

Third Report from Seoul, South Korea January 2017

In every Winter Bible School I have participated in there have been Jeju Island tangerines. Jeju Island is off South Korea's south coast, is sub-tropical, scenic, and protected. I learned yesterday that already 40% of the automobiles on the island are electric, and I suspect many of the remaining 60% burn natural gas. A lot of fruit is grown on the island and it is a place for agricultural research. It is also a popular honeymoon site. South Koreans take pride in Jeju. Each year someone (or more) brings in a box or two of the tangerines. They are tasty.

Who says all Koreans are short? Here are three chaps who are in my class in the Winter Bible School. I don't know much about any of them, but they are tall. The fellow on far right is made taller by his hair! The fellow on the far left has taken a job down south and wants to start a church in the city where he now lives. Good for him.



During several of the WBSs in which I have taught a little lady has been present. She is short (see picture) and has dark or tinted glasses. Since her nose is so slight her glasses slip down, and characteristically she has to tilt her head back to see through them correctly! She walks with a limp because her right leg is permanently straight and evidently shorter than the other. She speaks some English, but these are not the reasons for writing about her. She is a



caregiver of handicapped people. Her husband, now deceased, was an invalid; and while she was taking care of him she also took care of five or six other handicapped people. Her hands show that she works hard. She is very pleasant and is interested in Bible study. She wanted her picture made with me, then one with David and me.

Sunday (15th): In our assembly today David South preached, and we had people from five nations: Korea, Philippines, India, Ghana, and the USA. As usual, we shared lunch together, and that gives good opportunities for talking to one another.

Today Chris and Teresa Boyce visited us. I had Chris as a Missions student at ACU, and now they are here with their 13-year-old daughter, Sara. Sara was born in Kenya when the Boyces worked there. Currently she is in language school, learning Korean, Japanese, and Chinese. The rule in the Korean language school is that students are to speak in no other language. Nine times Sara has been reprimanded for speaking Japanese and Chinese in class! Her parents are not bothered. After all, not everyone can be reprimanded for speaking Japanese and Chinese in a Korean language class! Evidently Sara has a gift for languages.

She wants to do her university work in Osaka, Japan. She will simply be a multi-culture person, one who feels relatively comfortable in several cultures. Chris will begin teaching English at KC University in March, since that is one way he can stay in the country.

During our classes last week, we had one Presbyterian preacher. He has been here before. He speaks almost no English so I cannot dialog with him. As stated before, Protestant clergy who attend the Winter Bible School say they study theology but not Scripture in their seminaries. Of course if one studies biblical theology one will study Scripture, but evidently they have little of that.

BCC has an extraordinary amount of information one can pull up to watch or hear. They have scores of Steve Flatt's "Amazing Grace Bible Class" from Madison with Korean subtitles. Many sermons and lectures are available. Sang Yang has put in hundreds of hours dubbing in the Korean on English materials, and of course they have quite a lot of material in Korean. Koreans from many parts of the world log in to get the oral version of "Power for Today" or some type of daily devotional.

In the Monday class there were at least three pastors and one woman who aspires to be one of the lower level female leaders in her church. She feels, however, that the lead pastor and several of the women are trying to run her off for reasons she does not understand. She wanted to talk, so I referred her to Matt. 18. I feel sorry for her since she seems to be very sincere. Today two other pastors wanted to talk to me about tithing. I had mentioned several things required under the law of Moses, in the covenant of Sinai, that are not required as such in the new covenant, tithing being one of them. One of the pastors went to Matt. 23 and Jesus' instructions to the effect that "these you should have done" in reference to tithing the garden plants. He said that tithing is the way they finance churches. I mentioned 2 Cor. 8-9 as a long passage on giving in the new covenant. One reason BCC wanted Hebrews taught was this very kind of approach, this common failure to distinguish between the covenants.

In the following picture you see Shin Dong Yeol with me. Several years ago I was here teaching when he decided to be baptized. He had been in two or three of my classes, but brother Sang has given him most of his teaching. I baptized him in 2003, and now he is preaching and building up a church in Jeju Island. His wife and children have also been baptized into Christ. I value this picture, though I try to downplay the importance of who does the baptizing.



Today at noon a local preacher who is very good on the harmonica came in and played lunch music. He is very good. He reads music, but he said he can play about anything that he hears. A few days ago when he told us he would come and play during lunch, he asked whether we had any songs we wanted him to play. Just joking with him, I asked, "What about Beethoven's Fifth?" He then voiced the first few notes of it! He didn't play it today, but he likely could do some of it. He has a nice little case that had at least six harmonicas of different sizes. He did something I have not seen before, and that is to play two of them at once, holding one above the other. It was nice entertainment.

At this point I'll bring this Report to a close with the plan to send out only one more.

--Philip Slate Jan. 16, 2017