

Korea and Korean Church

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1. Where is Korea located?

Korea is a region in northeastern Asia. It is bordered by China to the west, Russia to the north, and to the east it is separated from Japan by the East Sea.

The population of South Korea North Korea combined is about 74 million, South Korea about 50 million and North Korea about 24 million), which is the 18th most populated country in the world. The combined size of south and North Korea is 221,336 square kilometers. The capital city of South Korea is Seoul and it is a metropolitan area with more than 10 million population.

2. History and culture of Korea

Korea has a history of 5,000 years. Among many dynasties that existed in Korean history, let me introduce a very important dynasty that existed right before today's Korea. In about 1,400 the Choseon Dynasty was established and it existed for about 500 years until early 1900s.

However, Korea was occupied by empire of Japan and it was under control of Japan from 1910 for 35 years until 1945 when the US destroyed two Japanese cities by two atomic bombs during the final stages of the Pacific War, World War II, leading to Japan's announcement of its surrender and ending Japan's 35-year colonial rule of Korea.

Since independence from Japan, Korea has been divided into South Korea and North Korea due to the agreement by the US and the Soviet Union to occupy Korea. South Korea became a democratic country and North Korea became a communist country. There was 3-year Korean

War during which UN 16 countries supported South Korea and the Soviet Union and China supported North Korea.

Korea is a homogeneous country with a unique language called Hangul which is composed of consonants and vowels like English Alphabets. Koreans' illiteracy is close to 0%.

3. Korean Economy

The Korean War destroyed almost everything in South Korea. However, Korean people are hard working people and in a very short period of time, South Korea achieved a dramatic economic success. As a result, South Korea hosted Olympic Games in 1988 and World Cup in 2002 and we have achieved political stability.

Korea ranks the 13th in economy in the world Korea is a strong trade partner with the US. The major export products are electronics, automobiles, shipbuilding, construction, etc.

The companies well-known around the world for all of or some of electronics, automobiles, shipbuilding, construction, and construction equipment are Samsung, LG, Hyundai, Kia, and Daewoo. Currently, Korea ranks the 1st in exporting ships.

Korea was entirely destroyed in 1950s during the Korean War, but in 50 years it became a country of \$20,000 GDP per capita.

4. The history of the Alliance of South Korea-the US

South Korea and the US have had strong relations since the Korean War from 1950-53 when many soldiers from 16 countries including the US died to defend South Korea

South Korean soldiers have fought at Vietnam War, Afghanistan War, and Iraq War to support the US.

5. Christianity and churches in Korea

Christianity was introduced during the late Choseon Dynasty when French Roman Catholic missionaries and Christian missionaries from the Great Britain and the US came to Chosen. Many missionaries and Christians were subject to hardship and persecution and many were martyred. However, it did not stop churches from expanding. Even during the Japanese control

of Korea pastors were subjected to hardship and churches were closed by the Japanese government.

Since the Japan's surrender and the Korean War, American missionaries came to Korea and their active missionary work along with 1970s' economic development in Korea have helped Christianity grow significantly in Korea. And today Christian population accounts for 25 % of the Korean population. Korean Christians are actively involved in Christian activities.

There are some unique Korean Christian activities. For example, we have an early-morning service, which is a service occurring at 5 am everyday. The pastor gives 10-20 minute worship, followed by songs and 30 minute to one-hour prayer. This was a major factor that accounts for the growth of Korean Christianity and today the biggest church in the world is in Korea. It is located in Seoul with 600 thousand members.

Korean Christian churches have strong passions for global missionary. Korea is a country that sends the second most missionaries around the world following the US. The first thing Korean do in a foreign country is to build churches and these churches become a center for Korean communities.

Korean churches in 80 countries are 5,634 and a majority of them are in the US, Canada, Germany, France, Australia, New Zealand, China, Russia, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, etc. There are 4,144 Korean churches in the US, 1,313 in California (31.7%), 443 in New York, 239 in New Jersey, 201 in Virginia, 199 in Washington, and less than 100 in Illinois, Texas, Georgia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and other states.

Korean church in USA has manyfold denominations. For example, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist,, Assembly of God and etc like American church. There are about around 800 Korean Baptist churches in USA and 16 churches in TN.

6. Korean Baptist church of Jackson

This church was established around 20 years ago by a Korean who studied theology with Korean who lived in Jackson.

Today, Pastor Jongman Lee is a pastor in charge. (Refer to the photo)

Deacon Kitae Jeong who is an Assistant Professor at Lane College.

The members of the church are a student couple and Koreans married to Americans who own beauty supply shops and restaurants and have regular jobs.

Korean population in Jackson and the surrounding areas is 40 adults and 10 underage children.

Among them church members are 30 and 15 members attend a Sunday service. The target persons to convert to Christianity are 8 and there are 4 people who are members of American churches.

Last Christmas one member was baptized. (Refer to the photo)

This church has relationship and is working together with with TBC, Madison-Chester county Baptist association, Korean assembly in USA, Korean TBC.

7. Vision of our church

The number of Koreans in Jackson has been no change and there is little possibility to the growth of the Korean church. In order for the Korean church in Jackson to grow, it would be a better way to target other ethnic groups, Asians first and then people from the Middle-East and Americans.

The biggest obstacle to the goal is change of perspectives and mastery of language. With changed perspectives and better language proficiency the Korean church would better serve divers population. It will take time.

Please pray for the Korean church and Jackson church. (Refer to the photo)