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TOWARD THE RECOVERY OF EFFECTIVE YOUTH MINISTRY
FOR KOREAN ETHNIC CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES

A Dissertation Presented to
the Faculty of the E. Stanley Jones
School of World Mission and Evangelism
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Missiology

by
Suh Kyoung Suh
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ABSTRACT

Toward the Recovery of Effective Youth Ministry for Korean Ethnic Churches in the United States

Suh Kyoung Suh

The study investigated the exodus of younger Korean-Americans from Korean ethnic churches in the United States, and discovered that the problem is caused by a cultural barrier between the older and younger generations, inadequate spiritual nurturing of the younger persons, and the church's failure to prioritize youth ministry. The church leadership's decision-making patterns and cross culture knowledge were investigated. The church's involvement of youth in Bible study, prayer, and small-group activities, and the development of youth in evangelism and witness were also investigated. And the nature and sufficiency of programs to meet the needs of young people were explored as practical aspects of the problem.

Findings confirmed that post-high school youth are exiting Korean-American churches, and ministries to teens in high school are stagnant. The investigation did not fully confirm the effect of Korean traditional cultural barriers on youth ministry. The findings affirmed the lack of cross-cultural knowledge in first-generation Korean-Americans and the absence of interesting programs based on the needs of young people, suggesting the churches were not prioritizing youth ministry.

Suggestions to prevent or remedy these problems are: egalitarian leadership, cross-cultural training for all, a holistic approach in spiritual aspects, church programs based on needs, and networking among youth pastors and youth across Korean-American churches.

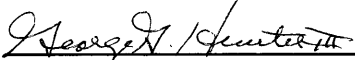
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This dissertation, entitled
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FOR KOREAN ETHNIC CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES**

written by
Suh Kyoung Suh

and submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Missiology

has been read and approved by the undersigned members of
the Faculty of the E. Stanley Jones School
of World Mission and Evangelism
Asbury Theological Seminary


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CHAPTER 1

The Exodus of Korean-American Youth

Introduction

"Halmani (Grandmother), Harabaji (Grandfather), where are you?" If you visit one of the large Korean churches on a Sunday in a big city in America, you may hear, in Korean with English accents, these words from children looking for their grandparents. This scene is not a holiday scene but is reenacted in every Sunday school in Korean ethnic churches. Because Korean grandparents live with their children, they are not considered mere extended family. In fact, they are integral and authoritative figures in the family structure of Korean culture.

Many Korean-American children attend church with their parents or grandparents through high school. Then they move away from home to attend college or to go to work. Such mobility is a Western cultural pattern, not Korean. In the traditional Korean family system, it is normal for firstborn or other children to live with their parents even after marriage. So, when Korean-American children leave home for an independent life, they signal their adaptation to Western individualism over the old ways, and as one pointed out to me, a move often includes an end to church going.

Korean ethnic churches try to prevent or intervene in this development through holding frequent revival meetings aimed at solidifying the Christian commitment of young people, including their responsibility to evangelize. Typical is the challenge of powerful evangelist Moo Soo Park from Korea, in a

revival meeting for young Korean-Americans in Tacoma, Washington. On June 24, 1994, at Tacoma United Presbyterian Church, he reminded those in attendance:

You are a point of contact for reaching Americans; by your example of faith you can help to restore their faith to Jesus Christ. . . . God brought your parents to America to restore the faith of people in America, but your parents cannot reach Americans effectively because of the language barrier and cultural barrier. But you can be a great asset for God and for us to reach out to Americans as well as to other ethnic groups.

Encouragement along these lines is common in Korean ethnic church revival meetings. Nevertheless, a growing number of these young people whom Christian elders believe are called to help "re-evangelize" America, are themselves being assimilated into the secular American culture. Why? Is this phenomenon inevitable? Or are the tools available for Korean ethnic churches to halt the exodus? Does the phenomenon partly reflect the inability of the Korean ethnic churches to effectively minister to this new generation? If so, what barriers need to be overcome? This is one of the most pressing issues in Korean-American churches. The great fear is that without strategic intervention, the problem is bound to get even worse.

How did I become interested in the evangelism of the Korean-American younger generation? If you are a Korean and live in a big city, you almost certainly will become involved with the local Korean community and, in doing so, with the local Korean ethnic churches. This was my experience. I soon became involved with a children's weekend school operated by a Korean para-church organization. For a few years, I taught art to Korean-American children in that

setting. The church life of youth became familiar to me through volunteer work for youth summer retreats. In the churches, because I was interested in young people's spirituality, I often observed young people's services and their programs.

In 1993, I undertook a church growth field study; and because of my interest in Korean-American young people, they naturally became my target population to research. The research impressed Dr. George Hunter, who encouraged me to explore the matter further and later became my mentor for this dissertation.

The Statement of the Problem

Is the perceived exodus of younger Korean-Americans from Korean ethnic churches in the United States a reality, and if so, has it been produced or exacerbated by a cultural barrier between the older and younger generation, inadequate spiritual nurturing of the younger persons, and failure to prioritize youth ministry?

Purpose of the Study

The perception of the exodus of younger generation Korean-American Christians seems to be widely accepted, but has not been established as fact by field research. This study proposed: (1) to determine the degree to which the exodus has been occurring, (2) to uncover the most significant problems facing effective youth ministry among Korean-American congregations, and (3) to recommend appropriate recovery strategies.

missions. It examined the growth of young Korean-American churches with special attention to cultural differences between first generation Korean-Americans and their children, using field research methods, especially interviews.

My objectives were

1. to help first generation church leaders and parents understand their 1.5 and second generation youth through their cultural identity and needs,
2. to help Korean-American youth understand what is happening to them as their personal identity and cultural identity are undergoing change,
3. to help the 1.5 generation (those born in Korea who came to the United States between age eight and sixteen years) and second generation (born in the United States or came to the U.S. before the age of eight years) youth understand Korean culture and their parents' generation more adequately,
4. to help Korean-American young people appreciate the value of being bi-cultural personalities who can function effectively in either culture,
5. to encourage both older and younger generations to recover their evangelical zeal and be informed about the dynamic of cross-cultural ministry.

The Hypotheses

The study will test the following hypotheses:

1. Korean ethnic churches are experiencing an exodus of high school and post-high school young adults.
2. Cultural barriers exist between first generation Korean-Americans and

their children. A strong tradition of authoritarian leadership style with rigid policies and decision-making patterns, natural with first-generation Korean-Americans, goes against the grain of 1.5 and second generation youth. It often results in the older generation's attempt to impose a traditional Korean worldview and its values on the younger generation. The problem persists because neither generation is sensitive to the other's cultural orientation, nor is the need for culture training recognized.

3. Korean-American churches have not provided sufficient Scripture study, prayer, small groups, and training for witness among younger people, all of which have figured prominently in historic Korean church growth.

4. Ministries to youth have not received high priority. There has been little interest in their felt needs and programs.

Research Questions

In order to test my four hypotheses and accomplish my stated purpose, the following lines of inquiry have guided my research:

1. Is the perceived exodus of high school and post-high school young people real?
2. Do cultural barriers exist between first and second generation Korean-Americans which negatively impact effective youth ministry?
3. Are younger generation Korean-Americans being adequately nurtured in their Christian faith?
4. Do Korean-American congregations adequately prioritize meeting the

real life needs of their youth?

The Data Needed to Solve the Problem

I used a combination of library research, interviews, case studies, and observations to answer the research questions. An extensive literature review focused on previous studies of aspects of the Korean church scene in North America, pertinent church growth literature and youth ministry literature.

The sixty participants in this study were from the New York City boroughs or neighboring New Jersey communities. They included thirteen youth pastors from ten youth groups in nine churches and one youth pastor and youth group from one para-church organization.¹ Eleven parents of young people, involved and formerly involved in church, also participated in the study. Twenty-two young people currently attending and thirteen youth who formerly attended responded. Five American youth pastors, and four American youth were interviewed informally.

In addition to the literature research and interviews, I also gained insights through case studies and participant observation. I chose three young former churchgoers (among thirteen) and one church (among nine churches) as the subjects of a case study focusing on my research questions.

Methods for Collecting the Data

Interview

As indicated, I interviewed church-goers and former church-goers of 1.5 and second generation Korean-American young people, Korean-American youth

pastors, and laity. Telephone, and E-mail were also used. Each interview was guided by a list of interview questions and administered by me or a research assistant. Interviews occurred over a period of three months from September to December in 1996.

Case Study

In addition to the interviews I prepared three case studies of young people to learn more about their reasons for leaving church, their struggles, and their felt needs. I also prepared a case study on ineffective youth ministry in a Korean ethnic church. The case studies entailed multiple interviews with each subject, in their homes and at church, exploring in greater depth and detail the issues raised in the research questions and interviews.

Observation and Participation

I observed and participated in Korean ethnic churches in the New York City area for several years prior to returning to school. I am familiar with the experience of immigrants and their children in Korean churches.

Preview of the Study

The background of the Korean ethnic church is examined in Chapter 2, which brings out Korean Christian history, Korean immigrant history, and ethnic church history. The discussion in Chapter 2 of the church life and the struggle of the Korean-American youth in the Korean-American church reflects the research problem in this study and leads toward understanding the data interpretation in Chapter 5. The literature review concerning leadership patterns in Korean

ethnic churches is found in Chapters 2 and 4; this reveals the background of the research subjects and leads to data interpretation (Chapter 5) and the suggestions in Chapter 6.

The literature review concerning religious worldviews in Chapter 3 helps clarify the cultural background of Korean-American Christians in America and leads to deeper understanding of the worldview assumptions of the older generation and of Korean cultural differences from American culture into which the younger generations assimilated quickly (both discussed in Chapter 4). This background information was necessary in order to recognize the barriers between the old and the young; and it provided the frame of reference for interpreting the data and proposing strategies. The data are interpreted in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6, strategies are suggested and conclusions are presented.

Delimitation of the Study

This study limits itself to the Korean youth selected from nine large churches in the New York City area. Therefore the outcome may differ somewhat from other cities such as Chicago, Los Angeles, Toronto, London or from small Korean ethnic churches in rural areas. The study does not rely on quantitative data, it is rather a qualitative study intended to provide insight into the presented issues.

Definition of Terms

Korean ethnic church or Korean-American church in America. The Korean ethnic church consists of first generation Korean immigrants and their children. These children are called either the 1.5 generation or second generation children of Korean immigrants depending on where they were born. Korean ethnic church or Korean-American church are used interchangeably in this study.

Korean-American youth or Korean-American young people. These are the children of first generation Korean immigrants. The range of age in this study will be from thirteen to twenty-one. These terms are used interchangeably in this study.

The 1.5 generation youth. This term refers to the youth who were born in Korea and came to the United States between the ages of eight and sixteen years. This age range is used in this study because children eight years old have already received two years of Korean primary school education and have therefore been exposed to Korean cultural influences.

Second generation youth. In this study, the term refers to Korean-American youth who were born in the United States and remained, or came to the U.S. before the age of eight years.

Korean leadership style. Traditional leadership styles in the Korean church or society are generally authoritarian and hierarchical. If a church was planted by a pastor, he or she has the major power for setting policies and

making decisions. If elders planted the church and a pastor was invited, the elders have decision-making power.

Egalitarian leadership style. This leadership style used in many American churches is where the senior pastor has ultimate responsibility but shares the decision making process with elders and staff members. There is a shared sense of respect and acceptance between the senior pastor and youth pastor.

Holistic spiritual discipline. This term refers to the use of inclusive methods of discipleship. This combines Bible study, prayer, small group spiritual discipline with social actions such as community service and mission trips.

Significance of the Study

From the 1980s until now only a few studies have looked into effective ministry approaches to Korean-American youth in the Korean ethnic churches (Kim, Paul Shu 1980; Kim, Mark Heung Soo 1982; Paek, Woon Young 1989; Kim, Dae Hee 1990; Kim, Nak-In 1991). Each of these draws useful conclusions. However, there remain some potentially important avenues to explore.

Because this study addresses cultural, spiritual, and strategic dimensions of ministry, it promises to shed additional light on the problem. First, I suspect that one of the problems is the leader's ignorance of the cultural obstacle caused by their authoritative leadership style toward the younger generation who are experiencing cultural change. If this hypothesis is valid, the churches need to depart from this traditional leadership style and bridge this generation gap.

Discovering how best to do this is an important goal.

Second, if I am right that the exodus of the young exists and is related to inadequate strategic planning for ministry on spiritual disciplines, programs and needs, development of a comprehensive strategy for these ministries will be vital.

Notes

¹ Four out of nine churches are between about 500 to 600 members, with Sunday worship attendance 300 to 400. Five churches are between 800 to 3000 members, with Sunday worship attendance between 600 to 2000. Each of these churches has from three to ten associate or assistant pastors. Eight of the churches have one youth group each; the ninth has two youth groups: one for second-generation and one for 1.5 generation youth. One para-church organization (Korean Y.W.C.A. in Flushing, New York) is included in research question one, in order to compare its pattern of growth or stagnation with those in the nine churches.

There are only two para-church organizations for Korean young people and eight for adults in New York boroughs and the New Jersey area according to the 1997 Christian directory. The addresses of 367 Korean churches are shown in New York City boroughs (Queens, Flushing, Manhattan, Bronx, Staten Island, Brooklyn, Long Island, Northern Area in NY) and New Jersey areas in the 1997 Korean-American Christian Yearbook.

CHAPTER 2

Background of the Korean Ethnic Church

Introduction of Korean Christianity in the United States

The Immigration Act of 1965 and the amendment of 1976 enabled many Koreans to cross the Pacific to America to begin a new life (Kim, Illsoo 1981:17). According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the Korean population in the United States multiplied from 70,000 in 1970 to 799,000 in 1992, an increase of 1100 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992 cited in Nah 1993:289). The Chicago Tribune reports that approximately 35,000 Koreans came yearly in the 1980s. However, Korean immigration was decreasing in the 1990s. New Korean immigrants numbered only 19,359 in 1992 (You 1994:sec. 1:19). In 1994, the number of new comers was 15,985 (The Jung Ang Daily 22 Aug. 1995:sec. 1, p. 3). Korean immigration appeared to be declining because of the anti-immigrant mood in America and the increase of violence in big cities, such as the Los Angeles riots (The Jung Ang Daily 22 Aug. 1995:sec. 1, p. 3).

Another reason was the economic growth of South Korea. The gross per capita income increased from \$2,158 in 1984 to \$7,435 in 1993 (You 1994:1). However, at the end of 1997, Korea's economy dropped drastically from being the world's eleventh richest country to requesting funds for a bailout, due to major corporate bankruptcies, political tumult, and finance trouble in Asia. However, the country can become more economically strong if they learn from this situation (Jelinek 1997:B8). The gross per capita income of \$10,000

decreased to \$6,000 in South Korea in 1998 (The Korea Times 22 June 1988:B10).

Korean immigrants in America numbered 982,000 in 1997, making up ten percent of Asian immigrants in America (The Korea Times 16 June 1988:A1). The Korean government resumed the policy of sending technical labor power abroad in order to help the unemployment crisis (The Korea Times 29 June 1988:B3).

Despite the annual immigrant decrease, the Population Reference Bureau projects that the Korean population in the United States will reach about 1.3 million by the year 2000 (Gardner et al. 1985: cited in Hurh and Kim 1990b:19).

There were about seventy-five Korean immigrant churches in the United States in 1970 and the number grew to about 2,000 in 1988 (Philadelphia Inquirer 30 May 1988:sec. B cited in Hurh and Kim 1990b:19). A recent article shows that there are over 2500 Korean ethnic churches in America (The Korea Times 22 Feb. 1996:sec. 4, p.1). Approximately 70 percent of the sample in Los Angeles and 77 percent in the Chicago areas report that they regularly attend Korean ethnic churches (Hurh and Kim 1990:20).

The majority of Korean immigrants come from the urban, middle-class segment of the Korean population in which Christianity is stronger than other religions. Korean Christians are more likely to immigrate to the United States than Buddhists, traditional Shamanists or Confucianists because they have been exposed more to Western culture and technology (Min 1992:1376).

Churches around the world have been watching the rapid growth of Christianity among Koreans. To understand this growth, we need to trace the history of Christianity in Korea. The History of Korean Protestant Christianity has marked a little over one hundred years. The initial believers were few. The American missionaries targeted the poor, women, and children. They were very receptive of Christianity, and remarkable church growth has taken place. The Korean-American Christians have a rich background to their faith and they want to pass their faith to the younger generation. The knowledge of the past and present role of Christianity in Korea and in the Korean-American society in America will help Korean ethnic churches and the young people to know where they are from.

The History of Korean Christianity

The phenomenon of the rapid growth of Korean churches in Korea has attracted the attention of churches around the world who are interested in the causes of growth, strategies for church planting, strategies for evangelism, ministering programs for church members, spiritual life of the Christians, and so forth. Horace G. Underwood counts more than ten churches with constituencies of over 10,000 members. One Seoul church, the Full Gospel Church, Assembly of God, counts their numbers as 800,000 (1994:74). There are many Sunday services in mega churches. Underwood says:

These super-churches arise in part from the charismatic leadership of the minister, in part from a strong organization and "cell" structure, and in part from Korean group-consciousness, where congregational loyalty is greater than denominational loyalty, and where people like to be identified with a well-known group. (1994:74)

Other key factors for Korean church growth are systematic Bible study in home cells (Cho and Hurston 1983:283), prayer (Park, Cho-Choon 1983:203), and mobilization of laymen's and women's witness (Chung 1983:319). However, a recent study done by David Tai-Woong Lee, director of the Global Ministry Training Center, reports the decline of church growth from 1985 to 1993. The average annual Korean church growth was 8.4 percent from 1960 to 1985. However, the average annual growth dropped 6.7 percent from 1985 to 1990. 1993 showed a 4 percent decline in annual growth. Nevertheless, in 1994, a 3 percent increase was anticipated in annual growth (Guthrie 1996:199).

How did Christianity begin in Korea? The first Catholic Church was established in 1784 (Song 1985:19; Underwood 1994:66, 67). French Catholic missionaries began to enter Korea in 1835. Between 1835 and 1882, which is the period of the opening of Korea to the West, Catholics suffered persecution and martyrdom (Underwood 1994:67).

Unlike Catholic missions, the Protestant missionary history began smoothly. Horace N. Allen, the first to arrive and a medical missionary (Presbyterian), came to Seoul from America by the request of Yi Su-Jong, Korean Bible translator, in 1884 (Song 1985:19). The next year, 1885, Horace G. Underwood (Presbyterian) and Henry G. Appenzeller (Methodist) arrived together. In the same year, W. B. Scranton, a medical and pastoral missionary; his mother, Mrs. Scranton; and J. W. Heron, a medical missionary, arrived. These missionaries began mission work with medical and educational programs

in Seoul (Song 1985:19).

Allen earned King Kojong's trust and became the king's personal physician after he cured the wounds of a government minister injured in a coup d'état. As a result, Allen was able to open a small hospital as an avenue of mission work without any difficulties (Song 1985:19). In addition to medical mission work, modern education was introduced by the earliest missionaries (Song 1985:20).

Protestant missions in the late nineteenth century in Korea emphasized literacy, education, and salvation. These missions targeted the lower classes; thus, Christianity became "one of the main channels of hope and opportunity" for them (Underwood 1994:67). Educational, medical, and evangelical work were core goals from 1897 to 1910 (Grayson 1985:111). Everett Nichols Hunt, Jr. indicates three reasons for the "success" of Protestant beginnings in Korea. These are: "(1) the purity of the gospel preached by the missionaries; (2) the use of the Nevius method (self-support, self-expansion, self government); (3) the response of Koreans" (1980:2).

From 1910 to 1945, Japan dominated Korea. At the beginning of this period, in 1910, the churches were the only Korean organizations not under total Japanese control. They therefore became one of the few avenues for Korean leadership. However, Japanese pressure and control grew heavier, and after 1933 many Christians were persecuted due to their refusal to participate in the Shinto ceremonies (Underwood 1994:67,68).

After World War II in 1945, Korea was divided into North and South. The North was taken over by the Communists. Numerous Christians fled to the South yet large numbers of Christians remained in the North and were persecuted (Underwood 1994:68):

The church was very closely identified with Korean nationalism, a nationalism further reinforced by the anti-Communist crusade mentality of the Korean War and the continuing Communist threats from the North, so that in the post-liberation period, there has been a strong tendency towards an attitude of "my country, right or wrong," that has usually identified anti-government activities with anti-national or even pro-Communist feelings, even among Christians. (Underwood 1994:68)

The Korean Christians were primarily from among the common people until the mid-1960s as the result of evangelism mainly focusing on this group. Thus, churches were poor. However, the number of educated Christians began increasing in leadership in government, business, and education. As a result, the status of being Christian rose, and at the same time Korean churches became affluent due to economic growth in the 1980s and 1990s (Underwood 1994:68).

The phenomenon of Christians being lifted from the lower class to the middle class through training, education, and social aid by the Christian mission has been described by Donald A. McGavran (1990) as "redemption and lift." McGavran says that men and women are redeemed as they turn to Christ and depend on the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and prayer. By "lift" McGavran means the socio-economic rise persons often experience after becoming Christians. This phenomenon vividly applies to early Korean Christians, women as well as men.

Later, as technology developed and the economy expanded, a large middle class formed, and Korean Christianity grew throughout every educational and economic class.

Now 30 percent of the population are considered Christians in Korea. As Christianity grows in Korea, so also grows Korean-American Christianity in America. However, the history of Christianity among Korean-American immigrants begins with small seeds in Hawaii.

The History of Korean Immigrants in America

The Korean-American Treaty of Amity and Trade was signed in 1882. The first Korean Embassy opened in Washington D.C. in 1886. The earliest Korean arrivals were a few merchants who were registered as Chinese, and advanced young learners in 1889. Young people were fascinated by Western culture and technology. Educated by American missionaries, they came to this new land to learn. Korea's first president, Dr. Soongman Rhee, had been one of these young progressive people who entered America to learn (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:7).

After these few initial arrivals, laborers, refugee students, picture brides, and political leaders formed the major four groups who emigrated to America in this early period. The first group comprised ninety-three laborers, who arrived in Honolulu in 1903. Hawaii was the first landing place for about 7,000 Koreans from 1903 to 1905. Among them about 6,000 were young men between the ages of twenty and thirty. The rest were young married couples (Kim and

Patterson 1974:111).

Bong-Youn Choy indicates three reasons for Korean emigration to America. The economy in Korea, the need for laborers in Hawaii, and the influence of the American missionary were motivation for some Koreans to migrate to America (1979:73).

The first reason, the economic situation of Korea was disastrous due to the economic invasion by foreign powers, such as Japan, United States and Russia. Each tried to colonize the Korean markets at the end of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth century. There was also the severe famine which swept through the whole country in 1901. Many people suffered from starvation (1979:73). Second, laborers were in short supply in the sugar plantations in Hawaii due to the frequent strikes and migration of Japanese workers. Adding to this shortage was the deportation of Chinese laborers which took place after the annexation of Hawaii to the United States. Third, the influence of the American missionaries, Horace N. Allen, George H. Jones, Horace G. Underwood, and Henry G. Appenzeller. They introduced Hawaii as a paradise on earth and stimulated economically lower class Koreans to emigrate to America in order to help them have a better life in America (Choy 1979:73-74).

Some Korean farm laborers moved to the West Coast and Southern California by 1910 (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:8) from Hawaii. Between 1910-1918, due to Japanese colonialism, 300 Christian students arrived in America to

escape religious persecution. They were refugee students. Between 1910 and 1920, a total of 951 picture brides landed in America to marry the early Korean male immigrants (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:8-9). Refugee political leaders and students escaping Japanese oppression were the major groups to emigrate to America between 1920 and 1940 (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:10). The early Korean immigrants were marginal in number and status (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:7).

A second period of Korean immigration began in 1945 (through 1965), the year of the end of World War II when Korea was liberated from the Japanese occupation. From 1952 to 1973, 12,370 Korean students came to America to study (Kim 1975:10 cited in Kim, Paul Shu 1980:11). From 1950 to 1971, a total of 57,129 Koreans came as immigrants (Shim 1975:20).

The Immigration Act of 1965 opened America's door to many Korean professional and non-professional immigrants (Kim, Illsoo 1981:17). A total of 8,654 Korean immigrants were professional, classified as "professional, technical and kindred workers" from 1959 to 1976, (Kim 1975:30; cited in Kim, Paul Shu 1980:13).

The fourth period of Korean migration began in 1970. The annual quota of 25,000 for Korean immigrants in 1970 was filled with many non-professionals. Many opened up small business such as stationery stores, gift shops, grocery stores, fruit and vegetable stores, dry cleaning shops, and discount stores. Thus, immigrant Korean non-professionals overcame barriers of language and unemployment (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:13). The annual number of new comers

dropped during 1990s. In 1992, new comers numbered about 20,000 (You 1994:19), and in 1994, about 16,000 (The Jung Ang Daily 22 Aug. 1995:sec. 1 p.3). The number of Korean immigrants in America was 982,000 in 1997, ten percent of all Asian immigrants in America (The Korea Times 16 June 1998:A1).

The History of Korean Ethnic Churches

Yu (1988) divides the history of Korean-American churches into the following major periods:

- 1) New beginning with the church in the center, 1903-1910
- 2) Nationalism and the church in turmoil, 1911-1945
- 3) Frustration and the church in decline, 1946-1967
- 4) Explosive growth of the church in confusion, 1968-1987
- 5) The church on the crossroads: maturity or second decline. (1988:76)

Between 1903-1910, Korean immigrant churches were birthed and began to grow by meeting the needs of their congregations in Hawaii. From 1911-1945, however, as the Japanese occupied Korea and Korean immigrant churches turned their focus to the independence of Korea from Japan, the churches were in division due to the diverse political ideology of people. In 1946-1967, the growth of churches in quality and quantity declined. During 1967-1987, Korean-American Christianity grew rapidly as numerous Korean immigrants entered America due to America's open policy to other nationals. However, confusion took place among Korean immigrant churches in this period, due to the absence of a theological foundation. Churches were divided by denominational conflicts, competition between churches, and preferences of people and clergies. The Korean ethnic churches have become mature today,

however, the churches are not growing in quality and quantity (Yu 1988:77-119).

Because one-third of the first Korean immigrants were Christians in Hawaii, the Korean immigrant churches were opened from the initial stage of Korean immigrant life wherever they lived (Choy 1979:253). In 1903-1910, Korean churches were established among Korean Christian laborers in Hawaii and later on the U.S. mainland. The church was the only place where Korean immigrants could come and share their discouragement over dreams broken by working as low paid laborers in a new land. Their common concerns were surviving as Koreans in a foreign land and coping in an environment of severe racial discrimination. The Korean church under dedicated church leadership became the community center for worship and fellowship (Choy 1979:257).

The Korean churches became a home for Korean workers and other immigrants where they could speak their own language; where lost personal dignity, national and cultural identity were restored through sermons and practice of traditional customs; and where they could enjoy each other's presence like a family including sharing authentic Korean meals. English language for adults and Korean language for children were taught in the churches. In addition to providing a homelike environment, early Korean churches in America became the mediators in bridging between Korean and American cultures and encouraged immigrants to cope with their new life (Yu 1988:77-80). These functions of the early Korean-American church continue today.

The immigrant church tried, theologically, to dignify marginal people and the struggles of immigrant life by identifying them with the suffering of Jesus Christ. The church planted hope in people's hearts and they realized God's intervention in their lives. This experience gave them meaning and purpose in immigrant life, they become zealous Christians (Yu 1988:81), and their immigrant life improved:

Movements like self-reform, beautification of environment, and puritanical vigilantism in the Korean community reflected the strong desire of Koreans for a participatory and contributive life in a new world, America. The Korean church played a vital role in the development of the movements by providing the energy and vision as well as leadership. (Yu 1988:83)

From 1911 to 1945, Korean immigrant life was in darkness. The Korean immigrants had lost their home country by Japan's occupation. In the United States, racial discrimination against Asians—Chinese, Japanese, and Korean—spread in this period. Racism against Asians was most extreme in California where the majority of the Asians resided. In 1913, the Webb-Heney Land Law was passed. Any Asian owners of real estate, land or house, could not become citizens. In 1924, the Oriental Exclusion Law was passed; Koreans were not eligible for immigrant status except for students who were allowed only to study. Thus, unlike European immigrants, Korean immigrants were denied the basic human right of family unification (Choy 1979:107).

With their homeland dominated by the Japanese, and marginalized by extreme racial discrimination in the United States, Korean immigrants became patriots and advocates of a free, independent Korea. Korean nationalism and

patriotism became the highest collective values and virtues in the Korean immigrant community and also in the Korean immigrant churches. Korean immigrants wanted Korean national independence more than they sought any personal objective or achievement. However, this political involvement created problems and divisions within the Korean immigrant churches (Yu 1988:86), birthing coldness and divisions among Korean immigrants. Participation in and contribution to their new land also were tragically diminished (Yu 1988:92).

The third period of immigration (1946-1967, "frustration and the church decline") began with the liberation of Korea from Japan in August, 1945. Despite the fulfillment of their ultimate goal of Korea being independent, the Korean immigrant churches again sank into a dark period in that time. During the early period, Korean churches had been planted wherever there were a few Koreans (Yu 1988:93). In 1945 only nine churches were on the directory of Korean churches in the mainland; seven were in California; one was in Chicago; one was in New York City (Kim, Woong-min 1981:55).

There were several interpretations of this adverse phenomenon. Some said that this was caused by the stagnation of the Korean population, influenced by the Oriental Exclusion Law and the quota system in the American immigration policy from 1924 to 1968. This law prevented Koreans from entering America (Kim and Patterson 1974:134). Other scholars, however, did not see the stabilization of Korean population as the major cause (Yu 1988:94). In 1964 there were 42,815 Korean-Americans (Kim, Bok-Lim 1978:9) a population which

should have been enough to vitalize the churches (Yu 1988:94).

One study says that the period of 1946-1967 was “a reconstructive stage” prior to rapid church growth (Yu 1988:95). However Geunhee Yu disagrees with this view. He writes that the rapid church growth in the 1970s and 1980s took place mainly because of a large number of new immigrants (1988:95). Yu rather attributes the cause of church decline in this period to “the church’s uncritical adoption of political ideologies [nationalism and patriotism] as pastoral paradigms and importation of the fundamentalist [legalism] and other-worldly faith orientation [compromise] from Korea” (Yu 1988:96).

In this dark period, Korean immigrant churches faced another dilemma: the conflict of national and cultural identity between parents and their children. Second and third generations began losing their Korean identity and Korean patriotism because they were assimilating into America so fast. Korean-American Christians generally perceived that during the period 1946-1967, young people were leaving their churches when Korean immigrant churches failed to meet youth’s needs and attempted to impose the first generation’s values on them. (Yu 1988:97, 98).

As Korean churches began to notice the problem of losing half their large second generation population, they tried to apply a new strategy of narrowing the gaps. Nevertheless, it did not work and churches were hurt badly (Yu 1988:98). This is illustrated by a Korean-American pastor:

Though the parents badly wanted to keep their children in the church and the church responded to the desire giving bilingual services and appointing the second generation members as church officers, most

American-born Koreans left church, once they became mature enough to live an independent life. (Kim, Woong-min 1981:53)

The growth of the church declined badly in this period (1946-1967) in quantity and in quality; a few survived (Yu 1988:98-99).

In 1965, reform of the immigration law opened the door for a large number of Korean immigrants. Explosive Korean immigrant church growth took place in the period of 1965-1987 in America, mainly due to the large number of Korean immigrants (Yu 1988:99). The total number of Koreans in the U. S. was 70,000 in 1970. The number grew to 799,000 in 1992 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992 cited in Nah 1993:289).

In 1965, seventeen Korean churches existed in America (Kim, Woong-min 1981:72). According to the Philadelphia Inquirer (May 30, 1988:sec. B cited in Hurh and Kim 1990b:19), seventy-five Korean immigrant churches opened in 1970 (Hurh and Kim 1990b:19). In 1981, there were about 1000 churches (Kim, Woong-min 1981:72). There were 2000 churches in 1990, the Philadelphia Inquirer claimed (May 30 1988:sec. B cited in Hurh and Kim 1990b:19) and over 2500 churches actively exist today (The Korea Times Feb., 22, 1996:sec. 4).

Yu attributes fast Korean-American church growth to the religious character of Korean people and contextualized theology. Korean Christians seem to believe in divine election and predestination. Their view holds that God chose the Korean Christians to be a second Israel. Korean-American Christians interpret their immigration to America as an exodus ("Third Canaan Theology") by God's election ("Pilgrim's Theology") (Yu 1988:100-101).

In addition to these two major factors, several others contributed to the growth of Korean Christianity in America. A study shows many (sample 316, 51.3%) were already Christians in Korea (Hurh and Kim 1984:129). This is due to the "church boom" in Korea during the 1970s, in which six new churches were being started every day (Kane 1981:67,80).

The strategy of meeting the needs of immigrant congregations has been a major contribution to Korean Christian growth in America from the early 1900s to today (Yu 1988:102). In the early days (1903-1905), the majority of immigrants were uneducated bachelor laborers (age 20-30) who came to Hawaiian plantations (Hurh and Kim 1984:42). But recent immigrants, after 1968, were generally highly educated, and immigrate with their families (Hurh and Kim 1984:57-58). Their purpose for immigration was not for labor nor for political refuge; their purpose was to "preserve and enhance their status but also to establish themselves in this new world" (Yu 1988:104).

However, the reality of immigrant life contradicted their dreams and visions. The majority of Korean immigrants have been unable to find professional jobs in their fields. These problems have been attributed to the language barrier, cultural conflicts, and racial discrimination (Choy 1979:220).

The Korean ethnic church has played the major role of caring for the unmet needs of immigrants by providing spiritual and social fellowship and by creating a "microcosm" of Korean society (Hurh and Kim 1984:135). Thus, ethnic identity is found in ethnic churches (Min 1992:1374). However, holding a

strong ethnic identity by excluding American culture and customs may bind ethnic people within an "ethnic trap" (Yu 1988:107).

Ethnic churches face the danger of separation from the main society as they are trapped by ethnicity. This strong ethnicity makes the second generation feel excluded as they are assimilated within the core American culture; so they often leave their church and faith (Yu 1988:107-108).

This ethnic trap tends to create ethnocentric theology in the Korean churches in America. The immigrants' life process has been interpreted from the pulpits of the Korean ethnic churches as embodying a divine purpose and election. This ethnocentric belief tends to produce life isolated from other ethnic groups and from the mainstream of America. In addition denominational conflict, divisions, and competition arose among Korean ethnic churches (Yu 1988:108).

What is the condition of Korean ethnic churches today? They are organized. Church buildings have been built. The number of members has grown. It appears that the churches have grown almost to full capacity. However, at the same time, it appears that the churches have begun to decline in quality and in quantity. In order to prevent this situation, they need "to make a decisive and radical turn toward a new day of maturity" (Yu 1988:118). Thus, this is the time the church needs to turn its focus from the emphasis of numerical growth to the emphasis of quality growth and of making disciples, especially among Korean-American second generation, whose population will outgrow the first generation Korean-Americans soon if America closes her doors (Yu

1988:114).

So far we have described how the Korean ethnic church became the center of life for Korean immigrants, and has strived to meet the needs of the Korean immigrants throughout the short Korean ethnic church history in America. In the next section, the function of the Korean ethnic church today will be examined.

The Function of the Korean Ethnic Church Today

“A people experiencing major culture change tend to be very receptive” to Christianity, more so than those who are not experiencing such changes, George Hunter points out (1987:80). Korean society springs from one race, one culture, and one language (Kim, Tae Hwan 1984:79). Korean immigrants experience major cultural changes as they move to America where diverse races, cultures, and languages co-exist. This is one of the reasons non-believers become receptive to Christianity in America.

One of the major distinctions between Korean and American culture is family structure. Individualism and independence are practices in American social structure (Augsburger 1986:200) whereas family and extended family-oriented lifestyle is practiced in Korea (Brandt and Chang 1980:255). Though modernization produces changes in kinship systems, particularly in rapidly growing urban areas, Korean family ties are still stronger than the norm within American culture.

One of the Korean immigrant’s basic needs is belonging in order to cope

with the new life in a foreign land (Hurh and Kim 1990b:20). The Korean church provides the atmosphere of “a pseudo extended-family” to the Korean immigrants (Kim, Illsoo 1981:199). Besides, they need to connect, to make friends with Koreans so they can share the stress, frustration, fear, and discouragement of immigrant life as well as future hope in a new land. The church is the main place to meet large groups of Koreans (Min 1992:1381).

A small church is a better place to have a close friendship network than a large church. However, large churches offer home cell groups to provide close fellowships by dividing members according to geographic area. This district home cell meeting is called Kuyok Yebae (district worship service) and meets at members’ homes where a worship service is combined with a hospitality meal (Min 1992:1382). Such fellowship provides “church in the home” in a giving and receiving environment--a meeting to fill each other’s needs (Cho and Hurston 1983:273).

Korean immigrant churches play a major role in preserving Korean culture and customs in various ways. Only the Korean language is used in adult worship services. Bilingual services are provided for children. Several Korean churches in big cities provide weekend school to teach children Korean language and customs (Min 1992:1383).

Korean immigrant churches celebrate traditional Korean holidays by having fellowship and sharing meals. The churches teach children and youth Korean family values such as filial piety (hyodo) and the virtues of loyalty

(chungsong). These are basic Confucian teachings; Korean churches teach this family value and this virtuous conduct to children, as these are also biblical values (Wells 1990:11,13).

Korean ethnic churches serve new immigrants by providing various kinds of information and assistance as they struggle to settle in a new land (Min 1992:1385). Because of language barriers, Korean immigrants have difficulty seeking assistance from English-speaking social services. According to Kyung-Hee Nah, several researchers show that the initial language problem of new immigrants is a universal matter (1993:289). Most Korean immigrants are not able initially to function on their own, mainly because of language problems. Thus, the church assists them by performing all kinds of needed services.

Information about employment, jobs, housing, health care, social security, children's education, interpreting service, and paper work is provided by the church. The staff of the church often help some members with legal problems. Korean language schools and Bible schools are opened. Job training seminars and conferences for family problems and for new life adjustment are held by the church (Min 1992:1385).

Many Korean-Americans open "labor-intensive small businesses"--small groceries, vegetable shops, fast foods, dry cleaning, gift shops, small general stores or other services--by using family labor (Lee, Dong Ok 1992:266); or people work as blue collar workers in American society (Min 1992:1389). Among 96 immigrant families observed by Nah, about half the husbands had

worked in white-collar jobs in Korea; but in the U.S., more than sixty percent of the same group were self-employed in a small business, and only about thirty percent were employed in a white-collar occupation (1993:291). Professionals who work in non-professional areas, despite their education, training, and experience due to language and other barriers, have a need for status. Although many Korean immigrants have succeeded financially by operating small blue-collar businesses, they are dissatisfied with their social position. Therefore, the Korean immigrant church seems to try to meet the status need of immigrants by offering voluntary lay leadership in a hierarchical order (Min 1992:1389).

Korean immigrants are drawn to the church for her "identification with people, being indigenous, and meeting people's needs" (Hunter 1993a). George Hunter said that at the 1993 Annual Church Growth Conference, Peter Wagner called this growing movement of Korean Christianity in America a Korean ethnic "people movement" of a "web movement" type (Hunter 1993b).

If this is in fact a "people movement," there are five great advantages according to McGavran:

1. The church is rooted in numerous places and becomes independent economically.
2. The church is naturally indigenous.
3. The spontaneous expansion of the church is natural.
4. These movements have enormous possibilities for growth.

5. These movements provided a sound pattern for becoming a Christian.
(1982:88-92)

Does this mean the future of the Korean ethnic church is secure? An answer to this question would be positive if there were only first generation Korean immigrants in the United States. However, the Korean ethnic church also consists of second generation and 1.5 generation Korean-American children. Thus, the Korean church must not neglect providing these children with a sound pattern for becoming Christians. Nevertheless, we hear from the youth that they do not feel at home in the Korean indigenous church. Why do they feel that way? Obviously, there seems to be a conflict. Their home life reflects struggle too. These issues are addressed in the next section.

Korean-American Youth and Church Life

According to Byoungsik Choo, one of the primary reasons for attending Korean-American ethnic churches is maintaining Korean ethnicity through the touch of Korean culture and structure for Korean-American youth (Choo 1992 :17).

Most Korean ethnic churches provide educational services for children on Saturday and/or Sunday or once a week at least. Churches offer Korean language, history, custom, folk dance, and etiquette (Min 1992:1383). The churches teach children and the youth Korean values such as filial piety for parents or grandparents (Min 1992:1384).

Filial piety (hyodo) is a strong basic teaching of Confucianism in Korean

society; thus honoring, respecting, and cherishing parents and family solidarity are taught and practiced in the churches as well (Wells 1990:11,13). However, as the children grow up they tend to develop more individualized lives, although the first generation tries to teach Korean values to the younger generation in churches. As the youth graduate from high school, they seem to leave the church and faith for various reasons.

Lyle E. Schaller indicates that American young people tend to leave church often shortly before high school graduation and during the four or five years following high school graduation (1978:2). However, a former youth pastor, an American, who worked for a few years in a Korean ethnic church in New York City, reported to me that one of the major reasons that young people seldom participate in church activities is the cultural conflict between the first and second generation. Another reason for the decline in attendance is that many of the youth are entering college.

That former youth pastor said the demands for filial piety, speaking in Korean, and keeping Korean customs are major issues of conflict. His youth programs had often been interrupted by the elders, who perceived the programs as irrelevant to Korean values. Church building projects also had a negative impact on the youth ministry, since the building projects received higher administrative priority and support.

The problem of ineffective youth ministry prevails also in America (Borthwick 1983:76). A prevailing attitude in the church is to see youth "as

belonging but not as an integral part of the church” (Cromer 1972:83). A change in this attitude of the church was suggested by some scholars and youth ministers.

A seminary professor warned that churches must view their youth ministers as “a professional and ordainable ministry rather than just a steppingstone to the pastorate” (Borthwick 1983:76). One youth advocate says that the church needs committed youth workers because teenagers “respond best to relationships that are stable and trustworthy” (Borthwick 1983:76).

Sara Little suggests that Christian youth should be viewed and treated as “young laity” (Cromer 1972:83). She further explains:

Reference to “ministry” as a task given to the whole church may have been misleading to some readers. This interpretation is consistent with a recovery of the Reformation—and biblical—view of the priesthood of the Body of Christ. . . . But all believers and their children “are baptized into the Christian priesthood. And everyone who is baptized shares fully, and should share equally, in their priesthood of the body.” Young laity then are called to contribute their gifts, to assume their tasks within the overall division of function and labor. They receive and respond to the gospel, and are equipped for their service, as laity, as parts of the church, not as a separate organization. (Little 1968:29)

Youth need to be acknowledged as “first-class” church members, rather than treated as “the church of tomorrow” (Cromer 1972:83).

Korean-American Youth and Family Life

The Weekly Jung Ang News (June 25, 1994:28) reports that a Korean father was kicking his Korean-American teenage son at Kimpo Airport in Korea. The family just arrived on a plane from the United States. Unlike America, no police arrest was made because arresting a father at the report of his son is

unthinkable and unacceptable in the Korean society.

The reason for the father kicking his son can be traced back to a time when the father was arrested by the police in the United States. A police report was made by his son, because the son was disciplined by the father once with a few strikes to correct the youth's repeated wrong behaviors. This incident so disillusioned the father about living in America that he decided to move back to Korea where he could discipline his children without police interference.

Worldview differences and language barriers create a communication gap and lead to relational problems between the parents' generation and their children's generation. Young people influenced by individualism become assertive and express their own rights in logical arguments; this attitude conflicts with family oriented attitudes of parents (Paek 1989:83-90). Paul Shu Kim's study shows that meaningful communication is often absent between Korean parents and children (1980:85).

In-Gyeong Kim Lundell identifies the typical problems of immigrants. He suggests the old generation immigrants face "a major crisis of identity" as they experience change in culture, language, and social systems. The second generation also faces an identity crisis between their parents' culture and their nation's culture. The 1.5 generation struggles to adjust to school life and becomes insecure and lonely (1993:12,14).

The lack of time to teach and to be with children due to long working hours stresses parents. It is difficult for parents to see their children losing their

traditional identity and values and assimilating into American culture (Nah 1993:293-294).

We see this phenomenon of young people losing their traditions in other cultures also. One study observed a Cuban family placed in a culturally diverse context in which parents and children were exposed to both Hispanic and mainstream culture. The study found that family problems were often created by intergenerational and acculturational differences due to young people acculturating far more quickly to the mainstream than their parents, who tended to remain far more attached to their traditions (Szapocznik, et al. 1978:129).

School is the major place for immigrant children to learn new values, customs, and the ideology of their host country, according to a study done with Southeast Asian children in the United States. For an example, in daily life “Children choose less respectful ways of relating to adults, new ideas about boy-girl relationships and sexuality” (Lefley 1989:253). In the acculturation process--as children grow detached from parental culture--American individualism influences children most; they become independent and assertive; their life goal changes; their heroes change. Consequently, family quarrels arise as changes take place in the children’s lives (Lefley 1989:253). This acculturation process of Southeast Asian children applies to Korean children as well.

The Leadership Pattern in Korean Ethnic Churches

It is known that the traditional authoritarian Korean leadership style has carried over in the Korean ethnic church in the United States. Douglas E.

Wingeier writes that the practice of "directive, assertive, controlling" Korean traditional leadership patterns tend to create conflicts and misunderstandings with American co-workers and with second generation young people in Korean-American churches. The youth are already accustomed to and have learned egalitarian and cooperative leadership styles. They now expect "more opportunity of mutuality, ownership, and participation in decision making, and more shared leadership and responsibility" in leadership operation. There is a growing need for new leadership model developments in Korean-American churches (1990:84-85).

As the need for new leadership models arises in Korean-American churches in America as suggested by Wingeier, the need to depart from the authoritative leadership model arises in churches in Korea as well, according to Stephen Sikyong Pak (1988:1).

The leadership structure in Korean society and churches is transitioning to becoming more democratic compared to the strong traditional Confucian leadership pattern. However, the authoritarian and hierarchical leadership still predominates in most churches. Often Korean church leaders are more authoritarian than any secular leaders, because the congregation tends to believe that the church leader, especially the pastor, is divinely appointed. This authoritarian leadership approach once contributed to the growth of the church in Korean society, but this un-compromising leadership pattern needs to be changed to embrace all ideas from the congregation to develop quality growth in

the church (Pak 1988:1-2, 4, 13, 14).

Summary

This chapter began with recent developments in the Korean immigrant population in the U.S.A. The development of Christianity in the Koreans' homeland was discussed. Korean Christianity in America was introduced.

Within a little over 100 years of Protestant history in Korea, Christianity's percentage of growth has exceeded its growth among most other nations in the world. The chapter discussed the contributions of the early missionaries and mission emphases and their factors of success.

The chapter reported from Paul Shu Kim's literature that the history of Korean immigrants could be divided into four periods (1903-1945, 1945-1965, 1965-1970, 1970-today). The discussion of the history of the Korean ethnic church in America followed through the four different periods in Geunhee Yu's study: 1903-1910, 1911-1945, 1946-1967, 1968-today.

The problems of Korean-American youth in church settings and in family life were introduced. The leadership pattern in the Korean ethnic church in America and in the church in Korea was discussed last. The worldview differences between Koreans and Americans will be addressed in the next chapter as an indispensable perspective for understanding the changes in Korean/American youth and for engaging in culturally relevant ministry with them.

CHAPTER 3

The Religious Background of Korean-Americans

Worldview-Religions

Mrs. Higgins, a Korean, complained to her American husband, an army chaplain, about his New Year's Day sermon on the way home after the service. She said, "Today is new beginning of the year, you should have preached about God's blessing over the congregation in order to encourage them, instead of preaching how to discipline yourself for spiritual growth." This conversation took place on the first day of January, 1997, in Kellen, Texas. For Chaplain Higgins, why is personal discipline a significant subject to preach on New Year's Day?; and for Mrs. Higgins, why is preaching God's blessing important on the first day of the year? If we trace their cultural backgrounds, we will understand why this little argument began between an American husband and a Korean wife.

To understand the Korean American, one must understand the distinct worldview that characterizes Korean culture, particularly its roots in Shamanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and also ancestor worship. This chapter examines those themes. The next chapter will complete our exploration of Korean cultural identity by delineating Korean self-understanding, values, and social structure in comparison with American culture.

The common worldview of people in a particular society results from learning and sharing the way of perceiving the world collectively (Burnett 1992:13,20). Korea's worldview collectively has been influenced throughout her

history by Shamanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and most recently Christianity (Lundell 1993:53). However, Koreans also created their own unique spirituality, “*ol*” (spirit), through recreating or transforming foreign elements of belief and culture from these religions (Ryu 1985:310). Before tracing the history of these three religions predating Christianity, the term “worldview” requires definition. Among many definitions of worldview, one by Michael Kearney is especially appropriate to this study.

The world view of a people is their way of looking at reality. It consists of basic assumptions and images that provide a more or less coherent, though not necessarily accurate, way of thinking about the world. A world view comprises images of Self and of all that is recognized as not-Self, plus ideas about relationships between them. (1984:41)

Darrell Whiteman defines worldview as “the central set of concepts and presuppositions that provide people with their basic assumptions about reality” (1983:478). Paul Hiebert defines worldview as “the basic assumptions about reality which lie behind the beliefs and behavior of a culture” (1985:45). The basic assumptions operate cognitively, affectively, and evaluatively. “People perceive the world differently because they make different assumptions about reality” (Hiebert 1985:45,46). The dimensions of a worldview include that which is “individual, corporate, personal, social, geographical (Asian or Eastern), natural, supernatural, personal, impersonal, mechanic, or organic” (Lundall 1993:48). “World view integrates our culture” (Hiebert 1985:48).

Hiebert suggests both “mechanical” worldview analogies and “organic” worldview analogies (Hiebert 1982:41). A mechanistic worldview is treating

living beings as if they are machines. In this mechanistic model “right formulas” are needed in order to control nature, living beings, or human beings. In other words, humans can change their own destiny if they use the right formula, an impersonal force. In this worldview, for an example, the labor of human beings can be treated as if people are machines, working for the purpose of production. Feelings, problems, and relationships in living beings are ignored. This worldview is prevalent in the American society, unlike other parts of the world where they treat nature and human beings in a more personal way (Hiebert 1985:120).

The “organic” worldview analogy, on the other hand, is “to see things as living beings in relationship to each other” (Hiebert 1982:41). People who have the organic worldview believe that diseases are from a living evil spirit. In this organic worldview, Christians see God as a living heavenly Father in terms of relationship (Hierbert 1982:41).

People explain everyday reality through their culture’s worldview; it explains causes of reality, causes of happenings, remedies, and prevention. Diagnosis and the methods of treatment for sickness or disease and prevention of misfortune differ according to different worldview perspectives (Lundell 1993:49). For example, a car accident might be regarded from an American worldview as a natural incident caused by driver’s error, or by bad weather, or by mechanical failure; from shamanist perspective, however, it may be interpreted as a misfortune caused by malevolent spirits.

In Korea, not only in earlier centuries but in recent years Shamanism is still practiced (Hard 1989:45). However, it seems that the practice of shamanist rituals is hardly seen today in the Korean cities; it appears mainly in the countryside. When a member of shamanist family fell sick or met with misfortune, a shaman performed rituals in order to bring help from the benevolent spirits of family ancestors to cure the patient or to restore the loss of fortune. Thus the faith of Shamanism is expressed through the shamanistic rituals in order to bring out answers from underlying causes. In this way, underlying meaning is expressed in a cultural form through folk religion.

A worldview performs several functions for a people including “explanation, evaluation, psychological reinforcement, integration, and adaptation” (Kraft 1979:54-57). The worldview explains how the traditional customs were created and have developed in certain places. The Korean worldview is expressed through “folklore, riddles, songs, maxims, mask dances, games, and legends,” since these were originated, recreated, and developed according to the Korean worldview. Well-known legends which reflect the Korean worldview include the legends of origination of the Korean nation, filial piety of children for their parents, and the loyalty of wives to their husbands (Lundell 1993:51).

In addition to providing an explanation for one’s reality, other elements such as the conduct, behavior, and attitudes of people are evaluated according to the standards of ethics and values of a society, as moral or immoral and as

proper or improper. Thus the "educational, political, social, communicational and economic structure" of a society operates according to worldview assumptions including the value system, and this operation gives "meaning, sanctions and judgment" to a society (Lundell 1993:51).

As an example, polygamy is considered an immoral arrangement in Korea, as well as in Western countries and in biblical revelation. In Pictorial Bible Dictionary, monogamy is the relationship of marriage which is reflected in the relationship of God and Israel (Hos. 2:9; Jer. 3:14; 31:32; Isa. 54:5) in the Old Testament. The New Testament relates Christ as the bridegroom and believers as the bride (11 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-32; Rev. 19:7). Both texts consider idolatry, as immoral and sinful, thus polygamy would also be considered immoral (Tenney 1967:513). In Korea, if one is judged guilty of polygamy or even if a wife sues a husband for an adulterous affair, he must serve a jail sentence. However, polygamy is a way of life all over Africa; having many descendants represents the "immortality" of a family; a large family earns respect by a community; many children are the source of farming labor; corporate life is more desirable among wives in domestic work or raising children; it reduces unfaithfulness and prostitution (Mbiti 1969:142). Thus, polygamy is regarded as an ideal marriage pattern in Africa (Mann 1989:13).

Wayne Dye writes that certain actions in a society cannot be judged by another worldview perspective because the standard of right and wrong judgment comes out from their culture (1976:28). Thus, the case of polygamy

involving a new convert to Christianity needs to be dealt with delicately and with care in that cultural context. Many tragedies and damages have occurred as some missionaries tried to bring new converts out of the polygamous marriage system right after their conversion, without provision of financial and emotional support.

In Korea a pastor does not sit with crossed legs in the pulpit of the church; a student does not sit with legs stretched out in front of the professor in the classroom. These behaviors are considered disrespectful in Korea since formality in public is encouraged through Confucian teachings. Ice-breaking humor at the beginning of a sermon or public speech seems to elicit a positive response from an audience in America, whereas using humor in the beginning of a sermon in the Korean church is considered a break in the reverent atmosphere.

The worldview of a society develops rituals to strengthen people's minds and attitudes when they face problems or celebrations. Some societies believe the difficult times of childbirth, death, sickness, or natural disaster can be overcome through the performance of various rituals of primal religions. The rituals celebrating puberty, marriage, planting, the new year, and harvest also give richness to life. Thus "psychological reinforcement" takes place (Kraft 1979:55).

Common attitudes, common behavior, and common ceremonies, due to a common worldview, give confirmation among people in a society. This

integration of common elements creates the core culture of a society. However, when need for an innovation arises due to change in a society, the worldview “perceives, filters, conceptualizes, and validates for the sake of systematization” (Lundell 1993:51).

The result of either integrating or changing the worldview of a society produces the values of a society, and the values become goals for people to pursue. In Korea, filial piety is the most important ethical value and one of the most carefully practiced norms of the society. A daughter-in-law’s marriage relationship, child rearing methods, and domestic affairs can be brought under her mother-in-law’s control (Lundell 1993:52), since society accepts this control as a normal behavior in an extended family system. However, as the country is modernized, people are beginning to value the nuclear family system above the extended family system. Consequently, the dominance of parents-in-law is disappearing as the extended family system is disappearing. Many married children now have their own households apart from their parents.

When the need of cultural change arises in a society or in a person’s life, their worldview needs adjustment. When the adaptation process is accompanied by a modified attitude in order to embrace the change, “revitalization” takes place in a society or in an individual’s life (Kraft 1979:57).

Worldview conflicts may be inevitable between second generation and first generation Korean-Americans at home and in church because they perceive reality differently. Both generations can gain understanding by learning the

major distinctions between the Korean worldview and the American worldview.

Shamanism, Buddhism and Confucianism

Core Korean cultural elements come from an integration of Shamanism, Buddhism and Confucianism; the three were synthesized during certain periods, at other times one dominated (Park, Bong-Bae 1972:33). Shamanism is considered Korea's original and longest-lasting religion; Buddhism was adopted from China in 372 AD during the Three Kingdoms period. The period of the introduction of Confucianism into Korea from China is unknown (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:33, 34).

During the Silla Dynasty (668-936 AD), although Shamanism dominated the other two religions, these three religious elements were synthesized. During the Koryo Dynasty, which followed the Silla Dynasty, beginning in AD 936, Buddhism prevailed as the national religion. Buddhist monks became powerful and functioned as ministers to the kings, influencing political affairs until the nation became corrupted by the power of Buddhism (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:34).

The Yi Dynasty (1392-1910 AD), the last dynasty in Korea, was established as the result of a political revolution by a Confucian general, Yi, Sung Kwe, against the corrupt Buddhist kingdom. Confucianism was upgraded as the upper class religion and became the national religion of the Yi Dynasty, as Yi became first king of the dynasty. As a result of this revolution, the power of Buddhism weakened but did not disappear; its influence remained on the lower classes only as a private religion and the number of monks was limited.

Shamanism also remained a private religion of the lower class. These phenomena continued throughout the Yi Dynasty. The teachings of Confucianism form the core of the social and ethical code from the Yi Dynasty until now (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:34). As Confucianism has become the foundation of teaching and norms for social structure in Korean society, Buddhism has contributed its doctrine to the philosophical aspect of Korean's minds, and superstitious beliefs were created by the influence of Shamanism (Kim, Jae-Un 1991:163).

Shamanism

As a culture and religious tradition, Shamanism has influenced Korean life throughout the five thousand years of Korean history from the beginning of the nation until today (Lundell 1993:53). Shamanism alone became a major influence on people's lives during the Silla Dynasty, but it was weakened by the other two religions and had little power during the Koryo and Yi Dynasties (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:34).

Korean Shamanism originally came from the Mongolian nations. It did not stem from Buddhism nor from other religions of other nations. Thus Korean Shamanism has its own unique character in superstitions, and rituals, and has its own primitive worldview for the universe, nature and the souls of human beings (Clark 1981:174).

The term shaman appears "to be derived from a native Tungus name for priest, 'saman.'" The Koreans call the whole cult of Shamanism "Sinkyo, or Spirit

worship” (Clark 1981:174).

Shamans were highly respected for their influence on political affairs and they became powerful priest figures nationwide in primitive Korean society. However, as Shamanism lost power to Buddhism in the three Kingdoms and Koryo dynasties, the power of shamans was confined. As the practice of Shamanism was downgraded to a family cult by the power of Confucianism, the shaman’s role was limited to the women in the Yi Dynasty (Chang 1982:25-27).

Shamanism offers almost no social ethics teachings for community life. Reasons for natural disasters or human tragedies are also not raised in Shamanism. Rather, it seeks an escape from a calamity or a misfortune (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:33) and it tends to be “human-centered realism or pragmatism” (Kim, Jae-Un 1991:73). Korean Shamanism is described by in the World

Christian Encyclopedia:

It involves a strong belief in the influence of departed ancestral spirits as well as nature spirits who inhabit trees, rocks and other natural phenomena. These in turn must be propitiated or otherwise controlled either by individuals or by priests (shamans, mudang) to ensure health, fertility and healing and success in life’s ventures. There is a strong emphasis on exorcism and healing, with extensive use of chanting and drums. Belief in a supreme being also appears to be ancient; and this idea has been strengthened by contact with Christianity. (Barrett 1982:441)

Shamanism promotes the function of the shaman, or mudang in Korean. He or she holds strong power as a medium between the spiritual and the natural realms to change people’s destiny, to heal the sick, or to deliver from bad spirits through a petition. Shamans can control and manipulate divine or good

ancestral spirits (Kim, Sung-Tae 1988:61), or the spirits of nature, such as mountains, trees, rivers, stone, the sun, or other celestial bodies depending on the events (Owen 1975:40,76-80, 240). Thus a shamanist may be able to grasp the concept of Jesus being the mediator between God and people, while having difficulty understanding the reality of the Trinity.

There are generally two types of shamans in Korea: god-descended shamans, which is the basic type of Siberia, and hereditary shamans. A god-descended shaman is that one from an ordinary background who becomes a shaman by the selection of a god after the "shaman sickness." This type of shaman is not learned or cultivated. The shaman sickness symbolizes "the breakdown of the order of everyday life" and they become the possessors of the power of direct communication with spirits (Choe 1989:224). Hereditary shamans descend from generation to generation (Lundell 1993:58).

Although the majority of shamans are women (Lee, Jung Young 1996:120, Owen 1975:282), some male shamans also perform the rituals; however, they wear female ritual attire (Owen 1975:150, Kendall 1985:27). Female shamans can wear male attire sometimes (Lee, Jung Young 1996:79). In early Shamanism, male shamans dominated the rituals. However, as Confucianism became the male-oriented religion, male shamans almost disappeared (Kendall 1985:50).

According to Shamanism, three dimensions exist in the universe. The highest god, with the good gods, resides in the highest dimension where the

spiritual heavenly place is located. Humans, animals, and nature are in the middle dimension, or the physical world. Evil spirits reside in the lowest dimension, or hell. Although no specific social ethical guidelines or teachings are presented as with Buddhism or Confucianism, Shamanism believes in general that good deeds or sinful activities in the present life will send people either to the higher or lower spiritual world after death (Billings and et al. 1983:49).

The supreme deity of Shamanism is called "Hananim" (Owen 1975:240), "the Great One" (Owen 1975:69). No concept exists of Hananim's function relating to creation or salvation or intervention for the affairs of the universe or for persons. Hananim merely indicates the title of the highest ranking god among the gods. The other gods are pantheons of lesser "supernatural personages" who are viewed as good or bad interveners in the daily lives of the Korean people by protecting them or by bringing good events or bad fortunes (Owen 1975:240). "Buddha is one of the lesser gods" of Shamanism's various gods (Clark 1981:196). The spirits of mountain, water, earth, and wind rank under the gods (Moon 1982: 28 cited in Lundell 1993:55). "The supremacy of Hananim" is recognized not only in Shamanism but also in Korean Buddhism (Clark 1981:196). Korean Protestant Christians also took the word "Hananim" gave the meaning of the English word for God. The Roman Catholics adopted "Chunchu" in Chinese as their name for God (Clark 1981:196).

Sung-Tae Kim suggests that some of the negative influences on the

churches by Shamanism are an extreme emphasis on the outward gifts of the Holy Spirit (speaking in tongues, burning heart, smelling of fragrance, healing, etc.), the shamanistic elements of prayer houses (they consider mountain sites the most blessed places), and the charismatic leadership of pastors (Kim, Sung-Tae 1988:30, 79, 82). Kim also attributes the lack of contribution to society by the many mega-churches to shamanistic influence that Christians have a self-centered “magical” attitude of self blessedness as the result of participation in services and giving sacrificial offerings (1988:26).

Buddhism

Buddhism is an individualistic religion seeking to help individuals enter a state of mind that frees them from the sufferings of this world primarily caused by greed, desire, and passion. Due to the emphasis on personal spiritual growth through the practice of isolation, ethical teaching for society and community life is lacking; active involvement with the community is discouraged (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:33). However, Buddhism contains more ethical teaching than Shamanism. Unlike Christianity, the problem of human sin is not the major issue in Buddhism; rather it deals with the mystical question of human suffering. Thus Buddhists seek to become free from suffering rather than free from sin. Unlike Confucianism, which emphasizes family and community life with strong societal ethical teaching, the individualistic approach toward suffering in both Buddhism and Shamanism leads them to integrate easily (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:33).

The main contents of the general doctrine of Buddhism are “Four Noble

Truths, the Eight-Fold path, Twelve Nidanas, Three Refuges, Karma, Five Shandas, Great Ocean of Life and Death, and Transmigration" (Clark 1981:86). Korean Buddhists appropriated these doctrines without adding additional tenets (Clark 1981:86). For the Buddhist, life is full of evil and people are bound by miserable circumstances. All men, demons and even the gods themselves, were bound to the wheel of life, ascending or descending in successive rebirths, according to an exact system of retribution, exactly according to the Karma merit accumulated in various lives. Down through hells or up through the multitudinous heavens, it was all one. They were all on the Wheel (Clark 1981:86).

The definition of karma, J.P. McDermott writes, is a person's act and its ethical or physical consequences (1981:401). Therefore, if one performs many good deeds in the present life, one will be rewarded in the next life by being born into a noble home; if one does bad deeds in the present life, one might be born as an animal in the wheel of the next life.

Many examples of the karma merit appear in the history of Buddhism. In a current example, Thai child prostitutes believe that though they were sold by their parents, their activities as prostitutes to help family finances will be rewarded in their next life. Because they hope that they will be born into rich families in the next life, they do not react and do not have any bitterness against their parents. Thus they perceive that their behavior is meritorious rather than sinful. For missionaries, teaching them the concept of sin in biblical truth is a

complicated task because they seldom grasp the teaching. According to a missionary, that reason is why so many Thai Christians still live their in old sinful lifestyle. However, sins need to be understood in relationship to the standard of people's culture in order to deal with them carefully.

A state or a path for a Buddhist to pursue as the ultimate goal is called "nirvana," "a consciousness of peace and rest; a perfect, passionless happiness" (Seamands 1973:170). Cravings for the desires of life can cease and in that state, suffering no longer exists (Seamands 1973:170). However, a Korean Buddhist changed this concept of the state to the Western Paradise of Bliss, Keu Rak (Lee, Hyun Mo 1992:74). Salvation comes from any method that might give an individual release from the suffering on the wheel of life. Buddha tried crucifying the body in order to obtain a peaceful state, but later disregarded that method. Then he grasped the truth of the Four Noble Truths: "the truth of all life is suffering; this suffering was due to desire; the way to release was by getting rid of desire; one could rid himself of desire by following the Eight-Fold Path" (Clark 1981:87). The Eight-Fold Path involves:

- 1) Right views, i.e. freedom from illusion and superstitions.
- 2) Right aspirations, i.e. desire to attain salvation. Desire to live in love with all men. Desire to serve all living things.
- 3) Right speech, i.e. that which is kind, frank and truthful. No abuse, or angry word. No slander or gossip. No impure or bitter word.
- 4) Right conduct, i.e. peaceful, honest and pure. This includes the Ten Commandments.
- 5) Right livelihood, i.e., one must earn a living without hurting any live thing.
- 6) Right effort, i.e. self-discipline, self-control.
- 7) Right mindfulness, i.e. be not weary in well doing.
- 8) Right rapture, i.e. meditation upon the transitoriness of life, the frailty of men, the sorrows of existence, and the certainty of the end to it all.

(Clark 1981:86, 87)

There are ten commandments for the Korean Buddhists to keep; the first five of the ten are required of the laity:

- 1) Not to kill any living thing.
- 2) Not to steal.
- 3) Not to commit impurity of any kind.
- 4) Not to lie.
- 5) Not to drink wine.

The remaining five commandments were binding only on the monks and the nuns:

- 6) Not to sleep or sit on a high, broad bed; i.e., not to be lazy.
- 7) Not to possess gold, silver, or jewels.
- 8) Not to use flowers or perfumes for personal adornment.
- 9) Not to eat at unseasonable hours.
- 10) Not to be greedy. (Kim 1977: 78 cited in Hyun 1990:26)

Unlike philosophers of his day, Buddha did not raise philosophical questions such as, "Is the world finite or not? Had it a beginning and will it have an end? Is there a god? Is personality eternal?" Buddha's only concern was seeking his own ways of being released from suffering, "the fate of the Wheel" of this physical world. It was a practical approach; the existence of a personal God was denied by Buddha (Clark 1981: 88).

Korean Buddhism (Mahayana Buddhism) can be called "shamanized Buddhism" because of its syncretism with Korean Shamanism by creating the deity figure bodhisattvas, who aids people to go through their salvation, and by adopting the concept of Western Paradise (Lee, Hyun Mo 1992:75). Buddhism has been rejected by Confucianists because its teaching contradicts theirs.

However, Buddhist impact on Korean culture through its values, non-violence, non-attachment, and emphasis on Great Enlightenment is undeniable.

Nevertheless, the Buddhist tendency of “exilic isolationism” which causes detachment from social activities or concerns needs to be corrected (Park, Sung-Bae 1982:85).

Confucianism

Confucianism became the “official ideology” of social ethical teaching of the Yi Dynasty (1392-1910) by laying the foundation of the social and political structure of the nation during that era (Lundell 1993:74,76). Confucianism was brought from China as early as the period of Three Kingdoms (ca 57 B.C.–668 A.D.); however, it appeared under the dominion of Shamanism and Buddhism until the Yi Dynasty (Lundell 1993:74, Park, Pong-Bae 1972:34).

Confucianism cannot be considered a religion since it merely suggests how to live in an ethically and morally correct manner in a philosophical way (Lundell 1993:75). The five canonical books and the four books of lesser distinction of China form the foundation of its teaching and are called the Bibles of Confucianists wherever Confucianism is practiced (Clark 1981:116). The five canonical books are: Sijeon (the Book of Odes), Shooking (the Scripture of Documents), Juyeok (the Book of Change), Chunchu (the Chronicles of Lu) and Yeki (the Book of Rites) (Lundell 1993:75).

The existence of cosmic order and harmony, a person’s ability to discern the cosmic order, and the necessity for personal devotion to learning are the

three basic ideas of Confucianism. First, Confucianism holds that the universe runs with order and regularity and all areas function with harmony and unity (Kim, Hei Chu 1982:92). This cosmic order is called "Tao." David Burnett describes Tao:

Tao literally means a "road or way," but in a wider connotation it means a "law, truth, and order." Tao is the path that the universe follows, and all things evolve from that. (1992:92)

There is the cosmic order, Tao, with the cosmic hierarchy between Heaven and the earth. And the king stands between Heaven and the earth as the priest of Heaven-worship. The Tao penetrates into every living being in the universe. (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:34)

The hierarchy of Tao is seen in the five fundamental human relationships (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:34). These are sovereign to subject, father to son, husband to wife, elder to younger, and friend to friend (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:34, Lundell 1993: 75). The Confucian rationalization of inequality in the social structure is that in order to live harmoniously in society, the vertical and hierarchical social structure needs to be in place, and in this system one can find his or her own place in society (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:34). Second, people can recognize cosmic order through the way the cosmos operates. Third, in order to live harmoniously with others and the universe, one needs to become a "gentleman" by acquiring wisdom through systematic learning about people, the function of social institutions, the nation's and the family's history, and classic literature and arts (Kim, Hei Chu 1982:92).

Maintaining harmonious interpersonal relations through the hierarchical system is considered the most valuable social ethic in Confucian teaching. For

parents, pursuing higher education for their children becomes the most important goal in life because of the emphasis placed on learning in Confucianism (Hyun 1990:36). It is well-known among Korean-American immigrants that providing a broader experience of learning for their offspring is one of the purposes of Korean parents who immigrate to America, in addition to economic improvement. This tendency to place education as the first priority in a child's life also appears in the interviews I have conducted with Korean-American youth. Studying seems to be their most common area of concern.

Although learning has been emphasized with great importance in Confucianism, virtue is valued even more than knowledge. The process of learning is considered a virtuous deed. In the process of learning, people acquire both intellectual freedom and virtuous freedom (Kim, Sung-Hae 1990:20). The five virtues in Confucianism are benevolent love, righteousness, proper conduct, wisdom, and faithfulness (Lundell 1993:75). Individual perfection, that is, being noble, can be achieved through cultivating an individual's moral ethics, not through one's talents or family background (Kim, Sung-Hae 1990:20).

It is not necessary to be an upper class person; a mature personality produces a noble character, according to Confucianism. Confucianists believe that every human being holds equal capacity for being morally right; therefore Confucianists are expected to practice individual benevolence (Kim, Sung-Hae 1990:21).

Unlike Shamanism and Buddhism, Confucianism stresses strong ethical teaching in order to create harmonious living among people. Confucianism promotes the individual's noble character as the highest virtue through the practice of moral ethics since human beings are social beings who are rooted in the family and community. Confucianism seeks to "regulate the relationship" in a vertical and hierarchical system through inequality between people (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:34). Thus the five human relationships, loyalty to one's ruler, filial piety to one's parents, hierarchical positions between husband and wife, elder and younger brother, and friend and friend, have been the foundations for successful moral living in Yi Dynasty (Chung 1982:100).

Emperor, chief ministers, high officials, gentlemen-scholars, and commoners formed the hierarchical order in the Yi Dynasty which was adopted from China (Chung 1982:100); titles were given to individuals according to their status. This title-oriented tradition permeates Korean society even today (Lundell 1993:76).

Presently, the democratic Korean society in Korea is hierarchical and formal in social structure, reflecting the tradition of Confucianism. High status equates with authority and power. Superiors are respected by inferiors, as are seniors by juniors throughout public and private educational systems. Even among junior high and high school systems, this formality of respecting higher ages and higher school years prevails among students. A junior must call a senior big brother or big sister. Conversation between a junior and a senior is

conducted on respectful terms on the junior's part. Therefore, the old and the young do not relate as equal friends as in America, but relate in a respectful and formal way. There are hierarchical relationships in the family system even between brothers and sisters. If twins are born in the family, the first born is considered senior to the other and treated as an elder (Crane 1978:29).

The words uncle, aunt, sister, brother, or grandma are not used only for relatives, but also for acquaintances or strangers according to the age range, although its implication is different. Many parts of Asia and Africa seem to have the same customs and the same titles for strangers. Horace G. Underwood points out that hierarchical structure prevails even within the church. People favor using personal titles rather than names (1994:66). These hierarchical systems and title-oriented traditions also prevail in Korean ethnic churches in America.

The structure of the Korean church stands on a "vertical axis" rather than a "horizontal democratic line." The senior pastor of Korean churches, whether in Korea or in Korean ethnic churches in the United States, is the "supra-committee" of a church since the pastor is placed at the top in the church structure and holds the highest authority in the churches (Lundell 1993:114). Pastors are highly respected because the congregation considers the pastors stand next after Jesus Christ, who is head of the church in the spiritual hierarchical order. The pastors are called "the servant of Jesus," a title with reverent meaning.

Traditionally, teachers are also respected. There is a saying that there are two debts one must pay back: one is to parents and the other is to teachers. Teacher's Day has been celebrated for decades along with Mother's Day. These customs stem from Confucian teaching emphasizing learning and filial piety to parents.

Confucianism places the family at the center of the structure of society and the nation. Social and national structure resemble a family structure, since society and a nation function like a family in the structure of Confucianism's perspective (Park, Pong-Bae 1972:35). This traditional concept of a social structure reflecting a family system continues in the Korean society in America. Thus a Korean immigrant church functions as a family by providing family atmosphere through support, encouragement, and nourishment between congregations and churches.

Relationships between kings or sovereigns and subjects in the Yi Dynasty as a nation or as a prototype of a family were established based on loyalty and commitment as members of a family are loyal and committed to each other. Therefore the loyalty of the ruler-subject rule is applied to a father as ruler and a son as subject, a husband as lord of the household and a wife as subject in traditional family structure. It also required subjugation from son to father, from wife to husband (Lundell 1993:78).

Trust between superiors and inferiors in working relationships and between family members and friends is the foundation of human relationships in

Korean society. This unique human relations system based on trust and respect has become the most important tradition in the Korean social structure.

Therefore, the concept of the hierarchical and the patriarchal system based on loyalty is still strong in today's Korean homes, societies, and churches, but not as strict as in earlier years.

The loving, caring, giving attitudes of children who with gratitude repay the debts of their parent's sacrificial love in raising them, is called filial piety, or hyo in Korean. Hyo or hyodo was the most important social ethical code in practice from the king down to the commoners of the entire society of the Yi Dynasty, and this filial piety has been carried on in every home in Korea even to the present. This, along with loyalty (chungsong) to parents and teachers, has been encouraged in believers by Protestantism in Korea (Wells 1990:11,13). The patriarchal and extended family systems have been promoted by the influence of filial piety along with self-sacrifice. In addition, this hyo concept also produced patriotism and nationalism for the Koreans since the structure of the nation reflects the basic family structure (Grant 1976 cited in Lundell 1993:78).

Even in the early Korean ethnic church history in America after Japan's annexation of Korea, nationalism and patriotism became the ultimate values in the Korean community and in the churches, (Yu 1988:86) since keeping loyalty in human relationships and for the nation have become the Korean's unique character. The Korean's faithfulness toward family, friends, work, and churches contributed to the growth of each church and overall to the growth of Korean

Christianity. Veneration or respect goes beyond the present family and extends to the ancestors in the past through worshipping them:

Ancestor worship has become a major religious, social, and family tradition because of the strong emphasis on filial piety in Confucian teaching. However, ancestor worship was practiced continuously even before the Yi Dynasty through Confucianism, Shamanism, Buddhism, and other religions throughout Korean history (Lundell 1993:78).

Ancestor Worship

Koreans generally engage in ancestor worship three times a year as part of our social custom: the first day of the new year, the harvest day, and the anniversary of an ancestor's death. Right after I became a Christian at the age of eleven, participating in ancestor rituals became a burden for me. Even though children are supposed to follow family tradition and submit to the authority of their fathers, I, the last one among four children, declared that I would not participate in the rituals right before the worship began. My father accepted my refusal. My parent's only son, who now lives in New York, took over the performance of the ancestral rites after my father became a Christian. I disciplined my nephew secretly because my brother and his wife are inclined to Buddhism. One day I got a call from my nine year old nephew asking what he was supposed to do about ancestor rituals as a Christian. I hear similar stories from other Christians from time to time. The issue of ancestor worship can be a burden for new converts of all ages.

Ancestor worship prevailed throughout Korea before Christianity entered in. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, Roman Catholicism entered Korea. More than ten thousand Catholic converts were martyred during the following three centuries by the Confucian Yi dynasty government. The official persecution for the Protestants who refused ancestral worship was less severe because of the decline of the Neo-Confucian dynasty. Today, Roman Catholicism has a more generous attitude toward the practice than Protestantism. Although the practice of ancestral worship is much less prevalent because of weakened Confucianism, worldview change, and the change of the family and social structure values, it is still practiced in Korean society and even among some Christians (Son 1989: 61-67). Ancestor worship has been practiced through Confucianism, Buddhism, Shamanism, Taoism and other private religions throughout Korean history (Cho 1990:50).

The purpose of Korean ancestor worship is to build and respect and preserve the ancestral paternal lineage (Cho 1990:287, Lee, Sang Bok 1989:10). The spiritual status of Korean ancestors is determined according to three categories: "individual, domestic and linear " (Cho 1990:130). Confucianism sees death as the "Decree of Heaven" which is a "cosmological process of transition" from the present physical world to another spiritual world (Cho 1990:53).

Confucianism defines life as the cosmological birthing process which comes from the integration of heaven and earth; this process equals the process

of a human birth resulting from male and female union (Cho 1990: 51). Parents are the foundation of a child's life as the heaven and the earth are the foundation of the cosmos, since the life of the child is created by the parents. A well-known folk song states that the children's debts to parents for giving birth and raising them are higher than the heaven and wider than the earth. Filial piety for parents, including ancestors, is the way of paying this debt.

Ancestral worship in Shamanism uses supernatural powers giving blessings and material well-being as well as protection from other evil spirits (Cho 1990:25). As Shamanism accepts the immortality of the soul after death, so Korean Buddhism believes in the immortality of the spirit and believes that there is a place for the soul to go after this world. Thus, special rituals are offered for the departure of a soul to go to a better place, the land of heaven (keuknak). This ritual is the result of syncretism with Shamanism (Cho 1990:54, 24).

Therefore, Korean ancestor worship has become a unique indigenous form by blending diverse religious traditions in addition to emphasis upon filial piety in Confucianism. In the Korean worldview, one's deeds and relations are not only confined to the present family and the society but extend to his or her family ancestral line and the nation. At the same time, many Koreans believe that the ancestors also relate to their descendants by protecting them. So, the soul of the family and the nation continuously exists.

Christianity has influenced Korea to become modernized greatly during

the past 100 years, as described in Chapter 2. All the major religions, including Christianity, which entered from outside, have become Koreanized. That is, the original form of the religions changed in the process of being united with the Korean's unique spirit (Yoon et al. 1994:16). It is general knowledge that ancestor worship is still practiced in some Korean homes in America since filial piety is one of the most emphasized Korean family value.

Summary

Chapter 3 began with an introduction of brief worldview definitions developed by Kearney and Hiebert. Buddhism, Shamanism and Confucianism are the three major religious traditions which have had the most influence upon the Korean worldview. The history and character of Buddhism, Shamanism, and Confucianism were described in this chapter, followed by a section on ancestor worship. Chapter 4 will discuss the distinctions between individualism and collectivism, especially as these affect the self concept, and social structure and values from both American and Korean perspectives.

CHAPTER 4

The Cultural Orientation of Traditional Korean-Americans

Worldview-Assumptions

On January 16, 1998, ABC Night Line, told the story of one Korean-American family. The story begins with a well groomed family sitting on the floor in the traditional Korean manner, in a living room well furnished with traditional Korean furniture. There were four family members: a middle-aged couple, their daughter, and a grandmother. The grandmother, dressed in Korean costume, sits in the center beside her granddaughter. Unlike the typical American arrangement, the father is sitting beside the grandmother instead of beside his wife; the mother sits on the other end of the group, beside her daughter. The young-adult daughter serves as family spokesperson and tells their story through home video tapes. She begins with her grandmother's story.

The grandmother has another son, who has lived with his family in North Korea. Grandmother has been separated from this son and his family for forty-seven years, since the Korean War. However, recently it became possible for them to communicate with each other through letters. Subsequently, her Korean-American son (the narrator's father in the broadcast) has entered China to help smuggle his North Korean brother and his family from North Korea to China, because there is no traveling freedom within North Korea. A life-taking risk is involved for both parties. Finally, the North Korean family is united with the grandmother in Seoul, South Korea; the whole family gives a big bow,

bending low down to the floor, to the grandmother. The grandmother praises God for answered prayer: she has been praying for this moment for forty-seven years, from three to four or five o'clock every morning.

This is a very moving story: a well-to-do family man in America risks his life to rescue his brother, sister-in-law, nephews, nieces and great-nephews. The story also shows the filial piety of a Korean-American son for his mother, seeking to fulfill her lifelong desire to be reunited with her North Korean son and his family. This story also shows that the grandmother is a central part of the family—we see this even in the family's seating arrangement. In fact, the grandmother speaks most, through her granddaughter's interpretation; the father speaks a little; the mother keeps silent. This story epitomizes the content of the present chapter, which examines Korean and American worldviews, especially concerning self, social structure, and values.

A Chinese seminary professor, once called his son a "banana." He means that his son is Chinese outwardly, but an American inwardly (however, this term is perceived as racist). Korean youth may also have double features, Korean looks and American mentality. Fundamentally Korean and American societies reveal opposite worldviews. Among many contrasts, the most significant fundamental worldview difference is how to view self. This contrasting view of self widens the cultural gap, and tends to create most of the problems between the Korean immigrant parents and their children. Parents identify their self in connection with the family, the group, and the nation of their

origin. Unlike their first generation parents, the second generation tends to identify self apart from the family, groups, and the nation or tends to be in a state of confusion. They both need to understand each other with the knowledge of these different views of self in their cultural perspective. In addition to basic differences, social structure and values contrast distinctly and relate with this study significantly. Therefore, these basic differences of (1) individual self versus collective self, (2) social structure, and (3) values will be discussed from Korean and American perspectives.

Individual Self versus Collective Self

The roots and characteristics of individualism and collectivism will be examined first.

The Roots of Individualism

Geert Hofstede defines individualism as:

The opposite of collectivism; together, they form one of the dimensions of national cultures. Individualism stands for a society in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family only. (1997:261)

Individualism is prevalent in most Northern and Western regions of Europe and in North America, while collectivism is the prevailing cultural practice in Asia, Africa, South America, and the Pacific (Triandis, Brislin, and Hui 1988:271). The fifteen most individualistic nations are--the least collectivistic countries--the United States, Australia, Great Britain, Canada, Netherlands, New Zealand, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, France, Ireland (Republic of), Norway, Switzerland, and Germany. The least individualistic countries include

Guatemala, Ecuador, Panama, Venezuela, Columbia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Costa Rica, Peru, Taiwan, South Korea, Salvador, Thailand, Singapore, and West Africa (Hofstede 1997:53).

Individualism is thought by some to be an outgrowth of secularism or naturalism which emerged in the seventeenth century from the ideas of thinkers like Rene´ Descartes (1596-1650) and John Locke (1632-1704). Descartes presented a mechanical model of the universe and humans; that is, he assumed the universe is a huge machine and humans are part of the material universe. In the process of developing this thought, Descartes assumed “Cartesian dualism” which made a distinction between “mind” and “matter.” Scientists studied the body with the assumption of material bases, and philosophers and theologians researched the mind and soul (Burnett 1992:39-40).

Following Descartes, Locke developed the assumption that reasoning verifies the validity of reality, and reality is based upon matter rather than spirit in a world in which humans are included as part of the universe (Burnett 1992: 39-41). This new worldview placed emphasis on matter and a mechanical model of the universe, resulting in “materialism.” Since there was no room for spiritual reality, God was no longer needed, and secularism was produced as a result of these thoughts. This assumption of the absence of God led to the self reliance of secularism and this notion of self confidence turned to individualism (Burnett 1992:41-43).

As the result of this new worldview of materialism, Europeans were eager

to obtain power over the world through technology. Science was the major area of research in academic settings. Secularism developed rapidly as the result of this phenomenon in the nineteenth century. Military, political, and economic colonialism of Westerners in many areas of the non-Western world in the twentieth century is the result of obtaining technology. Westerners appeared having individual affluence as well as “a sense of confidence and superiority” to the people of the undeveloped countries (Burnett 1992:50,51). If Westerners have this sense of accomplishment as perceived by people from non-Western countries, that confidence can be traced to having self-reliance (Triandis, Brislin, and Hui 1988:276). Burnett explains:

the great emphasis that the secular world view places upon the mind of the one who perceives the world leads to a stress upon the individual. A society or even a family therefore becomes an association of individuals who live together for their mutual cooperation and benefit. The individuality and worth of each person is accepted as being more important than that of family and social responsibilities. (Burnett 1922:45)

Individualism is strong in an industrial society of high cultural complexity because people tend to avoid in-group—family, extended family, work group (Japan), band, tribe—activities in order to have personal goals and freedom (Triandis, et al. 1988:324, Triandis, Brislin and Hui. 1988:269).

Individualism is prevalent in countries with a high gross national product (GNP) since self accomplishment tends to be measured by financial success, whereas collectivism is high in underdeveloped countries (Han 1990:22). In addition, “mobility, occupation, age, life style, education, child rearing patterns and population density” are other influential factors in whether a nation develops

individualistic or collectivistic societies (Han 1990: 22). Interestingly, “proto-individualism” exists in extremely simple societies such as in the Mbuti Pygmies. Because of their dealings with a small unit of people, they are able to have the freedom and independence to do their own things (Triandis, et al. 1988:324).

Within a predominately individualistic society the degree of individualism may vary among individuals, ethnic groups, or geographic regions of the country. Some groups within the individualistic society might even tend to be collectivistic. The USA serves as an example since the nation was built by immigrants from many different countries and cultures and the door remains open for immigrants every year (Hecht, Anderson, Ribeau 1989 cited in Han 1990:19).

The degree of individualism also varies in different social classes. In general, upper-class people seem to be more individualistic. Although Turkey is not an individualistic country, Turkish upper-class people display even higher individualism than Americans overall (Triandis 1989b cited in Han 1990:21).

The first generation of Korean-Americans are highly collectivistic groups in America due to their tendency to preserve the Korean culture in their homes and churches. However, their children tend to be more individualistic in the collectivistic Korean-American society due to the influence of the American mainstream culture in schools.

When two opposite worldviews co-exist in the Korean-American homes and churches, it creates barriers between the first generation and their children.

However, these barriers can be overcome with cross-cultural understanding.

The Roots of Collectivism

Hofstede defines collectivism as:

The opposite of individualism; together, they form one of the dimensions of national culture. Collectivism stands for a society in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive ingroups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. (1997:260)

Collectivism is strong where a relatively high level of cultural complexity (e.g., Romans, Aztecs, Chinese) (Triandis, et al. 1988:324) is combined with an agricultural society in which the nature of work requires group work. Group working methods with family, extended family, friends, or coworkers are effective for agricultural production (Han 1990:21). Even in industrial countries like Japan, or Korea, group working methods are practiced because the individual's loyalty or devotion to a group or to a company leads to high productivity.

Collectivism is rooted in the primal worldview (Burnett 1992:60). According to Harold W. Turner, the term "primal" indicates "these religions that both anteceded the great historic religions and continue to reveal many of the basic or primary features of religion" (Turner 1971:7). The primal worldview extends from tribal religion to the contemporary world (Burnett 1992:57). Burnett writes:

In contrast to the secular worldview, the emphasis of the primal worldview is placed not upon the individual but upon society as a whole. In this view, every person is perceived as a participant within a particular society. The value of an individual as a person lies not within oneself but in the endless chain of humanity. The life an individual experiences has been passed on from generation to generation through one's ancestors and will pass on to one's children and grandchildren. The person finds individual

value in the assumption of "I am, because I participate," and "I am, because we are." This contrasts with the secular worldview, which assumes, "I can reason, therefore I am." (1992:60,63)

Thus the primal worldview stresses community more than individual self.

Individuals often sacrifice their rights to meet their own needs in order to subordinate their desires to the benefit of the community (Burnett 1992:63) and to the family since the family is the center of life in a primal worldview (Burnett 1992:98).

Self in Me versus Self in Others

Self in individualism believes self to be autonomous from other human beings; self has the ultimate value of freedom to choose and it values the unit of a single human being in the society. Freewill, privacy, self-assertion, and self-reliance are valued and encouraged for people living in individualistic societies. Thus unlike collectivism, individualists' goals, aims, or motivations seek the self's well-being and the well-being of their immediate families (Augsburger 1986:85, 86).

Individualism believes that each person has hidden potential. This potential can be developed for the better, and individuals need to reach to their full capacity. This need of human beings for continual growth can be achieved through the process of actualizing the self (Cosgrove 1982:70).

Self in collectivism understands self interconnected with others. Parents identify themselves through children, children through parents, including extended family, groups, and the nation. Jung Young Lee sees self from the

plural perspective of God's creation of human beings; that is, an inclusive or collective self.

Individual is plural because God created through a Trinitarian plurality. . . . As a plural self, what I am is also who we are. I am yellow, but my yellow color also contains the colors of white, brown, red, and black. So racial difference is not something added to my existence but it is intrinsic to it. Therefore, I cannot understand myself unless I understand others who are in me; I am included in them, as the reverse is true. (1995:105)

As the worldview of collective self is rooted in a primal worldview, the family becomes the center of one's life. Chinese people hold this aspect of a primal worldview, and relations with family and other people are their highest priority. The Chinese say, "to live at all . . . is to live in relation to others," that is, in relationship with other people (Porras 1985:310). A person is not an individual being but "part of the endless chain of humanity of which the family is the central social unit" in Confucian tradition (Burnett 1992:98). Thus, this chain of humanity extends to the family's and the nation's ancestral line by worshipping ancestors in many families of China, Korea and Japan.

Filial piety from Confucian teaching continues to be a strong social ethic in China. Grown children carry an obligation to look after their parents' well-being. A father-son relationship is more important than a man-wife relationship in a family unit (Burnett 1992:98). Filial piety becomes a shared traditional social value and cultural pattern in a collectivistic society (Hecht, Anderson, Ribeau 1989 cited in Han 1990:19), particularly in Southeast Asia. Confucian filial piety is emphasized as the main social ethical code in Korea, as well as in

Korean-American society, and it is a frequent sermon topic in Korean ethnic churches in America.

When an individual is guilty of misconduct and the matter becomes known to outsiders, that individual not only loses “face” but the family name loses honors. Shame may extend to an entire village. This is called “collective shame” (Burnett 1992:99). Thus the one dishonoring the family name with destructive behavior not only brings shame to the family but to the ancestors in Korean society. Individual behaviors relate to each other.

People from a collectivistic culture emphasize the importance of relationships more than an individualistic culture does. When visited, a community-oriented African or an Asian converses at leisure before addressing the main task of the visit. A Westerner asks the task of the visitor first without much preliminary conversation, if any. This style may produce embarrassment or offense to people of a community-oriented culture (Burnett 1992:63, 64).

One Christmas day I visited the home of people who were not yet friends but more than acquaintances, to give a present. “What can I do to help you?,” were their first words when they opened the door. My joyful mood was immediately dampened. The same response often embarrassed me when I called an American friend just to say “hello.” On the other hand, a task-oriented Westerner might be frustrated by the ambiguity of the purpose of a visit or a call from an African or an Asian person. People from a collectivistic culture also enjoy dropping by a friend’s home without calling first; however, a Westerner

might be placed in an uncomfortable situation not knowing the reason why someone drops by without previous notice.

Relational-oriented people who come from a collectivistic society tend to talk about private matters even with an acquaintance. On the other hand, a Western acquaintance may be irritated and feel his or her privacy is invaded. A Beeson program pastor at Asbury Theological Seminary once shared his amazement at the openness of Koreans when he visited Korea. The family with whom he stayed began to ask personal questions the first day he met them. He said he felt great uneasiness.

Immediate culture shock for non-Westerners who come to America may not be caused so much by a new political, social, or economic environment as by unexpected attitudes, responses and misunderstandings of people in relation to non-Westerners. These differences often cause non-Westerners to become confused and fearful of interaction. This confusion isolates them from the people and the society and may induce depression since they are not able to function with their natural personality and with the character of their own upbringing.

In order to survive or cope with the majority of people in the new culture, non-Westerners typically learn to adapt to the Westerners' standard behavior. In the process of trying to be who they really are without losing their own identity, they miss their former social world. Finally after a few years of study or work experience in America, when they return to their own country they realize they

have changed and they experience another counter culture shock in their own country.

However, generally each ethnic group tries to cluster together with their own ethnic population so they can preserve their unique worldview, culture, and living style. Thus the churches or religious organizations become centers for preserving ethnicity. Nevertheless, culture shock is inevitable no matter how hard they try to create their own society.

Cultural shock arises in different ways and in different stages for non-Westerners while they live in America. One Korean-American home experienced deep psychological culture shock when the children became teens. A Korean mother, divorced from an American father, shared her dilemma in rearing her twelve-year old son. When the boy spent time with his father, he was allowed to do what he wanted to do. His mother was strict, believing he was not capable of making independent decisions. The boy rebelled against his mother's control. Thus she was hit by culture shock even though she had resided in America for more than a decade, feeling that her expectations for her son seemed too far to reach.

Another mother with a college age son faced another kind of culture shock when her son complained about his mother's hospitality in serving food to his friends in the Korean way without asking whether they wanted food. She felt embarrassed, disappointed, and distanced from her son when her loving action was treated as ignorance. In the same household, Korean parents and

American children were living separate lifestyles.

The way people come to Christ is also different in group- and individual-oriented societies. In an individual-oriented society, an individual makes the decision to become a Christian. However, in a group-oriented society, people come to Christ through persuasion by relatives or friends. A “people movement” is the result of many relatively small homogeneous group conversions within a group over several years (McGavran 1990:140, 223).

This joint group decision for conversion contributed greatly to the growth of Christianity in Asia and Africa. If a missionary reaches a head of a house, or a chief in a village, the entire family or village may convert to Christianity because of their respect for the old or for authority. Burnett writes that in group-oriented cultures, old people are respected for their wisdom and for their lifetime experience in every aspect of life (Burnett 1992:64). In Korea, there is even a respectful verb ending to use when the young communicate with the old (Lundell 1993:111).

In collectivistic cultures, harmonious behavior between people and in-group activities is stressed where people cooperate and share concerns. Usually confrontations are suppressed and avoided (Triandis, et al. 1988:326).

Nourishing relationships between parents and children or between friends tends to change from “love, status, and service” of time consuming caring to the “money, goods, and information” of less time consuming actions when a shift takes place from a collectivistic society to an individualistic society. Parents in

an individualistic culture tend to spend less time with their children but give more money or presents in exchange for their own freedom (Triandis, et al. 1988:325).

The Uniqueness of the Korean's Self

Unlike America, which is known as a "melting pot" or a multi-ethnic society, Korea consists of one race, one language and one culture; thus social bonding is high (Lundell 1993:104). In addition, an isolated geographical location (peninsula) and centuries of suffering imposed by foreign powers seem to contribute to the ethnocentric tendency of Koreans (Underwood 1994:66).

In a collectivistic, cohesive, ethnocentric society, a person's identity is rooted in the identity of the group. "Identity comes from the family, clan, village, school or company, even national selfhood" (Lundell 1993:104). Collective consciousness and identity, emotional dependence, group solidarity, shared duties, and obligation have become Korean values and emphases. Friendship is based on trust and loyalty. A person's identity is often found through a strong reciprocal support system among friends (Kim 1991 cited in Sun 1992:9).

Korean identity is rooted in the family, in the group, and in the nation. Other Easterners' identities are rooted in their society, the family functions as the foundation of the social network (Oh 1988:2). An individual independent life style is not welcome in Korean society since the family or group influences each person's affairs. Korean culture does not permit children or even adolescents to be independent or to make their own decisions without parental intervention. Even adults need the consent of parents when they choose marriage partners

(Paek 1989:46).

Due to all this ethnocentric cohesiveness and cultural upbringing, Korean-Americans tend to be very collectivistic in comparison to Anglo-American individualism. But, the Korean children become individualistic in comparison to their parents as they experience the influence of American culture. Some studies show that longer residency among Korean immigrants might tend to make it easier to acculturate to American mainstream culture (Park, Seung Hwan 1983:64, Hurh and Kim 1984:84). Overall, ten to fifteen years after immigration, economic improvement and acculturation are likely to take place (Hurh and Kim 1990a:458). However, a Korean immigrant's strong ethnic attachment, "strong sense of family priority, ethnic pride, preference of teaching Korean language to their children," including attending Korean ethnic churches, is not nearly as affected by residency length in America or by educational status (Hurh and Kim 1984:84).

Self in Others

The Korean self can not be autonomous, especially from parents. This does not mean they do not have unique individuality, but that individuality is closely connected to the parents (Park 1996:81). Since the Korean's self is rooted in a family, in a group where they belong, and in the nation, they are loyal to their parents, family, friends, groups or company because of the influence of the teaching of Confucianism.

That life is alone worth the living
That lives for another's gain
That life that comes after such living

is the rainbow after the rain. (J. R. Miller, from "A Great Heart," cited in Cowman 1966:349)

Harmony is a unique characteristic of the Chinese culture. Concern and care for others are emphasized in Japanese society (Hui 1984 cited in Han 1990:23). A sacrificial act is considered the most virtuous and noble deed in Korean society. Many legends of parental, child, or spousal sacrificial love have come down from generation to generation. A parent often sells land or houses to educate their children. One of the reasons why Korean immigrants in America work long hours is to provide education funds for their children. As the children become distant from their parents without crediting their parents' sacrifice, the American dream to achieve through the children is often shattered. Sacrificial giving by church members, in some cases selling their own house, is one reason for the financial affluence of Korean churches today. People often give most sacrificially to church building projects.

Although women usually oppose their daughters repeating their sacrificial lifestyle, wives and mothers are required to sacrifice most in Korean society. As the role of a husband is defined as the breadwinner of a household, the wife's role is often limited to domestic affairs. However, the majority of Korean-American women in America need to work since in the American economic system, one income is not sufficient to meet living expenses and to prepare an educational fund for the children. Furthermore, the majority of women do the domestic work and raise the children without adequate help from their husbands.

Thus, Korean housewives tend to see themselves as "a self-sacrificial

housekeeper” and “a caretaker, nurturer.” This sacrificial role stems from Confucian teaching from the Yi dynasty (Kim, Ai Ra 1996:55,115). The traditional role of homemaking for women in cooking and serving the family prevails not only in Korean homes in America, but in churches as well. Women seem content with this role in Korean ethnic churches. In today’s Korean ethnic churches in America, “first generation Christian women’s sacrifice is equated with that of Jesus and is legitimized by notions of Christian virtue” (Kim, Ai Ra 1996:77, 115).

Fellowship with women in a kitchen becomes a refuge from interacting with men in Korean social gatherings. In the Korean tradition, social interaction between female and male is discouraged by the ancient Confucian teachings which still influence Koreans subconsciously. Korean-American youth are surrounded by all these cultural phenomena and these role models. They tend to criticize their parents’ culture as too old fashioned. Daughters do not want to repeat this model. Sons are not able to learn to interact with women. I once was shocked by how my second generation teen age nephew can still be influenced by the Korean cultural pattern, when I heard him murmuring “what can a woman know about that?” This has been a typical utterance by a man when he is unhappy with a woman’s suggestion or advice.

As Korean immigrants in America find national, cultural, and personal identity through Korean ethnic churches, the churches also to try maintain Korean culture by using only the Korean language for the adults and by

maintaining the Korean social structures, customs and values (Lundell 1993:144). Thus the Korean ethnic churches reflect a “mini-Korea” culturally (Kim, Ai Ra 1996:78). The church becomes a home away from home; the congregation becomes a big family to Korean immigrants.

The bonding pattern in the family of collectivist cultures and individualist cultures is different, due to holding different values on child raising methods. Parents in collective cultures expect their children to be submissive and trustful. In individualist cultures, children are encouraged to be independent, self-reliant, and creative. Parent-child bonding is stronger than spouse-spouse bonding in collectivist cultures and the opposite in individualist cultures (Han 1990:23). These different bonding patterns can be easily observed in ordinary daily life. American children usually sit or walk next to a couple, whereas Korean children usually are placed between the couple. Korean children generally have a bedroom with the parents until they are five to six years old whereas American children sleep in their own room from infancy.

Korean and American parents discipline their children with contrasting approaches. Korean parents use “love-oriented interactions [positive affirmation]” rather than “power-assertive [punitive methods]” techniques (Lee, Sang Bok 1989:124). Korean mothers use “internalized norms” with loving behavior, whereas American mothers often apply “externally oriented” disciplining techniques. An American parent’s assertive method intends to “enforce conformity.” Teachers also use this method with students (Choi

1992:20). Korean fathers tend to be strict in disciplining their children, however, mothers tend to discipline in much softer attitudes than fathers.

For typical Korean mothers, the notion of disciplining—"doing this only because I love you"—does not need to be verbalized because they see the long-term benefits of establishing self-motivated cooperation through 'love-oriented intimacy' techniques. Such an attitude stands in direct contrast with the Western approach, embodied in the saying "spare the rod, and spoil the child," which is based on the assumption that severe sanctioning is not only good for the immediate correction of a fault or misdeed, but also for its long-range extinction as well. (Lee, Sang Bok 1989:124-125)

Self-reliance and self-identity in the individualistic society promote adolescent independence from parents. Adulthood brings self support and living separately from one's family in America, whereas children depend on their parents for their entire education up through their college years in Korea. Children respect parental discipline even in the high school and college years. Leaving home and having a separate lifestyle are discouraged except for the proper reasons (Lundell 1993:108,109). Not having self confidence or being self reliant apart from the family is not only a characteristic of Korean collectivism but also reinforced by Confucianism influences (Kim, Jae-Un 1991:68).

In Korean homes, children become caretakers of aged parents by supporting them or living with them. Due to collective mindsets, Koreans use plural pronoun forms, such as "we, our, and us" instead of "I, my, and me" (Lundell 1993:105). Koreans use of "I" means "we" because "I" is related with others. Thus, "I" and "we" both indicate inclusiveness (Lee, Jung Young 1995:8). However, inclusive terms are common like, "our mother, our house, our

school, and our country" (Lundell 1993:105) and even "our wife [it means my wife]" or "our husband [my husband]".

The meaning of words sometimes reflects the dimension of individualism/collectivism in these two cultural patterns. Meaning of "concern" in an individualistic society refers to affection or worry. However, in a collectivistic society this meaning is extended to others or groups in a sharing attitude (Hui and Triandis 1986:231). This relational consciousness in a collectivistic society applies even to finding a job. A person's connection counts more than his or her qualifications in an East Asian society. More time is consumed for the relationships than for doing transactions for East Asian business affairs (Lee, Jung Young 1996:30).

As the children become isolated in their rooms for privacy, or spend most of their time outside the home, relational oriented Korean parents suffer with loneliness. This problem may be universal for parents who have teenagers. However, it is much harder to endure for immigrant parents who came from a collective society.

Searching Self

A study shows that young Korean-American children between two and thirteen seem to grasp bi-cultural experience well at home and at school well (Choo 1992:110). As children grow up, between ages 15 and 30, they tend toward the "structural segregation" of American culture, such as church groups, clubs, or gangs (Choo 1992:xv). Children seldom share their experience away

from home, school life or inner struggles with their parents. As a result, the children become strangers to their parents and vice versa. Young children, up to pre-teens, attend church with their parents. As they become teens or independent, they no longer go to church with their parents. Often they leave the churches if there is pressure by unbelieving peers.

As these two cultures contradict each other, problems arise between first generation Korean immigrants and their children. As they become influenced by American culture, Korean-American youth find less personal identity within the family, the church or the Korean people. Thus, they struggle with relational difficulties with the first generation Koreans at home and at church (Paek 1989:70).

The youth seem to be unsuccessful bi-cultural people. Their identity is confused between the American and the Korean culture. The term "Korean-American" is a "hyphenated identification" which implies various dynamics between two worlds, two languages and two cultures (Paek 1989:70).

Korean-American youth have "difficulty identifying with their Korean ethnic background and not yet having achieved a new Western identity" (Paek 1989:80). Consequently the second generation is in a confused state. They lack a consistent self identity, and they miss a life of contentment and understanding of surroundings (Paek 1989:80). Their problem is amplified when first generation church leaders are not experienced with, or do not empathize with the problems and needs of second generation (Paek 1989:75). These patterns

of the immigrants' lives evolving around the church and the frustration of the second generation are not unique to Asian immigrants, as Pauline V. Young (1932), in The Pilgrims of Russian-Town points out:

You see, we young people live in two worlds, and learn the way of both worlds--the ways of our parents and the ways of the big world. Sometimes we get mixed up and we fight, we fight our parents and fight the big world. Sometimes I feel I am not much of an American. I was raised by Russians, I understand Russians, I like the Russians. At other times I think that I am not much of a Russian; except to my parents, I never speak Russian and all my friends are American. Well, I am American, we live in America--why shouldn't we take their ways? . . . "This isn't Russia. When you go to Russia, you can be Russians; but you can't be Russians in America." I have learned American ways. I can't go against my friends and do the Russian way. . . . Many times I get mad, and then I leave the house. You see, I don't want to hurt my parents and still I want to live like I see is right--that is, right according to American ways. They can't see it my way, and I can't see it their way. . . . My mother gets me sore--and that's why we fought tonight. She starts in: "Why don't you get married?" Sure, I want to get married, but let me marry whom I want, but my mother objects to an American daughter-in-law. I say to mother: "I have to live with her, and not you; why do you object?" And she says: "How will your girl repeat the marriage vows in 'church'?" She will stand and stare." I say to her: "You leave that to me. She will surprise you." But no, nothin' doin'. She is not Russian. Of course, I would not marry without my mother's consent. I could not do that. It would break her heart. If she does not give me her consent to marry, I will stay single. I'd like to be married in the Russian "church" by our preacher. . . . The young people [Russian] live like Americans in many ways, but in real life they do most things the old folks do. When they marry, or when children are born, or when anybody dies, they all come to the "church" and do as our "church" has always done. (Young 1932:114-115)

American-born Japanese view their parents as "too Japanesy", and the parents grieve over their children's Americanization in mentality, attitude, and behaviors (Marden 1952:179). The children of immigrants of any nationality face such a "strange dualism." "In the school room they were too foreign, at home

they were too American” (Hansen 1987:12, 13).

Thus it is evident there is universal reaction caused by the cultural gap between the two worlds in an immigrant home. However, compared to Russian or European youth, Korean-American youth experience further difficulty because of their physical or racial differences to Americas. Therefore, Korean-Americans experience “a triple alienation: from their family, society, and physical identity [as Asians]” (Paek 1989:81). Asian-Americans have been treated as inferior by American core society because of Asian-American face, appearance, speech, behavior, thinking, and working” (Park, 1996:40).

Racial problems which occur with Euro-Americans are based not only on individual issues, such as skin color or language deficiency, but also on discrimination encountered by Korean business owners with wholesalers, or Korean tenants with white landlords, even in big cities such as New York or Los Angeles. The serious racial problem in the history of Korean immigrants is epitomized by their victimization at the Los Angeles multi-ethnic riots. When African- and Hispanic-Americans destroyed or burned most of the Korean stores in Korea Town in 1992, many Korean store owners lost fortunes and lost American dreams at the same time. Even the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) failed to help Korean Americans by protecting their shops. The focus of the LAPD was on the properties of Euro-Americans (Park 1996:22).

Koreans believe that they became the scapegoat in the explosion of the American racism battle between African- and Anglo-Americans. Church leaders

stated that “America is no longer the land flowing with milk and honey for Korean immigrants” (Kang 1994:39).

There were also a few overt racial conflicts between African-American customers and Korean-American small business owners in the New York City area. Will America ever be freed from racial conflict between different races? Some of the Korean-American youth interviewed for this study highlighted racism in America as one of the problems they are confronting today. There is no doubt that most ethnic people might have experienced racism in America. However, racism has often been seen in the churches as well. A Korean pastor, Jung Young Lee reflects his experience of discrimination in denial of ordination with a Methodist Church Conference in 1961.

When they returned to the conference table [for ordained elder committee meeting], the chairman told me, “We definitely think that you are qualified and meet all the requirements for ordination and full membership in our conference. You have attended the Methodist seminary . . . You were ordained a deacon a year ago and served the Methodist church as an associate minister for two years . . . you have met all qualifications for full membership in our conference. . . . [But] there is no congregation in our conference that wants you to be their pastor. . . . “You should know that you are different.” . . . Although the bishop received me into the conference, he did not want to appoint me to a church. . . . One day, the district superintendent in Cleveland asked me whether I would be willing to accept a position as a janitor in a huge university church. (1995:163-165)

The fear of racism may be one of the big reasons that the ethnic groups form their own society. How can Korean-ethnic churches equip the youth to meet this fear of racism? The Korean-American pastors need to teach both adults and youth to see people of other races as mission fields for outreach.

The result of my interview indicates that the community outreach programs for adults and youth are absent in most of the churches. However, Ralph D. Winter stated at Urbana 1996, Inter-Varsity's Student Mission convention, that the Korean-American mission society is planning to use the force of Korean-American young people to reach out to about 300 ethnic groups in America alone by the year 2000 (Urbana-Champaign, Illinois December 27-31, 1996).

Despite racial barriers, children assimilate more quickly than their parents to the American way of life through their school and outside activities. Consequently Korean culture seems out-dated and out of context as the American worldview increases in influence (Paek 1989:82).

Korean immigrants work long hours to survive in a foreign environment (Paek 1989:83). For some people, overwork is necessary for survival, but the materialism in America also drives some people to focus more on work than family. "I was 26 when I came here with my parents and sister," says a Korean immigrant, Mr. Hong, 41. "We wanted to make money, and we felt we could do it here. In the beginning, it was very hard. My parents were too old to work, and I had to support the family by working in a restaurant." Then Mr. Hong's family opened their own fish market. "I've done well" he says, "but I have to work too hard. It's seven days a week, all year. I've never taken a vacation day because, if I did, I couldn't have survived." (You, 1994: Section 1, p. 19). This kind of story is common among Korean immigrants.

As Korean-American children become immersed in American society,

their parents are not part in their school experiences, friendships, and other areas of their life outside the family. Woon Young Paek (1989) attributes this to parental fatigue and lack of time. Whatever the reason, the cultural gap is widening and both generations feel isolated from each other (Paek 1989:83).

The language barrier is another major reason for the generational and cultural gap between Korean-American parents and their children (Park, Seung Hwan 1983:41; Kim, Lee and Kim 1981:23). Many second generation young people can communicate verbally in Korean, yet seem unable to read or write Korean. Children seem to prefer to speak English much more than Korean in the homes. Chang-Ho Kim writes that parents desire their children to remain bilingual (1992:36).

Children spend most of their time in an English-speaking environment in school, and they learn English additionally through the media. By contrast, the parents have much less opportunity to learn English--except for limited use at work. Thus meaningful conversation can seldom be carried on in Korean or English, between parents and children. The language barrier is one of the major reasons Korean immigrants are not able to become immersed in American society (Paek 1989:83.84).

The relational gap between the Korean-American first generation and their children is also caused by the contrasting worldviews and values of the two societies. Korean children learn more egalitarian social customs at school while parents maintain the old authoritarian social customs at home and church.

Despite these differences, parents expect to be treated by the children according to the Korean customs and children expect to be treated by the parents respectfully. However, their expectations are not met properly (Lundell 1993:106). The parents and the churches teach children the value of respecting older people, but the youth often complain about the lack of respect for their voice by their parents at home or by adults at the churches.

Social Structure: Vertical versus Egalitarian

Korea has been a monarchical form of government from the beginning of three dynasties to Yi Dynasty (57 B.C.-1910 A. D). A hierarchical, authoritarian, and patriarchal social structure has been prevalent in Korean society from ancient times to today. The teaching of Confucianism, which was adopted as the foundation of social ethics by the Yi Dynasty (1392-1910), reinforced this social structure (Wingeier 1990:85,87). Traditional interpersonal relationship qualities in the social structure of Korean society have been loyalty, subordination, trustfulness to one's superior, to one's husband, to one's older brother, to friend and filial piety to one's parents (Chung 1982:100). The vertical and hierarchical order is usually established according to age, sex, social status differences, and genealogical order (Paek 1989:86).

One of the highest virtues in Korean society is respect for the elderly and males. In a Korean home, the father has the ultimate authority since he is old, male and head of the household. In interpersonal relationships in Korean society, where different levels of age and social or working status exist, a high

degree of formality in language and respectful behavior are expected (Paek 1989:86).

The levels of the Korean language also indicate the hierarchical system and the complexity of formality between people. Historically, five levels of respectful verb endings were used for kings, nobility, elders, friends, and those younger or inferior. In modern Korea, the distinct language for kings is no longer used (Lundell 1993:111), nor is distinct language for the nobility as the nation has changed to a more democratic society.

In a Korean home, a wife usually uses respectful language to her husband, the equivalent of "thou" instead of "you" in everyday conversation (Kim, Ai Ra 1996:109). Children also use respectful verb endings and words when they communicate with parents, especially with a father or a grandparent. The custom of calling the older people by their name is not permissible.

In the majority of Korean-American homes, one-way authoritarian communication, in the form of ordering, teaching or advising, is carried on instead of two way communication between children and parents. The authoritative role of parents, especially the father, often increases the distance between children and their parents. In addition, many Korean-American parents follow traditional Korean cultural values by hiding their emotions and affections. They seldom express their affection for their children, verbally or physically. This non-expressive behavior often creates invisible walls between children and parents in America (Paek 1989:85). However, this wall seldom exists in Korean

homes in Korea, because children do not experience the bi-cultural challenge that Korean-American children face.

Americanized children misperceive their parents' lack of expressing emotion as their lack of love since they have been conditioned by the American patterns of expressing affection outside the home. Significant friendship between parents and their children is an unnatural concept for Koreans, due to the ranking system in Korean homes. American children often refer to their parents as their best friend and vice versa. A father serving as best man at his son's wedding could be a contradiction in Korean terms.

The reason for the prevalence of a strong authoritarian, patriarchal family system in Korea is the culture's emphasis upon filial piety. The extended family system has long been practiced in Korean homes by caring for aged parents in a household. Sons were more valued than daughters, since sons keep the lineage, care for parents and practice ancestral worship. Thus most of a family's fortune goes to the sons (Lundell 1993:111). (Recently, however, a law was established for the equal distribution of family inheritance among daughters and sons).

America began to be aware of the need for equality in her society in the nineteenth century (Commager 1950:13). People need to have equal freedom so individuals can have equal opportunity in order to explore personal potential (Augsburger 1986:162). This equality applies to both genders (Thomas and Althen 1989:211).

Korean-American children tend to view all people as equal because American society stresses equality in race, gender, age and status. Americans are accustomed to informal interpersonal relationships using the same levels of language and manners (Paek 1989:86).

The concept of equality does not exist in the Korean tradition. On the contrary, all relationships are predetermined on the basis of status differences. Within the family this means each person is assigned a hierarchical position reflecting their age, role, and gender. For example, every home in Korea--no matter how poor--allots the best room in the houses and the finest delicacies to grandparents. Similarly, male superiority dictates that the wife's place is in the home and she is expected to fit into her husband's family. Unlike Koreans, Americans do not attribute much meaning to social class, occupational status, political affiliation, birth order or other ascriptive considerations which can be used to define the self. Instead, every one is regarded as equal before God and the law. (Strom, Daniels, and Park 1986:214)

Korean-American youth and adolescents often want to adopt more equality and a more open atmosphere at home than is ordinarily found in Korean homes, hoping their parents will share home affairs and their strengths as well as their weakness with their children (Pai, Pemberton and Worley 1987:17). However, parents are reluctant to change from authoritative figures to a friendship relationship with their children because they fear losing the respect of their children and the ability to discipline their children.

The role of Korean women and children is considered less important than that of males (Paek 1989:86) in Korean homes and in Korean society in general, including churches in Korea and America, except for the mother's role in disciplining and nourishing children. A Christian woman, wife and mother of grown children (44 years of age), who has acquired a Master of Divinity degree

and is pursuing a doctorate at Drew Graduate School, comments on her position in the church:

The development of women's leadership was not only discouraged but also ignored. As you know, women's position in the church is terrible. We are "nobodies." Therefore, I wanted to study as much as male ministers and prepare myself as a church leader so that I may help improve women's status, so that men can not ignore my leadership. You know, people in the church, especially men and women in our generation, don't like ambitious women who cultivate their potentials. I mean, they really reject those women who pursue higher academic degrees. Therefore, when I go to the church, I never stand or walk straight. Constantly, I bend my back forward and bow to every one, so that I may not offend or threaten the people. (Yoon He-Rim-pseudonymous-1990, cited in Kim, Ai Ra 1996:159)

Male dominance, "gender hierarchy," or the patriarchal system is prevalent in Korean homes and churches in Korea and in America (Kim, Ai Ra 1996:108). Women's leadership is seldom seen in Korean churches, whether in Korea or America (Kim, Ai Ra 1996:73), except that the majority of cell leaders are women. In one case, a business woman was appointed as chairperson for an outreach program. The men in this program, however, often made decisions by themselves without informing her of the meetings (Kim, Ai Ra 1996:72, 73). Korean youth tend to have an individualistic attitude typical of American culture, yet the Korean traditional gender hierarchy tends to influence them negatively toward interacting with females.

In recent history the position of Korean women has been raised, and class barriers have been gradually broken by the continual efforts of pioneer missionaries and their successors (Moffett 1973:216). However, gender hierarchy, class barrier based on economic class, and those related to education

acquisition still prevail in the Korean society and even in the churches in Korea and America.

M. W. Noble wrote a case study of a Korean woman which shows the price a woman had to pay to become a Christian in late nineteenth century Korea. Married women were required to serve their father-and mother-in-law and were subject to their husbands. This servitude was the first duty of married women, due to the deep influence of long Confucian teaching. Christianity was so misunderstood by Confucianism and Korean culture, that commitment to the Lordship of Christ was thought to remove a woman's duty to serve her parents-in-law or husband (Noble 1927:72).

If a woman became a Christian, she faced unbearable persecution. One Christian woman recalls an incident that occurred in the beginning of her Christian life. "I went to the service and on my return my husband came into the house carrying a club with which he beat me cruelly, saying, 'You are subject to me and you must stop going to church and being a Christian.' I answered, 'Though you kill me, I cannot reject my Savior'" (Noble 1927:72). In this case study, the lady was beaten by her husband every time she went to church. Later, however, the husband became a Christian.

Through the stages of persecution, Korean Christian women became strong, and many were educated by missionaries. Schools were opened for women. Some Christian women became successful educators. Hundreds of women devoted their lives to the Independent Movement during the period of

Japan's colonialism. Women have played crucial roles in church growth (Lee, Youn-Ok 1983:233-235). Currently, women have acquired freedom to work in many areas of society, and some have become leaders of organizations. Even so, the society assumes that women are inferior to men. This attitude is found in a majority of churches as well.

A 1982 national survey reports about 63.5 percent of Korean Christians in Korea were women (Kim, Jung Ha 1992: 99), and 70 percent of attendants were women in two churches of Jung Ha Kim's study in America (1992:99). Overall, women are the majority congregation in Korean churches in America (Kim, Jung Ha 1992:100). Yet, women's roles in the churches related almost to "kitchen-related responsibilities (Kim, Jung Ha 1992:101). Why are the Korean churches unable to practice equality among genders today? Hyun Sook Lee suggests:

When the Gospel was introduced in Korea, Christianity was regarded as enlightening and liberating "good news" but soon froze into an ideology oppressing women's self and experience by colonial theologies of missionaries. The Korean church was silent about liberating traditions for women in the Bible and simply oppressed verses and stories about women and used them to control women. Here, the so-called "good news" becomes a thicket of thorns that pierces and persecutes women. (1988:40)

Korean men and women do not interact with each other as well as Americans do due to the application of this traditional gender hierarchical system in the society. Korean-American men admit that interacting with women and treating them as equals is difficult (Lee 1975 cited in Kim et al. 1981:15). However, in every area encountered in daily living in America, there are as many female workers as there are men. Opening doors for ladies or other "lady first"

customs are hardly seen in the society of Korea.

One day, I heard a young girl calling my ten year old nephew as we strolled. Instead of responding, he turned his face away from her. Korean-American youth of both genders have learned gender hierarchical attitude and language at home and at church. They also seem to have difficulty interacting with American female youth due to the same negative influence. Thus, they tend to cluster with their own kind, the Korean-American youth.

In America, Korean-American women are typically forced to work, since their husbands are usually unable to get high paying jobs because of barriers in language and experience. As Korean women immigrants experience the capability for adopting new social roles as co-bread winners, women appreciate their new found strength. However, they continue to be responsible for supporting the family in all traditional domestic roles.

So, in many Korean homes the women have double roles, working outside while also doing domestic work in the homes. In some homes, however, the men become involved in domestic work. Consequently tremendous pressure follows for both spouses as the result of the role exchange. Unfortunately, from the Korean Confucian cultural perspective, men think they lose dignity or the dominant position in the household from the role change. Thus, they may feel threatened by wives who can become independent. Unlike today's Western psychology, which regards "co-dependency" as dysfunctional, a Korean man views his wife's independence as wrong because a wife should depend on her

husband in every aspect of life. Korean-American youth learn to become independent outside the home, yet they also learn interdependency with family members. They are almost American in their parents' view, but they are somewhat different in an American's view.

In Korea's neighboring country, China, where Confucianism originated, gender hierarchy has disappeared since Communism has bestowed equal social and economic responsibility and opportunity to women.¹ Thus it seems that when women become financially independent, the roles change. Women's equality with men follows, then confusion arises between spouses.

Although Korean females seem to adopt this change more easily than Korean males, the family problems of Korean-American immigrants are rooted in the changing roles of spouses, which often lead to psychological problems. While married couples struggle with their role adjustments, this problem of role change influences children, who also develop problems. In marital and extended family relationships, Kyung-Hee Nah lists the problems of children far above others such as mental health, language, employment, and finance (1993:292). However, unlike the gradual change of gender hierarchy in Korean homes, most Korean ethnic churches strongly maintain the gender hierarchy because of their continued practice of Korean traditional culture.

As the structure of most Korean ethnic churches reflects the traditional hierarchical system of Korean society, a pastor becomes the ultimate decision maker over a committee's decision. The authority of pastoral leadership is

viewed like God's commission of a priest's authority in the Old Testament (Hwang 1992:51).

In this hierarchical relationship, elders expect children to be obedient and respectful. As mentioned above, there is very little communication between youth and adult members in a congregation due to the cultural, language, and generational gaps. Therefore many needs and concerns of the youth are not met in Korean ethnic churches in America. Today, the Korean ethnic churches are facing the universal and increasing problems of youth such as suicide, run-away, crimes, etc. (Kim, Dea Hee 1990:103). However, the relational gap in the hierarchical system caused by the cultural gap seems to be a major area needing attention in Korean ethnic churches, both for the adults and the youth.

Values

Traditional Korean values founded in Confucianism, filial piety, and the priority of valuing family relationships also contribute to the problems which Korean-American youth ministry must confront. Other values that may contribute to the negative attitude of youth include: "A tenacious memory of the past paternal authority; familistic collectivism; reverence for the aged; learning and personal cultivation; legalistic conservatism; a hierarchical society; rigidity of thought; and a rigid social behavior" (Paek 1989:51). Although old Koreans still hold these virtues, they are fading from the minds of young people, due to the influence of Western culture.

As individualism is prevalent in materially affluent nations, materialism in

general is more highly valued than human relationships in America. Material possessions become the highest goal in life. Thus Americans stress the value of education and training skills in order to get good work and possess good things (Du Bois 1955:1235).

Since individualism is valued by Americans, they value freedom, privacy, and individual property (Paek 1989:87). Individuals value being independent and controlling every aspect of life. They do not rely on others, even on parents (Thomas and Althen 1989:211). Thus an individual autonomy becomes the basis of establishing human relations (Augsburger 1986:153).

In contrast to Americans, Koreans value inter-relatedness. In order to relate to each other appropriately, certain manners and language levels are followed according to the hierarchical order in the social structure. Respect and obedience to elders, and to authority figures, are valued by members of the Korean-American first generation, and they in turn have imposed these values upon the second generation. However, their efforts seem to have failed (Ahn 1986:127).

As children become acculturated to American individualism, individual rights and privacy become points of conflict between parents and children in Korean homes in America. Children insist on their own right to choose activities and dates. They do not want to rely on their parents when problems arise. They want to take responsibility for their own lives (Paek 1989:87).

In Korean culture, even today, individual rights are much less stressed.

Collective duties and responsibility are emphasized. A private life style is still not welcomed in Korean culture. The self finds its identity within the family or group. Parental authority controls every area of children's lives. Thus, Korean-American children consider themselves over protected compared with their American friends (Paek 1989:88). As in American or individualistic cultures, children are getting emotionally detached from the parents as they grow (Triandis et al. 1988:325). The barriers between parents and children rise as children grow. As children become distant, both parents and children experience loneliness in the Korean-American homes.

According to some Korean psychiatrists, an over-emphasis on obedience and conformity of children in Korean traditions may hinder the development for independence (Kim, Dea Hee 1990:10). A study shows that although parents respond positively to the traits of self-reliance, assertiveness and autonomy, they also want their children to have cultural traits of respect and obedience for authority figures (Park, Seung Hwan 1983:47). Several researchers said that imposing excessiveness of these cultural traits may result in a passive learning experience rather than active participation in the class room (Choi 1992:18). Furthermore, the youth are pressured by the expectation of their parents for academic high achievement (Sun 1992:2). From my data in research question 4, the pressure to study was the most common problem identified by the Korean-American youth I interviewed.

Most Korean-American pastors agree that Korean-American second

generation members do not value Korean traditions and values as much as their parents, because the youth assume Korean value systems are not related to American values. The majority of pastors believe the Korean-American youth in America lack respect for old people. Consequently conflicts of values between parents and their children arise in many Korean homes in America (Ahn 1986:138), as well as in Korean ethnic churches.

A youth pastor once shared his dilemma as a go-between for the two generations. Adults in his church often pushed him to remind the youth to show respect for their elders. Even a decade ago there was a threat that the youth culture may overrun the parents' culture in the near future, since the youth population is already 40 percent of the whole Korean-American population (US Department of Justice 1988 cited in Sun 1992:1).

Summary

This chapter discusses the contrasting worldview assumptions of individualism and collectivism, social structure, and values between American and Korean cultures. Contrasting worldview assumptions of the two cultures co-exist in Korean-American homes and churches and have become major areas of conflict between the first and second generations in the United States.

The practice of vertical social structure is discussed in this chapter. These discussions laid the foundation for understanding the cultural gap between first and second generations of the Korean-American population in America.

Notes

¹ An interview with Dr. Ben Hur Lee who has been a missionary along with his wife for seven years. Taik-Dong Mo was the primary promoter of women working.

CHAPTER 5

The State of Youth Ministry in Korean Ethnic Churches

“Silent exodus,” “the second generation is being lost,” “they are the mission field we need to focus on.” These statements voice the concerns about the Christian faith of Asian-American youth today (Lee, Helen 1996:50) including Korean-American youth. Why is this phenomenon happening? Many factors come into play.

This study hypothesized that the exodus of young people is caused by a cultural barrier between the older and younger generation, inadequate spiritual nurturing of the younger persons, and failure to prioritize youth ministry. The existing Korean traditional social structure hinders strategic planning, and contradicting worldviews create the cultural gap between generations in Korean ethnic churches. The omission of strategic planning also includes a lack of spiritual discipline for the younger generation. Thus, because youth ministry does not receive a strategic or important position, the churches fail to meet the needs of their youth.

The research questions proposed in Chapter 1 focused on: (1) the existence of the perceived exodus of Korean-American youth from their churches, (2) the effect of cultural barriers on youth ministry, (3) spiritual discipline for the Korean-American youth, and (4) the priority Korean ethnic churches place on their youth ministry. The data needed to answer the four research questions and related hypotheses were collected through interviews

with the youth pastors, parents, and young people.

This chapter begins with a story of a youth ministry in a mega-church in New York City. It tells how the youth ministry grew, how it declined, and how it stayed in stagnation. The stories of two individuals then help clarify the various reasons for youth reducing their church involvement or left the church completely, though they may not have completely lost their faith. The results of all of the interviews are analyzed in the order of youth pastor, parents, and youth. In this way, the data about adults compares with that of young people. The findings from each group for each research question are integrated last. My interpretation follows with the assistance of the literature review.

Let Us Hear the Stories

The story of Hope Church, Alice's story, and John's story are presented here.

The Story of Hope Church

Hope (pseudonymous) Church is the largest Korean ethnic church on the east coast and one of the five largest in the United States. The church relocated from the middle of the commercial district of New York City to Queens in order to own their own church building.

The church tries to evangelize Korean non-believing families and junior high and high school young people. The church's first purpose for targeting youth is awareness of the importance of youth ministry to pass on the inheritance of the faith of the Korean-American first generation. The second

purpose is that children or youth can be an avenue to bring the whole family into the church. During the church's growing periods, as the number of adults grew, so did the youth group and vice versa.

I first visited Hope Church in 1984. All age groups filled the small rented sanctuary. The service was orderly. The choir sang beautiful Korean gospel music. The pastor preached a scriptural sermon in Korean. I felt as if I was at a church in Korea. After the service, a huge crowd of children and youth came up to the sanctuary from downstairs. They were looking for grandmothers by calling "Hal-ma-ni" in Korean with an English accent. I had such a warm feeling in observing many children being with their grandmothers. However, when I revisited the church in 1995 after they had bought their own building in a new location, I had a much different impression. Maybe because of the big size of their new building, the density of children could no longer be seen.

The church was planted by twelve Korean families in New York City in 1975. It started as a house church. The attendance increased to 200 people in a couple of years. The church invited the current pastor in 1978 and he has faithfully and vigorously served Hope Church and expects to continue. In the beginning, the church set the goal of reaching out to 500 unbelievers by 1980 and every year after an additional 500 were reached. Membership increased to 1500 in 1982, 2000 in 1983, and 3000 in 1985.

The youth membership was 500 out of the 3000. The annual adult growth rate had been 45 percent until 1985, an outstanding percentage. However from

1986-1996 up to the present, it has not grown but has stayed about the same. The number of youth also began to decline dropping to about 200 in 1991 and 1992. This plateauing continues to the present.

George G. Hunter III, in To Spread the Power, indicates six “mega strategies” for church growth (1987:34-36). These strategies seem to be the main strategies used by Hope Church during its growth. First, the church used visitation evangelism for “identifying receptive people.” Second, Hope Church “reached out across social networks” by using the channel of family, friends, business associates, and school alumni networks. Third, it “multiplied recruiting units,” one of the most successful methods of church growth in Korea. This church has had home groups, Bible classes, choirs, as well as groups for men, women, youth, children, and grandmother/grandfathers. Fourth, the church has “ministered to people’s felt needs” in providing hospitality, family atmosphere, social services, and attention to second generation ministry. Fifth, they “indigenized” the church’s ministry in the Korean way of worship, language, leadership, and custom, which drew Koreans to the church. Sixth, “strategic planning for the church’s future” worked to produce growth through the cooperation of pastoral and laity teams. For example, owning a church building in a strategic location had been a long-term goal since 1983, and finally that goal was accomplished a few years ago.

Peter Wagner stresses that leadership is a key to church growth (1979:281). Evangelizing all unchurched Koreans and youth in the New York

area has been the pastor's vision. The pastoral team has sacrificially responded to people's needs day and night.

The enthusiasm of the laity for evangelism complemented the zeal of the pastoral team. However, the long process of the building project seems to have caused ten years of stagnation in the church overall, and the drastic decrease of the number of youth and the continuous stagnation of the youth ministry seem to suggest even more profound problems. The youth group of 500 members in 1985 decreased to half that number in 1990, and since that time youth membership remains about 200. Sunday worship attendance remains around 130.

The Korean ethnic church seems to consider the youth and children important because children are the hope of their parents for the future. However, some of the youth and the youth workers claim that the church prioritizes the adult congregation's needs rather than those of the young people. This shows that the church may not treat them as "first-class" members. The church seems to focus more on the children and the youth as a bridging force to bring parents to the church.

Unlike the 1990s, bilingual ministry was not prevalent in the 1970s and early 1980s; most churches used Korean in the youth service. One of the requests to the church by the youth was that their service and ministry be bilingual (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:74). In the 1990s, most Korean churches in America offer bilingual or English services for the youth congregation.

Paul (pseudonymous), an American bilingual minister, shared that the youth ministry of the church began to grow by using English for the programs. Paul was an experienced youth minister. He knew how to “communicate love effectively and build the trust that teens need” (Borthwick 1983:76). The youth I interviewed admitted that this quality of Paul’s and the hospitality of the Korean youth staff drew them to the church. Hospitality is valued and practiced in Korean churches, since it has been a way of life (Hak 1992:27).

One of the successful programs was “TUG,” a Tuesday gathering for group counseling purposes. After Paul resigned a few years ago, this counseling program ceased. Camping, retreats, and revival meetings were held occasionally in addition to Sunday and Friday night youth services. Contemporary worship music with the youth volunteer band was played during the services while Bible teaching was emphasized. Despite all of these programs, the youth attendance began to decrease.

Lyle E. Schaller says people tend to withdraw from church life in their late teen years and young adults years (1978:13). In addition to this observation, when Paul was ministering to the youth, cultural conflict between the first and second generations was severe. First generation members demanded filial piety, use of Korean language, and practice of Korean customs from the next generation. The youth programs were often interrupted by the elders because they thought them irrelevant to Korean values. Furthermore, the building project

also produced a negative impact on the youth ministry while Paul was ministering there.

The youth attendance decreased from about 200 (membership 250) to 130 (membership 200) after Paul left. Jeff (pseudonymous), an American youth pastor, replaced Paul. Attendance has remained the same. A couple of new Korean student youth pastors were also hired. The church finally moved to its new location after ten years of the long process of acquiring their own building. Jeff left recently. Chris (pseudonymous) replaced Jeff. English became the main language of the youth services and programs, but parents continued to pressure the Korean youth pastors to use Korean for hymns and sermons.

A deacon insisted that the youth must speak and understand Korean in order to remain active in church life during the post-high school period so that they can participate in the young adult or adult ministry. Another dilemma was that the Korean youth pastors felt that the American youth pastor made simple programs which did not fit into the culture and nature of the Korean church. A mother commented that the frequent change of youth pastors and their inexperience was one of the reason for losing the youth.

We will better understand the dynamics of the growth and decline of the youth group through the personal stories of two youth group members.

Alice's Story

Alice is a twenty-one year old college student. She has not attended church since her senior year in high school. Her voice became alive when she

began to share about her first visit to Hope Church. Her mother's friend led Alice to church one Sunday when she was seven years old. Her mother did not accompany her because she was not a Christian at that time. The crowd of children and the kindness of the children's pastor impressed her. She kept going with her mother's friend. A few weeks later, her mother and her younger brother, Alex, joined her. Alice could not understand the meaning of salvation until she reached her second year of middle school.

She received Jesus Christ as her Savior at a youth retreat. A change occurred in her attitude. Even though she had been a quiet and obedient child to her parents, she wanted to be a better daughter.

Alice's mother dropped out of the church due to an opening in their small, family business during Alice's last year of junior high school. The children also stopped going to church even though they enjoyed the church life. When she reached high school, Alice and Alex came back to the church because they could take the subway on their own. However, they attended irregularly. They seldom went to church after it moved to its new location because they did not feel comfortable in the new environment, and because their friends had all left the church.

At the time of the interview Alice and Alex both felt insecure and far away from God. Alice also felt guilty because she was more attracted to social activities such as dating, going to movies or dancing than to church meetings. Sometimes that guilt kept her away from God. Alice's future goal was to

succeed financially to release her parents from having to work seven days a week. Alice and Alex had completely stopped going to church. Alex moved away from home and Alice had a non-Christian boyfriend. Alice said she wanted to attend the new church in her neighborhood in the near future.

The story of Alice is a common one for Korean-American youth who leave behind the faith which they had experienced from childhood. Korean-American Christians are concerned that unless new immigrants continuously enter the country, the beautiful sanctuary of the Korean church might become empty in the near future if the church is not able to retain the second generation population.

John's Story

John (pseudonymous), a college student and a non-churchgoer at present, changed his Korean name to an American name by himself right after he was admitted to college because his Korean name was hard to pronounce. He and his younger brother, Young, a high school boy, came to America when John was five and Young was three years old. Their parents have never been Christian. The two boys never attended church until the boys' Christian uncle moved into their house. The boys' uncle took them to the church for a couple of years.

The church was located an hour's driving distance from their home. The boys' uncle moved out after he got married and the boys could not go to the church by themselves. Consequently, they stopped going to that church. However, their friends led them to the neighborhood church. From that time they

wandered from church to church looking for more “fun” churches. However, they both lost interest as they mingled with non-Christian friends. John left home to attend college, but he refused an invitation to attend a Korean-American student Bible study at college, as he was involved in sports activities.

Meanwhile, as John’s father and mother were working in a family-owned stationery store from early morning to late night seven days a week, Young, fourteen at that time and in high school, got involved in an Asian gang in their neighborhood without the knowledge of the family.

One night Young and other gang members were arrested for fighting. Because he was a minor, a judge ordered him sent to a military school for discipline. His parents became discouraged, depressed, and lost much money in legal fees and school tuition. Young’s mother thought that her son’s destructive behavior was her responsibility and she felt she had lost face before her husband’s family and friends.

Young behaved well while he was in military school, but because of the heavy financial obligation the couple had to pull their son out of the school. Even though they tried to supervise Young’s activities every moment, while the family slept, Young went out at midnight and became involved with gang friends again.

Young confessed later that he and his gang friends made a covenant based on loyalty so that he could not get out of that circle. When Young’s parents found out, Young’s mother went to a youth pastor, which she had never

done before. The youth pastor tried to help Young by bringing him to church again. But Young had already lost interest in the church and could not leave his lifestyle. Young's parents scolded and pled with him to be a good boy again. Because they feared a possible further incident, they deported him to Korea to live with his grandparents, even though he could not get into the Korean high school because of his Korean language barrier.

Now Young lives with his grandparents, studies Korean, teaches English conversation to adults, and has made a few Christian friends. Young has not attended the church yet, but his father began to show an interest in Christianity after the agony caused by his son. What kind of strategic agendas can we suggest to the Korean-American churches to prevent the exodus of the young population?

Interview Participants

The data collected to answer all four research questions were secured through interviews from fourteen youth pastors, eleven parents, and thirty-five youth, for a total of sixty participants. The questions appear in the interview guidelines found in the Appendix. Total answers recorded for each question vary.

Youth Pastors

Fourteen youth pastors participated in the interviews. Thirteen were from nine churches and one was from a para-church organization. Seven were female and seven were male. Five youth pastors were between twenty-four and

thirty years old; seven were between thirty and thirty-nine; two were in their early fifties. Three youth pastors had been in America less than ten years; six more than ten years; five more than fifteen years. Nine youth pastors had less than five years of youth ministry experience; five youth pastors had over five years of youth ministry experience. Thus, according to the demographic information, half of the fourteen youth pastors were over thirty years old; more than half had been in America over ten years.

Parents

I interviewed six mothers and five fathers to gain insights from parents by using the four research questions. They all had teenagers or young adults. Their ages were between forty and fifty-four; two had been in America under ten years; five had been in America over ten years; four had been in America over twenty years.

Young People

The thirty-five young people who participated in the interviews included fourteen females and twenty-one males. Out of this number, twenty-two youth went to church, thirteen did not. Twenty-five were second generation and ten were 1.5 generation (the youth who came to America between eight years and sixteen years of age were considered as 1.5 generation in this study).

Among those twenty-two young people who attended church, seventeen were second generation and five were 1.5 generation. Ten were females, twelve

were males. Sixteen youth were between thirteen and eighteen years old; six were between nineteen and twenty-one years old.

Among thirteen former churchgoers, eight were second generation and five were 1.5 generation; four were females, and nine were males.

Out of the total number of young people (35), eighteen had both American and Korean names, eight had Korean names, and nine had only American names. Half showed their double cultural identity in their names. However, Korean names were usually used in the homes and American names at school. The reason was the Korean names were not easy to pronounce or remember by their American friends.

Research Question 1

Is the perceived exodus of teens and post-high school young adults real? The data related to this research question were collected through the youth pastors. This research examined the existence of the exodus of teens and post-high school young people.

Youth Pastors

All fourteen youth pastors from eleven youth groups agreed that the post-high school young people were leaving the church. Concerning the question of the teens' exodus, ten youth groups out of eleven were not growing—eight groups were in stagnation, and two groups were decreasing in size. Most of the pastors said that new youth were coming, but about the same numbers had left in the last two or three years. A youth pastor who had about 110 youth in

attendance said that his youth groups had been almost the same during the last five years with only a variation of between five or ten.

Only one church divided second and 1.5 generation youth into separate worship services with different youth pastors. The second generation group of that church was not growing but the 1.5 youth group had increased recently because of transferring numbers from the primary school children as they went to junior high school, and due to overall growth through the arrival of new immigrants and their children. If the Korean-American church is losing the younger generation, there is need for deeper study to search for possible solutions.

Data Interpretation

All fourteen youth pastors perceived the exodus of post-high school young adults as real. The high school youth ministries are in stagnation (9 out of 10 youth ministries).

According to the survey of Young Pai, youth are inclined to leave the Korean-American church as they get older, especially in their college years, because their needs are not met (1987:52, 53).

The tendency toward exodus of the younger generation is seen not only in the Korean ethnic churches, but also in other Asian churches in contrast to their great success in the growth of their adult congregations (Lee, Helen 1996:50).

Keeping the younger generation in the churches as well as maintaining their faith is a significant challenge requiring action by other Asian churches in America, as well as for the Korean ethnic churches.

Perceived Reasons for the Exodus

The youth pastors, the parents, and the young people were asked the perceived reasons for the exodus of high school and post-high school young people. These groups were asked in order to get a complete picture of what seems to be happening.

Youth Pastors. The fourteen youth pastors were questioned concerning reasons for the perceived exodus for post-high school young people. Their responses were: college or moving (9), non-Christian parents (2), change to an American church (1), and insincere or indifferent faith (1).

The perceived reasons given by the youth pastors concerning exodus of high school teens were: non-Christian parents (6), insincere faith (3), study (2), non-Christian friends (1), Korean language barrier (1), and conflict with first generation (1).

The youth pastors remarked that as the youth graduate from high school, many move to other states in order to attend college, so they also have to leave the church. A youth pastor said, however, that if a young person believes sincerely, he or she will continue going to other churches after entering the college. Korean-American youth usually go to church with their parents when

they are young, so unbelieving parents might not stimulate their children to go to church.

The youth pastors were asked what proportion of the teen youth have a nominal faith, and what proportion have a sincere faith. Eleven youth pastors offered estimates for eleven teen youth groups.¹ Two youth pastors thought that about 15 to 20 percent of the teen youth hold sincere faith and the rest are nominal. Three pastors estimated about 30 percent were sincere, one thought 40 percent. Four more agreed that 50 percent of their youth are genuine Christians. One pastor said 80 percent were sincere. These estimates suggest that the churches need to disciple all of their young people to become mature Christians, reducing the percentage of nominal Christians.

Parents. The interviewees' children were churchgoers, with only two exceptions: one mother's children were not, and the son of another couple left church after he graduated from high school. Six parents offered their perceived reasons for the exodus of high school youth. The perceived reasons were: poor programs (2), unbelieving friends (1), inexperienced youth pastor (1), ineffective youth pastor (1), too much freedom (1). In addition, a father said that the church shifts responsibility for immaturity of faith of youth to the parents, and parents blame the churches.

Young People. A sixteen-year-old high school girl, a leader in her youth group, indicated that she perceived only 10 percent of the youth attendance from her church seemed to be real Christians and the rest of the youth were nominal.

She said many came to church to be with friends. Some of the youth smoked cigarettes behind the backs of the adults, some were involved in gang activities, and some had unhealthy opposite gender friendships. She said only approximately 10 percent of her youth group did not face a communication gap with their parents. She said each young person needed a model to encourage him or her to live a good Christian life.

Ten former churchgoers were asked the reason for their exodus: boring (4), busy college life (social activities) (2), skeptical about church (adults are social and political) (2), no meaning (2).

All the young people said that there was no change in their lives after dropping out of church. Though not much change happened in her life, a female college student, Alice Lee mentioned social activities such as dancing and “to do fun things.”² Another one said that although she stopped going to church, she still prays. One boy complained that his mother bugs him to go to church.

As I reflect on the perceived reasons for the exodus of young people, some reasons, such as moving to go to college, can not be controlled. But some reasons could be altered by our efforts. Most reasons reflected the problems examined in this study: cultural, spiritual and program areas.

Paul Shu Kim indicates the lack of empathetic understanding by the first generation as the major reason for the exodus of the second generation from Korean-American churches. First generation leaders lack training to understand the needs of the second generation. As a result, the young people suffer

boredom at church and tend to leave (1980:56, 116). The crisis is that the faith of young Christians may well be lost as they leave their home churches (Lee, Helen 1996:50).

Research Question 2

Do cultural barriers exist between first and second generation Korean-Americans which negatively impact effective youth ministry? The data for answering this research question were collected through the youth pastors, the parents and the youth. I explored decision-making patterns, and the degree of cross-cultural understanding, particularly as the older people teach a traditional worldview and first-generation values to the younger generation, and fail to exhibit cross-cultural sensitivity.

Youth Pastors

Cultural Barriers. Korean-American youth pastors seemed unable to innovate strategies to go with the cultural changes of the young generation. I assumed that church leaders (pastors and lay leaders) do not allow the youth pastors sufficient authority to do this. In order to discover how youth pastors create programs in the cultural patterns of the authoritarian leadership structure in the Korean ethnic churches, the program decision-making process for youth ministry was investigated. The data for the decision-making pattern of the youth ministries were collected through the youth pastors of nine churches.

Program decisions can be made by the youth pastors in four out of nine churches. The youth pastors make plans but need to have approval of the

senior pastor in two churches. The youth pastors and the senior pastor work together in two churches, though in one church the senior pastor makes the major program decisions. However, reporting to the senior pastor or to the elder is required in three churches. Direction, advice, and approval by the senior pastors is required in five churches. Even the youth pastors who can make their own program decisions, need approval of the leadership of the church.

Many youth ministries in large churches consist of several youth pastors, including assistant youth pastors. Program plans are usually made cooperatively. All participating youth pastors agree that initial programs are planned within the limit of the character of the churches and its guidelines.

The Emphasis of Korean Worldview and Values. Questions about emphasizing the worldview and values of the older generation upon the young were asked of ten youth pastors of ten youth groups.

Nine youth groups out of ten had been taught some things about Korean culture, according to the youth pastors. These teachings were: Korean values and customs, community, filial piety, Korean language, and Korean values with Biblical interpretation. The youth pastors perceptions concerning youth responses about teaching the Korean culture were: four negative, two positive, three neutral. One youth pastor felt that youth pastors were pressured by the elders and deacons to use Korean language in the services. None of them said they are imposing Korean culture on the youth, but they are teaching it. If nine

churches teach Korean culture out of ten churches, it implies that the Korean church is emphasizing the Korean worldview and values.

Cross-Cultural Training. The question to test my hypothesis of the lack of cross-cultural training information for youth ministers was asked of twelve youth pastors.

In this information of cross-cultural training, four had none, five had a little experience, and three were bi-cultural. None of the twelve youth pastors received cross-cultural training from their churches, indicating Korean-American churches were not aware of the need for cross-cultural training for their young people (for example: job training seminars were sometimes held in Korean ethnic churches). The remaining issues related to research question two will be discussed in the data interpretation, after examination of data from other groups and other research questions.

Parents

Cultural Barriers. Parents were asked: In what areas does the first generation struggle or find it hard to adjust in their new life in America? Eleven parents participated, and some offered more than one answer.

Language barrier (6) created the most difficult adjustment for parents living in America. This could include that language problems are one of the causes of the lack of communication between the first and the younger generations. Customs (2) and adjusting to the job (2) came next. Some (2) did

not experience a problem. Others were crime (1), missing extended family (1), and racism (1).

The next question was: What are the areas of difficulty relating to the younger generation? The American value system of individualism, independence, and self assertion adopted by their children appeared to be the most difficult area for Korean-American parents to deal with (6 cited). Communication gap (2) and generation gap (2) followed. The disrespectful behavior of children toward their parents as compared to Korean tradition (1) and following the American cultural pattern of more respectful manners and language of parents toward children (1) were identified as issues for Korean-American parents. American customs (1) were also listed as issues. A mother complained that her son was too arrogant and looked down on his parents because of their English language insufficiency and their ignorance of American customs. Children seemed to feel inferior when their parents could not speak out at PTA meetings because of the language barrier.

A mother fretted, "Though good American children know how to respect their parents, my son learned this arrogant behavior not from the school but through the programs from the mass media." She thought that her son learned negative behavior before the positive side of culture, and therefore became a selfish person. Self-assertion of their children is perceived by Korean parents to be arrogant because Confucian teaching discourages self-assertive words or

behavior. A foolish person, in a Korean joke, is someone who praises self, wife, or children in public.

Another mother complained that her son did not respect adults in his behavior; he would lie down in front of adults or stay lying down when an adult would come in. Her son also exhibited poor greeting habits toward adults.

I myself was amazed when I saw my friend lie down in front of her parents-in-law and chat with them. This kind of freedom of manner has never been allowed in Korean society because of Confucian teaching which emphasizes respectful and formal etiquette between young and old.

Chu (pseudonymous) repeatedly fretted: "My son does not value the importance of close relative relationships so my children do not visit the relatives."³ What frustrated her most was the wide communication gap between her and her son, since her son can not speak Korean well nor can she speak English well. The mother complained: "I just can not understand my son's mental world." When the friends of her son would visit their home, if she would serve food without asking whether they liked to have it or not, her son would complain that she did not ask first and sometimes they would not eat. From the mother's perspective, these friends do not appreciate hospitality; from a youth perspective, the mother is too intrusive.

Why does this kind of behavior conflict and irritate mother and son? The act of hospitality generally is very strong in a collectivistic country where accepting hospitality creates bonding. In Korea, if someone offers a meal,

people usually say no at first even if they want it, so they get the offer a couple more times, and then accept. Koreans are persuasive in showing hospitality. Even when people are full, they persist in offering food. Koreans in America often laugh about their experience of coming home hungry when an American friend offered a meal because they say no first, even though they wanted something. That mother who comes from the culture where people engage in the interaction of strong hospitality naturally feels hurt over her son's response.

Being a typical Korean, that mother feels distant from her son, and sad. She said; "I feel like I have an American son." Her son reacts against her for entering his room without knocking, for cleaning his room without asking, for touching his things. She thinks that her motherly authority is lost in this culture. When racial problems between Koreans and people of other races occur, her son is not in favor of Koreans but in between, saying that Koreans might treat the other wrong, too.

Two parents said communication difficulties and the generation gap create problems between themselves and their children. Though the generation gap between parents and children is universal, Korean-American parents reported that their cases are extreme because of cultural differences in addition to generation differences.

A father, Mr. Sung-Mo Yu (pseudonymous) gave a reason for this phenomenon: Koreans try to teach their children English first when they arrive in America, rather than giving children bilingual education as other ethnic groups

do. The children adopt American culture fast and forget the Korean culture as a result of their prioritizing English lessons.

The father continued his observation by saying:

Most of the Korean ethnic churches use English only for the youth ministry because they have a Korean language barrier. However, when they graduate from high school, they no longer are able to participate in the young adult or adult congregation since they use Korean language in their services and activities. Young people do not seem to fit in the American church either. Consequently, they leave the church and stray from their faith.⁴

This father also said that in some Korean churches families are divided into two kinds; Americanized and Koreanized families and they socialize with their own kinds in the churches.

In Korean custom, adults do not interact with children with respectful language, such as using the term "please," nor do parents thank children for small errands. Parents usually order and children obey. In Korean the verb ending is also commanding for children. Manners and language are different according to ages, roles, and status.

A husband thanking a wife for handing him a napkin or a cup of water at the meal table, or similar interactions between parents and children, as in American customs, seem to indicate an individual has separate identity within a family. This kind of scene is not in the picture in Korean homes since self does not exist apart from one's family. Thus, Korean parents feel a pain of separation as their children seek an individual identity within their family.

Opposing etiquettes create misunderstanding between the Korean-American first generation and the second generation. Informal behavior of youth toward adults irritates adults. The youth complain against adults for their lack of respect and appreciation for young people.

All eleven parents said that they obeyed their parents when they were growing up. Though it was hard at that time, they appreciated the discipline of their parents. Respect for the old is missing in the behavior of the Korean-American second generation children today, a father said.

Another father, a lay leader at the Hope Church, Mr. Hyung Lee (pseudonymous) said: "The Korean-American church leaders care for the young people, but they are accustomed to non-expressive behavior. Instead of expressing their care, they point to the disrespectful manners of the youth toward adults. So the youth interpret the adult's non-expressive manners and criticism of them as lack of interest and respect."⁵ The youth can not comprehend why the adults do not respect their individuality since the youth have not been brought up in a traditional Confucian oriented society.

Despite all these differences and conflicts, the older generation seems to care about narrowing the gap with the young. So they try. Four parents out of the ten parents, said they try to understand their children as they interact with them. A mother said that though she tries to understand her daughter, she can not resist interfering with her daughter's hair style or what she wears. A father said he learns to narrow the generation gap through listening to the same music

his son likes to hear. Another father indicated that he tries to understand the bi-cultural perspective by positioning himself on both sides of the cultures. Two parents said they try to narrow the generation gap; another two said they seek to communicate well with their children; one emphasized individuality of each child; and one father said he gives freedom to his daughter because he trusts her.

Six parents admitted they do not have enough time to spend with their children. All parents said they spend time with their children in conversation about school work, friends, and daily activities. One father added that he often speaks of the merits of his ancestors to his children. This father insisted on Korean language acquisition for the offspring of Korean immigrants.

Due to the density of the Korean-American immigrants in pockets within mega-cities, such as Los Angeles, New York, or Chicago, adult Koreans tend to socialize with each other and to work in Korean shops or companies. So they encounter limited influence from American culture. The majority of parents work in Korean places. A mother said she works for a Korean nursery with Korean workers. She uses Korean at work and at home. For her there were few chances to learn American culture in depth. Six parents said they wanted to learn American culture and family ways, but they did not have time or opportunity. Two parents said they knew American culture well. One showed no interest in learning.

Young People

The Church Leader's Interaction with the Youth. If the influence of the Confucian hierarchical social structure in age and status is one of many factors creating a widening gap between the first and second generation, are the church leaders aware of it? Is there any indication of church pastors trying to interact with the young in casual settings?

All respondents, nine out of nine, said they just say "Hello" to pastors other than the youth pastors, and do not interact. The pastors who minister to the adult congregation do not cross their boundary to reach out to the young people even in casual settings. A parent said: "My senior pastor tried to reach out to the youth by hugging and joking with them, but some of the adults thought he was losing his dignity." A girl said her senior pastor ignored her greetings, but greeted adults well. However, a much closer relationship existed with youth pastors. Among sixteen youth, five reported feeling close with their youth pastors. Four said the youth pastors were like a teacher; two that youth pastors were like their own siblings; two said the youth pastors were like their friend or brother; two simply said they felt comfortable with the youth pastor; and one said the youth pastor combined the roles of friend, advisor and teacher. Jae-Un Kim writes that the barrier between age, status, and gender is a product of Confucianism (1991:68).

The Emphasis of Korean Culture. If the church emphasized keeping Korean customs and values for the youth, I next asked the youth how this influenced their Christian faith. Fourteen responded to this question.

Seven answered that their church emphasizes Korean values and customs. They think this helps them learn about Korean culture. Two say the church emphasizes Korean culture some of the time. Five youths said there is no emphasis on Korean culture. Among the five, one indicated that the church used English only for the youth service and tended to discourage learning Korean culture. All responded that the cultural emphasis of their churches did not effect their Christian faith.

Twenty-nine young people responded to the question about learning Korean culture. Nineteen young people (66%) were interested in learning Korean culture. Seven (24%) of the 1.5 generation said that they already knew the culture. Three (10%) showed no interest.

A second generation young adult indicated he no longer intended to continue studying Korean language, which was offered by his church; however, he wanted to visit Korea in the summer. One 1.5 generation youth said he did not care to study about Korea, yet visiting Korea and relatives would be in his future plan. A couple of youth, though they wanted to learn, cited lack of time as a reason for not being able to learn about their country of origin. One wanted to learn Korean culture both to understand his parents better and also for himself. The majority of young people showed interest in learning Korean culture.

Data Interpretation

The assumption that the hierarchical, authoritarian leadership structure in Korean traditional cultural might be a contributing barrier to the youth pastors having flexibility to create attractive youth ministries was suggested but not confirmed. The data about the decision-making process showed that four out of nine youth pastors could make their own decisions about the youth programs. However, two of these four pastors were required to report to the senior pastor and the elder (superintendent of the youth group) after making decisions and before their application. One was required to listen to advice from the senior pastor before making a decision, and another one was required to get approval from the senior pastor after the decision. Five youth pastors from five churches made joint decisions with the senior pastor, based on direction from the senior pastor. All youth pastors agreed that they plan the programs according to the guidelines of the church.

As I interpret this information, these data (4 out of 9 making their own decisions) suggested but did not prove that the youth pastors have limited freedom to create effective programs to stimulate the faith of youth. However, the programs represented in research question 4 indicate mainly weekend services. In most of the churches, as has been mentioned already, some of the youth commented that they were bored at church. However, the youth pastors might be in a dilemma in seeking to create programs to attract youth. If they go with the grain of Korean culture, they are likely to alienate the youth. If they fail

to honor the Korean culture's patterns, they will alienate the older generation.

Either way, there is potential to create a further gap between the adult and youth congregations in the church. Thus, suggestions for innovative programs need to be made regarding this aspect of possible conflict.

All five American youth pastors interviewed said that they have sufficient authority and that even reports are not required after they make programs on their own, except for programs which require major funds. Rick, a youth pastor from Wilmore, KY, said that some youth pastors have limits on their freedom, but the degree of control is much less than in Asian-American cultures.

If the gap between the older and younger generations is widening, one of the reasons might be the prevailing authoritarian structure of the Korean-American churches. The traditional Korean culture would dictate that the pastor and other adults would not interact casually with the young people because of the status and age hierarchies. The data confirmed that these cultural traditions are the norm for Korean ethnic churches. The majority of the youth (9 out of 13) said they only knew pastors of their churches at a greeting level. Some (3 out of 13) said they felt closeness, like with a teacher, advisor, or friend. The pastors of large churches did not interact with the youth, but the pastors of the small churches did.

However, the youth enjoyed a close connection with the youth pastors. Over half of the youth (8 out of 13) said their youth pastors were like brothers and sisters and friends. Some (3) saw their youth pastors as teachers. The rest

(2) carried a positive response to their youth pastors, saying they had comfortable feelings toward them.

The existing traditional social structure appears to be a barrier to planning strategic ministry methods for the youth and creates a relational gap between status and age.

The authoritarian leadership structure has been prevalent in the Korean ethnic churches in general (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:108, Paek 1989:94, Kim, Dea Hee 1990: 104). The congregation knows how to relate with those in hierarchical position through conduct and speech (Pai 1987:18). Respect and obedience are expected by the seniors from their juniors in age order and status order (Pai, Pemberton and Worley 1987:18; Paek 1989:94; Kim, Dea Hee 1990:104) as the result of the influence of Confucianism (Kim 1990:104). Thus the younger generation is pressured to follow the rules of hierarchical order (Paek 1989:94).

Younger pastors of the youth or young adults seemed to want to create more effective ministry methods with less intervention by the older generation pastors, but emphasizing support and respect from the elder church leaders. Yet obedience to the authority of the older generation pastors is a virtuous manner in Korean culture. When younger pastors seek more egalitarian leadership, the older generation pastors argue. From the traditional absence of egalitarian leadership in the Korean churches, they believe that the younger generation pastors need to learn from their experienced, older pastors rather

than seeking to dictate changes to them (Kim, Nak-In 1991:111). In reflecting on this argument, a dilemma is how can they interact with one another in a way which is effective. The older generation prefer authoritarian and hierarchical relations as the way of life. But the younger generation is much more influenced by the Western egalitarian social structure since their lives have been involved in the American culture through school, work, friends, and media. Thus each finds it hard to adjust to the other's cultural perspective.

The first generation ministers of the Korean ethnic church give "too strict, too religious" impressions to the younger generation (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:107). The younger generation perceives that the ministers and the older generation of the congregations are alienated from them due to language and cultural barriers. Trusted counseling figures among ministers and the adult congregation are desirable for the youth congregation (Paek 1989:96).

In the late 1980s, Woon Young Paek wrote that the lack of leadership for the second generation because of language and cultural barriers and first generation centered programs caused the exodus of the second generation from Korean-American churches (1989:4). Helen Lee argues that the younger generation of the Asian-American church in general desires to be free from the Confucian pattern of hierarchical and authoritative structure. The awareness of and the application of "leadership equality" is required in America today (1996:52).

Another problem is that the children tend to become nominal Christians since the Confucian style of authority of the parents makes their children go to the church habitually. “The kids don’t own the faith. They come to church because they are forced to. They can’t differentiate between Asian culture and Christianity, and they often develop a hatred of the culture—which they then extend to Christianity” says Charles Kim, a youth worker at Korean Oriental Mission church in Los Angeles (Lee, Helen 1996:53). How can we find the point of contact where two generations can meet? Narrowing this gap in core cultures, whether between pastors or between the young and the old congregations, may be a slow process.

Are the first generation Korean churches in America trying to force their worldview and cultural values on the 1.5 and second generation?

Nine out of the ten youth ministries teach Korean values, customs, language, and filial piety. This indicates a desire by the older generation to pass their cultural values and practices to their children. However, all the youth pastors said that they do not impose the culture, but they teach it. Youth pastors’ perceptions of the youth reaction to the teaching of the Korean culture are as follows: three out of nine said the response of the youth was neutral; two said they react positively. Thus, over half were open to learn. The other four said the youth react negatively to the teaching of Korean culture.

Seven out of thirteen of the youth, said that their church emphasized the Korean culture often and that this teaching helped them. Some youth (2)

commented that their church sometimes taught Korean cultural values. Five of the youth said cultural teaching was not emphasized. Over half (9 out of 13) commented that their church life had not been influenced negatively by the cultural emphasis of the church. Interestingly, 66 percent (19 out of 29) desired to learn Korean culture.

The data showed that the majority churches tried to pass their culture on to their youth so they taught or emphasized traditional Korean values and customs rather than imposing them. Over half of the youth were open to learning the culture of the older generation.

However, other research by Yong-Soo Hyun indicates different data regarding the teaching of Korean culture at church. Some second generationers disagree about learning Korean culture for fear of not being able to get into the main stream of American culture. Some first generationers urge teaching the culture to the younger generation so they might inherit a Korean cultural identity along with faith (1990:1-2).

In an interview, the president of the Korean-American Midwestern Education Conference, Ku Young Park, suggested that the Korean immigrant society must help the second generation to discover the root of its identity as Koreans in order to be successful Korean-American citizens. The second generation needs to speak Korean and to understand Korean culture and society (Korea Times January 9, 1996:1). Under this obligation, the first

generation generally tries to teach young people Korean history, value, customs, and language.

Korean Language Schools open on weekends at the church to teach the Korean language. When the children are young, the parents bring the children to the Korean Language School to learn. As they get older, they drop out of the weekend language school to spend time on their own interests. In my study, some youth showed interest in learning Korean worldview and culture.

In Nak-In Kim's study of the Korean-American second generation, Korean-American congregations revealed that 82.5 percent (33 out of total 40 respondents) want their children to know Korean language and culture (1991:56).

A question emerges in reflecting on cross-cultural education: Are Korean leaders of Korean-American churches aware of the need to minister cross-culturally to all the generations of their communities? This answer can be found in the data of the cross-cultural training section. None of the participating churches have offered cross-cultural lectures or seminars to their church leaders or young and old generations. In the responses we also found a lack of programs effectively addressing the needs of young people to overcome narrowing communication and cultural barriers in relation to the older generation.

In exploring the cross-cultural experience of the youth pastors, four out of twelve have no such experience; five have a little experience; and three are bi-

cultural. The three bi-cultural youth pastors are either 1.5 generationers or married to an Anglo-American. It appears that the cross-cultural training of the youth pastors generally is lacking. Their churches do not offer training to the leaders nor to the congregation.

Though some Korean immigrants in big cities have been in America a long time, they have little exposure to American society and culture. These people socialize strictly with Koreans and work in Korean society. Unlike small towns, in the big cities Koreans can live well without language and cultural difficulties because of large and well-established Korean communities.

If the first generation of Korean-Americans tend to preserve Korean culture, there must be conflicting areas in living in America. In what areas are the parents struggling to adjust? The language barrier appeared to be a difficult adjustment for six out of eleven parents. American customs (2) and jobs (2) were next. The crime problem (1), racism (1), and absence of extended family (1) followed.

For six out of eleven, American cultural values such as individualism, independence, and self-assertion by their children are the most difficult areas to accept. Cultural values, communication (2), and an extreme generation gap (2) also create problems between parents and their children. However, some parents try to understand their children. Some parents, also try to narrow the generation gap and open communication.

In the area of parental cross-cultural experience, ten work in Korean companies or shops. As a result they can not socialize with the families of their children's American friends because of lack of time since they work longer hours than average Americans. However, some parents want to learn American culture in order to understand their children and American family dynamics.

The communication gap between parents and children is most problematic in both the second generation (10 out of 14) and the 1.5 generation (5 out of 9), according to the youth pastors. The cultural gap (13 out of 22) also creates barriers between the old and the young, according to the young generation. These problems between the first and second generations are commonly recognized by earlier studies as well as more recent ones.

Fluent and meaningful communication with parents and with the first generation appeared to be the most needed area (90%) discovered by Paul Shu Kim when asking youth about their problems twenty years ago (1980:85). The feeling of alienation among youth from the adult congregation comes from language and culture gaps (1980:41).

Woon Young Paek attributes worldview and language barriers as the reason for relational problems between the younger and the older generations. The tendency toward individualistic attitudes and logical thinking of the youth culture conflicts with the family-oriented and emotional reaction of the parents' generation (1989:83-90). The cultural value and language conflicts between the

young and the old occur because the youth acculturate more rapidly than adults (Hyun 1990: 2).

Many, 66 percent (19 out of 29), of the young people interviewed in this study showed interest in learning Korean culture. Some, 24 percent (7), were already familiar with Korean culture since they were 1.5 generation. Only 10 percent (3) showed disinterest.

The last assumption of the lack of cross-cultural understanding of the first generation Korean ethnic churches was the possible impairment of the Korean-American church leaders. Their ineffectiveness due to the absence of cross cultural training is displayed through the lack of strategies and programs for meeting the needs of culturally changing young people.

These three groups--the youth pastors, the parents and the youth--showed interest in some degree of cross-cultural discipline. However, the homework of the church is to discover how it can facilitate learning between the first and the more recent generations of each other's culture.

To summarize the findings of research question two, cultural barriers were explored in leadership patterns as were the possible consequences of imposing Korean culture on the younger generation and of acquiring cross-cultural training. There was not sufficient evidence to prove that youth pastors and programs are bound by rigid policies of their senior pastors. However, the barriers between the old and younger generations did seem to be in the areas of culture and communication.

Though the older generation teaches or emphasizes Korean culture, there seems to be no imposition of their culture on the young. The older and younger generations do not have cross-cultural training or experience in how to intentionally understand each other, however, they are open to learn. Communication and cultural barriers can be narrowed, enhancing the sensitivity toward each other's culture. Usually cross-cultural training brings this sensitivity. Cross-culturally sensitive leaders will minister to young people effectively and will be free to create innovative programs and strategies as well.

Research Question 3

Are younger generation Korean-Americans being adequately nurtured in their Christian faith? The data for this research question was collected through the youth pastors, the parents, and the young people. I inquired about the study of scripture, practice of prayer, the use of small groups, and training in evangelism in the churches' youth programs since these are the basic avenues to nurture the growth of the Christian faith.

The programs shown in Table 1 for nurturing the Christian faith of the young people were reported by the youth pastors of the nine churches.

Table 1
Youth Programs for Spiritual Discipline

Programs	Number of Churches Utilizing
Service (Sun., Sat.), Bible study, prayer (Sun., Sat.)	4
Service (Sun.) and prayer (Fri.) no Bible study	1
Service, Bible study (Sun.), prayer (Fri.)	1
Service (Sun., Fri.) and Bible study (Sun.) no prayer	1
Service (Sun.), Bible study (Sat.) 1 prayer 1/month	1
Service (Sun., Sat.), Bible study, prayer (Sat.)	1
Small group (cell, home)	0
Revival meeting once/yearly	4
Revival meeting twice/yearly	5
Retreat twice/yearly	8
Retreat once/yearly	1
Mission trip once/yearly	4
Community service (soup kitchen)	1
Nursing home visit	1
Community service (soup kitchen) and habitat	1
Community evangelism once/month, visit small churches once every other month	1

Nine participant churches held services twice a week including the Sunday service. These weekly services were a combination of worship, praise, sermon, Bible study, and prayers. However, none of the churches offered home-based cell groups. Two youth pastors said that the district home Bible study was desirable for spiritual discipline but they did not have time unless more youth workers were hired. All the participant churches held revival meetings and retreats once or twice a year. Four churches out of eight took mission trips abroad. Three churches had a community service program. Two churches did evangelism in the community.

Parents

We now have a picture of how youth are nurtured toward spiritual growth in the churches. Their spiritual life at home also needs to be investigated since churches and homes are the major sources of spiritual influence.

Family worship was absent in the homes of all eleven participants. Only one mother disciplined her boy to read the Bible for thirty minutes daily before bed time. Six parents reported that the family prayed individually.

Young People

The main youth worship services included preaching or scripture study. If the faith of the youth is nurtured through the sermons or Bible studies in worship, how does the Word of God influence their lives? Eighteen answered this question.

Thirteen out of eighteen gave a strongly positive response. The data show the importance of the spiritual discipline which influences the faith of the youth. They said that sermons and scriptures influenced them positively, encouraged them, motivated them to believe, and they could apply the teaching to daily life. Three said that these teachings had no effect on them.

After young people leave the church, do they get involved in other outreach programs? Twelve former churchgoers answered this question.

The majority of former churchgoers, nine, did not attend other ministries such as Campus Crusade or student Bible study. Two youth were involved in the ministry of a para-church organization.

Next, the question arises as to whether the young people share their faith with others apart from cooperating with church evangelism events? If they do, to what group do they reach out? Twenty churchgoers answered this question.

Half of the youth (10) said they witness. Among them, five said they witnessed to Korean friends since they had more Korean friends, and five to school friends of other races. However, half (10) did not share their Christian faith at all.

Data Interpretation

The data about the assumption of insufficiency in spiritual discipline for youth was collected from nine churches. All nine churches had Bible studies and prayer times. These were combined with worship services on Fridays or Saturdays in some churches. Some churches had a Bible study or prayer

meeting before Sunday service or right after. None of the churches had small home groups or independent cell groups for youth based on interests, needs, or geography. Korean adult home group activities are worship services combining prayer, Bible study, and fellowship. Unlike the American church's cell groups, the Korean-American home groups for adult are seldom based on common interest or needs, but based on geography. So they are called "District Service" (Ku-Yuek Yea Bae).

The contribution of the small home group structure is widely credited for the remarkable Korean church growth. The founding pastor of the largest church in the world, a Korean church, Dr. Yonggi Cho claims that the home cell group is one of his strategies for growing his church in spiritual quality and in numerical quantity (Cho and Hurston 1983:282). The "growth-producing elements" of the home cell group include close fellowship, Bible study in a home environment, meeting the individual prayer needs, openness for the work of the Holy Spirit, laity evangelism and more (Cho and Hurston 282-285). "Small groups provide a safe and nurturing arena for the transforming work of the Holy Spirit" (Crandall 1995:126). Because of that warm environment, the gifts of the members can be expressed and developed. The depth of Christian discipleship can be created in the home cell group environment perhaps more than any other environment through learning, sharing and accountability (Crandall 1995:126).

Dr. Cho-Choon Park, the former senior pastor (in 1980s) in the largest Presbyterian church in the world praised the small group activities as one of the

growth dynamics of Young Nak Presbyterian Church in Korea in the 1980s.

Special small groups formed according to people's interests in addition to the expected district specific small group for worship and Bible study (Park, Cho-Choon 1983:208).

According to the youth pastor at the Wilmore United Methodist, Rick, his former youth members have commented that one of the longest lasting, positive influences of Christian faith was from their small home group experience. The Korean-American churches seem to overlook the effectiveness of meeting the needs of spiritual growth for young people through small groups. Joining adult small groups for worship or Bible study may not be enough to meet the unique needs of the younger generation.

All eleven parents said they did not have family worship at all. One family used to have home worship but discontinued it as the children grew. Only one mother disciplined her child to read the Bible for thirty minutes every day.

Looking at spiritual discipline through mission trips, community evangelism, or social action, three churches out of nine took a mission trip once a year. Two churches did community service once a month. Only one church was involved in evangelism. Community and international evangelism and social service for the community were lacking in the youth programs even though these stimulate the faith of the youth.

Bible study and prayer were part of the worship programs, but did not occur as spiritual disciplines in the youth meetings. Home small groups

designed exclusively for the youth were not yet formed. The youth or children were usually allowed to join the adult home groups. Outreach or evangelism for the community and abroad were absent in the youth ministry of the Korean churches studied. However, the Korean-American youth ministry did not lack Bible study and prayer in general, but the supporting system through small groups and outreach appeared to be poor or non-existent.

According to Nam Ki Huh, the churches in Korea are also experiencing an exodus of young people after their graduation from high school. No matter how hard the church in Korea, tries to prevent the loss of its young, so far not many strategies have worked. Some reasons he gives for this phenomenon include the influence of the secular world, the influence of nominal Christianity, and outside pressures on one's faith. But his assumption is that the most fundamental reason could be the lack of spiritual discipline for youth and young adults in Korean churches (1996:86, 87).

A young Korean-American youth pastor of an independent multi-ethnic church stresses the value of prayer and the sacrifice of the Korean older generation for the spiritual and numerical growth of the younger congregation (Lee, Helen 1996:53). The lack of spiritual discipline is also one of the problems among young Asian congregations in America. This value needs to be emphasized along with "leadership equality and the role of ethnic identity" for the spiritual growth of young people in Asian-American churches (Lee, Helen 1996:52).

Balancing between fun programs to prevent boredom and spiritual programs to prevent shallow faith is the dual challenge for the youth ministers to prevent the exodus of the youth. The youth look not only for fun but also for “meat” in sermons. Spiritual activities need to help the spiritual growth of youth. Paul Borthwick, youth pastor in an American church, realized one of the major reasons for the decline in the numbers of his youth was the lack of outreach programs due to many reasons such as “demographic factors, inconvenient locations, tight budgets, busy schedules, and poor facilities.” Evangelism programs reached outside the church, but hospitality within the church to enhance the growth of spirituality of the youth was missing due to Borthwick’s lack of zeal for outreach in his youth ministry (1986:54-56).

In general, young people are perceived to be inclined more toward fun programs than spiritual disciplines. However, in my study 59 percent (13 out of 22) were inclined more toward spiritually nourishing programs than toward others. A survey of 125 youth showed that spiritual satisfaction was their highest priority (31 boys out of 58, 45 girls out of 67) (Kim, Mark Heung Soo 1982:92). Another study reported that spiritually uplifting programs were the most important (47.5%) among forty respondents. The next 25 percent wanted relevant programs for Korean-Americans. Teaching basic Christianity is considered as the most important program for 15 percent of respondents. Second generation Korean-Americans look for the spiritual quality of the pastors (40%) along with the ability to understand second generationers (40%) (Kim,

Nak-In 1991:152). These studies imply the need for strong spiritual discipline in church programs for young people.

Research Question 4

Do Korean-American congregations adequately prioritize meeting the real life needs of their youth? The data were collected through the youth pastors, the parents and the young people. I examined the felt needs among young people in the churches, and the actual youth-related programs in place within the churches examined.

Youth Pastors

Eight youth pastors answered that the church regarded the youth ministries as important in response to the question of meeting the needs of the youth being a priority in their churches. However, four said they lacked enough youth pastors in comparison to the number of youth, even though no lack of pastors existed for the adult congregation. Three said adult ministries and building projects were top priorities in their churches. One youth pastor explained that this was because the youth are not the ones who contribute to the offering. Another said that the importance of the youth was only words, not action.

A youth pastor whose church finished a building project said that they built the big sanctuary for adult worship, but there was no separate space for the youth. A bi-cultural youth pastor commented that as long as there were no problems, the senior pastor or the elders usually approved the youth programs.

However, she continued, the adults did not care what was going on in the internal world of the youth.

According to these comments, the youth population is not treated the same as the adult congregation. The church considers nurturing the second generation population important for the future, but they do not support it in practical ways.

Does the church have extra youth programs in addition to the main programs of weekend worship services? If they have, what are the programs and how often are they held? The data for information were gathered from nine youth ministries of the nine churches.

Four churches had literature reading night once a year. One church out of the nine held a sports fellowship once a month. One out of nine churches conducted joint worship with the adult congregation. Two churches out of nine offer family activities once a year or on holidays. One church tried friend invitation night once but not on a regular basis and no future plan existed to hold it again. One church tried family night but it failed because of the lack of communication and interaction skills between adults and children. One youth pastor commented that the adults did not have patience to mingle with the youth.

What are the felt needs of these young people? This question was asked in order to know whether the church programs were meeting the needs of the these young people. The data was collected from fourteen youth pastors for the second generation and nine for the 1.5 generation young people.

Table 2

The Felt Need of Second Generation and 1.5 Generation
Korean Youth as Perceived by Youth Pastors

Perceived Need	Numbers of Times Cited	
	Second Gen.	1.5 Gen.
Spirituality	3	2
Love	1	1
Model fellowship	1	1
Communication with parents (understanding, spending time)	10	5
Language (English)	0	4
Identity or self-esteem	4	2
Study	5	3
Healthy opposite sex friends	4	2

The youth pastors perceived communication between parents and children as the most crucial need for both second and 1.5 generation. Second generation youth seem concerned about study and 1.5 generation about English problems. Establishing an identity with high self esteem, and having healthy friendships with the opposite sex are also needs of the Korean-American youth. Not much distinction appeared between the needs of the second and 1.5 generation except the English barrier for 1.5 generation.

One church out of nine holds joint worship with adults once a month; two churches offer occasional programs between adults and youth to establish

relationships. It appears these nine churches lack extra programs to narrow the communication gap between the first generation and their children. The data from parents will follow next.

Parents

Parents undoubtedly observe the youth ministry in their churches and perceive its priority in comparison to the adult ministry. Eight parents gave their opinions. One said the church treated the youth as very important. Three said the church regarded the youth as important. One gave her opinion that the church considered the youth to be important but said it was not expressed. Two said the church “thinks youth are important” but the thought was not put into action. The last one said the church treated them fairly.

A father, Mr. Young-Sik Kim (pseudonymous) said: “Even though the church leaders consider the youth as important, they are aloof to the youth because of communication and cultural gaps, so that their message of concern does not communicate to the youth.”⁶ A young girl, Ae Mi (pseudonymous) reflected Mr. Kim’s comments: “The adults seem not to care. The voice of the youth is not heard. The elders and the deacons in our church only respect and care about the pastor. When I greet them, they ignore me. The adults behave as if they are non-Christians. Our voices are not really heard.”⁷

How do the parents want to see the church develop ministry to the young generation? Eight parents contributed their ideas. Two suggested bilingual services; one suggested an after-school program; sports activity was mentioned

by one. The remaining parents offered these additional ideas: a second-generation youth pastor; Bible study and Bible-based entertainment; home visitation to help family communication; and activities related to the Holy Spirit movement (e.g., Tres Dias).

Young People

In order to know whether or not the church is in touch with the needs of young people, they were asked to identify their greatest concerns. Some gave several answers. Thus, although thirty-three young people answered, they raised 37 issues.

School study (16), future (college, career, how to fit in--9), family well being (8), friends (2), faith (1), money (1), and witness (1) appeared as their important issues. Study, future, and family are the three major issues for Korean-American youth and young adults. They were most concerned about school work. Children felt pressured since they knew that their parents considered their education as a higher priority than spirituality in their immigrant life for their children's success and they worked hard to finance their children's education. The priority placed on education rather than on spiritual development by the parents might be a reflection of the nominallity of the parent's faith. This priority could also have been influenced by the American value on success.

Preparing themselves to meet the future was the next area for concern after study. If they studied hard, they could get into well known colleges and after graduation they could get secure jobs. So they tried to choose the right

major. They also wanted to fit into the mainstream of American society and to know how to do it as Korean-Americans.

Though parents struggled over the individualistic lifestyle of their offspring, their children's future concerned parents greatly. Their top priorities were practical matters rather than spiritual (depend on their faith). Only one parent expressed concern about the needs of spiritual well-being for their children. This could also imply a need for spiritual discipline within the Korean-American Christian family in general.

Parents spending quality time with their children is one of the most significant means to influence not only relationships but also the cultural and spiritual aspects of their character. Through time together, each other's needs can be revealed. Twenty-four young people answered questions about this subject .

Three youth mentioned they did not spend time with parents because their parents worked late, including weekends. One said he spent most of his time with his friends. Four young people spent one or two hours with parents a day. Another four had two to four hours a day with parents. Thirteen of the youth who spent four to five hours a day with parents, said it seemed good. However, if two hours is deducted out of that time for meals, only two or three hours are for other activities.

If the cultural gap between the first generation and their children exists in the church, probably the gap also exists in home life. Eighteen second

generation and eleven 1.5 generation youth were asked for their perspectives regarding this issue. Of the second generation youth, most (13 out of 18) considered the area of greatest conflict to be the cultural gap. The next most indicated area of conflict was the generation gap (3). The least indicated area was the language gap (2). Of the 1.5 generation young people (7 out of 11) reported no major conflict. Some (4) had conflict with the traditional Korean culture. The youth of the 1.5 generation faced less conflict with their parents than did second generation youth.

The assumption of a cultural barrier and its nature between 1.5 and the second generation needed verification. Ten young people spoke about this. Six youth said that the 1.5 generation and second generation did not get along well with each other because of the language barrier and world view differences. Four responded that they got along well.

This information implies that the Korean-American church has generation barriers between first and 1.5 generation members and between first and second generation members and between 1.5 and second generation members. The ministry approach needs to vary according to the different needs of the adults and these youth congregations.

Additional information regarding concerns about living in American society was requested of ten young people in order to suggest ministry methods to meet their social as well as their personal needs. Thirteen subjects offered fourteen concerns.

Racism in America appeared as the most repeated subject (4). Concern for keeping Korean-American identity appeared next among other concerns (2). The Korean-American ethnic churches need to disciple the youth to equip them to live with other people groups harmoniously. Other issues mentioned were: the future, conflicting world view, happiness in family, school and career, crime, uneven distribution of wealth, and fitting into the American mainstream. One respondent simply answered, "nothing much."

Six former churchgoers out of seven mentioned they needed motivation to re-find faith or to come back to church life. Their answers as to what type of motivation were: life crises, renewed seeking, a desire to change the church, an evidence of supernatural power, and a desire for fellowship. The last one responded that there was no motivation to come back to church life.

The youth were asked about their favorite programs in order to discover what draws them to church. Twenty-two youth responded.

Praise worship (service, weekend night--8), retreat (5), fellowship program (interaction, meal--1), poem reading night (1), and puppet drama (1) were the young people's favorite programs. Three answered that they did not know what program they liked. Two answered they liked most of the programs.

The young prefer programs of spiritual discipline, services, weekend evening services, and retreats to other activities. This information shows that many youth are most hungry for spiritual nourishment.

Data Interpretation

The importance of youth ministries in the Korean-American churches is affirmed, according to the eight youth pastors who answered. However, all said that meeting the needs of the adult congregation or building projects become top priority. Therefore, more demonstration of the acknowledged priority is needed, such as providing more workers or more spaces for the youth.

Half of the parents (4 out of 8) thought the church treated the youth ministry well. The other half thought the church was aware of the importance of ministry to the second generation, but it was not a priority.

In discussing special programs, four (out of 9) churches offered literature reading night as a special program in addition to spiritual discipline programs once a year. Only one church holds a joint worship service with adults on a monthly basis. Two churches had joint activities with adults once a year or only on holidays. Joint programs with youth and adults, or family-oriented programs, were absent in Korean-American churches. The majority did not offer special programs for youth. The churches neglected the basic ministries for youth.

Other researchers agree on this pattern in church leaders in the Korean-American churches to neglect the younger generation while prioritizing the first generation (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:45-46, Paek 1989:3, Kim, Nak-In 1991:181). Korean-American youth point to the lack of attention by their senior ministers to the children and the youth, unlike American pastors (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:74). The Korean church considers the youth "the future of the church," not as a "part

of the present church" (Kim, Nak-In 1991:103). Consequently the church tries to meet the needs of the present church, the first generation, and tends to neglect the younger generation's needs (Kim, Nak-In 1991:103, 104). The reason for this is that many churches are still struggling to survive since they are relatively young churches, a first generation pastor explains (Lee, Helen 1996:51). A young adult pastor in an Asian church says that the immigrant churches consider their primary mission to focus on the needs of the first generation (Lee, Helen 1996:53).

The perceived needs of the second generation, according to the youth pastors interviewed, were communication with parents (10), study (5), identity establishment, developing high self-esteem (4), and healthy opposite sex friendships (4). The needs of the 1.5 generation were communication with parents (5), overcoming the English barrier (4), and study (3). Thus, better communication with parents is needed by most of the young. However, this desire is less strong for 1.5 generation youth than for second generation youth.

The youth pastor and parents agreed that the communication gap between the youth and their parents was the most problematic area in Korean ethnic churches. Programs or activities aimed toward narrowing the communication gap between older and younger generations were absent.

The youth answered that studying (16 out of 33) was the most important issue for them. Thus, communication with parents and study for the second

generation, while communication with parents and overcoming language barriers for the 1.5 generation, were the areas of greatest needs.

In asking about the culture gap between 1.5 and second generation youth, four (out of 10) said they did not get along well because of culture, worldview, and language barriers. How can the church bring unity among them? Does the church need separate ministries or integrated programs for the unity of the young generation? What are the pros and cons?

Paek indicates that the strong existence of a communication barrier between first generation pastors and their second generation congregations is not only due to the language barrier but also due to giving adult ministry the priority. Consequently the youth do not believe their needs are recognized and the gradual but increasing exodus of the young people takes place in the Korean ethnic churches (1989:95-97).

The youth also need planning for future life in America. They are concerned about racism. They want to flow in the American mainstream with a well-established Korean-American identity.

Researchers confirm the findings about the needs of Korean-American youth: narrowing communication and cultural gaps, and academic achievement. Language and cultural gaps are widening because of children's rapid English acquisition coupled with their fast acculturation and their parents' preservation of Korean language and culture. The children need the communication with

parents and with the first generation (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:21, 85). Along with these needs comes the generation gap (Kim, Mark Heung Soo 1982:104).

A communication gap between parents and children arises because of the language barrier and attitude differences. Authoritative communication by parents creates a conflictual atmosphere (Ahn 1986:314, Pai, Pemberton & Worley 1987:15). This communication gap creates serious conflicts between the first and the younger generation in Korean churches in America (Kim, Nak-In 1991:104). Korean parents pressure their children to speak bilingual and children prefer to speak English. These attitudes conflict with each other (Paek 1989:79) and relationships turn painful (Sun 1992:3).

The young people of the 1.5 generation have the bilingual and bi-cultural ability to apply to their daily living, although identity crises may arise (Sun 1992:13). Another view is for the Korean younger generation, a marginal population in the nation, the experience of becoming bilingual and bi-cultural provides a sense of self-esteem and confidence (Kim, Dea Hee 1990:20).

Korean immigrants face cultural problems along with identity problems as a marginal racial group. Family-oriented Koreans experience conflict with American materialism (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:16). The youth experience conflict between the family-oriented culture which requires obedience and respect to the parents and the individual-oriented culture which stresses independence (Kim, Mark Heung Soo 1982:35). Strong family ties, especially the father and son bond in Korean culture, conflict with American individualism. As this cultural

value begins to unravel in Korean homes, problems arise between parents and children (Ahn 1986:312).

Korean-American youth lean toward “the person centered worldview” and the parents tend to preserve “the relationship centered culture” (Pai, Pemberton, and Worley 1987:16-17). Holding opposing values can create tensions in their relationships (Pai, Pemberton, and Worley 1987:16-17). Displaying the individualistic attitudes of the second generation young people regarding rights when making decisions, the parents, who want to intervene in every area of their children’s life, are disappointed (Paek 1989:87-88). Korean children who are raised by authoritarian parents cannot display an attitude comparable to American students. Eventually it creates the problem of lost self-esteem (Kim, Dea Hee 1990:14).

Relationships between parents and children are deteriorating in many cases as the children value individualism while their parents value collectivism (Sun 1992:3). Another struggle for many Korean-American children is not being able to balance the Korean culture of home life and the American culture of school life (Kim, Dea Hee 1990:106). All these studies show the most basic area of cultural gap in individualism and collectivism between Korean first and second generations. My study shows one of the needs of youth is to narrow the gap in culture as well as the gap in communication which arises as a result of the cultural gap between Korean-American generations.

My study shows that academic achievement is a major need for the young people. Youth are pressured to get in to well-known colleges or universities since a major purpose of immigration is for the children's better education opportunity (Kim, Paul Shu 1980:21; Sun 1992:4). The parents are determined to give them at least a college education (Kim, Mark Heung Soo 1982:24). The pressure of the 1.5 generation is to overcome English barriers so they cansuccessfully carry the burden of study (Kim, Mark Heung Soo 1982:121). Many Korean-American youth strive to study in order to establish their ethnic identity and overcome their marginality through achievement (Kim, Nak-In 1991:60).

Summary

As Korean-American high school youth graduate from school and leave their homes for college life, many leave their churches and also tend to lose their faith, according to the findings of this study. Ministry to teens was also found to be in stagnation. The influence of parents on the faith of the youth and effective programs of the church are the major factors preventing youth from being mere nominal Christians.

The assumption that the hierarchical authoritarian leadership structure in the Korean traditional culture might be a barrier along with other cultural issues to creating attractive youth programs was not verified. However, the programs presented for this study imply there is a hindrance because of the youth pastors' lack of authority in implementing programs.

The first generation parents and the youth pastors lacked cross-cultural knowledge in general. Korean-American youth welcomed the teaching of Korean culture by the church, but the preference for a family-oriented lifestyle by parents and for an individualistic attitude of the youth constituted the major area of cultural clash. However, all--old and young--showed interest in learning both cultures.

The spiritual disciplines of Bible study and prayer were not lacking in the youth ministries in the Korean ethnic churches. However, small groups for nurturing fellowship or discipling were absent in the churches examined in this study. The actions stemming from Christian responsibility for outreach through evangelism, social work, and missions were absent in Korean youth work in these churches.

In this study few programs emerged beyond the basic two weekly services. Programs meeting the major needs of breaking barriers of communication and culture between old and young and providing counseling to address their concerns were not seen at all in this study. In the final chapter suggestions will be addressed as to how Korean-American youth ministry can produce genuine Christians.

Notes

¹ Percentages of perceived sincerity of faith of youth were calculated out of the attendance of the youth groups.

Youth ministry 1 and 2--40 members 30 attendance (both 30 % sincerity).

Para-church organization youth ministry 3--50 members 15 attendance (30% sincerity).

Youth ministry 4--65 members 40 attendance (50% sincerity).

Youth ministry 5--70 members 50 attendance (80% sincerity).

Youth ministry 6--85 members 70 attendance (15% sincerity).

Youth ministry 7--90 members 65 attendance (15% sincerity).

Youth ministry 8--130 members 110 attendance (50% sincerity).

Youth ministry 9--160 members 120 attendance (20% sincerity).

Youth ministry 10--190 members 140 attendance (40% sincerity).

Youth ministry 11--200 members 130 attendance (50 % sincerity).

² Interview Date--September 10, 1995

³ Interview Date--September 8, 1995

⁴ Interview Date--September 3, 1995

⁵ Interview Date--September 3, 1995

⁶ Interview Date--August 26, 1995

⁷ Interview Date--August 26, 1995

CHAPTER 6

Strategies for More Effective Youth Ministries

in Korean Ethnic Churches

What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost. (Matthew 18:12-14, NIV)

And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. (Ephesians 1:9-10, NIV)

How Does the Church View Their Youth?

The youth ministry of the church has been regarded as “the church of tomorrow” (Hoilands 1938:104), or “future-church” (Little 1968:15), “tomorrow’s church”(Ludwig 1979:36), “the future of the church” (Ludwig 1988:26, Borthwick 1996:154), from the 1930s up to the present (Hoilands 1938:104; Borthwick 1996:154). All these researchers agree that the church tends to postpone the importance and immediacy of youth ministry to the future since the church prioritizes adult ministry. An interpretation of these data could be that from the 1930s up to today the church seems not to heed the cries of young people who need to be embraced as today’s church.

The “fullness of time”—to see youth ministry as an immediate ministry target—has arrived at the door of the church. The Korean ethnic church should not be exempted because of the excuse of immigrants settling into a new life.

The time is passing. The church needs to grasp the heart-beat of Jesus Christ for the lost and for the back-slidden souls of the young people.

Since the youth and children below the age of fifteen occupy one-third of the whole world population (85 percent in the Two-Thirds World), they have become a great mission field (Myers 1993:40). Reaching this young population is an important task because “the great majority of people make life-shaping faith decisions before they reach the age of 20” (Myers 1993:40).

The majority of these children live in China, India, Indonesia, the United States, Nigeria, Brazil, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Russia, and Mexico. According to MARC, a division of World Vision International, 80 percent of the world's young people are not raised in Christian homes or a Christian environment (Myers 1993: 40). Young people under twenty years of age constitute 40 percent of the Korean-American population in America (US Department of Justice 1988, cited in Sun 1992:1).

Today is the fullness of time for the church to fulfill the will of God on the earth to search and bring youth and young adults into His Kingdom. Today is the fullness of time for the Korean ethnic church to change their attitude and welcome young people as first class members of the congregation.

Interest in producing turn-around is not limited to those who think in spiritual terms. We might say that the natural tendency of every activity and organization is to run down. Therefore, businesses, universities, community organizations, urban centers, and even individual persons need new beginnings or they expire. (Crandall 1995:15)

The Dead Sea is dead since no fresh water flows in. So if it is a universal law that institutions, secular organizations or churches need new beginnings before they run out of energy, the Korean ethnic church needs a new beginning to revive youth ministry before it fades away. A few strategies to prevent the continued exodus of Korean-American young people have been suggested by Korean-American church growth researchers (Kim, Paul Shu 1980; Kim, Mark Heung Soo 1982; Kim, Dea Hee 1990; Kim, Nak-In 1991; Paek 1989). However, there is still room for other strategies from diverse perspectives both now and in the future.

How Do the Youth See Themselves?

Korean-American second and 1.5 generation young people have grown up with the newest generation of Anglo-Americans. These American young people born between 1965 and 1983 have been called "Busters" because their population size is smaller (66 million) than their "Boomer" parents (76 million). Initially the 41 million children who were born between 1965-1976 were called Busters, however the next generation (1976-1983) was included in this category later (McIntosh 1995:130).

The diversity of titles of this youngest generation in America reflect their uniqueness, such as "Twenty-something Generation" (old busters), "Yiffies"- ("for young, individualistic, freedom minded"), "Nowhere Generation," "Post-Boomer(Posties)," "Echo Boom," "Baby Boomlet," "Tweens"--the teenager busters, "the 13ers--the thirteenth Generation," "Generation X" (from Douglas

Coupland's 1991 novel). Children under twelve years old are also called the Baby Boomlet these days. The teenager Boomlet (1977-1983) is about 25 million today (McIntosh 1995:130-131). Andrea Nasfell, a Buster who was born in 1973, reflects her generation:

In the last 15 years we have come of age, struggling to understand who we are and why we are here. The established church seems equally confused as it has approached my generation with traditional methods and been flatly rejected, leaving older leaders wondering, who are these kids, and what will it take to reach them? . . . We've been called a generation of "slackers," complaining about a world where all of our needs are met. We're considered lazy, expecting the world on a silver platter. We are written off by employers and even the church as rebellious or apathetic. . . Even the names we have been given cast a shadow of negativity over us. "Busters," "Thirteeners," "Generation X." The last is particularly degrading, comparing us to Brand X, generic, nothing special or unique about us. (1997:10, 11)

Out of this youngest generation of a post-modern and post-Christian society, 40 percent experience the divorce of their parents. As a result their peers replace family (Nasfell 1997:11).

The Korean-American youth of this generation have a unique situation apart from their American peers since their parents are recent immigrants instead of American-born Boomers. They grow up with Buster friends in school, yet also grow up in Korean homes and churches.

Korean ethnic churches have this unique bi-cultural young generation to reach out to and to build; this fullness of time is "kairos" time. "Institutionalizing a new era," as Lyle E. Schaller calls the time of change (1993:123), is at hand for the Korean ethnic church. Change cannot take place immediately in the Korean traditional society. Some side effects might occur; gradual change might

be more realistic. So the new era or kairos time for the Korean-American church means to be aware of the need for change and begin to work toward the change.

Schaller indicates five reasons for the plateau or decline of congregations. These are: "1. An unwillingness to change 2. The attractiveness of the status quo or the absence of sufficient discontent with the status quo to motivate and support change 3. Reluctance to pay the price 4. Demographic trends 5. The absence of visionary initiating leadership." Leadership plays the key role for change (1993:62).

The Significance of the Findings

With respect to research question 1, Korean-Americans perceived that Korean-ethnic churches had experienced an exodus of post high school young people and stagnation of high school teens due to a lack of effective youth ministry. The findings of this study demonstrated the factors causing these phenomena. Contributing factors included cultural obstacles between the older and younger generations and lack of strategic planning by churches for reaching and ministering with the younger generations. The findings concerning the reality of the exodus of post-high school young people and the stagnation of high school teen attendance, along with the causes of these trends, are significant. This reality ought to convict Korean ethnic churches not to neglect the ministry of the younger generation, and can provide guidance in forming strategies to counteract these undesirable trends.

In examining research question 2, concerning cultural obstacles, this research data neither confirmed or disproved the hypothesis that Korean-American youth pastors tend to have insufficient authority and input into program planning, due to the hierarchical authoritarian leadership structure. The data does indicate that behavior conforming to the traditional culture is expected of the younger generation, such as Korean customs and language, and filial piety. Also explored and confirmed by the data was that church leaders and congregations lack cross-cultural knowledge and understanding.

Cultural values are taught young people rather than imposed, as this research confirmed. The generations in my study lacked cross-cultural knowledge of each other's customs, values, and worldview. These findings are significant because strategies based on them can be created. This will help to narrow the cultural barriers between the older and younger generation in Korean ethnic churches. Egalitarian leadership and cross-cultural study are offered as the solutions.

In answering research question 3, we find that the Korean-American younger generation needs to be nurture in their Christian faith. Bible study and prayer are present but need to be developed more. Small group activities, community outreach, and missions were absent. Consequently, a holistic approach was recommended, and detailed suggestions were made concerning Bible study, prayer, small group, and out reach programs.

In examining research question 4, we found Korean ethnic churches did not prioritize youth ministries. The needs of young people were not met. Extra programs, beyond the simple addition of second worship services, were rarely seen. Especially, intergenerational activities were absent. Communication and cultural gaps between youth and their parents needed to be reduced. The cultural gap among younger generations (1.5 and second generation) also needed to be reduced. The second generation young people in my study needed to establish identity and self-esteem. An intergenerational approach was recommended as a strategy to narrow the relational gap between the older and the younger generation in Korean ethnic churches. Finally, the findings prompted the recommendation of forming networks connecting youth pastors and young people among Korean ethnic churches.

Proposed Strategies

I offer the following suggestions to youth ministries in Korean ethnic churches based on cultural and spiritual aspects and on needs of young people.

“God’s Fellow Workers”—Egalitarian Leadership

One suggestion is for the church leadership to move toward an egalitarian leadership style, one of shared input in youth planning between the senior and youth pastors, in order to implement programs effective in attracting and retaining youth involvement. In general knowledge, the social structure of Korean society is hierarchical and is the foundation in Korean-American churches since they are preserving their traditional culture. Since the style in

America is more egalitarian, this hierarchical pattern may not fit with the younger generation as they become acculturated. My data interpretation from Chapter 4 presents that five youth pastors have limited flexibility in planning activities, four have more flexibility in decision making and program planning. The data were not sufficiently clear to fully support my hypothesis concerning the lack of decision making power available to youth pastors as a factor contributing to ineffective youth programs. However, the data does suggest that the lack of variety in programs for the youth is a factor in why the youth are leaving the church. According to the youth interviewed in response to research question 1, the major reason for leaving was the programs were boring. Should further research confirm the hypothesis that leadership style in the Korean-American church contributes to the lack of interesting programming, an egalitarian approach to leadership would be useful to address this problem.

Jonathan Park is a second generation Korean-American who came to America in his early childhood. He was a student and a dormitory chaplain at Asbury Theological Seminary. Jonathan used be a youth pastor in the Los Angeles area prior to coming to seminary. He had a one-year short-term missionary experience in Russia. He is trustworthy, sincere, and lives life with integrity. He cares about people. When I asked him whether he had flexibility in planning, making decisions, and implementing decisions when he served as a youth pastor, his answer was unusual and simple. He said that he had complete authority in decision making and in implementing his decisions. When I replied,

“Why?”, Jonathan simply said, “because he trusted me, but cases like mine are rare.”

Autonomous leadership in decision making was given to all the judges under Moses’ leadership in the Old Testament. It was a highly effective leadership structure to minister to the masses.

But select capable men from all the people--men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain--and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but bring every difficult case to you; the simple case they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. (Exodus 18:21- 22 NIV)

What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe--as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God makes things grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God’s fellow workers; (1 Corinthians 3:5-9 NIV)

In the New Testament, Paul seems to see other workers as independent, or “God’s fellow workers, or servants.” He acknowledges the different gifts and different callings of workers in 1 Corinthians 12:5-9. The senior pastor of Jonathan Park’s church allows him autonomous leadership. These three leaders provide egalitarian leadership structure in their ministry. Their burdens became light; they have a humble attitude and also wisely choose trustworthy people to whom to offer the jobs.

The need for shared leadership is expressed strongly by younger generation leadership against the authoritarian hierarchical structure of the Asian-American churches according to Helen Lee. The authoritarian leadership

style is one of the hindrances to the growth of the younger generation in Asian-American churches (1996:52). Responses to research question 4 show that programs reflect no variety. This could imply the lack of opportunity of youth pastors to create diverse or innovative programs. Lee quotes one interviewee as saying: "Unless the first generation leaders are able to give second-generation pastors the freedom to lead, their young people will not go to these churches. First-generation pastors need to be aware of this dynamic" (1996:52).

Korean ethnic churches have to offer diverse programs in addition to providing strong spiritual discipline for the young people if they are to come to church, and leave behind their secular interests such as popular music, television, films, sports, peer groups, dates, drugs, and the internet. If the church lacks programs for young people, one reason is that youth pastors cannot implement their creative gifts if they have insufficient leadership authority for youth ministries.

If we look at the fall calendar of the Wilmore United Methodist church, in addition to Sunday regular service and midweek worship time called "body life," and weekly small group activities, we see a hay ride, wilderness retreat, "rise and fall" community youth retreat, concert, fund raising, and amusement park trip. Rick Durrence, the youth director, said that he plans, decides and executes the schedule. They took a missions trip (Dominican Republic) and an urban ministry trip (Chicago) in the summer time. He reported what they decided to do or what they were doing to the senior pastor. The senior pastor's advice is

respected but he rarely gives it. "I am trusted by the pastor and the parents of the youth," Rick says. Snyder delineates what the church structure ought to be:

The church is a theocracy, not a democracy. But it is not a hierarchical theocracy tracing from God down a ladder to the lay peasant. Rather it is a family in which God rules supremely, but kindly lovingly in a way that builds and affirms each member and makes hierarchy superfluous. . . . God's authority, rule and sovereignty don't require a top-down hierarchy. (1983:252)

A change in leadership structure is required in the Korean ethnic churches in America today. Hierarchical structures need to be changed to a more egalitarian structure through building and affirming young leaders, including and respecting women, young people, and children.

New technology awes us and it influences young people most. We are living in the age of many paradigm shifts. Gregg Johnson writes that the church needs to replace the "youth group" mentality with the "youth church" mentality. If the church allows youth groups to function not as a small part of the church but as an autonomous or independent youth ministry, the church will experience growth in new dimensions (1995:6).

Youth ministers' gifts and potentials need to be used fully for the young generation. Donald Radcliff and James A. Davies warn that if the church neglects ministry to the younger generation by not using all the resources of the church, the church will lose them and the church will not last (1991:3).

If a youth ministry functions like a church, the responsible youth pastors will shift to a pastor mentality stimulating their motivation and bringing out their creativity. If a youth ministry functions as a youth church, it will reach out to the

community. If a ministry functions as a youth group, it will continuously exist as a “service part of the church (often nothing more than a baby-sitting service),” and “youth group stays youth group” or it will remain as “ a safe group” for the parents. This secure mentality toward youth ministry produces the group “with high maintenance/low impact kids” (Johnson 1995:6, 9). Though the degree is different, this paternalistic attitude of the older toward the younger generations may be a universal phenomenon in the church in every culture.

The paternalistic attitude of first-generation leaders toward the younger leaders seems much stronger in the Korean ethnic church than in the church of other north Asian countries, due to the strong Confucian influence in the Korean church and culture. Thai pastors, Dadee-en and Oi Saengwichai (pseudonymous) mentioned in casual conversation.

The Korean missionaries in Thailand are very zealous to evangelize Thai; however people’s feelings are often hurt because missionaries have paternalistic attitudes and commanding behavior toward converts. Though this attitude is motivated from caring people, it goes against the nature of meekness of Thai. And we do not understand why they behave that way unless we learn about the Confucian practice in the social structure of Korean society. (October, 1997)

If Korean-American churches were aware of the need for a paradigm shift by replacing hierarchical structure with an egalitarian structure, what would be the process? The innovation process takes five steps according to Everett M. Rogers. These steps are “knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation” (1983:206).

Attaining knowledge of the nature of egalitarian social structure, its outcome and its side effect of application are necessary as the need for change arises. The persuasive effort to adapt to an egalitarian system leads to the decision; actual implementation leads to confirmation. After the innovation process in a church or in a few churches, diffusion to the rest of the Korean-American churches will eventually have a good chance of taking place. That means an egalitarian leadership style might take over from the authoritarian hierarchical leadership style gradually over a period of time in Korean ethnic churches in America.

Rogers (1983) writes that "diffusion change agent success is positively related to the extent that he or she works through opinion leaders" (331). It means that change agents, initiators, or innovators contact the leadership of churches to convince them to adopt an egalitarian system since they are an influential force on the decision-making process.

How does the older generation of the Korean-American churches learn about the need for applying an egalitarian structure unless they have knowledge of American social structure? Cross-cultural study provides this knowledge.

Cross-Cultural Training Breaks Barriers

The responses to research question 2 reflect a lack of cross-cultural knowledge existing among youth pastors and parents. Their churches did not offer teaching on American core culture to the leaders or the congregation to help them understand American society or their younger generation. The data

indicated that communication gap and cultural gap were the most problematic areas between the old and the young. The different generations need to learn about American and Korean cultures in order to increase understanding of one another. Thus, the cross-cultural training for each generation is necessary to minister to youth effectively.

Don, a youth pastor, developed a unique evangelism model for the community. Don was sensitive to current issues or news and to the needs of the young people and their parents in his community. Don studied the issues of the young people and their families in his town; he prepared helpful answers and created meetings for the families of the community. Sometimes Don was invited to speak at community schools. He chose philosophical topics to discuss. "Life and death" was the topic at the time of Desert Storm. Relationships of parents with children, dating, or abortion were also discussed at other meetings. In addition to philosophical topics, he discussed theological issues.

Meeting places sometimes were shifted from his church to McDonald's or to pizza parlors. Because he spent so much time outside the church to reach out to community kids, Don recruited a few adult volunteers and student leaders to help the youth programs in his church. As days passed, the long-stagnated attendance (40) grew to 150 at week-day meetings. Some parents resisted Don's culturally relevant methods for young people. They demanded that he hold to the old style of evangelism by inviting youth to churches or to revival

meetings. Despite that minor opposition, his method became a new vehicle to bring many to Christ (Senter 1992:200-201).

The above case demonstrates an effective evangelism method with secular subjects. Cultural anthropology is the study of cultures, their customs, values, driving ideas, etc. For the Korean-American older generation, who lack cultural knowledge of America, adjustment problems arise. Their children's worldview cannot be understood; cultural and communication gaps with their children are big; relational difficulties arise with their children; young people's needs are not comprehended; contextual theology for the young generation cannot be created; effective evangelism and discipleship may be missing.

For the Korean-American younger generation, if they do not understand their Korean roots, identity confusion arises. The existing cultural barrier with the Korean old people creates communication and relational gaps. Young-II Kim writes that today's ministry requires a cross-cultural mindset and cross-cultural methods. Without knowledge, without an embracing attitude, and without experience, effective cross-cultural communication cannot take place (1992:13).

Paul Borthwick writes that reaching out to today's youth is a "cross-cultural experience" since they believe Christianity belongs to the adult culture (1996:154). Korean ethnic churches face the challenge to break the dual cultural barriers of their congregations, which are created not only by a generation gap but also by a cultural gap.

Duffy Robbins proposes a six-level pyramid figure for the youth population. These are from the bottom: "pool of humanity (general population--large), come level (nominal Christians--less than general population), grow level (sincere youth), disciple level (mature youth), develop level (reaching out to others), and multiplier level (discipleship for others--small population)" (1987:26-29, 1992:47). Cross-cultural study is one of the programs that can draw every spiritual level of youth together for interaction with reduced barriers.

Providing cross-cultural study may be a crucial program for the older and the younger generations since the churches are bi-cultural. The older generations need to learn American culture with depth, and the younger generations need to learn Korean culture and worldviews. Cross-cultural study for adults can be added to the curriculum of the Korean language schools which open every Saturday in many Korean ethnic churches. Also Korean language schools can be activated for adults to learn English. The cultural course can also be offered through seminars. Informal fellowship by inviting American friends and families is an avenue to experience Western culture.

For example, special lectures and seminars to help pharmacists, nurses, and physicians studying for their licensing examinations have been offered by some of the Korean ethnic churches in the New York City area since the early 1970s. Mathematics and English were included in the curriculum of the children's summer language school in a Korean ethnic church in Bronx (Kim, Illsoo 1981:201-202). One para-church organization, the Korean YWCA in

Flushing, opens “Senior Citizens College (Noin Daihak)” for Korean-American elderly people on Tuesdays and Saturdays, offering English, a general culture course, exercise, and a fellowship meal. Galilee Church in New Jersey opens “Adults College (Aroon Daihak)” for senior citizens on Saturdays along with children’s language school. The church offers English, aerobics, Bible study, and some lectures.

Thus the Saturday schools in Korean ethnic churches would feature at least three distinct courses of study: (1) Orientation to American culture and American--English language--for older generation Koreans, not only for senior citizens. (2) Orientation to Korean culture and language for second generation Korean--this has been the main feature of Saturday Language School. (3) Cross-cultural communication training for both generations--with intergenerational practice experiences.

Cross-cultural schooling should begin with the basic comparison of individualistic and collectivistic worldviews. Social structures and values of the Orient and the West also need to be explored. As people begin to learn the fundamental differences of two cultures, cross-cultural communication training needs to follow. Donald K. Smith states that an effective bi-cultural communication skill requires a respecting and learning attitude toward other cultures (1992:235). Being a bi-cultural person means that one does not have to change who he or she is, but to get to know how to interact with others by learning and appreciating their cultures.

Cross-cultural learning should not only be offered to the congregation of the church, but should extend to unbelieving families, relatives, friends of the congregation, and community people. This method of evangelism through cultural study by inviting unbelieving friends or relatives and neighbors might be highly effective to reach people. Cultural and communication gaps between generations will be narrowed as the result of understanding others. Intergenerational relationship restoration might take place and both parties may learn to understand each other's need. Meanwhile growth might take place not only in youth but in adult ministries as well. Thus, offering cross-cultural training can be a highly effective intergenerational program to narrow the multiple gaps between different generationers and to reach both generations.

The identity confusion of the second generation can be solved as they learn where they came from and where they are now. If they understand themselves, low self-esteem problems can be solved. But above all, if the church becomes the community of love and care in unity among different generations, it witnesses to the unchurched people and it pleases the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ. For He prayed: "May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them as you have loved me"(John 17:23). Thus, if the Korean-American church offers cross-cultural training to older and younger generations, its outcomes will be:

- Knowledge of egalitarian structure and the awareness of the need of egalitarian structure.

- A unique evangelism method.
- An effective program of interaction for all spiritual levels of youth.
- Narrowed communication gap between generations.
- Narrowed cultural gap between generations.
- Restored intergenerational relationships.
- An effective method for intergenerational fellowship.
- Enhanced bi-cultural attitudes and appreciation.
- Unity of the church's witness to unbelievers.

Holistic and Experiential Spiritual Discipline

In Korean ethnic churches, Bible study, or prayer are not lacking since these are combined with weekend and Sunday services, as indicated by the responses to research question 3. These disciplines are incorporated into the worship and not focused on individually. Also indicated by my data was there are no small groups or home groups based on need or geography. Spiritual discipline through mission trips and community evangelism are also not part of the programs offered to the youth. The youth were more inclined toward these types of spiritually nourishing programs (Kim, Mark Heung Soo 1982:92; Kim, Nak-In 1991:152).

The saints can say: I am growing in my intimacy with God and faithfulness to His word. . . . I am growing in real relationships with others in a small group. . . . I am growing in my service to God and others. . . . I am growing in reaching pre-Christian relationships for Christ. (Hunter: 1996:43)¹

Can the young people in Korean-American churches confess those words? If so, the church is meeting their spiritual needs effectively with a holistic approach through Bible study, prayer, fellowship, and witness by serving neighbors. Holistic spiritual discipline brings a balance into the Christian faith of young people, not only by loving God but at same time learning to love others through service (Parrott 1995:39).

Spiritual discipline helps to solve the problem of the identity confusion of some Korean-American second generation youth. Christian identity helps to settle the personal identity confusion of adolescents as their faith matures through the spiritual discipline (Steele 1988:95). Mature “values, thoughts, and acts” of young people are some fruits of spiritual maturity (Young 1990:91). Because of the lack of focused Bible study and prayer separate from worship, I would recommend they be included in the spiritual discipline taught to the youth.

Bible Study. How can the Korean ethnic church prevent young people from having merely nominal faith? Bible study is the key method to disciple young people to become genuine and mature Christians. However, Bible study might be a boring experience to youth if a traditional teaching method is used without a creative presentation. Jameward Snodgrass shows six creative ways to capture the youth attention. These are:

1. Make small journal writing groups to share each other’s insights.
2. Teach big picture concepts (fragmented section teaching needed to connect with context and with past, present, and future).

3. Act it out (role play, drama).
4. Use kids' interest (with art form, music, painting, writing - can use painting for fund raising).
5. Teach the tools of using the Bible (maps, concordance, study Bible)
6. Teach in appropriate settings and time frames (experience settings, meal meetings, outreach to inner city, mountains for transfiguration study and so on). (1997:11)

Teaching Bible in a small home group can be very effective. A warm environment can nurture spiritual growth of the members since the level of receptivity is often stronger and it can create a climate in which the Holy Spirit can work (Cho and Hurston 1983:283, 285). The “authority of Christian faith” according to E. Stanley Jones, comes from three realities, “The objective reality (the infallible Bible) becomes the subjective reality (the infallible Christian experience) and is corrected and corroborated by the collective witness (the infallible church)” (1968:104). If Scripture study is the foundation for a believer to experience the reality of Christianity, Bible teaching is much needed in Korean-American youth ministry.

Prayer Discipline. “Pray continually” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). If Bible study is taking the bread of God for spiritual growth, prayer is connecting the breath channel to God. Without these two key activities, Christian faith remains nominal. Korean Christians are well known as a praying people. Early morning prayers and mountain prayers of the Korean church have contributed to her

growth in major ways. Early morning prayer is held at about five o'clock in the morning, seven days a week, in most Korean churches. Korean-American churches are not exempted from this rich tradition. Even some Korean-American youth are becoming known for their seriousness of prayer. However, the Korean ethnic church needs to offer her young people a variety of prayer discipline methods since young people are also interested in fun activities rather than routine prayer.

Combining Worship and Praise. Many Korean ethnic churches offer worship and praise music with a youth band in their Sunday and Friday or Saturday services. Combining worship and praise music not only for the worship services but for prayer meetings can be used as an effective vehicle to open young people's hearts toward prayer. Live band music or tapes can be played in prayer meetings. The Vineyard movement has contributed its worship music and worship dance to the youth culture. Many young people experience reality of faith through worship music and/or worship dance.

Some churches of other denominations have adopted this method. Some Korean pastors who learned this method from the Vineyard movement have created a controversy in Korea since older Koreans favor more formal worship.² If the youth pastors in Korean ethnic churches have to work under the authority of the senior pastor or elders, this method may not be acceptable.

Prayer Workshop. Prayer workshops will help young people to learn prayer. Various prayer forms will help young people to experience deeper prayer life. Richard J. Foster delineates diverse prayers to help believers to “understand, experience, and practice.” These forms are: “Simple prayer, prayer of the forsaken, the prayer of examen, the prayer of tears, the prayer of relinquishment, formation prayer, covenant prayer, the prayer of adoration, the prayer of rest, sacramental prayer, unceasing prayer, the prayer of heart, meditative prayer, contemplative prayer, praying the ordinary, petitionary prayer, intercessory prayer, healing prayer, the prayer of suffering, authoritative prayer and radical prayer” (1992). Some of these prayers could be selected according to the spiritual level of young people and practiced corporately, individually, or through small groups.

Small Intercessory Prayer Group. How can the growth of youth ministry take place without prayer? A revival movement, a mission movement, a people movement or a revival in local churches arises after long, toiling intercessory prayer. The modern missionary movement and the volunteer movement were birthed in 1805, when students at Williams College in the U.S. persisted in prayer, which started under a haystack. Through this movement 40,000 young people dedicated their lives to cross-cultural mission. Prayer for the younger generation has been emphasized through para-church organizations such as Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Campus Crusade for Christ, Operation Mobilization, etc. (Senter 1992:178).

Plans and strategies are a required foundation to make youth ministry grow. However, all plans and strategies for growth must be brought in prayer for God's intervention (Cho, Yonggi 1984:106). As they intercede for revival and for the lost, youth move to a deeper level of faith.

"Prayer is nothing but the breathing out before the Lord, that was first breathed into us by the Spirit of the Lord" (Dr. Arthur Petrie cited in Cowman 1966:287).

Small Group. What was the small group experience of early Christians? Hunter delineates its character from Acts 2:42:47: believers "studied the apostles' teachings, experienced the fellowship, broke bread together, prayed together, pooled resources to meet one another's needs, enjoyed one another's company, praised God, built rapport with the wider population in Jerusalem, and engaged in outreach that led to further growth" (1996:83).

The small group was introduced by Wesley into Methodism in the eighteenth century as the "class meeting" in order to help Christians to become more faithful and more spiritually mature (Watson 1985:93). "At first, class meetings met in homes, shops, schoolrooms, attics, even coal-bins--wherever there was room for ten or twelve people to assemble" (Henderson 1997:99). The class meeting was geared to intensive discipleship methods through interpersonal accountability based on obedience and grace (Watson 1985:132). Personal character of the members often changed toward Christian virtues through long years of discipline. Long lasting, trustful friendships were created

through class meeting activities (Henderson 1997:102). It seems that these traditional discipleship benefits of small groups would be effective ways for maturing the spiritual growth and close fellowship in Methodist churches in America today.

Prior to adopting the class meeting structure in the Methodist churches, John Wesley had formed a study group during his tutorial period at Oxford in 1729. This group focused on Bible reading, prayer, fasting, confession, and sacrament in addition to academic study. His group was known as "The Holy Club," "Bible Moths," "The Methodists" (Henderson 1997:42-43). The Youth in my study are greatly concerned about academic work, according to the data in research question 4. This idea of combining study and spiritual discipline through small groups can be an effective method of meeting the needs of young people.

The small groups of New Hope Community Church in Portland, Oregon include nurture groups (caring for one another), support groups (overcoming and healing), and task groups (task or ministry--ushers, greeters, worship band, and adult youth sponsors). Saddleback Valley Community Church includes community groups (fellowship), care groups (for recovery), growth groups (Bible and accountability), and mission groups (outreach). Willow Creek Community Church includes disciple making groups, community groups, service groups (ministry or task), support groups and seeker groups (for nonbelievers) (Hunter 1996:85-95).

Duffy Robbins contends that small groups are as much “people studies” as Bible study. They are an avenue to develop Christian faith through fellowship. Small group experience helps to form young people’s own identification through exploring who they are in an atmosphere of acceptance and love (1987:42, 43). Small groups (six to ten members) need to form with the same gender, if it is a long term assignment, to prevent unhealthy emotional attachment since the group produces intimacy between members.

The youth ministry of Wilmore United Methodist church has had small groups for about ten years. The church has about 100 youth members and ten small groups. The small groups meet once a week in a home or in the youth room in the church. The leaders are college students, seminary students or adult volunteers. Each small group consists of three to ten members of the same gender, including the leader, because “intimacy brings [too much] vulnerability if groups are made with opposite genders,” according to Rick, the youth pastor.

Four basic agendas operate in these youth small groups: (1) relationship building, (2) Bible study, (3) accountability, and (4) prayer. Their small group discipline focuses on discipleship rather than evangelism. Many young people who left the church to go to college reported that their small group experience influenced their life more than other activities of the youth group, and its memories are unforgettable.

I asked a few youths "Why do you like to be in a small group?" They made the following comments: "I can share my secrets," according to Joanna; "I like the small size," said Lisa, who was selling Christmas trees to raise money for the youth fund; "I like to meet friends," added Suzanna; "I like my accountability group for they straighten me up," Ryan laughed.

Christian A. Schwarz claims "small groups--as the pillars of church growth." His research proved the multiplication of small groups as the foundation of church growth all over the world (Schwarz 1996:32, 33). I received a letter from a youth group in Thailand announcing that their country was having a small group conference for young people. I also heard a report a year ago, from a pastor from Kazakhstan, of the growth of his youth participation through small cell groups. These testimonies indicate that small group discipline is also one of the most effective strategies for the spiritual growth and evangelism for youth.

Evangelism through Word and Deed. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son" (John 3:16a).

"God did not come to this world to save me only but others also." Dr. Peter Storey from South Africa reminded us of our responsibility to do evangelism not only with the Word but with deeds as he preached at one of the Asbury Theological Seminary chapel services. Korean-American young people should learn that witnessing is both Word and action. "Together, spiritual and social formation are the twofold goal of mission, and each must be given its own

integrity and importance” (Wall 1987:121). Most Korean-American churches focus on spiritual formation, but the goal of social formation is absent.

Today’s church fails to interweave the “verbal and visual proclamation” of evangelism; that is with Word and deed (Kirk 1983:103-104). The reason is that the church has an incomplete view of evangelism due to a poor theology of integration. “Personal evangelism, social involvement, personal integrity, growth in the knowledge of God and Christian fellowship can all be related together as indispensable parts of a total Christian witness” (Kirk 1983:16).

Generally, in today’s church, spiritual formation has been emphasized and nurtured, yet social responsibilities have been ignored. There is a saying that if every church adopted three homeless, there would be no homeless in the streets in America. Even in many churches, the responsibility of helping their own member’s physical needs have been neglected. Today the churches need to turn their eyes on physical needs as well as spiritual needs of their congregations. At the same time to expand social actions outside of the church, to neighbors, to towns, and to nations.

Korean-American churches also need to offer young generation a holistic spiritual discipline, that is, a balanced approach with spiritual formation and social action. Korean ethnic churches must reach out to the community to share the love of Christ with neighbors of other races by word and action. Racial barriers will be narrowed naturally as a result of a caring community. Holistic spiritual discipline will produce holistic Christians.

Missions. Missions trips or education is a way of reaching the nations and a way of transforming local Christians into world Christians. Though missions conferences are held yearly, one of the reasons for the lack of missions programs for youth in today's American church is because their regular programs might be interrupted by missions activities (Wilcox 1989:51).

In Korea, most of the churches are engaged in active evangelism but only 10 percent of the churches are active in missions work (Guthrie 1996:201,204). Missions through giving--not through mission trips or conferences--is highly encouraged among older generations in Korean-American churches in America. My study shows also that mission trips or education for younger generations is absent in the Korean ethnic churches.

In America, three Korean-American mission agencies participated in Urbana III 1996 Mission Conference, which is the largest mission conference for young people (about 20,000 participants) in America, held once every four years in Urbana, Illinois. In Korea, 100 mission agencies send out more than 4,000 missionaries to nations today. The goal by the year 2000 is 10,000 missionaries. Although Korean churches are losing youth through "material affluence" and an educational system which demands tremendous study, young people's zeal for missions has grown in recent years (Guthrie 1996:199).

Today most places in the world are only a one-day flight away. Soon it will be even shorter. What an advantage the church has to reach out to the nations. Korean ethnic churches in America must get beyond their boundaries

and make their congregations world Christians. Younger Christians especially will have great opportunities to travel to other nations. The church needs to prepare them to become mission-minded Christians. If short-term mission trips cannot be a part of the missions program, churches can begin with mission education such as:

- Post a monthly bulletin full of missions news and resources missionary bibliography, audio-visual tapes (Wilcox 1989: 51).

- Hold missions fellowship pot-luck nights. Invite missionaries or international students to speak about their countries.

- Adopt missionary families. Write and pray.

- Hold missions intercessory prayer meetings on a regular basis.

- Raise missions funds through car wash, food or art bazaar, garage sale.

- Hold an annual local church missions conference.

- Participate in mission conferences such as Urbana missions conference.

In a survey to find the events influencing a maturing of faith among adolescents, a summer mission trip appeared as the most important. Summer camps followed next; retreats came after summer camps; Bible study and prayer followed next among thirty-one events (Lewis, Dodd, and Tippens 1995:89).

Programs Based on the Needs of Young People

According to data obtained from research question 3 concerning cultural barriers, the communication and cultural gaps are the two most significant problem areas. Research question 4, concerning the church's priority of the needs of the young people, shows the youth ministries are not a priority of the church. The issue of the importance of the communication gap was also validated by the data from research question 4. Other issues indicated by my data are their school work and the establishment of their identities in their dual cultural settings. Also suggested by this data is a relationship gap between the 1.5 generation and those of the second generation Korean-Americans because of a cultural difference caused by different worldviews and language barriers.

If Korean ethnic churches consider youth ministry as highly important, programs must meet the needs of youth. Intergenerational, family oriented programs help to narrow the communication, generation, and cultural gaps which will improve relationships between the generations. Identity confusion of some of the second generation young people can be reduced by learning their national and family roots through intergenerational fellowship.

Intergenerational Oriented Programs. One church in my study experienced growth in its youth ministry. The 1.5 youth attendance grew due to the fact that the church separates 1.5 and second generation ministry. Thus that church has three layers of generation related ministries. Adult, young adult, youth, and children's ministries must work independently in Korean-American

churches. But at the same time some intergenerationally oriented programs need to be created to meet the younger generation's need. In the hierarchical Korean society, an intergenerational approach can be a difficult task. However, providing intergenerational and family oriented programs is required today in Korean-American churches to break the communication and cultural gaps between generations.

Intergenerationally oriented programs will also help people learn cross-cultural communication. Since Korean ethnic churches are constituted with bi-cultural congregations, all generations need to learn cross-cultural communication skills. Cross-cultural communication requires respecting and learning attitudes regarding the differences of culture and person (Smith 1992:235).

Congregations learn each generation's culture through cross-cultural training. In learning other cultures, cultural imperialism or inferiority must be avoided and cultural beauty needs to be explored. At the same time, one's own cultural identity needs to be preserved (Wingeier 1992:121).

Without the knowledge of each other's worldview and culture, an effective cross-cultural communication between people of different generations and cultures cannot take place. Effective communication requires involvement (Smith 1992:29). If better communication can be opened between youth and older generations or parents, they will be able to grasp today's youth culture (Mueller 1992:46). As youth sense that they are understood, involvement in

their lives will be allowed. As parents involve themselves in their children's lives, more effective communication will take place between them.

As the communication and cultural gaps become narrowed between the old and young Korean-American generations, they might develop a mutual sense of belonging to each other. That sense of belonging can help to establish young people's identity. The mutual needs can be expressed and heard. Caring action can take place to meet each other's needs. One such action might be tutoring assistance by adult volunteers with school work subjects such as mathematics. Mentoring is one of the intergenerational activities for one-to-one discipleship. A word of caution is that a same gender mentor program is preferable in Korean societies.

An intergenerationally oriented approach creates family oriented programs. A family-included youth program once failed in a Korean ethnic church because the old and the young did not know how to interact with each other. However, if these different generations learn each other's worldview and culture through cross-cultural study, and if communication and cultural gaps become narrowed through intergenerational oriented programs, it should succeed.

Family Oriented Program. Family, especially parents, exerts the greatest influence on youth to maintain a healthy life style (Vobeida 1996:A1, A6). Parents' influence on the cognitive life, the religious values, and decision making of young people is stronger than the influence of their peers and ministers

(Lamport 1990:24). My data from research questions 1 and 3 indicate that the Christian faith of the youth and their participation in church is influenced by the faith of the parents.

Scott Koenigsaecker suggests “bridge-building strategies” for family included programs. These are parent-youth encounter (a communication lab), parent training (seminars about adolescent development), Sunday morning worship (family focus), family worship (worship designed for family participation), family counseling, parents’ nights (open house or potluck dinner, etc.), family camp, intergenerational experience (songfest, recreation, etc.), and more (1986:54). Sports activities not only help physical growth but also help family bonding. A multigenerational approach to spiritual discipline may help strengthen the family’s faith as well as that of the youth.

Rick Thompson, a youth pastor from Florida whom I met on the campus of Asbury Seminary in the spring of 1997, displayed his vision for intergenerational discipleship. Rick says youth discipleship led by young adults may produce the positive effect of identification. However, young adults may lack spiritual maturity. Mature adults could help youth to grow spiritually.

Mark DeVries suggests using youth as Scripture readers, leading prayer, ushers, greeters and more (1994:178,179). In missions and community services, DeVries further suggests the mobilization of the young people for Habitat work, vacation Bible school, soup kitchens, distributing food to the homeless, nursing homes and children’s hospital visits, raising funds, family

mission trips within the States and to other nations, etc. (180-182). Thus, the effects of executing a family or an intergenerationally oriented approach can be:

- Intergenerational programs narrow the communication, relational and cultural gaps between different generations.
- Mutual needs can be expressed and heard as the result of breaking down each generation's barriers.
- The identity confusion of youth can be solved as they feel they belong to their family and church.
- One-to-one discipleship can take place through mentor programs.
- Family activities can help to break the barriers between parents and their children and it can restore the broken relationships caused by communication and cultural gaps.

Pat Brennan, an evangelism coordinator, predicts the trend of youth ministry in America up to the year 2010. He believes that the ministry which operates in intergenerational context will help the growth in evangelism, discipleship, and healing for young people from broken homes (1994 30-37). My study shows the need of an intergenerational approach for the youth ministry. This positive prediction will apply to Korean ethnic churches as well.

Think Networking--Youth Pastors and Youth Network

When I interviewed the youth pastors, I found them to be isolated from each other. There was no sharing of information or of struggles between these pastors. There was also no sharing of evangelical work. Linking youth pastors

of Korean-ethnic churches to create cooperative special projects, program resources, etc., to reach out to young people is a highly effective strategy, since teamwork mobilizes more sources and actions. A decade ago, some leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention created an event called "Youth Link 2000"-- simultaneous youth events in six cities for worship, Bible study, missions, evangelism, and discipleship. The events will begin with the year 2000. This event hopefully will open the hearts of many unchurched young people to Christ Jesus (Pennington 1997:1-2).

The Korean-American youth pastors in my study tend to lack contact with the youth pastors from other churches.³ Again I reiterate the need for the freedom of Korean-American youth pastors' to make decisions apart from their senior church leaders in order to create such team projects as sports events, retreats or revival meetings with other churches to help many unchurched youth become church youth.

The youth pastors of four churches in the Wilmore community in Kentucky meet once a month to pray, to share, and to plan team projects. A "Super Bowl Night" was held in January of 1997 at the gymnasium of Asbury Seminary by inviting unbelieving young people. "Rising Fall" fall retreat was held on a weekend in October to minister to the youth together. Its positive impact on the young people has been great, according to Rick, a youth pastor of Wilmore United Methodist Church (Durrence 1997). This youth pastors' network can create a network of youth. These can become an effective way of nurturing the

faith of churched youth and an attractive way of reaching the unchurched youth in the community.

Today the church has to offer strong attractions to young people to “compete with jobs, sports, extracurricular activities, homework, parties, and gangs, as well as television, MTV, videotapes, shopping malls” (Senter, 1992:183) and computer internet. Partnership work among the Korean-American youth pastors of different churches could create powerful evangelism methods for today’s Korean-American unchurched youth; effective re-evangelism methods for nominal Christian young people; and revitalization methods to mature the faith of young believers.

Summary

“It’s a sin to bore a kid,” according to the founder of Young Life, Jim Rayburn. However, “it might be more of a sin to suggest to young people that the Christian life is always fun and never boring. It is precisely in those experiences that teenagers might describe as ‘boring’ that Christian character is often formed,” according to Mark DeVries (1994:27).

My prayer is that the centrality of Jesus Christ will be found in my approaches and suggestions to help Korean-American churches reach their younger generationers; that one finds these strategies in balance with fun and spiritual formation; and that they are practical to apply.

Executing egalitarian leadership in Korean ethnic churches is suggested to enable the creation of innovative strategies by the youth pastors. In addition,

offer holistic spiritual discipline through Bible study, prayer, small group and outreach. Also, apply an intergenerationally oriented approach to meet the needs of the youth. Lastly, a strong network between youth pastors and the youth of Korean-American churches can create powerful evangelism projects to bring the unchurched youth population to the Christian faith.

Notes

¹ Hunter delineates five vital signs of growth. The fifth was omitted since it was not applicable to youth.

² Interview with Rev. H. S. Kim, who used to serve at Vineyard headquarters in America.

³ Informal conversation with youth pastors.

Epilogue

A few Korean-American youth pastors said that insufficient funds cannot be the cause of the decline or stagnation of their youth ministry. If there is enough love and concern for youth by Korean ethnic church leaders and their congregation, then growth will take place.

Early church growth was not the result of flourishing funds or sufficient church rooms for congregational needs, but the result of the zeal of believers to go outside the church to share the good news with non-believers and to nourish spiritual and physical well-being among believers. Today's church, according to Howard A. Snyder, should not be exempted from this model (1977:120, 121).

It takes the zeal of church leaders to reach out to young people to change their lives today; it takes "God's fire," "God's heart" and "determination" in their heart to bring young people to become Jesus' children (Goddard 1989:221).

I pray for zealous hearts toward young people for Korean ethnic church leaders as well as other ethnic church leaders. I pray for the vision of the first generation of Korean-American Christians to bequeath their Christian faith to their offspring to become a reality in the near future. I pray for young people, the hope for tomorrow, to become God's children today. Because each young one "matters to God who created the universe, stars, galaxies," they "matter to the body of Christ."¹

Notes

¹ These quotations are taken from the sermon preached by Dr. George Hunter, at the Sunday morning service in Wilmore United Methodist Church on November 16, 1997.

APPENDIX

Interview Questions

Questions for Youth PastorsDemographic

1. Gender?
2. Age?
3. How long have you been in the United States?
4. How long have you worked as a youth pastor?

The Exodus of Teens and Post-High School Young Adults (research question #1)

5. What is the membership and average attendance of your youth group?
6. Do you think the exodus of high school teens and post-high school young adults from the church is real? What has been your experience?
7. What are the reasons for the exodus?
8. What percent of the young people in your youth group are sincere Christians?

Cultural Barriers (research question #2)

9. What is the decision-making process for the youth program in your church?
10. How do you introduce Korean culture to your youth?
11. How do they respond ?

12. What traditional Korean views and values do you want the children in your church to learn?

13. Have you ever taken cross-cultural training?

Spiritual Disciplines (research question #3)

14. Does your church encourage Bible study and prayer for youth? How?

15. Do you have small groups for teens? If so, describe how they resemble or differ from adult small groups.

16. How often do you have revival meetings for the youth?

17. How does your church train youth for personal witness? Do you sponsor mission trips? If so, describe them.

Priority of Youth Ministry (#4)

18. How much priority does your church give to the youth program?

19. Does your church have any extra programs in addition to services and joint programs for adults and youth? If so, do they interact well?

20. What are the needs of today's youth? How do you identify their needs? How do the needs of the second generation differ from the 1.5 generation?

Questions for Parents

Demographic

1. Age?
2. Gender?
3. How long have you been in the United States?

The Exodus of Teens and Post-High School Young Adults (#1)

4. If your children are post-high school young adults and have left church, what were their reasons?

Cultural Barriers (#2)

5. What aspects of living in America are hard to adjust to?
6. In what areas are you having difficulty relating to your pre-teenage and/or teenage children?
7. How do you interact with your children?
8. Do you work at a Korean or an American company?
9. Would you like to learn more about American culture to understand your children?

Spiritual Disciplines (research question #3)

10. Do you have family worship?

Priorities of Youth Ministry (#4)

11. How important is youth ministry in your church?
12. How should the church develop the youth ministry?

Questions for Korean-American Youth (church-goers, former church-goers)

Demographic

1. Age?
2. Gender?
3. How long have you been in the United States, if you were not born here?
4. Do you have a Korean name or American name?

The Exodus of Teens and Post-High School Young Adults (#1)

5. If your friends, or your self have left the church, what were the reasons?

Cultural barriers (#2)

6. Do you feel close to other pastors?
7. Describe your relationship with your youth pastor.
8. Do your pastors emphasize traditional Korean values and customs?
9. Are you interested in learning Korean culture?

Spiritual Discipline (#3)

10. Do the sermons and Bible study speak to you? How?
11. Does your church have small groups for youth? If so, how are they helpful?
12. Are you involved in other ministries if you have stopped attending church?
13. Do you witness? If you do, do you witness to Korean-Americans, other Americans, or both?

Young People's Needs (research question #4)

14. What is the most important issue in your life now?
15. How often do you spend time with your parents? What do you do? What do

you talk about?

16. What conflicts come up between you and your parents?
17. How do 1.5 and second generation friends get along?
18. What are your future concerns?
19. What will motivate you to re-discover faith if you stopped attending church?
20. What are (were) your favorite programs in youth ministry?

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