him with power, wealth and hedonistic pleasurable invitation, uttered solemnly, "Go away Satan," and Jesus chased him out of his life.

A person or entity is not born Satan. In the Garden of Eden the highest ranking and God's favorite angel had

become too haughty, tempting mortals they too can become Godly if they eat the forbidden fruit. Thereafter God turned this angel into serpent slithering around the surface area at the bottom of the earth. In the Gospel of Matthew and Mark at the onset Jesus commended Peter for his astuteness and faith and for Peter's correctly exclaiming, "Jesus, rabbi, my teacher, you are the living God." Jesus then responded, you are the ROCK, the foundation of church. But later when Peter was overcome by jealousy and cowardice and betrayed Jesus and complied with Roman ruler appointed soldiers, Jesus then pointedly said to Peter, Satan. Many times we are betrayed by not unwitting strangers but rather by our close friends and best student, follower, fan. This bible story is eye opening and a best seller caliber reality-based narration today.

Grace is not a multitude of virtues that Christians strive to earn and amass by good deeds and grand gestures to glorify God [9]. Grace does not operate like a revolving line of credit where you periodically pay down the outstanding then you are then restored in your credit worthiness and can freely expend more to your liking until it's due date to pay down debt again. God does not pick and choose believers for different or proportional size of Grace meaning the scope and sheer categories of Grace volume from which believers can rationalize and say I can reconcile my foibles today because tomorrow I will have done good deeds by volunteer work and charitable donations and contributions for good cause. Grace is freely given by God alone, realize the believers at some point in their faith journey. In this regard, patience is a virtue and the old saying the more you do the more you are run foul to developing spiritual life for healthy living and cultivating good human relationships. Nor can a believer say, there was no witness to my aberration of naughty deed today and besides I was not acting like Jack the Ripper or Adolf Hitler. Nor can a believer say by comparing with his enemies I am practically a saint that is, when I compare with bad actors among my peers whose bad acts either went unnoticed or were overlooked, so why not me as well in the spirit of joining the bandwagon and testing water to assure bonding and forging new friendship and relationship to assume dominance and team spirit out of common enemy. Confession and prayers marked by repentance are one way to put a halt and slow down pace at which we may be deviating from standard of what is proper and appropriate outside and what makes you feel at ease with your own sense of being a sinner before Jesus Christ and not perturbed at the notion you may have achieved and triumphed in this society at the cost of your having fallen outside the boundaries of God's grace. When this crossroads of faith journey lightning hits your face and mind then you have a choice of leaving the church, leaving the practice or else you can admit you are sinner which is the right answer to reconvene and practice your faith discipline and journey.

Yoke v Status Quo, as is

Many Korean believers are brain washed into thinking that certain daring integration and bravery or even effrontery will result in corporeal punishment, Draconian measure as a consequence or else total obliteration of two steps moving forward met with open hostility and jealousy out of envy thus feeling like your whole being is reduced to dust, bone ash and such. Surgery is not a branch of medicine many Koreans or for that matter Oriental Asians would opt as a career path. But most Asians concede there is not much to showcase other than Chinese cuisine requiring big bulky and sharp butcher knives as essential tools for food preparation, a cousin difference from an axe normally associated with cutting down trees, which Chinese soldiers have uniformly indulged in in each invasion in Chinese neighboring military history of bygone eras. The Gospel says, "Thou shalt not yoke with non-believers." To this certain Mandarin bullies and other foreign devils have taunted Korean young women to befuddle them such concepts of love of care out of moral obligation marked by knowledge of knowing their lowly station as female vs societal expectation of proper women and Madona posture and stance sealing bad boys bad acts with acquiescence to live and survive in her community. It's not unusual in any Korean church meeting or a committee group gathering in their effort at pioneering effort to have confronted with trespassers intrude quorum and process, rummaging, badgering, pestering and so forth. With status quo coming to mean temporary impasse and peace and silence, brainy but lazy committee members then interject, "We are resigned to our station. Peace be with you, brother and friend." In Korean language typically other members bemoan, "Maga kkinda." What is the limit of Korean church goers diplomacy at affording devils their day in court, opportunity to be heard without feeling like aliens are stepping all over Korean American Christians misleading well intentioned, firm believers in the dark valley of death. Sometimes we don't move forward or we don't feel obligated to be part of the spirited forefront in our endeavors and enterprise or for that matter the pioneering group risking everything to be the winner. But we can consider such an adventure, a project, enabling collaboration because as the Bible says if we know in our heart God is with us, who can be against us.

Liberty v Helping Establishment Look Good and Mighty, for the Sake of Business as usual

Bible study affords theologians and scholars and other students and professional of certain trades to observe, ponder, investigate, research and publish findings to set a benchmark and springboard from which to elevate any branch of knowledge to larger and greater truths to

enable such notions as justice and equity more accessible to those who seek them. Branching out, creation of new body of study or discipline or for that matter, for example, publishing in journal for the sake of public health [10] or patent award for inventions resulted from decades of toil and labor cannot be ignored and ridiculed. That to recount 400 years ago it was the other way around and so Koreans look Chinese as compared to Caucasian people who have fairer skin pigmentation is begging the question and making bad history look worse. What is at stake in abstract sense on an epistemological level is fairness, prudence and judicious findings regardless of the physical attractive appearance of the originator, the creator, the inventor. Ignoring colored by racism encompasses inflicting accidental deaths and pilfering original draft of recording of work or manuscript. Who wants to alarm public at large with vitriol, "Koreans are taking over, climbing all over and getting under our skin." With each good student of Korean heritage many times taught by American University faculty members excelling and thriving and achieving awards and rewards there are schemers and low life thugs who promise new wealth and fame for the those elites with lackluster records by their acting God and Satan intermediary simultaneously by perpetrating forgery, putting forth and altering originator name on record from something Korean into something totally white Anglo. Forgery then is a starting point of investigation not the final conviction ground in prosecution.

Donations and Theft

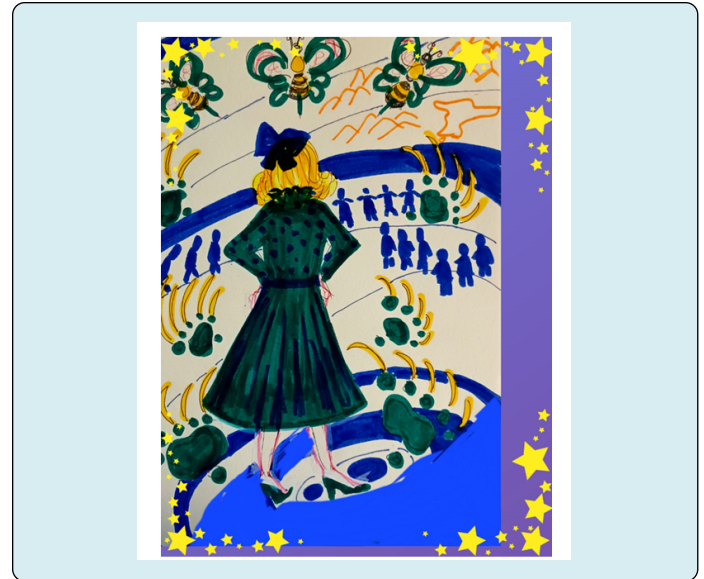
With Jesus Christ teachings and conversion initially by European then American missionaries in Koreas [11], Bible says no more human or even animal sacrifice after Jesus Christ. Instead during worship service, church goers are given opportunity to partaking in breaking bread and sharing red wine to signify that in the Last Supper with his disciples he said passing around dinner roll and drink, "This is my body, given to you. Do this and eat bread in remembrance of me." Then Jesus pointed to grape juice, "This is my blood given to you. Do this and drink red wine/ grape juice in remembrance of me." So sincerely held belief in Christianity includes shying away from gluttony sin category, cannibalism, human sacrifice and so forth. This is another area where the First Amendment Free Exercise Clause should engage in robust and respectful discussion regarding secret ritual of cannibalism. There are other precedents, notably peyote smoking prohibition as part of religious ritual and practice. Some say, American civilization has evolved and advanced so far that we have to create permanent caste system marked by classicism with assets and income so that the top class may have to convert inferior johnny come lately ethnic lot who achieved new wealth into their own and to abate the ruling class "our rage and anger". The top

class feels repugnance at the notion they may have to step aside [12] after feeling pushed aside to make room when the new comers make no effort at creating their own space by asserting their rights, taking prophylactic measures for the welfare of the community especially protecting minors and so forth. Instead they say yellow people are false believers just chiming and be sycophants with their pauperish hand sticking out waiting for crumbs after currying favors to the establishment because loud noise is too upsetting and making everyone distraught. In the extreme, hateful speech could escalate into mass killing under the pretext of ethnic cleansing and maim and then indulge in cannibalism to have a sense of latitude and generosity mimicking noble spirit of generally known as aristocrats of the bygone Imperial eras in the four corners of the earth because no outsider is going to find out dirty little secrets that seem to offer instant and quick relief. Believers and nonbelievers should be cognizant of such deviance and aberration that everyone viscerally feels and knows as totally and completely unacceptable and deems egregious misconducts by any standard. These hysterical terrorists should also be afforded a day in court with a trial on the premises in God we trust. Thanks be to God. Grace and Peace.

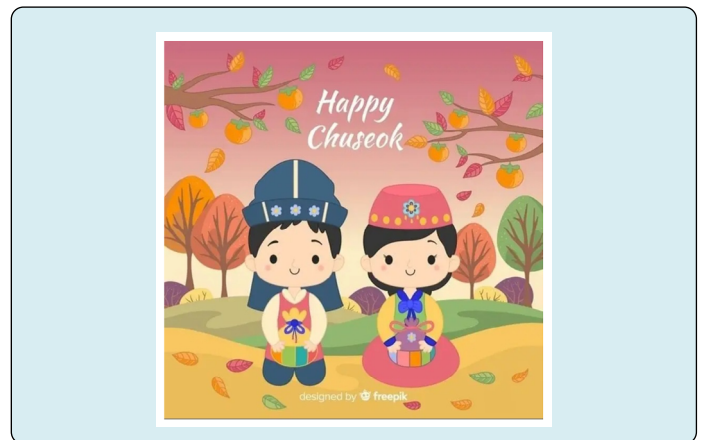
Because 2 Corinthian 10 to 11 says “Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven – if there was anything to forgive – I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are NOT UNAWARE of his schemes,” Korean Christians make easy and smooth transition from traditional Confucianism that places education imparting knowledge as everything from ethics to skill sets to coping mechanisms for sanity and social harmony to Western Christian practice that makes knowledge as a forward moving in motion [13] and branching out to other new and different disciplines where necessary as part of building patience and tolerance as building blocks for Jesus’s Commandment of neighborly love to instill duty of care for safe and civil society with ever so changing job descriptions in work ethic minded community with relative division of labor to know each person’s burden and workload are bearable and where love and loving (3 different kinds) can overcome sickness and anger in each mortal. So cognizance of Satan’s wordings and workings is part of faith journey to issue spot and later followed by work to find a solution or a strategy that which may be identified with each hardship encounter in the end that befalls human after living a life of strayed hedonist however brief it may have been.

Addendum: Images

1) Christianity by Korean American artist, Dorothy M Hong [7].



2) Korean Thanksgiving/Harvest Day: Source: digital art posting on Facebook newsfeed.

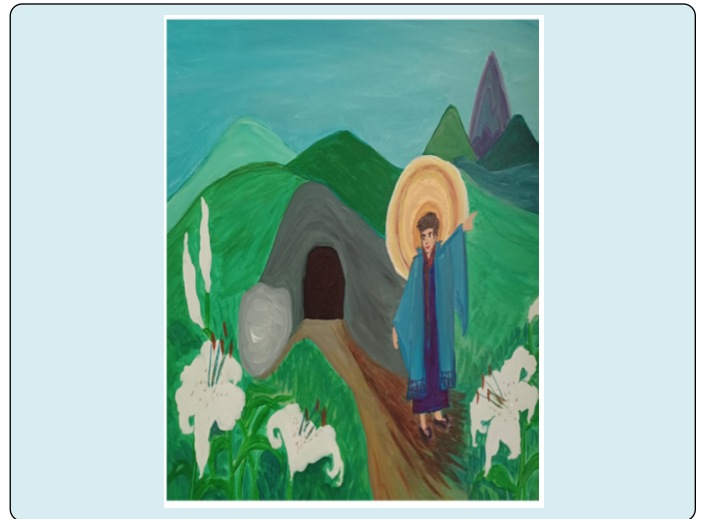


3) Epiphany by Dorothy M Hong [7].



4) Religious paintings since the Middle Ages in Europe (as comparison).

7) Easter, Resurrection by Dorothy M Hong [7].

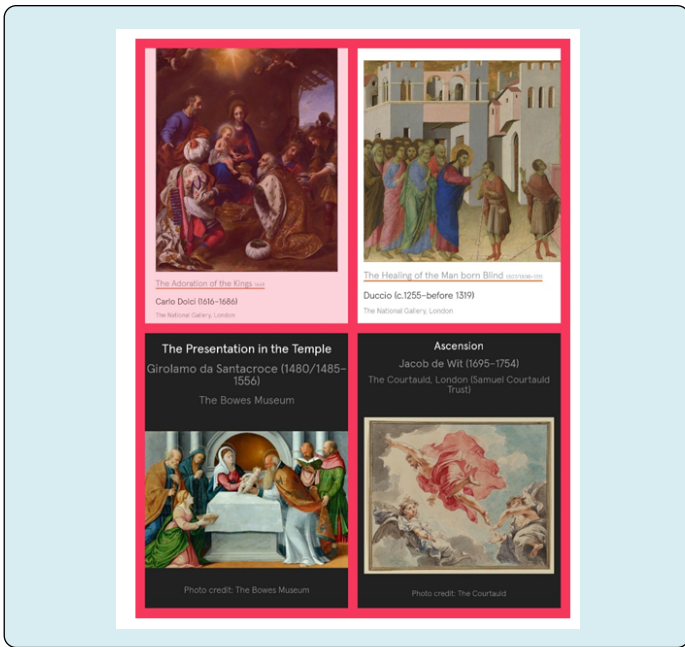


8) 59% of Korean ancestry population consists of church going Christians in the USA. Source: The Korea Times, New York Edition article [9].

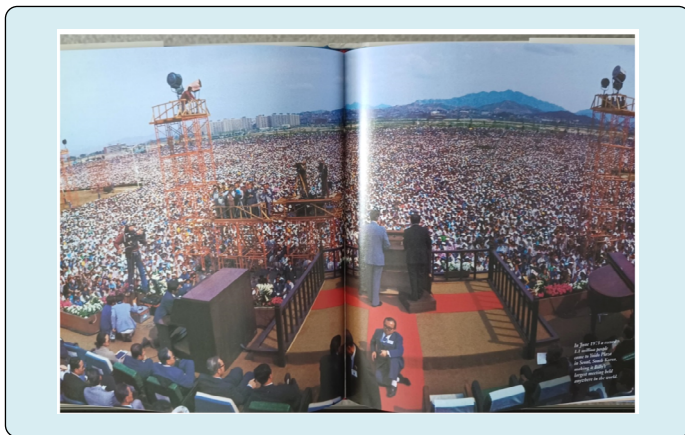


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3. US department of state, Israel-Hamas Conflict.
4. United states institute of Peace, events.
5. Nationsonline.



5) Missionary work and Evangelism in Asia: The late Billy Graham in Yoido in Seoul, South Korea in June 1973. Source: a picture book of the late Billy Graham.



6) The late Billy Graham and his prayer works.



Source: picture book of Billy Graham, God's Ambassador by photographer, Russ Busby.

6. Refer to Pneuma Journal for Pentacostal Studies 103(3): 313-317.
7. Dorothy Hong was baptized in a Korean Presbyterian Church and ordained/installed as deacon a Korean United Methodist Church in New York, USA.
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