

HOW THE “AE DEUL” SECOND GENERATION
KOREAN AMERICANS CAN BECOME
RESPONSIBLE CHRISTIAN ADULTS

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Advisor: Gary Simpson, D.Min.

David Ahn
Drew University
Madison, New Jersey
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ABSTRACT

HOW THE “AE DEUL” SECOND GENERATION KOREAN AMERICANS CAN BECOME RESPONSIBLE CHRISTIAN ADULTS

David Ahn

KumRan United Methodist Church in Gardena, California

In this project the notion of responsibility for the “Ae Deul”, or *children*, second generation Korean American Christians is evaluated in relation to the connection of the Korean speaking immigrant church. The first generation Korean speaking “parents” have harvested a culture of labeling the English speaking members as “Ae Deul” regardless of age or social status. Through this distinction the EM, English Ministry, has developed an understanding that the church they are a part of is simply their “parent’s church” and in order to mature as Christians a sense of ownership needs to be harnessed. For some second generation Korean Americans the struggle between the first generation is so difficult that many have opted to planting their own ministries away from their parents. The diminished role of the second generation in the immigrant church has led to a sense of responsibility and awareness, but with a lack of a developed spirituality, love, self, and stewardship the progress has been slow.

Through the studying of KumRan United Methodist Church (Glory Church), survey’s, interviews, and a website were used to introduce the idea of developing a story which would describe and validate the experience of the second generation. The ideas of ontology, love, mission, and sacraments were also evaluated to develop a better understanding of where the

second generation stands in their faith and spirituality as well as point out influences that have affected the second generation perspectives. Though there are influences and factors that have contributed to the state of the first and generation Korean Americans it is important that the second generation ultimately take responsibility and ownership of their own faith and not hide behind the beliefs of their parents. A key understanding of this relationship between the two is the influence of leaders and the origin of participation in churches. The first generation needed to attend church for adjustment and survival in the new land, while the second generation have been given the option to attend because of the opportunities that were afforded to them.

DEDICATION

This paper is being dedicated to my wife, Okki, who has always supported me and been next to me through-out the process. To my family who has been next to me no matter the situation and loved me for who I am. A special dedication goes to my father who has passed away on December 12, 2015 after fighting over 20 years of brain cancer. He is now in a better place in heaven without any restrictions, able to walk, talk and enjoy the freedom of being next to the Father. To my best friends who have always been next to me since middle school and high school, thank you all for your love and care. Finally, to my advisor Dr. Gary Simpson for the support attention you have given to me through this process. Thank you!

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

How the “Ae Deul” second generation Korean-Americans can become responsible Christian adults.

The Project

This is a project about transitions and change as it is expressed in the Korean Christian community. As one generation wanes, the other rises looking for meaning and purpose, but these movements often lead to difficulties and opportunities. This is an examination of possibilities that is rooted in the challenges of generational cultures, which in the Korean tradition can be described by the labeling of the English speaking congregation members as “Ae Deul.” The main focus of this project is to help the second generation Korean-American church develop a story that is not solely based on “my parent’s church” experience, but on the individual and corporal experience of being between two cultures. To have a better idea of how this research was formulated, personal experience and history will be introduced to develop a basis for the development of this project. Through the research performed at Glory Church (an alias name) located in the South Bay region of Southern California; the idea of forming a narrative, becoming more responsible, sharing the gospel, finding identity through self and ultimately being faithful Christians who take ownership will be explained and better defined.

Experience

Growing up as a second generation Korean Brazilian American in the United States was not as challenging as it was to grow up as a second generation English speaking Korean in the Christian Church. Being a minority had its difficulties and hardships. Having to, not only, prove

that I belonged in America as a viable participant, but to also show that I understood the cultural norms of my parent's Korean background was a consistent struggle. This experience is not unique to only Korean Americans, but it is something that most second generation minority Americans have to deal with.

My Second Generation Korean American Perspective

Before beginning, I would like to state that many may agree with some of my ideals, but no way are my experiences the definitive example of all second generation Korean American experiences. Everyone's experience is unique and my experience would not suffice as a generalization of all second generation Korean Americans, but I share nevertheless with the desire to propose ways we can become more responsible and take our turn in leading the Korean American Church.

Growing up in the church, I did not have a choice as a child whether I would be going to church on any given Sunday, rather it was decided for me that no matter what Sundays were spent at the church. Both of my parents were active in serving in choir, food ministry, or in the maintenance of the church. So naturally, my siblings and I would also help with the various ministries that my parents were involved in. While living in Dallas, Texas the church had a need for new utensils for the members and my parents serving in the food ministry were the first to notice the need, but because we were very poor my parents could not just give the money needed to pay for the new utensils. So my parents being very active and wise in teaching, told us that we would be riding our bikes after school everyday for a few hours and ride around the neighborhood picking up cans and bottles so that we could help the church. With this plan in mind my siblings and I everyday went out after school and collected cans, bottles, and anything that could be recycled. For about six months we had repeated this and eventually we had

gathered and sold enough recyclables to buy the needed spoons, forks, knives, and chopsticks. Being proud of what we accomplished my family all went to a local Korean market and purchased all the needed utensils.

I remember clearly, my father genuinely being filled with joy and excitement about giving this offering to God and having the church members enjoy the food using the utensils his family had worked so hard to purchase for the church. After my parents had gifted the supplies to the church people started to talk about how the utensils were purchased and the comments being made were very mixed. Some stated that it was a great way for the children to learn about stewardship and offering, while others talked down about our family and mentioned how we had done dirty work to buy the supplies. Hearing this my father and mother did not let it bother them because they knew in their hearts they had done for God what they could, but this changed when the pastor gave his sermon on the following Sunday. During his sermon the pastor made a comment about how we as Koreans needed to do work that gained the respect of the communities around us, but what devastated my family was when he said, “gathering cans and bottles is something others would look at and say “ugly Korean” to.” I remember clearly after that my family never went back to that church and had become so discouraged that we had moved to a new location to find a new community.

I write about this experience because my parents had taught me some valuable lessons. The first being that when it comes to doing the work of God, working together as a family all aiming for the same goal leads to accomplishing something that seems very difficult. Second, that when giving to the church one does not have to have a lot of money, nor time, but just the desire to do something great for God. Third, that people will not always agree with what you do or how you do it, but what matters is the heart and intention behind the act. Finally, that the leader of a

church has the power to discourage even a family who was so focused in doing good for God. My family after that point moved back to California in search of a new start and a new faith group that would not discourage us, but help us grow more in love with God. For a few years we had found a place where my father had once again started to serve in cleaning the church and my mother in the choir and food ministry. Everything seemed to be going well, but again a leader had been commissioned to our church and he had again discouraged my father from ever serving again.

My father, who has recently passed away, died of brain cancer, but before he was bed ridden and turned off by the leaders, he did whatever he could at church to help and truly modeled for me what it meant to glorify God in everything that we did. He did not hold anything back and always gave more than he had, but the leaders and their words were what had driven him out of the church. I believe this is something many people experience, though it may be in different forms, people experience some discouragement from their leaders or other members and leave the church. For me, I also left the church and did not want to go back because it was all a discouragement and how could a pastor say that children who spent hours after school, being bit my ants picking up cans to buy utensils for the church be called “ugly Koreans.” I did not understand how the Korean speaking congregation always said that the English speaking only learned to receive and never gave back to the church, when I did what I could to serve by teaching the children and setting the chairs up in the fellowship room. I just didn’t believe that the KM cared for me because I was a member of the church, but simply because I was someone’s son. Not God’s son, but just a son of a member.

I know that many have experienced many difficulties and hardships as second generation Korean Americans, but what is important is not that we focus on what we see as being bad.

Rather the second generation Korean American Church needs to look at what will be and could be. There is something that I always share with my brothers and sisters at church and that is “we, Christians, never prepare for the worst, but always look forward to the best.” The best because we are going towards heaven and being next to God, what could be better than being next to the Father and being told, “Good job, my son, I saw you pick those cans up and I know how much hard work you put into that and I am proud of you.” Who would not want to hear that? Christians or for the purpose of this paper, second generation Korean American EM members need to always prepare for the best and do their best to glorify God. To better serve and honor our Father, second generation Korean American need to consider their actions and take ownership of their churches and understand that it is our responsibility to give to God without any reservations.

The First and Second Generation

Paul Hiebert in, *Asian Immigrants in American Cities*, writes, “The first generation immigrants are foreigners in a new land, but they know who they are. The core of their identity was shaped by the old culture. Their children, on the other hand, face deep identity crisis. At home these second generation immigrants learn the beliefs and values of their parent’s first culture, but in school and in public they are enculturated into the new one. They have two worlds at the core of their being.”¹ The interesting thing about this comment is that many second generation Asian Americans do have this dilemma as part of their lives, but the labeling of the cultures as “old” and “new” is not necessarily how the second generation Korean Americans understand the two cultures to be.

The difference between the first and second generation cultures are not categorized as “old” or “new”, but simply measured in terms of experience. The distinction between the two is not set

¹ Paul Hiebert & Young Hertig. "Asian Immigrants in American Cities," *Urban Missions*, March 1993, 15-24.

by a time or qualified in terms of temporal period, but a corporal understand of where the culture lies for both the first and second generations. Meaning the Korean culture is not “old” because Koreans will always be Korean and it is continuous, likewise the American culture is not always the newly acquired or learned experience, but it comes down to who is the one having the experience.

The second generation Korean Americans are the ones that are “stuck” in between the two cultures, but it is not a disadvantage or a handicap, but it’s just a different experience and something that has to be addressed and understood from both sides. How the culture of the first generation is passed down varied tremendously between geographical regions, families, and socioeconomic status. Those who immigrate with economic hardships emphasize the importance of assimilating and fitting in, whereas those who come with some financial freedom plant the understanding that educational gain is needed for a more prosperous future. The difference lies in the notion that fitting in will lead to faster return versus adding skills that would be more beneficial.

So at times, the second generation assimilates into the American culture by losing the ability to speak the Korean language. Many second generation Korean Americans grow up not practicing the Korean language at home because the parents want to make sure they speak English perfectly and are not looked down by society. Due to this reason, many Korean homes inhabit a culture that limits communication between the parents and the child. In some Korean families the parents speak in Korean, while the children respond in English and often many things are lost in translation. Being aware of this difficulties many younger Korean American families have made the effort to send their children to Korean schools to learn how to read, write, and speak in Korean.

Dynamics of the Two Generations: Sacrifice

Depending on the socioeconomic status of the family, different expectations are placed on the second generation children. Coming from a lower status family, the responsibility to translate, read the mail, call companies, answer the phone, and pay the cashier at the local markets were a part of everyday life. It did not matter if there was homework to be done or if there was a midterm or final, what mattered most was that the language barrier, when presented, was surmountable through the help of the English speaking child. This is a burden that most second generation Korean Americans face within their families. There are a few families whose parents speak English well enough to excuse the children from language duties, but regardless of a strong or weak English spoken parent most second generation children are continuously reminded of how they need to succeed and achieve their dreams. The dreams that the parents plant into the minds of the child, their own personal goals they have set, and the agendas they had planned from the beginning process of immigration.

The second generation Korean American children are looked to as the “get out of jail free card” to societal roles. It is through the children that the parents will experience success and it is through the child’s abilities to receive straight A’s and go to a top tier school that will make the whole process of immigrating and sacrificing worthwhile. The satisfaction of life and personal growth does not lie on the individual, but a large portion of this gratification is placed on the successful career and future of the children. The joy of life is dictated by which school, what job, how much money, and where the second generation child’s house is located. The parental act of sacrifice for the betterment of the offspring is something most child grows to understand and appreciate, but often this sacrifice becomes a mask for the underlying desire to be receive a return on the initial investment. That is why the children end up being the translators for their

families because this is one of the ways they can give back to the parents who have sacrificed so much for their well-being.

This is not being explained to paint a negative picture of the relationship that exists between the first and second generation Korean Americans, but it is something that many would empathize with. The Asian culture has many aspects of parental sacrifice. The children, regardless of where they are residing in the world, understand that it is through the help and giving of their parents that they need to and desire to give back with a heart that knows the sacrifice and energy that was exerted towards their development.

Sacrifice in the Christian Church: *Ae Deul*

Many of the Korean churches in the United States were established by the first-generation Korean parents who worked hard, not only, to provide a better future and opportunity for their families, but also to help the development of their religious and spiritual growth. It is the parents who have given the offering that has enabled the church to have its own building. And it is also the parents who continue to give the offering that is needed to pay for the bills, the missionary work, the food, the outreach, the pastor's salaries, and importantly the funds needed to support the English Ministry.

Definition of Terms

Before going further, a few terms need to be defined. *Ae Deul*, is a Korean term, which literally means "children". This is an important term for this project because the second generation regardless of age, economic, or social status, are all called *Ae Deul*. The rationale behind this is in the fact that the second generation have not been very active in the establishing of the church and helping set the foundations in which it was set on. The second generation are

seem to be the people who have always benefited and received from the continual sacrifice of the first generation.

Also the acronyms of KM and EM need to be defined. KM in the Korean American church stands for “Korean Ministry” and the EM is the “English Ministry.” When referring to each other the Korean speakers call the English speaking EM and the English speaking members call the English speaking KM. The interesting thing about this is that regardless of the size of the church there is a clear divide that is set up between the KM and EM. And often the KM and EM division is not solely separated by the difference in language, but by who is the “parent” and who is the “child”. Since the children usually come to church with their parents and they are the ones who speak English they are EM who are also the *Ae Deul* of the church.

From personal experience in growing up as a member of the EM and *Ae Deul*, I have first-hand experience in witnessing and seeing how these two groups function with each other. Similarly to the familial dynamics explained earlier, the church becomes an extension of the hierarchical and sacrifice driven relationship between the Korean speaking and English speaking members. In the church the English speaking members are usually the ones who need to go the park first to reservation a picnic area before the Korean speaking members come because they are younger and know the language better in case someone tries to take the spot. Also it becomes the English member’s responsibility to translate the Korean written sermon, church program, letters, and notices into English because they can speak English. And if the fire department or local agencies come to the church, the English Pastor is the one who must take care of the situation because they possess the skill needed to resolve the issue, the ability to speak English. Basically, anything dealing with English the EM members need to handle and take care of the situation.

This is not a bad occurrence because this is the way the EM is able to help and contribute to the betterment of the church as a whole, but what does not make the experience pleasurable is in the parent's understanding that the *Ae Deul* do not contribute to the church. The parents believe that the second generation EM members only benefit from their sacrifice. The sacrifice of giving offering and providing financially to a group that is not financially able to support themselves. Many KM members in Korean and Korean American Churches are under the impression that the second generation "Ae Deul" are not contributors to the church, but just beneficiaries of the work and faithfulness of the first generation Korean parents. Regardless, of how much the English Ministry gives or helps it looked at as simply not being enough compared to what the first generation has done. This ultimately undermines the authority and voice of the second generation Korean Americans members leading to the absence of English speaking leaders in the structure of the church. Not only, are the "Ae Deul" looked as non-supporters, but unfortunately left out of meetings and decision making processes for the church as a whole.

Another Personal Experience

Historically, due to the age of the second generation Korean Americans, offering from the EM groups have not been very high. For example, while serving at a church located in Westchester, New York, the EM had approximately 30 members and the offering did not add up to more than two thousand five hundred dollars per month, with a majority of that coming from the EM pastor. Whereas the KM with approximately 100 members collected offering upwards of forty thousand dollars a month. When looking purely at the numbers there is a clear discrepancy between the two groups, but when looking at the age we can see that the difference is justified. Out of the 30 EM members 20 were college students, 3 graduate school students, 4 young adults who just entered the work field, and 3 young professionals. So given the fact that most of the EM

members were college students the rest who were giving their offering were giving on average the same amount as the KM members.² But because of the visual difference of size and offering between the KM and EM the efforts given by the EM through translation and volunteer services are being overlooked when the well-being of the church is being factored.

It is interesting to note that the dynamics between the first and second generation are again being driven by financial influences. Since the KM provides most of the capital that is needed in maintaining the church KM sees the EM as simply being *Ae Deul*. The monetary contribution by the EM does not match the standards of the KM so it is in their perspectives that the EM still need to grow up. The natural formation of the church, of course, is the main aspect of the labeling of the EM as *Ae Deul*. The fact that most of the EM are the children of the KM obviously leads to the calling of their children as *Ae Deul*, but what the KM or “parents” fail to realize is that the children are growing and that some of the members are adults that have worked professionally for several years. Even a college student in the KM side would call the EM members *Ae Deul*, which to the second generation members do not understand. The simple difference of language is also another deciding element in the label of all the English speaking members as children, including the EM Pastors.

Not only, did the KM fail to recognize the EM, but the KM missed out on many opportunities to utilize the skills and gifts the EM members possessed and were ready to use for the growth and betterment of the church. Being labeled children the EM became discouraged to serve and share their opinions because anything that they did were not looked at as being a significant enough contribution to the church. Eventually, many EM members left and started to

² Numbers were taken from a church that has been located in Westchester, New York for the past 20 years. The church has been under the same pastoral leadership for the past 30 years and many of the KM members are now older and the EM members are comprised of the children of the KM.

look for another church or congregation that accepted and empowered them to take ownership and become leaders.

The Challenges of an EM Pastor

Many EM pastors in the Korean American churches are looked at as being a “multi-player” or “Jack-of-all-trades.” Often the EM pastor’s duty is not only to provide spiritual leadership to the English speaking congregation, but to also be the support staff for the KM members. Many times EM pastors will go to court hearings, school parent-teacher conferences, home purchase escrow meetings, college orientations, and other venues per request of the KM parent. Korean American churches prefer that their EM pastor’s speak English and Korean because the KM members always want to talk and have meetings about their children and their college and career planning.

Being an EM pastor, I had to not only attend all the meetings mentioned above, but also provide social security income information, help with medicare provider selection, plan for business applications, go to car dealerships, sit down with lawyers, and attend city town meetings. All this was done because help was requested by the KM members of the church. The Em pastor of a church with a KM has to be willing to perform all pastoral duties as well as personal life requests and mostly translation support as a social worker. As a pastor these responsibilities are ones that are taken and performed with joy, but the challenge comes where pastoral authority is not ascribed to the EM pastor.

EM pastors in some churches are not given the same pastoral or spiritual authority as the KM pastor because a hierarchy exists between the two. The KM pastor usually is the ultimate decision maker and it is based on what the KM pastor says that the EM pastor is able to act. Also because a majority of the EM pastor’s salary is given by the KM congregation, the EM pastor

becomes a worker for the KM and not the leader or pastoral figure of the church. Even though the EM gives the same respect to the EM pastor as they do to the KM, the KM members treat the EM pastor differently from the KM. This leaves the EM pastor in a challenging situation where teaching is not possible for the whole church, limiting the pastoral authority to only for the EM members, forcing the EM pastor to, regardless of age, become one of the “*Ae Deuls*” of the church. And stated before, with the EM pastor being labeled a child, the pastor has very minimal decision making power, always reporting to the “senior” pastor, who is naturally the spiritual leader of the KM.

CHAPTER 2

History of the Church

Introduction

In this chapter the history and set up of the church will be explained to better understand the dynamics that exists between the KM and the EM congregations. The name Glory Church is being used to keep the researched church anonymous and to maintain privacy and sensitivity of information.

History of Glory Church

In the summer of the early 1980s, Glory Church was first founded with a total of 10 founding members in the South Bay region of Southern California. During the course of its 34 year existence the church has had three total KM pastors and six different EM pastors with several periods where the EM did not have a pastor. The KM initially operated solely as a Korean speaking congregation because there was not a need for an English speaking department. As the KM became more established and grew in size several geographical locations were made until the church was able to acquire and settle in its own building, the current location where the church exists today. The second Senior Pastor for the Korean ministry was able to build on the momentum of the founding pastor and for the next 15 years helped develop a church that was considered to be a model church for other Korean churches in southern California and all over the United States. During this consistent growth focus was placed on building a strong education department for the youth and children of the church. Naturally as the members continued to age and new members came, there was a need to nurture and spiritually lead the English speaking

children. In 1999, the KM launched a national search for a English speaking pastor and with the financial and spiritual support of the parents in the winter of 2000 a pastor was hired to help establish and develop a new English department and ministry.

The KM with excitement and great expectations gave their full support to the EM and used any necessary finances to support the planting of the ministry. In April of 2000 the first English Ministry service was held marking the beginning of the first fully English speaking worship in the history of the church. The process was not the easiest nor was it the smoothest and merely after four months of holding the position the EM pastor resigned as lead pastor. After the resignation of the first EM pastor Glory Church entered another pastoral search that lasted for two years. Without a leading pastor for two years the ministry had become very weak and unstable, but with the hiring of a new pastor in March of 2002 the EM was able to have a fresh start and establish itself. Now with a passionate leader the EM was able to develop a strong foundation leading members to become more active and to participate in missionary work overseas.

In 2004, the EM successfully journeyed together in a short term mission trip to South East Asian and for the first time finished 40 days of training in discipleship together as a church. This was a key turning point for the ministry because members started to truly feel connected and functioned together as one body going towards the same purpose. Throughout this process the KM was supportive and because of the small amount of offering from the EM members the KM continued to provide the needed funding to sustain the ministry. In 2005, the current pastor resigned and a new EM pastor was brought to the pastoral staff. Despite the pastoral change the English Ministry continued to grow and thrive as a growing ministry in southern California. Again in 2010, after five years of serving, the EM pastor left the church leading to the hiring of

another pastor who only leads the ministry for six months before resigning himself. The resignation did not come without its problems. During this process of leaving the EM pastor and KM pastor had a conflict in theologies leading to something the members today call “the Break.”

“The Break,” as described by current members, was a period where members just didn’t feel comfortable together and started to have differing views of spirituality and theology. This division led to the questioning of faith and perspectives of spirituality, causing many members to leave for other churches or for some the Christian faith as a whole. The confusion also led to the KM dividing EM members into two groups, the “obedient” and the “disobedient.” It was at this point that the church had reached its weakest point, members had become discouraged and desired to have stability. The conflict grew so big that the EM pastor left and those who were “disobedient” left alongside of the pastor to start plant a new church.

After “the Break”, the EM had one pastor who tried to hold the remnants together, but found it too difficult causing him to leave after a few months. Even in the midst of this confusion the KM recognized those who had stayed and were “of age” by giving them the titles of deacon. This was a huge decision because with the title of deacon the EM members were given a true voice in church decision making. With these new title and leadership roles, the EM and The KM instead of giving up and pulling the plug on the ministry decided to have a meeting to talk about the future of the KM and EM. It was in this particular meeting that the EM had made the decision to become fully independent, but affiliated with the Korean ministry. The proposal was that the EM would hire its own pastor without the influence of the KM and slowly become financially independent taking care of its own finances, but still functioning together as one church under the same building. For the next year, the EM members interviewed and through prayer decided to hire the current pastor who is still serving there today.

Dynamics Between KM and EM Members

As explained earlier the establishment of the KM and the EM for Glory Church has been one filled with hardships and difficulties, but also a process lead by God's grace and provision. The dynamics between the two ministries is rooted in the understanding that the KM has always supported by giving to the EM without reservations and the English speaking children has benefited greatly through this sacrifice. The truth is that the KM has, up to recently, provided financial support, but the when it came to the decision making and hiring of the pastor the EM members never had a vote. The previous pastors that were all hired were interviewed by the elders of the KM and the Korean speaking pastor. Ultimately, the hiring process was overseen by the KM and the inputs of the EM were not inquired. This initially was due to the fact that the members were too young and still children, but as time progressed and the members got older the KM had grown accustomed to making all the decision so the EM had no say in who would lead them as their spiritual leader. The KM believed that they knew what was best because the members of the EM were their children.

This process is not unique to Glory Church, but many Korean American churches go through this because the English speaking members are simply looked at as being "Ae Deul" and not participating members of the church. In the Korean American churches that I have served, I was interviewed by the English Ministry members only once and the ultimate decision was always made by the KM because the final "ok" came from the Korean speaking members due to the fact that they were in charge of the finances. The churches that I have witnessed the EM take an active role in the hiring of a pastor were in congregations where the English ministry were more financially independent from the Korean ministry. The decision can be made by the parents

because the parents may know what is better for the children, but it is important that the KM and EM work together to identify a leader who will best serve the English Ministry.

Another interesting dynamic between the KM and EM in many Korean American churches is that the EM pastor is either seen as a staff member of both the KM and EM or just exclusively for the EM. There are some that function in the middle as a bridge, but often the EM pastor is just serving the English speaking congregation or fully serving the Korean and English ministry on a as-needed-as-required basis. But this is not only true of the pastor, but present in the members understanding of where they belong and what they are there to do. During an interview at Glory Church the KM member mentioned, “I don’t really know what the kids (referring to the EM) do, they probably have their own thing today.”¹ And while conducting another interview with an EM member, the interviewee stated, “we just do things separately from the KM and we get together maybe a few times in the year, I think; Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years, but that’s about it, I think the parents want the kids to be together for large church events.”² Of course, there are members who are more aware of the events and the participation of the other, but the attitude of “they are their own ministry” is one that is present in many KM and EM churches.

What is intriguing about this dynamic between the KM and EM is that the underlying understanding that the EM is at the bottom of the totem pole is ever present. Even looking at the comments made during the interview the KM refers to the EM as “kids” and the EM member called the KM “parents.” This is something that is implanted in the minds of both the EM and KM and it is not necessarily something that is false because many of the EM members are the children of the KM, but it is something that needs to be addressed. The dynamic needs to be

¹ Interview performed at Glory Church with a Korean speaking member in March of 2015.

² Interview performed at Glory Church with an English speaking member in April of 2015.

named and discussed because this label has placed the EM members in a status that undermines their authority in the church. Not only do the “parents” take away authority, but the children shy away from responsibility and move towards being immature Christian adults. This relationship between the KM and EM has led to many leaving the church and breaking off into their own church. Causing a division, but a division is not always a fully negative. Many second generation Korean Americans have moved out and established flourishing churches, but with the growth of their fully English speaking churches the parent KM church is experience a decline of younger members who could carry out the tradition.

The Korean Speaking Church and The Decline of the KM

As Korean speaking immigrants migrated to the Unites States many searched for communities and groups to feel have a connection and affinity to the cultural norms they had grown accustomed to in Korea. Ho-Youn Kwon writes in, *Korean Americans and Their Religions*,

For Korean Americans, especially for the first generation, sociological variables such as group affiliation and identification may have been a major factor in their attending Korean churches...Korean churches also offer a refuge from racism. Many Korean Americans feel more empowered as soon as they enter a Korean church. It presents a communal ritual space in which people can experience their own sense of specialness and power, something they cannot do outside that space in the mainstream society.³

Today many Korean speaking congregations are seeing a decline in membership because of the declining number of immigrants to America. “In recent years, Korean immigration to the United States has stagnated and declined due to improvement in the economic and political conditions in South Korea, with a small but growing number of Korean immigrants and their U.S.-born children returning to South Korea.”⁴ With the economic stability and growth in Korea

³ Ho-Youn Kwon, *Korean Americans and Their Religions: Pilgrims and Missionaries from a Different Shore*, The Pennsylvania State University Press. 2001, 95-96.

⁴ Jei Zong, Jeanne Batalova, *Korean Immigrants in the United States*, December 3, 2014, Accessed 01/26/2016. <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/korean-immigrants-united-states>

less families are making the move to America, compared to the 1970s to the early 2000s. With this trend of decreasing immigrants the first generation Korean speaking population in churches has also declined. Looking at the demographics of Glory Church one will notice that 65% of the church overall, combined with the KM and EM, are over the age of 50, 10% are between the ages of 30 and 49, 15% are in elementary, middle school, high school, or college, 5% between the ages of 21 and 29, and 5% in the infant and toddler categories. It is easy to see that the age group is heavily skewed towards the 50 plus category.

The Decline of the EM

It essential that the KM and EM prepare together because the EM population has also declined. Many second generation during their elementary to high school years attend church with their parents because going to church on a Sunday is a must and something that becomes a habit. Without much resistance the children follow and attend their parent's church and learn in Sunday school stories like the Creation, Noah, Joseph, King David, Jonah, Samson, The Disciples, Jesus, the Miracles, as well as memorize the Lord's Prayer, and some Christian songs. Going to church is just something that is done without much effort, but as the children leave for college and enter the working field some leave the Church with the intention of never coming back. Without the supervision of their parents the second generation puts limited energy to go to church regularly on Sundays, but of course puts the effort to attend during major church events and when back during summer or winter breaks. This is something that is not only true for second generation Korean Americans and all ethnic, cultural, and racial groups struggle with this occurrence, but it is specially apparent in churches that have been established by first generation immigrants whose primary language is not English.

For others, college becomes a time to question, meet new people, and explore other perspectives. Often the second generation join Christian club organizations and substitute their church time for club meetings because these meetings consist of the same music, sermon, benediction, and small groups. The difference just lies in the fact that now it is their choice and not their parent's pressure to attend church. So these campus ministries become their new church where they grow spiritually and learn new theologies, but the difficulty comes after graduation when the second generation tries to go back to their "parent's church." In this transition back frustration builds up and a sense of individuality and independence is dismissed because again they have become the "Ae Deul" of the church. This leading to the departure of young adult members and creating a large gap between the youth and adults of the church.

This is crucial because the younger youth do not have many mentors or people they can look up to or talk with. With this perpetual notion the divide between the first and second generation Korean Americans just continues to grow. Eventually, leading to the death of the church. The churches with KM and EM ministries continue to decline, while more fully English speaking Korean American churches are planted and formed.

Church ABC

Being aware of this trend, more progressive churches have taken the step to empower the English Ministries and prepare for the future by building the the new foundation on the English speaking congregation. Church ABC located in Anaheim, California has a large presence in the Southern California region, with over 8,000 members. Recently in the summer of 2015, Church ABC has made the decision, collaboratively with the KM and EM, to provide the EM with their own campus located approximately 2 miles from the main site. The reason behind this move was not to separate the KM and EM, but it was done with the intention to give the EM the freedom to

develop its own ministries, leaders, disciples, missionaries, education department, and an independence that is grounded on the carrying of the torch. The focus for Church ABC is not on how the first generation has sacrificed so much for an ungrateful second generation, but on how the EM is the future of the church. Church ABC understands that in order for the Korean American church to continue with its mission, the EM needs to take charge and build on the church that the KM has built.

For Church ABC the attention is pulled away from what “I did” or “We did” or “what the KM sacrificed” rather the energy is geared towards an obedience to the greatest command to love and ability to become the hands and feet of body of Christ.⁵ Regardless of who started the church or how the ministries were formed, the individual members are seen as different parts of the body all working together for the same purpose and desire to spread the gospel and glorify God the Father. This is just an example of many churches who have taken the next step to prepare and plan for the future of the Korean American church, instead of trying to revive or rebuild the traditional structures that worked decades before, KM and EM congregations need to work together to serve God’s future generations.

The 21st century Korean American church cannot be one that is solely influenced and lead by the first generation Korean speaking members, but it needs to be in a joint venture where the English speaking members are placed on a status equal to the Korean “parents.” The goal is always set on the price to finish the race and glorify God through whatever we do. The focus should never be on who is of higher authority or wisdom based only on language and age. English speaking Korean Americans have be empowered, but also be willing to take the responsibility to lead the church and be active members who grow passionately in love with serving God to their best abilities. The truth is that the second generation have better

⁵ Romans 12:5. New International Version.

circumstances today compared to the first generation and what they had. With more opportunities the second generation should take the blessings from God and utilize them to build on what the first generation has established.

CHAPTER 3

The Research- Positives and Failures

Introduction

Through the course of this research methods like, surveys, interviews, meetings, and an establishment of an internet based website were administered and attempted. In this chapter the means and its results will be discussed to establish different themes, which will be later explained further in detail.

Survey

Two surveys¹ were administered during this research to twenty EM members of Glory Church between the ages of 18 and 45. The first survey dealt with questions regarding storytelling and what it meant to have a story, while the second survey covered the perspectives that each member had of Church and what it meant to them. The reason for these specific question lay behind the notion that in order for the second generation to take ownership, the EM church would need to develop a story or narrative to build a sense of ownership and belonging. Also the idea of Church needed to be developed to attain a better idea of the grounds where the members stood in their understanding of Church.

Survey 1.1

In the first survey, survey 1.1, the members answered the questions:

Background

1. From a scale of 1-10, how important are stories?
2. How long have you attended this church?
3. What is your role in the church?
4. Do other family members attend this church? (Y/N) if Yes, who?

Open-Ended/Reflection

5. What is a story?
6. What is your favorite story?
7. What is the story of the Church?
8. What is your story? (if someone asked you to say something about who you are)
9. What is the 1.5 or 2nd generation Korean American story in the church?
10. Please write any additional comments.

The first four questions were used to gather background information about the members and their affiliation with the Glory Church. On average, question 1 scored 7, question 2 averaged 16 years, question 3's most common answer was "member", and question 4 showed a majority answer of "yes." The second set of questioned were more open ended and geared to have members answer more openly without being limited to a "true/false" question. The interesting fact about the answers for questions 6-10 is that most answered with simple statements like; "a story is something that is told," "stories are things we read," "a story is the telling of an event," "story is sharing," "I don't know the church's story," "the Church is the body of Christ," "Glory Church is a place where people come to worship and praise God," "My story is my life," "I am my story and my story is what I have done," "The 1.5 and second generation Korean Americans are the children of the 1st generation Korean Immigrants," "I don't know," "I haven't thought about it," and "I am Nick."

Out of the twenty participants only two had answered the questions of having a story and being 1.5 or second generation with carefully explained answered. The reason for these answers were not in the construction of the questions, rather the second generation EM members simply haven't had the opportunity to think about these questions before. Not many EM members are approached and asked these questions because a majority have just become accustomed to having a story told to them or for them, but the first generation parents. The reason behind this could lie behind the cultural and traditional norms of the Korean American families. The

understanding that my story is my families story is something that is embedded in the minds of many second generation Korean American families.

Cultural and Traditional Dynamics

Traditionally, the first generation Korean “parents or adults” have always emphasized the importance of education and how they had sacrificed their careers and dreams so that the “Ae Deul” could have a better opportunity and make something of themselves in the “Land where hard works pays off in rewards.” Always being reminded of this sacrifice and hard work the second-generation Korean-Americans have always worked hard and excelled in education and in career planning/placement. It has always been a priority for the children to succeed in order to bring pride and acceptance to the family. Though many second generation Korean Americans have done well for themselves in society, spiritual life in church has always been an area of growth. Spirituality is an area that is not emphasized above obedience. Later, in chapter 5, this paper will reflect on the idea of the Eucharist to go deeper into the foundation of the second-generation Korean American Christian faith.

Through the consistent pressure of wanting to do well, with the awareness of the sacrifice the parents have shown, the children have always attended church with the same mind-set that “the church I attend is something that my parents want and somewhere I go to please my family.” The common phrase heard between second generation Korean American Christians is “my parent’s church.” The church that is attended for many years has always been “my parent’s church” and in a very few circumstances, “my church.” Due to the dynamics of wanting to do things for “my parents”, the second generation has grown accustomed to telling a faith story that is not personal, but always linked to and rooted from the story of “my parents.” This has greatly affected the spiritual and personal nature of the Christian faith.

Once the children enter college the connection between church and life for many instances fades away because no longer being under the roof of the parents the mom and dad have no command in pushing church Sunday as a mandatory weekly event. When visiting home during the breaks or holidays the children do attend church and have no hesitation going back to “the parent’s church” because it is just a familiar understanding of normal and natural life. This, of course, is not something that happens with all second generation Korean Americans, but many do use the “get out of church” pass freely and very often once they enter college.

The relationship between the first and second generation plays a large role in the formation of the bond between the second generation and the church. The church, in a sense, becomes an extension of the parent’s expectations instead of it being the place where faith is expressed in freedom. Because of this dynamic between the church and second generation, the stories that are told of faith are not expressed in freedom, but always in relation to the stories of expectation and sacrifice.

Survey 1.2

In the second survey, survey 1.2, the members answered the questions:

Background Questions:

1. When did you first start coming to this church?
2. Who introduced you to this church?
3. How often do you come to church? (specifically this particular church)

Open-ended:

4. What is Church?
5. What do you enjoy most about church?
6. What do you enjoy least about church?
7. How involved are you in church?
8. Is this your church?
9. Do you feel the EM has a strong presence in the church?
10. If you could change anything about the church, what would it be?

The answers for the background questions, unlike survey 1.1 were more diverse. For

example, question one answers varied from “since preschool” to “from last year”, question two from “came with my parents” to “my friend invited me”, and question three from “every Friday and Sunday” to “this is my first week back from college” and “just on Sundays.” There were more obvious variables in answering these questions so the results were expected, but the timid nature of the answers provided in the open-ended questions was not expected. For the second set of open ended questions the answers were surprisingly reserved.

Question 4

Some of the answers for the question “What is church?” were, “a place I come to worship God,” “the body of Christ,” “the gathering of God’s children,” “somewhere I have been coming all my life,” “where we learn about God and our faith,” and “this place we are in right now.” The interesting thing about these statements is that none of the answers provided defined the Church as being a physical or spiritual gathering where they are able to be freely express their emotions or feelings in community towards God as sinners. None of the members mentioned the word community or sin. This is intriguing because this may be a reflection of how the second generation views their participation in role or status at the church. The fact that the members answered the question with common understanding of what a Church is showed a slight lack of interest in being the Church and just attending a church. Being the Church is a distinction that needs to be addressed in comparison to being in a church.

Question 5 and 6

When answering questions 5 and 6 members seemed to be specially shy about writing what they believed. Some common answers were, “I like the fellowship,” “The Sermons are good,” “the praise music is awesome,” “seeing my friends,” “I don’t like the lunches sometimes,” “The worship room is sometimes too hot or too cold,” “Everyone just leaves after service,” “we get

smaller when people go to school,” “would be nice to have more joint services with the whole church,” and “there should be more communication between the KM and EM.” Again, the answers lacked depth, but it was encouraging to see that some were aware of the lack of communication between the KM and EM and how more planned events together as a larger Church was needed.

Questions 7, 8, 9, and 10

These questions were prepared with the expectation that the members would be honest and share their thoughts without much reservation because these surveys were all performed with the understanding that all participants will be granted anonymity. A few answered the questions with some thought and reflection, but the majority just answered with simple words like, “not that involved,” “I could be involved more,” “I don’t have the time,” “I help with the children,” “I serve in the praise team,” “I help with worship,” and “I help when I can.” The answers did not address the quality of the involvement, but simply listed where each member was involved. In connection to their involvement, questions 8 and 9 were answered with many “yes’s” and “no’s”. The answers did go into explaining why or how this is their church, but the participants should not be blamed because the structure of the question could have better written in a way that encouraged a more detailed response. Finally, the last question showed a varied response from “nothing really” to “many things, but we wouldn’t be able to do much anyways.”

Reflection

In reflection of the reported surveys, one can see that many of the answers were not answered with much depth of desire to be detailed, not because there is a disinterest in the survey, but because there was no previous exposure to these types of questions. Going back to the notion of storytelling, I believe the answers received through the survey is just a reflection of how the

second generation is not accustomed to sharing their stories or verbally narrating their personal experiences in the church they attend. Second generation Korean Americans are not usually asked to tell a story or think out loud, but from childhood were expected to just listen and be silent during worship and bible study classes.

The culture of listening and absorbing content may have contributed to the, some what, effortless answers. Growing up in the Korean American church, I remember being asked if I believed what was being said and to say, “amen”, but as I said “amen” I didn’t know what I was agreeing with, I just said it because the pastor told me and my parents taught me that I should listen to the pastor no matter what. Even during bible study classes, the teachers would pass out workbooks and all we cared about was getting it done and getting the answers right instead of asking questions. I am certain that this experience is not exclusive to myself, but it is a shared experience amongst Korean American individuals who are encouraged to be obedient and naturally submissive to those who are older. The survey’s were not as effective as planned, but nevertheless the information gather was valuable in the sense that previous preconceived notions were confirmed by the EM members of Glory Church.

The importance of coming to church is not questioned by the second generation Korean Americans, rather the contemplation comes in whether or not it is important to go to church. Attending church is something that is seen as one of the most basic forms of obedience and faith in Christianity, but when attendance out performs spirituality the source of the obedience needs to be evaluated. Is going to church just an obedience to the parents or is it a desire to worship God? This is the question that many Korean Americans are being asked to look inside their hearts and reconsider the reason why come to church. Is it simply because it is their parent’s church or is a longing to grow and develop the body of Christ and to follow the greatest

command to love God and love neighbor.¹ The understanding of love will be discussed more in detail in the next chapter, detailing the importance of the love of self as a overlooked portion in the greatest commandment give to Christians by Jesus Christ.

Website

Initially, the proposition to establish a website for the EM are Glory Church was introduced and well received, but as time progressed the idea proved to be one that did not need to be executed. There were two main reasons for the discarding of the website; 1. Participation and 2. Value. These two reasons will be looked at in more detail in this section.

Participation

In the beginning of the project members were introduced to the idea of establishing a website where they would be able to write comments, stories, ideas, and share any thoughts they had about Glory Church or the Universal Church. The website would be a vehicle in which the members would discuss and reflect with the intention to develop a unique story that defined the existence and role of the second generation Korean Americans in Glory Church as EM members and not “Ae Deul.” The preconceived notion was that the EM would become engaged in building a story, which would lead to the development of a stronger and louder voice in the overall structure of the church.

As the plans were being made for the establishment of a website the excitement never gained traction and slowly participants began to given reasons and excuses why they would not be able to participate. Some comments made were, “people would know it’s me writing these comments,” “would people actually read it?”, “I don’t think I can commit the time,” members started to question the importance and value of the website. It was explained to the EM that the

¹ Luke 10:27 “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, Love your neighbor as yourself,”(New International Version).

usernames would protect their identities and that the importance should not be measured by how many reads or comments or even “likes,”² but the idea of publicly sharing their spiritual stories didn’t seem as valuable as sharing pictures and live status updates through social media.

With the lack of participation and support from the EM the website was never built and the idea of having a “space” where EM members would feel free to share their spiritual updates never came to fruition. Though the site was not made and members did not participate this was not a lost cause people, through meetings and brainstorming it was uncovered that the EM already had personal spaces in which they shared their stories. By way of social media many members were already in dialogue with one another, sharing updates, comments, and insights. The only difference lay in the fact that the focus was different. The idea that members would share their spiritual status on a separate space was not appealing because there would be disconnect between their everyday and Christian lives. Meaning, members were already sharing their lives with others through various forms of social media. Building a website would have simply just created an exclusive location where members would be encouraged to divide their secular and spiritual lives.

The main finding from this website project was the notion that EM members are already narrating their stories in different ways and what the Church needs to do is to encourage the second generation Korean Americans to feel comfortable to share their status to one another in spoken words. Many young adults feel easy about sharing their lives in a space that is hidden behind a screen and shields their emotions. To develop a story together and become a community rooted in God’s love, second generation Korean Americans need to come together in a physical space and have fellowship. A fellowship that meets, eats, talks, plays, laughs, cries, discusses, debates, corrects, rebukes, corrects, encourages, and fights together. It is crucial to gather and

² In reference to facebook and the “like” icon, which expresses support, agreement, or liking to the post.

spend time together because without direct contact even the disciples would have had a hard time getting to know Jesus Christ as the Savior. Through the time spent with Jesus the disciples learned and experienced the human nature of Christ, leading to the first-hand experience of Jesus the Savior.

Interviews

A total of four interviews were performed throughout the process of the project, but there is one interview that will be highlighted and focused on to develop a better perspective of where second generation Korean American EM stood in their perspective of being the “Ae Deul” of Glory Church. Two other interviews with pastors of different churches will later be developed and shared in the following chapters of this project. Finally, the last interview will not be described in this paper because the content collected from the interview overlaps with J.Kim’s interview.

Interview: J. Kim

During an interview with a member in Glory Church, the subject of *Ae Deul* was brought up and the interviewee J.Kim had some very interesting points about this subject. To better develop an analysis a portion of the interview was transliterated:

Interviewer: So J.Kim I often hear the KM members call the EM *Ae Deul*. How do you feel about that label?

J.Kim: Well that is a good question. I mean I am 35 years old and I have been working in real estate for the past 10 years, I feel like I am well established and I am even a Deacon in this church and my parents don’t even attend this church. I just feel it’s weird that they group me into the word *Ae Deul*. I do understand why they do that and a lot of their children do attend the EM here, but yeah it’s just funny how they call me and the other older people here *Ae Deul*.

Interviewer: I see, why do you think they call the EM *Ae Deul*, other than the fact that you mentioned about their children attending the church?

J.Kim: I mean, I think it's because they just see us as a subgroup or just a sub ministry of the church. They don't see us as members who are full members of the church, but as just kids. I don't know. It's just funny like that, and I know this isn't just our church it happens in all of my friends churches and probably in all the Korean churches that have EMs.

Interviewer: So how does an EM member become a "full" member of the church? Can we become a "full" member or will we always be a sub group?

J.Kim: I mean, I think for us to become full members we need to all pull our weight. Like it can't just be a few of us. It has to be more people giving more and more people helping more and more people taking ownership of this church.

Interviewer: So it's important that the EM start believing that this is their own church and not their parent's church. Or just a church they come to on Sunday with their mom or dad?

J.Kim: Yeah, I guess. Like we need to start coming to "our" church and make this ours and take care of it showing the KM that we care about it just as much as they do. I mean we are not here just freeloading from the KM, we want to serve together and help the church grow together for the kingdom of God. Maybe the KM just needs to give the EM more credit also. Like we are helping and do many things here also.

Interview Observation

Based on this short excerpt from an interview with a EM member at Glory Church, one can see that J.Kim understands the labeling of *Ae Deul*, but feels strongly about being looked as a "full" member of the church and not as a child. The mention of a reciprocal appreciation is something that the KM and EM need to work together on. The understanding that both are

working together towards a common goal and vision is something that may help ameliorate the divide that exists between the KM and EM. As the first-generation may have laid the foundations through financial sacrifice it is now the second generation that is building upon that foundation to establish a church that works towards one common desire to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth. As J. Kim stated the second generation or EM ministry needs to “pull their weight” and take ownership. The second generation is now older and ready to also sacrifice to give back and contribute to the well-being of the church.

The interesting point about this interview is that J. Kim mentioned many times that he found it funny that the KM called the EM “Ae Deul” and that this experience is not unique to Glory Church, but something that most of his friends, who are around 35 years of age or older, experience. This interview reinforced the feelings that I had personally encountered as a second generation Korean American. But what also needs to be pointed out is the statement, “Like it can’t just be a few of us. It has to be more people giving more and more people helping more and more people taking ownership of this church.” This is important because J. Kim is emphasizing the fact that he as a responsible Deacon of the church is doing his part in giving his time, offering, and support to the well-being of the church, but in order to break free from the label “Ae Deul” more members need to do the same. In order for the EM to shed the title of being a child, the members need to all work together by having the same mind, purpose, and vision to do what is required of a mature adult Christian.

The interviewed shed light on the fact that the EM is not totally oblivious to who or what is at fault, but is aware of the shortcomings that exists from both sides. The KM should give more credit to the EM’s efforts and givings, while the EM needs to have a larger percentage of its members participate in the being faithful Christians. By faithful Christian I do not mean coming

to church faithfully on Sunday, but a faithful Christian pulls their weight and contributes to the growth of the body. As it says in Acts 2:44-47,

44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.³

When the EM and KM are able to have everything in common and have hearts that serve, the designations of child and adult may become a non-issue. Rather the focus will be on coming together to worship, share and love.

LAC

The LAC, Lay Advisory Committee, consisted of eight total members; one male English pastor, one female English/Korean pastor, two male EM members, two female EM members, one KM male pastor, and one KM female member. The reason for this configuration was to have a variety of perspectives and to gain a wider perspective of the issues that would be discussed. A total of six meetings were held at Glory Church between the months of December 2014 to April 2015. The initial meeting was a time where the members were introduced to the project and given a more in depth understanding of what the research entailed. The members were all mostly very interactive and supportive of the project, while at times some difficult questions were asked. As the meetings progressed many questions were asked, but the three most prominent topics discussed continuously were questions on unity/division, baptism, communion, and mission/spreading of the Gospel. Through these questions I was able to receive much needed guidance on the topics that would need to be discussed and shared during following meetings.

For example, during one meeting the EM's value of mission was brought up during a discussion of purpose and meaning. It was apparent that the EM valued mission work and

³ Acts 2:44-47, New International Version.

mission at Glory Church was described as the act of physically going somewhere to share the Gospel, help with labor, run bible study schools, and feed the hungry. So mission for Glory Church is known as a set time or one or two weeks where members would go to a different geographical location and do outreach work for those who are at a disadvantage. Glory Church has traditionally gone to the Philippines, Mexico, Korea, and Arizona for mission trips rotating the locations annually. This finding of mission work was very important because many second generation Korean American Christians have the same understanding and place much emphasis on this work because it is a tangible way for members to give back and experience the working hands of God. For many EM members giving the time to go on a mission trip is their form of giving back to God and sacrificing their vacation time and money to go and share the Gospel to the ends of the Earth. It is their hands-on reflection of their faith, but of course there are some that see this as a time to leave and experience a new culture and country. Regardless of motive, it is commonly understood within the EM community that those who go are blessed and motivate to go again. Another topic brought up during these meetings were the fact that baptism and communion were mainly done during special celebrated seasons with the KM. Knowing personally, that this is practiced by many Korean immigrants churches, I was able to use this meeting as a teaching moment to share the meaning of the sacraments and the importance of these rituals. The importance of the KM speaking LAC members was very clear during this conversation because when the EM members asked by the sacraments were done mainly in collaboration with the KM, the Korean speaking members were able to guide the conversation to better explain the KM's perspective of the sacraments. The content shared during this meeting will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

The LAC played a tremendous role in the direction of this project and it was through their feedback that the direction of the surveys, website, interviews, and construction of this paper were decided and planned. Again, with the help of the KM members the LAC was able to share in common their perspectives of what was important in both ministries. The topics of baptism, communion, and mission were common areas for those ministries and it was shared that these three topics were of great concern for both the Korean speaking and English speaking congregations at Glory Church. The following chapter will discuss the understanding of responsibility and ownership in terms of mission work for the second generation Korea American EM Christians.

CHAPTER 4

The Second Generation's Responsibility and Mission's Focus

Be Responsible and Take Ownership

It is important here to note that a story is developed and given life when those wanting to tell a story are given the opportunity to share their experiences and given the encouragement to speak without unnecessary and binding restrictions. For second generation Korean-Americans to fully share and extend a narrative the restrictions of the first generation need to be addressed and dealt with without boundaries. Because of the focus on the sacrifice given during the process of immigration and immigrant life, the second generation is deterred from vocalizing a story separate of the cost that was paid by the “parent’s generation.”

Up to this point much of the focus and finger pointing have been towards the first generation Korean parents, but it is essential to develop the idea that the second-generation is also at fault with the lack of narrating a story. The second generation Korean-Americans have been influenced and discouraged by the parents, but the responsibility also falls on the shoulders of the children. Instead of always falling on the cushion of “it’s my parent’s church” or “it’s what they would want” the second generation needs to step up and claim responsibility and ownership for their own faith and spirituality. The narratives that are developed are not biologically given nor are they formed from the womb, but the second generation Korean Americans have grown so used to the comfortable state that no real desire to shape a story has ever been a priority in the

social order of life.

For many years, the second generation Korean Americans have benefited from the financial support of the Korean-speaking congregation as well as being given all of the needed support to function as an independent yet connected ministry. The comfort of not being financially responsible has become a norm and while reaping the benefits no financial support has been given in return. The habitual receiving has been paid back with the misconception that self-success is the only form of repayment. The second generation Korean Americans adapted this model to their perspective of the church and carrying it over in to their financial giving and service to the body. The notion that “as long as I am good with God, everything is fine” has become the main motto of the Korean American church. Unfortunately, leading to a lack of tithing, giving of time, community service, and volunteering.

The lack of responsibility as well as the influence from the first generation Koreans have led to the outcome of a storyless second generation Korean American group. The importance here should not be placed simply on the fact that a story has not been developed, but also on the notion that having a narrative adds meaning and structures to life. As Cupitt writes, “we have to have narrative, because narrative alone can do more than merely register the tick-tock passage of time. Narrative fills time with meaning and structures it.”² In order for the void to be filled with a narrative that is both meaningful and structured the second generation needs to claim responsibility and become productive members of the church.

Cupitt also explains the four characteristics of how story helps to define one’s being, “every story just by being a story constitutes a promise that life can be meaningful...every story has, is and conveys a moral in the sense of a piece of practical wisdom about life...every story inculcates values: it is strongly action-guiding or regulative...stories in the telling define the

² Don Cupitt, *What is a Story?*, (‘Xpress’, 1991, reprint 1995), 80.

identities of their own leading characters.”³ The second generation Korean Americans need to develop a story, not only, for the sake of having one, but to have a better sense of meaning, wisdom, values, and identity as contributors to the kingdom of God and not just receivers and benefactors of the first generation’s contribution.

The comfortable state of accepting has been taken advantage of and in order for the second generation to be able to mature from “Ae Deul” to responsible Christian adults, the second generation needs to take ownership and develop a story that narrates the achievements and accomplishments of God in their lives. No longer should the goals be set by the parents, for the parents and with only the parents, but the future should tell the story of God’s providence and grace which is guided by the love, care and protection of God. The second generation Korean Americans need to move away from the shadow of their parents and mature into Christians who no longer hide behind their parent’s faith. It is important for the second generation Korean American Christians to understand that this is not a movement or a rebelling against the first generation, but rather it is a step in learning to share the love that God has shared with us through His son Jesus Christ.

Be Responsible and Love

The first generation continues to shadow and call the second generation “Ae Deul” because this is a form of protection and love sharing. Koreans being very familial, go to extreme measures to provide and give what is good to their children. Often forgetting about the self and being so selfless to the point that there is no love or the recognition self. This is, of course, not unique to the Korean culture, for all cultures and traditions sacrifice for the development and protection of the children. Often Korean American children will hear words like, “I work hard and do all that I can so that you can have a better future,” “my future and hope is in your good

³ Don Cupitt, *What is a Story?*, (‘Xpress’, 1991, reprint 1995), 77.

future,” and “everything doesn’t matter, all that matters is that you do well and have a happy life.”

The love that is shared from the first generation parents to their second generation children is rooted in the word *sacrifice*. But the sacrifice that is seen is not always received with gratitude and appreciation, but understood as a responsibility to do well and be happy for the satisfaction of the parent instead of the self. In order to become more responsible Christians this section will deal with the notion of love in a broader spectrum, instead of identifying this concept as something that is unique to the first or second Korean American community. As love is introduced the idea of self-love will be explained in relation to the Second and first generations understanding of what it means to love self.

Love

God is not only good, but God is love and in order to do the work of God, Christians need to love as 1 John 4:8 states, “whoever does not love, does not know God, because God is love.”⁴

Thomas Aquinas during a conference stated,

It is evident that not all are able to labor at learning and for that reason Christ has given a short law. Everyone can know this law and no one may be excused from observing it because of ignorance. This is the law of divine love. As scripture says, *The Lord will quickly execute sentence upon the earth*. This law should be the standard for all human actions. In the case of products of human manufacture, each product is considered right and good when it conforms to a standard. So also each human act is considered right and virtuous when it conforms to the standard of divine love. But when a human act does not conform to the standard of love, then it is not right, nor good, nor perfect.⁵

When Christians or rather humans engage the world, Aquinas should be taken seriously and every action taken when entering the “mission field” should be a product of love because anything else would be wrong, bad and imperfect.

⁴ 1 John 4:8, New International Version, 2010.

⁵ From a conference by **St. Thomas Aquinas** (*Opuscula*, In duo praecenta. Ed. J.P. Torrel, in *Revue des Sc. Phil. Et Théol.*, 69, 1985, 26-29.

As human beings, loving and caring for our neighbors is something that needs to take place and without this understanding works will yield a personal mission rather than the mission of God. Elaine Storkey writes, “love is not an option for human beings, it is a requirement. It is the most profound statement of who we are.”⁶ As beings who were formed in the image of God, functioning without love would be a failure to live out the very image we were created in. I believe love is a key factor in establishing who I am as a Korean American Christian and acting out love is a form of expression that not only gives recognition to the other, but also brings the focus back to me as someone created in the image of God. Storkey states, “There is a community between the Father, Son, and the Spirit. That community is love. But this same God has designed us, made us, shaped us, and loved us into being. We are to be called ‘God’s image.’ So love too is part of our own identity.”⁷ Patricia Lamoureux and Paul J. Wadell when defining Aquinas’ definition of love and charity state,

we are not first individuals who then decide whether to have neighbors or not, on the contrary, because all of us are joined together in the love of God, charity makes us neighbors of everyone. Every human being is a neighbor to every other human being through the exorbitantly diffusive love of God. Thus, we do not have to create unity among ourselves and others because it is there from the start.⁸

I believe Brent Waters, ethics professor at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, states it well when he says,

To deny love – and the potential disappointment and pain it necessarily entails – is also to deny humanity of being human creatures, for it is love that creates, sustains, and redeems them. To eliminate love is not to master human nature, but to annihilate it. Most importantly, if love is to have any substantive content, then people have a claim upon one another – a mutual belonging that both delimits and enables them to pursue the good leading to their individual and corporate flourishing.⁹

⁶ Extracted from Patricia Lamoureux and Paul J. Wadell. *The Christian Moral Life: Faithful discipleship for a Global Society*. Orbis Books, New York. 2010, 182.

⁷ Storkey, Elaine Storkey, *The Search for Intimacy*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 239.

⁸ Patricia Lamoureux and Paul J. Wadell. *The Christian Moral Life: Faithful discipleship for a Global Society*. Orbis Books, New York. 2010, 183.

Therefore, Christian love, as stated before, needs to continuously be aware of the interconnectedness of individuals, societies, cultures, and languages. With the simple yet complex notion of love, diversity and differences need to be intertwined, not with sympathy for the other, but with genuine consideration and contemplation of why the other functions and believes the way they do. Hence, it is important the EM and KM learn to weave together their perspectives because both hold more similarities than differences. Both EM and KM members are the children of God, are loved equally by God, are saved by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, are given the opportunity to follow Christ, have the same country of origin, have a common culture, are members of the same society, are minorities, work hard, long to do good, and want to spread the gospel. The differences of language, schooling, and opportunity should not be the only measuring points for these two groups, rather the shared experiences and commonalities should be the focus of the interconnectedness nature of the two. In order to accomplish this task the KM and EM cannot forget their identities and need to be able to define clearly their narratives and self-definition.

Today many institutions have taken up the slogan of “inclusivity” or “openness” and others an “open minds, open hearts, and open doors”¹⁰ model, but through this inclusiveness and openness the risk of losing oneself cannot be forgotten. In the present day the willingness to let anyone in has engulfed and transformed individual identities. Self-definition has turned into the tolerance of the other and losing of the self. By this I mean being too inclusive is the confession that one is not sure of whom he/she is, the “I” is lost. Referring back to the notion of love, if one is not able to love oneself as one created in the image of God, then it would be very hard for the I

⁹ Brent Water, *This Mortal Flesh: Incarnation and Bioethics*, Brazos Press, 2009, 34.

¹⁰ Slogan for the Rethink Church Campaign of the United Methodist Church.

to love the We. Looking at Matthew 22:37-39, “Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”¹¹ It is important to note that in this passage the last word is “yourself.” To follow the second greatest command given by Jesus, one needs to first learn to love oneself first to be able to love the neighbor. Without love of self the love given to neighbor would not be genuine because love of self is the acknowledgment of the love of God for us. Lamoureux and Wadell state, “Jesus’ command of love our neighbors as we love ourselves means that we have a moral obligation to love in ways that respect and affirm the unique image of God that we are. If we do not, we break the love command just as surely as when we turn away from God or become indifferent to our neighbors.”¹²

Love of self is the ultimate awareness of the love of God and it is through this understanding that a true awareness of responsibility could be understood. Meaning, how could someone love God without loving one of His creations? For one to understand the love of God the self needs to be accepted as a creation of God and a creation that is worth loving and caring for.

If genuine love for ourselves is rooted in God’s love for us, then our love for ourselves does not compete with or detract from our love for others, but is the very thing that enables us to love them. Confident of God’s love for us and grateful for God’s love for us, we can put aside the anxious self-concern that hinders both our love for others and a healthy love for ourselves.¹³

Likewise, in order for the KM to understand the EM the KM needs to love the self. Many first generation Korean parents pour out all of their love towards their children and their purpose

¹¹ Matthew 22:37-39, New International Version, 2010.

¹² Patricia Lamoureux and Paul J. Wadell. *The Christian Moral Life: Faithful discipleship for a Global Society*. Orbis Books, New York. 2010, 185.

¹³ Ibid, 186.

in life becomes the great accomplishments of their children. With this consistent expectation for the second generation to outperform their parents, the second generation Korean Americans have inadvertently created passion to do well and grow out of their parents' protection. Meaning, the second generation have learned to love the self so much that once they achieve the goals or their parents expectations they earn a "get out of jail" card and are free from the bounds of pressured success. Once this freedom is achieved many second move out and make a great living building their own educational, financial, and societal wealth, gaining the respect of the world, but lacking attention for their parents. This is not a mock at the second generation, but this is being stated because the first focuses their love on their children and place all their hope in their well-being, but once they move out and grow and achieve this task, the parents are left without a purpose or place where love can dwell. It is important for the first to learn love of self because when the birds leave the nest, there is no coming back, rather the nest grows older without meaning. In order for the first generation to see the second as more viable adults, the first generation Korean speaking members need to have the love of God dwell in them first. I understand it is a natural outpouring that comes from a parent's heart towards their children, but in order for the second, third, and futures generations to grow as responsible Christians the first need to first model for them what it means to have the love of God dwell in me first. The love of God being poured out on the self is so much that the overflow is what shares with the children what it means to be loved.

In order for the self to be loved an acceptance of self needs to be established and merited. Hans Küng in his book, *My Struggle for Freedom*, asks a series of questions of what the meaning of life is and follows with the statement, "Presumably there are more people than one things who say, 'I don't want to be as I am.' Many neuroses have their foundation here. It's often easier to

accept the world than oneself as one is or as one have been made to be by others.”¹⁴ Following this statement Küng quotes C.G. Jung and writes, “But the most simple thing is always the most difficult...In reality, being simple is the supreme art, and this accepting oneself is the embodiment of the moral problem and the core of a whole world-view.”¹⁵ Once the self is accepted and loved the carrying out of the greatest command in relations to developing a story and responsibly acting as an adult Christian will become more feasible.

As stated for Christians the essential knowledge of love needs to be outward to God and neighbor, but love also needs to be conceived internally for the self because love is not given as charity, rather all are worthy because God is love and they are loved. George Grant, a Canadian philosopher, while explaining the definition of love from Plato’s perspective of freedom states,

Freedom to Plato is not then that we can stop ourselves from loving – but that we can love that which is worthy of love and that is of course God – And if we are Christians we say that we love love. And this is of course what was meant by the Trinity – that God is love loving itself and that when we love absolutely, are just love loving itself. Freedom is then our ability to love what is worthy of love – rather than simply to love that which is not worthy of love.¹⁶

To love is to have freedom and to be free is to participate in the act of love that is reflected through the ability of the self to understand the “I” in relationship to the other. The ultimate other being God, the second other being the self, and the resulting other being the neighbor.

The awareness that self-love is important because love cannot be selective and exclude the self while including the other. To better participate in the works of the Church and the spreading of the good news both first and second generation Korean Christians need to not only go and follow the great commission, but also follow the greatest and the second greatest

¹⁴ Hans Küng, *My Struggle for Freedom*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, September 2003, 91.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ George, Grant, Christopher Emberley, Arthur Peter Davis, *Collected Works of George Grant : Volume 2*, The University of Toronto Press, 1951-1959, 454.

commands, which are grounded in love. As beings created in the image of God, love is a way to reflect back the very essence in which we were created in. In the first and second generation Korean American church love needs to be considered and displayed in order to develop a deeper dialogue and the sharing of understandings from the ultimate calling as Korean American Christians, rather than a simple effort to include all or the “Ae Deul” in the mix.

I write all this not to make the claim that the love of self is first, rather I would like to assert that the love of God is the first piece of the commandment and the self is last, but the self cannot be lost in the command. This is an important concept to lie out because during the interactions with Glory Church members it was clear that God’s love was present, but the way it was being shared differed between the KM and EM. Love of self cannot be confused with love *for* self, where the targeted end is the betterment of a finite and temporal life, rather love *of* self is the awakening reality that “I” too am created in the image of God and am loved because God is worthy. The love *of* self should be understood as Brent Waters states “a tautological imperative: you shall love the self with all your heart, soul, and mind, and you shall love yourself as yourself”¹⁷ and not as love *for* self where the focus is on expanding the things that are of this world.

With this understanding of love through Matthew 22, church works needs to go towards a trend that does not participate in sharing the gospel and giving love simply out of pity for those that “do not yet know what is good for them” or “are too young to understand”, rather the desire of the heart should be to share and love because those being reached are also the Children of God and have been formed in the image of God. It would be ignorant for Christians today to impose without love because in this globalizing world the optimal form of spreading the gospel would be to enter into dialogue and share in response to the love that has been given to all by God. A

¹⁷ Brent Waters, *This Mortal Flesh: Incarnation and Bioethics*, Brazos Press, 2009, 37.

dialogue that the first and second generation Korean Americans need to enter into on an even level plain, as the children of God and not just “Ae Deul” who are not responsible with their faith and actions.

Orlando Costas in his book, “*Christ Outside the Gates*”, states “if we want to share faithfully, in word and deed, the whole gospel with the whole world, we shall need not just to understand its original context and the historical development of its interpretation, but, especially, to be aware of the multiple situations from which it is being currently interpreted and proclaimed.”¹⁸ As Costas states knowing the original context and development are important, but what is more urgent to know is how the message, or gospel, is being received and taught. How is the story of the one that has brought hope and salvation being shared? How is the story of first generation Korean American being accepted by the second generation? What does the dialogue look like? Or is there even a dialogue between the two?

Costas goes further in the next section and explains,

“What has been said does not mean, of course, that generalizations about our world are neither possible nor important in mission. Indeed it is a sociological fact that all sociohistorical situations, every piece of the human mosaic, are glued together by common elements. Identifying them, knowing their basic characteristics, and understanding their function in human society is essential for an effective communication of the gospel in each situation. In fact such an awareness enables us not only to have a fuller vision of the world but also to live and share the gospel holistically.”¹⁹

Here Costas attempts to explain the fullness of the world and the wholeness of the Gospel in a way that does not place others equal to us, as if we are the standard and are doing charitable work by allowing them to be on the same level, but builds an awareness through a model of a mosaic, which allows Christians to enter into dialogue and communicate to develop a fuller understanding, or as Costas states a *holistic* gospel because we are all *glued* together.

¹⁸ Orlando E. Costas, *Christ Outside the Gates: Mission Beyond Christendom*, Orbis. New York 1982, 164.

¹⁹ Ibid.

For the first generation and second generation Korean Americans it is important for both to understand that the starting point of a dialogue between the two does not root in the understanding that “I will let them speak” or “let’s see what they have to say,” rather it is sprouted from the understanding that both have a valid stance and each group have a place to stand. It is not about the first generation letting the second generation step up into their level or the second generation trying to understand their very different parents, but the starting line is simply placed in a different point on a flat line. The first and second generation KM and EM need to come to the table without any reservations. At church and in fulfilling the mission of God, the two need to embrace one another and offer guidance and help for each other without one “allowing” or “restricting” the other to speak. As both have a clear interest in mission work, it is extremely important for the first and second generation to share information and resources to go towards the same goal.

Hence, effectiveness in missionary or Church work for the both the KM and EM goes beyond the number of baptism or confessional prayers, rather effective work looks at the fuller and holistic vision of the world as one equally unified Korean American Church. Costas affirms that all people who are spread out in the world are not isolated individuals, but rather are all linked together by family, linguistic, ideological, educational, religious, political, and economic ties.²⁰ The relational aspect of equality is again foreshadowed not in terms of pulling others up to be of the same status, but to confess that all have an equal voice of what it means to be a child of God.

Andrew Walls, while explaining the global history of Christianity, states, the “story is serial; its center moves from place to place. No one church or place or culture owns it. At different times different peoples and places have become its heartlands, its chief representatives.

²⁰ Orlando E. Costas, *Christ Outside the Gates: Mission Beyond Christendom*, Orbis. New York 1982, 164.

Then the baton passes on to others.”²¹ This is an interesting point because today Christianity is seen as something that is very personal and reflected through individual expressions, but a question that is triggered in this personalization of Christian faith is, how could tradition be passed on? Or first of all is tradition important? Passing on the baton is a good image of a race with an end and a goal to win, but who will carry the last leg? Or who would be the losers? Does it even matter who carries the baton? And how they carry it?

The Body of Christ and Mission

To better understand the “body of Christ” the explanation of the body in 1 Corinthians 12:15-20 will be looked at,

“Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.”²²

Through this parable the importance of the parts of the body is emphasized to build the understanding that every part has a relevant function in a complete structural organism. With this understanding I would like to propose that the interconnectedness of all Christians through global mission is like the veins sending oxygen and blood to the parts of the body that need these elements to function appropriately. The first and second generation Korean Christians need to build on this idea that both are connected and all part of one body functioning together to achieve one common goal to spread the Gospel and glorify God in all that we do. As the body of Christ, it is important for Korean Christians to understand that all are a part of the whole. It is important

²¹ Andrew Wall, “*The Mission of the Church Today in the Light of Global History*,” in *Mission at the Dawn of the 21st Century*, ed. Paul Varo Martinson (Kirk House, 1999), 372.

²² 1 Corinthians 12:15-20, New International Version, 2010.

for all first and second generation Korean Christians to join in dialogue for a more holistic understanding of what it means to belong to the body of Christ as equally valuable parts casting out preferential treatment for one particular area of the body.

Today as the world has gotten smaller through technological and economic advancements, it is more common to see a more diverse pool of missionaries, but Global Mission, today, is not just diverse in faces and tones, but also diverse in the forms of missionary or humanitarian work. Samuel Escobar claims that the Overseas Ministries Study Center in New Haven, Connecticut, a place designed for missionaries to rest and have recreation, needs to be aware that the “missionaries coming for rest or for continuing education are now Koreans who do medical work in Nigeria or plant churches in the Amazonian jungle, Japanese who work in theological education in Indonesia, or Filipinos who foster economic development in Bangladesh.”²³

The missionary movement for the Korean Christian Church has transformed and become a more diverse venue where all that are compelled or moved to spread the gospel travel from different parts of the world. Patricia Lamoureux and Paul J. Wadell states, “the concept of mission is a broader term, and one not necessarily associated with evangelization. Missionary activity includes providing medical, educational, or other assistance to people.”²⁴ As more first and second generation Korean American Christians join the mission efforts to share the Gospel, the works being provided line up with this understanding that mission trips are outreach activities where human needs are also provided. With the high value placed on mission by the first and second generation Korean American Christians, mission work has benefited from the second generations success as doctors, teachers, entrepreneurs, lawyers, engineers, and professionals. It is with these expertise that the first and second have been able to work together in the mission

²³ *Sharing in one World Mission: Proposals for the Council for Mission* (London: CWM, 1975), 7 (2.7).

²⁴ Patricia Lamoureux and Paul J. Wadell. *The Christian Moral Life: Faithful discipleship for a Global Society*, Orbis Books, New York, 2010, 246.

field and the reason why both place emphasis in their missional goal to spread the Gospel. Through the discussions with the LAC and personal contacts, I can positively state that mission is a driving force for many Korean American Christians. This is an important factor in this project because mission is a very strong connection point for the KM and EM and through mission these two will be able to come further together to elevate one another in collaboration towards serving God.

CHAPTER 5

Importance of the Eucharist in the Korean American Church

Introduction

This chapter is a reflection of what was discussed, taught, and shared during several LAC meetings during the research phase of the project. This information is being deemed to be important because the understanding of the Eucharist and Baptism is one that needs to be developed for the second generation Korean American Christian population in the English speaking nations. It was revealed during a meeting that the second generation had a limited knowledge of the importance of coming together as a community and participating in these sacraments as the body of Christ.

This chapter will also explain the meaning and significance of sacraments referencing from Stookey's books *Eucharist* and *Baptism* to develop a deeper understanding of spirituality in the second generation Korean American Church. Stookey is being used because during a teaching moment during a LAC meeting his books were introduced to develop a deeper understanding of the sacraments and it's meaning for the first and second generation Korean American Christian Church.

The chapter will be divided into sections explaining the meaning and definition of the Eucharist, Baptism and later jointly as a means of grace in spirituality. The overall understanding of the sacraments will be surrounded by the notion of grace with the belief that sacramental acts are not merely rituals and observances, but of acceptance, awareness, and acknowledgment of the love of God poured out to us through these spiritual rites. "God's grace can be proclaimed

through things such as the water of baptism and the bread and wine of the meal.”¹

Eucharist

Initially, the question that was raised by an EM male member was, “why do we have communion with the KM during special joint services?” Hearing this question a discussion was started between the EM and KM LAC members explaining to one another that communion is something we do in remembrance of God and the purpose for the joint services is so that we could remember together as one church. While listening to these comments and suggestions, I found it very interesting that both agreed in the idea that the joint services and the Eucharist were a way for the “two” churches to become joined as “one.” During this conversation I raised the question, why do we “become” one church during these times? Are we not already “one” church? The pastors in the LAC understood the meaning behind my question, but did not answer the question because they wanted to hear what the members would say. But the conversation did not carry through possibly because the members did not have a proper understanding of the why we did the sacraments and the meaning of being a community of believers. So with this recognition the next meeting was used to teach or discuss the meaning of the sacraments and community. An interesting to point out is that some of the members were not familiar with the word Eucharist and could only identify the sacrament as communion.

While looking over Stookey, five central themes to the sacrament of sharing the body and blood of Christ we individually explained and shared. “Therefore we begin with the message material things can convey rather than with the form of the things themselves. This we do by recalling God’s story in the categories of creation, covenant, Christ, church, and coming

¹ Laurence Hull Stookey, *“Eucharist: Christ Feast with the Church”*, (Abingdon Press, 1993), 15.

kingdom; with these categories are biblical meanings behind the feast.”² Each one of these themes were evaluated individually in lieu of the second generation Korean Americans and their views and exposure to the sacraments.

Eucharist: Five Themes

In Matthew 26:26-28,

26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”**27** Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. **28** This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.³

Jesus at the table, while eating, takes the bread and cup and blesses it and gives it to the disciples to eat and drink to teach them the truth of God’s ever present presence with us. So the LAC members when presented this information commonly shared that in the Church, second generation Korean American EM members are taught to partake and join in communion, but the act of communion with the parents is one that is limited to a few times in a year. This was not unique to Glory Church, but many Korean Churches administer the Eucharist only during Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Christmas. Hence, the community understanding of the church is not reinforced with the parents, but only reminded a few times a year. So communion for many Korean American Churches is a sacrament that is reserved for only a few times a year, but it is crucial to educate further the importance and spirituality that is rooted in this act of partaking in the table of Christ.

Creation

The theme of creation was also shared with group during the meeting. Creation is an interesting theme in the Eucharist because through this sharing of bread and wine Christians can

² Laurence Hull Stookey, *“Eucharist: Christ Feast with the Church”*, (Abingdon Press, 1993), 14.

³ Gospel of Matthew Chapter 26 verses 26-28, NIV.

develop a deeper understanding of this act, rather than just participating based on tradition or simply see it as something that is done during special church events. Through the theme of creation one can get a deeper understanding of what it means to receive the love of God and our responsibility to share, not only with our Christian brothers and sisters, but also with all of God's creation. "But a closer and more humble reading of the biblical stories will suggest that creation is intended to reveal God's love to all created things. The Eucharistic meal is about sharing – sharing both with all people and with the whole created order."⁴ Through the theme of creation the Eucharist is understood as being a form of love in which has given to us by God. And "us" is not limited to those who are a member of a church or baptized, but something that all of God's creation is able to participate it.

For the first and second generation Korean American Church this in an important insight because for many EM members the Eucharist is just a time for the members of the church to remember Jesus Christ, but to know the wider perspective of communion as something that is for all of God's creation is one that should encourage a reaching out to the close gaps between the KM, EM, and surround communities. The theme of creation brings light into the generational and language divides between the KM and EM. Though one may be older and a parent, and the other younger and a child, the participation at the table brings all of God's creation together with a single unified label, "saved." So regardless of rank within a household, all are welcome to the table as equals.

Covenant

Covenant is best summarized by Stookey,

"The meaning for our Eucharistic participation is this: We cannot earn from God an invitation to the Table of the Lord. But what is done there is intended to show us God's faithful ways of justice and mercy, and what is received there is meant

⁴ Laurence Hull Stookey, *"Eucharist: Christ Feast with the Church"*, (Abingdon Press, 1993), 17.

to strengthen us for responsible and faithful service to God.”⁵

Eucharist is an act of love for all and it cannot be misunderstood as something that is done for those who are pure, holy, and blameless. Being at the Table should never turn away those who feel or think that they are unworthy; rather the covenant of love with God opens the table to any and all people sending an invitation all of God’s children to partake in communion. It is through grace that we are called to the table and given a covenant of love to come and feast at the Lord’s Table.

Another idea in the Covenant theme is the notion of being strengthened to be responsible and faithful servants. The first generation needs to be faithful by providing the empowerment for the “Ae Deul” to mature by allowing them to participate as full members of Church. The second generation needs to be faithful by taking up the responsibilities needed to become adult Christians who take ownership of the Church. One needs to empower while the other needs to take up that power and take charge without hiding behind their parent’s shadows. This is a portion of our covenant with the God of love.

Christ

Christ, the third theme mentioned by Stookey cannot be merely understood as a character in the Last Supper, but as the center of the five themes.

“Jesus Christ, according to the New Testament, is both the inaugurator of the new creation and the initiator of the new covenant. Christ brings into sharp focus what before was known more dimly. But the work of Christ is understood not only from the past forward, but into the future. This from Christ emanates the covenant community of Christians called the church; and the new creation, known now only in part, will be known fully only in that event popularly called “the coming of the kingdom”.”⁶

Jesus Christ did not only eat with His disciples in the Upper Room, but in many other occasions

⁵ Laurence Hull Stookey, *“Eucharist: Christ Feast with the Church”*, (Abingdon Press, 1993), 19.

⁶ Ibid, 21.

ate with those who were not considered to be righteous. He ate with the poor, widows, sinners, tax collectors, prostitutes, Pharisees, and did not focus on their status, but on the individuals as human beings. Jesus shared food and ate with others as a form of fellowship and expression of the grace of God that is given to us through His Son.

It is precisely this fellowship that lacks between the first and second generation Korean Americans. The term “fellowship” is rarely or almost never used for collaborative events between the KM and EM. The more common word used is “joint” events or “joint” services. The understanding of having fellowship with the KM for the EM is foreign and the same is true for the KM when looking at the EM. The attitude is always that the KM and EM do not have fellowship with one another because “adults” and “children” don’t have fellowship, but just have time together. I believe this is something that needs to be addressed and brought up between the KM and EM because God the Father always longs to be in fellowship with us and being members of the same body, we should all have the same longing to have communion together as one Church. Fellowship is an integral part of our faith and it should not be reserved only for those who are in the same generational or linguistic association, but shared at the Table together regardless of background.

Church/Community

The Church, or community, “is the covenant community of Christ’s people; it is the company of those who know they live by grace and believe themselves incorporated into the transforming work of the resurrection.”⁷ With this definition of Church/Community, it can be understood that the church is a body that is aware and alert of the grace that is given to us by God to participate in His transforming work. There are many denominations and branches of the protestant religions that have varying doctrines and theologies, but there is a common

⁷ Laurence Hull Stookey, *“Eucharist: Christ Feast with the Church”*, (Abingdon Press, 1993), 23.

understanding that all gather with the purpose to worship. “The Eucharist is not each believer communicating separately with God, and happening to be in the same room for matters of convenience and efficiency...Christians come together because the believers by definition are bound together.”⁸ The body congregates to participate in the Eucharist as a symbol of the great feast that will come in with the victory of Christ.

The Korean American Church should consider looking at the potential of worship more together in services that are only “joint” but incorporated together intertwining the differences into a worship that celebrates the difference in unity. This may be possible by switching the roles and having the EM invite the KM to their worship service. Traditionally, the KM has always had the EM come into the KM worship room, but the simple act of inviting the KM to the EM worship would give the EM the opportunity to demonstrate to the KM that “we too can lead worship as adults.” This is simply a suggestion and it is not the resolution to many decades of division, but it is a starting point a proposition that would motivate the KM to empower and the EM to take the power and ownership to be responsible members of the larger Church and body of Christ.

Coming Kingdom

Finally, the coming kingdom is not a concept that is only seen and envisioned in the future, but it needs to be understood and seen as here and now.

“Those who glimpse the kingdom in the kingdom meal called Eucharist thereafter strive to do already on earth what they have envisioned to be done in heaven...therefore at the holy Table, the church makes a daringly bold entreaty: ”O Christ, come to feed us, to restore and invigorate us, until we join you in the Great Banquet prepared for all who love you to the end in faith and home. Amen.”⁹

The Eucharist is not something that churches do once a month, or during Easter and Christmas, it

⁸ Laurence Hull Stookey, “*Eucharist: Christ Feast with the Church*”, (Abingdon Press, 1993), 24.

⁹ Ibid, 26.

is a reflection of what will be in heaven and what is being prepared for us eternally. With this awareness, again, it is our responsibility to participate in the establishment of God's Kingdom here on Earth. The division of a KM and EM are important because of language preference and for the service of all in their native tongues, but once the KM and EM lose communication and the labeling pulls the two apart and the building of the Kingdom deviates away from the work of God.

There needs to be an envisioning of the kingdom being built together as one body by the KM and EM. Once the vision is set together the responsibilities and the focus will align becoming clearer what the purpose and reason for the ministries are, ultimately leading to one understanding their own individual role and duty. With this understanding the individual will be able to develop a story and narrate better what it means to be a Church and what the Church means to them.

Eucharist as a Form of Grace

“The Eucharist, our anamnesis of Christ, thus puts us in touch with aspects of God's presence that we might not otherwise see so clearly. Therefore the Eucharist is a means of grace – one of various divinely given ways in which we experience Christ in our midst.”¹⁰ The Eucharist is a form of grace that is given to us by the mighty acts of God through Jesus Christ. It is important to see that the Eucharist may not be a physical transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, but it is the transformation of our hearts to be renewed and reminded of what has been given to us and for us. “The sacrament creates the condition for our renewal as we enter ever more fully into the covenant initiated for us and with us by the One

¹⁰ Laurence Hull Stookey, *“Eucharist: Christ Feast with the Church”*, (Abingdon Press, 1993), 96

who hosts the feast.”¹¹ The renewal mentioned here is one that needs to be experienced within the Korean American Churches. As God’s grace has led to the growth of the second generation Korean Americans and their influence in society, the same grace needs to be extended back into the Church. The grace that has been given abundantly needs to be reinvested into the growth of the Korean American Churches to reinforce and build on what the first generation has started. But in order to accomplish this, the first generation needs to recognize the potential of the second generation and the second generation needs to take ownership and become more responsible with their faith.

The grace given to us by God is free and does not come with clauses or with a fine print, it is there for us if we chose to have it and participate in it. Through the Eucharist, God manifests His grace given to us through the partaking of the sharing of the body and the blood of our Savior. “To say that the sacrament is a means of grace is to affirm that it can indeed effectively bring Christ into our experience.”¹² The common experience of being Korean decent foreigners in this country known as “America.”

It was important to go over these themes broadly with the LAC group because through this discussion the members were able to describe with more certainty and confidence the value of participating in the Eucharist. The hope is that this information is not just held within the members of the committee, but that it would be shared and spread to other EM members. As time progressed the members did make suggestions to the lead pastor to have seminars for the whole church, not only the EM, but also the KM, about this topic so that when both the EM and KM joined in service the gathering would not be another joint service, but a time where one church gathers in unison to partake in a feast given to all by God’s grace. The same was true with the

¹¹ Laurence Hull Stookey, *Eucharist: Christ Feast with the Church*, (Abingdon Press, 1993), 97.

¹² Ibid, 97.

information shared about baptism. Again the information being shared is the content shared during the discussion. This is being narrated here because the LAC came to the agreement that this is valuable information that should be shared with all first and second generation Korean American Christians.

Baptism - Five Headings

The same way, the five different themes were utilized to summarize and share ideas of baptism to the LAC. “Through baptism, God tells us the story of divine love – a story which, for the sake of natural memory, may be summarized under five headings: creation, covenant, Christ, church and coming kingdom.”¹³ This section, will again look at baptism in reflection of the five themes proposed by Stookey to explain the view of Baptism for the first and second generation Korean American Church.

Creation

“Through the water of baptism, God brings us to our remembrance the stories of the early chapters of Genesis: creation itself, at which the Spirit brooded over the chaotic waters, dividing and restraining them so that land could appear; the rivers of the Garden of Eden...the stories of creation presented to us through the water of Baptism bring to our attention central themes of the Gospel that enable us to know who we are – and whose we are.”¹⁴

Through the signs and stories of the bible we are reminded that baptism we are redeemed and through water we are made new and transformed from death to life. As beings created by God we are formed and molded in His image to manifest His goodness and love to one another. “Thus, we discover that we are at once judged and saved by the one who has made us. Through baptism, God reveals to us our identity as redeemed creatures.”¹⁵ In the dynamics between the first and second generation Korea Americans, understanding that the baptism of water and spirit joins us

¹³ Laurence Hull Stookey, “*Baptism: Christ’s Act in the Church.*”, (Abingdon Press 1982), 13.

¹⁴ Ibid, 13.

¹⁵ Ibid, 14.

in unity as those loved by God is something that would contribute to the amelioration of the perspective difference of who has an “adult” and who is a “child.” Knowing that baptism leads to a new creation and a cleaning of the flesh should encourage the first and second generation to further develop one another spiritually as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Covenant

Along with creation, God continuously reminds us of covenants that were made with His people, through the image and usage of water. “Through the water of baptism, God brings to our attention the covenant made with Noah after the flood...God also reminds us of the covenant with Israel, which was accompanied by many events involving water.”¹⁶ All these covenants lead to the coming of Christ and the fulfillment of promised through Jesus who was also baptized by water in the Jordan River. For the Korean American Church baptism by water is something that most have experienced and witnessed during baptismal ceremonies. During these ceremonies, infants are dedicated to God by the parents as a covenant to raise the child to become a mature and healthy Christian, but during the process the Church also participates in the ceremony as witnesses and supports of the family to help with the responsibility of raising this child in a God centered home. The same is true for adult baptism. Adults are baptism with the support of the Church and as witnesses and members of the same body a covenant is made with God to guide and lead this individual towards a life focused on God’s love.

With this covenant, the KM and EM both enter in an a promise to help each other grow and develop as mature and well nurtured Christian adults. So it is important for KM and EM member to remember that the divide of language and generation does not merit a differentiating that lead to subordination, rather the divide should push both ministries to work closer together to support another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

¹⁶ Laurence Hull Stookey, *Baptism: Christ’s Act in the Church.*, (Abingdon Press 1982), 14.

This topic was one that the LAC members most liked because they enjoyed the discussion of how the EM and KM come together as equals in growing and maturing as Christian adults. It was interesting to see how engaged the members were in sharing their thoughts and ideas of how the EM and KM could help the spiritual growth of the individual who is being baptized. The consensus that both are responsible for the develop and growth because the church does enter into a covenant with God and the new member, so it is important regardless of language or age for the KM and EM to be active in the growth of the new addition to the body of Christ.

Christ

The life and acts of Jesus were often connected with water. From turning water to wine, being baptized, asking a widow for water, the calming of the thunder storms, washing of feet, and many others. Baptism is a consistent reminder of Jesus' life and the fulfillment of the covenant. Baptism is not something that is only kept and practiced by one, but "baptism belongs to the church...yet baptism is not the church's act, but Christ act in the church...baptism is a sign of identity Christ gives the church, lest we forget that we are God's people, and become content to be just another human organization."¹⁷

Similarly, the first generation Korean parents after dedication of the infant and development of their child into adulthood should learn to give the space and respect that is needed for the child's ability to make the faith their own. With the continual reminder of Baptism the second generation should be taught to remember their baptism and give thanks to God. Often, first generation Korean parents forget the fact that it is Christ who had baptized their child and it is God who builds them up to act as adults. Of course, parents will always view their children as kids, that is a natural, but it is important for the parent to let the child make the steps necessary to build an appreciation and thankfulness for the acts of Christ in their lives. The first generation

¹⁷ Laurence Hull Stookey, *Baptism: Christ's Act in the Church.*, (Abingdon Press 1982), 16.

always wants the best for their children, but sometimes the best comes with letting go and letting the child fall off the nest and learn how to fly underneath the wings of God. For the second generation to grow and become responsible they need to be remind consistently of Christ and His powerful movement in their lives.

The LAC agreed that it is important to remember their baptism and that through a joint service and connection between the first and second generation both could remind each other of vows we have taken with Christ. Christ, as shared by the LAC, is everything and He is the One that will help Glory Church grow. The model of having a bridge builder or a connection maker no longer should be the symbol used for KM and EM churches. Rather the image built should be a one body of water joining another to become one, instead of two being joined together by a temporary connection that could be destroyed. Christ is what joins the EM and KM to be simply MC, or Ministry for Christ.

Church/Community

As it is important for the baptized to become independent, that independence always comes with the backing of the community of believers. Baptism is something that the church participates in and the ones being baptized is not left on their own to float or sink, but it is the duty and obligation of the church to nurture, care for, and support the individual as a new member of the body of Christ. It is a communal act as the Eucharist invites all to the Table, during baptism one is being anointed, but all are being renewed in commitment to Christ.

As mentioned earlier, Baptism is a time for the Church to show their support and witness for a new member, but it is also a time for the body of Christ to be reminded of their own baptisms. The communal aspect of baptism should never to forgotten or under emphasized because it is key in the development of an individual and their walk with God. As a community the first and

second generation should be open to listening to one another and be willing to remind each other of the baptism of water and spirit. With the openness to share freely and communicate with one another the divide that is present between the first and second generation could be brought closer and eventually closed. The community of believers needs to be reflective of a community that shares and is honest, rather than one that labels and discourages natural growth.

The idea of being one community is one that the LAC believed in, but never was able to model or express because of the divisions that exist between the two. The EM and KM genuinely desires to come together and become a community of believers who share in remembering Christ as Glory Church, not the EM or KM of Glory Church.

Coming Kingdom

Baptism is a reminder to the church that it is a reflection of the kingdom and a place where the love and grace of God is to be shared freely and openly in worship to God. The act of baptism is what brings the Church to recognize one's membership into the body. As the Church desires to grow and develop, it is the responsibility of all who are in the body to harness a culture that puts forth the value of all parts. From young to old and female to male, all work towards becoming a congregation that mirrors the kingdom of God here on Earth.

For the first and second generation it is important for both to see each other as contributors to the building of the kingdom and as individuals who are all members of the body, through the baptism of water and spirit. It is a task that both need to desire together functioning as a well-orchestrated and constructed body under the baptism of Christ. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the KM and EM have a heart for mission work and as both work together to provide what is needed to those who are lacking, Glory Church will try to reflect God's kingdom here on Earth.

Baptism and the Eucharist

“Baptism and the Eucharist are thus complementary signs; the former reveals most clearly God’s initiative, the latter our responsible participation in transforming what God provides in the natural order.”¹⁸ For many years, baptism has been a prerequisite for participation in the Eucharist, but recently many have challenged this understanding and it is important to understand that the Lord’s Table is open to all and not a select few. But it is also important to understand that the Baptism is, not only a commitment, but a reflection of the life that will be lived through the grace of God.

Though the traditional view calls for only those who are baptized to be partake at the sharing of the bread and wine, if those that are not baptized participate they should not be refused, but after should be educated and given the opportunity to be baptized to join the community and the body. In the Korean American Church I have witnessed people being turned away from the table because they were not baptized. There is an importance in being baptized both symbolically and spiritually, but this should not be a prerequisite to participate in the Eucharist. The sacraments are not set in a particular order nor does it say in the Bible that only the baptized are in communion, but that all are should do this, breaking of bread and drinking of the cup, in remembrance of Jesus Christ.

For Korean Americans the meaning of being baptized and participating in the Holy Eucharist needs to be better defined and explained because these sacraments have become rituals and tradition, rather than a reflection of faith. The spirituality of the second generation heavily lies in the experiential factor of being moved by the Holy Spirit or being directly spoken to by God, but a mature Christian understands that faith does not rest in a time or place when one meets God. Rather faith is the continuous meeting of God and the obedience to His calling to love and share

¹⁸ Laurence Hull Stookey, *Baptism: Christ’s Act in the Church.*, (Abingdon Press 1982), 80.

the Gospel responsibly and effectively. To be patient and know that every day is a new day and that every morning is the first day of the rest of our lives. Baptism and participation in the Eucharist are acts of faith to remember and be reminded of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross for our sins. As sinners there is a constant renewal and reviving of our lives through obedience and a steadfast love for our Creator.

“A Christian is one who has been sacramentally claimed and identified by Christ, incorporated into Christ’s church, and made a citizen of the new creation.”¹⁹ Though this is just one of five definitions of “Who is a Christian?”, It is through the sacraments that we are claimed, that we confess, accept, and live out our lives in remembrance of what has been done and is continually done for us today.

A Personal Perspective and Approach

Through personal experience with these acts of faith and forms of confession in the Korean United Methodist Church and Korean Methodist Church, I have come to realize that the base and foundational understanding of the importance, meaning, and significance of these acts are similar, but the approach and style differ. Though it may be a difference in cultural settings and understandings, I believe that the variance comes, not only, from geographical settings and traditions, but also in circumstances and experiences. The immigrant life style of the Koreans in the America has a great influence on the perspective and view of the sacraments.

In Korea, around 50% of the people attend church and when immigrating to America an advice or recommendation that is normally provided for a quick assimilation and adjustment period to the new life style is to find and attend a Korean speaking church. Because the church is the best place to establish connections and become introduced to the community. It is often in the Korean Church that new immigrants could network and gain important information regarding the

¹⁹ Laurence Hull Stookey, “*Baptism: Christ’s Act in the Church.*”, (Abingdon Press 1982), 90.

local social and economic status of the community.

I believe that this is the same with the Eucharist and Baptism. Many Koreans enter the church for social adjustment and acceptance, but what eventually happens is that each person is baptized and join in the celebration of the Eucharist. It is amazing to see how the grace of God moves and allows those who come with different intentions to be formed and molded into people who understand and experience the saving grace through baptism and the Eucharist. Even though, the recommendation may have originated with the intention to fit-in, the prevenient grace of God leads more people to join the body and experience the joy that comes in being participants, cleansed with water and spirit, at the Table of Christ.

I believe that it is the personal claiming and transformation of hearts, souls, and minds that bring more and more people to arms of God. Stookey says, “To say that the sacrament is a means of grace is to affirm that it can indeed effectively bring Christ into our experience.”²⁰ It is this very experience that first generation Korean immigrants find when pursuing a better life for their family here in America. And God’s amazing grace is what truly drives them to have a better, fuller, and more meaningful life. The participation of the sacraments and acknowledging of the saving Grace of God is what brings people to an experiential life that is reflective of the passion of God for His creation. It is through the prevenient grace of God that we have been saved and it is through His love and care that we are able to come before Him and rightfully claim to be His children and heirs of His kingdom. As Stookey explains, “God’s grace can be proclaimed through things such as the water of baptism and the bread and wine of the meal.”²¹ His grace speaks loudly during the Baptism and the Eucharist.

Once this grace is experienced it is natural to act upon it and live it out as living and holy

²⁰ Laurence Hull Stookey, *Eucharist: Christ Feast with the Church*, (Abingdon Press, 1993), 97.

²¹ Ibid, 15.

beings. Stookey claims, “The sacrament creates the condition for our renewal as we enter ever more fully into the covenant initiated for us and with us but the One who hosts the feast.”²² It is through this renewal in grace and love that reveals to us the meaning and significance of these acts known to us as sacraments, Baptism and Eucharist. First and second generation Korean Americans need to look at the sacraments as means of diving deeper in the spirituality and a vehicle towards a more obedient life towards God who always gives freely and endlessness to those who trust Him.

²² Laurence Hull Stookey, *Eucharist: Christ Feast with the Church*, (Abingdon Press, 1993), 97.

CHAPTER 6

Many Possibilities for Growth

Introduction

The importance of love, mission, and the sacraments were discussed in the preceding chapters in order to better develop an understanding of where and how the first and second generation Korean American Churches approach their views and responsibilities as Christians. This is chapter will focus on what the second generation Korean American Christians have done with their new perspective of church. Also different growth models will be introduced to offer more possibilities for growth in the first and second generation Korean American churches in the United States and other English speaking nations.

The Hybrid Church

The EM church is, as Sharon Kim defines, in “*A Faith of Our Own: Second Generation Spirituality in Korean American Churches*,” a *hybrid*¹ church open to people, of all ages, languages, races, ethnicity, gender, and background. As Kim writes,

“Rather than assimilating into mainstream churches or inheriting the churches of their immigrant parents, second-generation pastors are creating their own hybrid third spaces - new autonomous churches that are shaped by multiple frames of reference. Furthermore, within these churches, the second generation is reaching out to all Americans, irrespective of their ethnicity of race. The growth of second-generation hybrid churches marks an empirical and theoretical turn from past patterns among immigrants. Within these new churches, second-generation Korean Americans are fashioning a faith of their own-a hybrid second-generation spirituality that incorporates elements of Korean Protestantism and various expressions of American Evangelism.”²

¹ Sharon Kim, *A Faith of Our Own: Second-Generation Spirituality in Korean American Churches*, (Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 2010), 3.

² Ibid, 3-4.

Recently, the second generation Korean American population has tried to move to planting their own places of worship. The unique aspect of these churches that are being established by Korean American is that many first build with a very distinct group of people, English speaking Korean Americans, but later move to develop with the intention to become a multicultural/multiethnic church. These new church plants are driven by second generation Korean American pastors who are just now become “older” leaders who are not viewed as “Ae Deul” because of their social status and physical age.

With the growth in the second generation Korean Americans, the need to have a leader who understands and has had the same experience is in much more demand. Even with the largest population of Korean Americans in Southern California, the churches in this region struggle to find a second generation Korean American pastor. The major cities like Chicago, New York, Dallas, Miami, Baltimore, and Seattle have an even more difficult time finding passionate second generation Korean American, let alone even a English speaking Korean pastor. In the Southern California region, many Korean American churches are in search of second generation Korean American pastors to lead the children ministry, youth group, college student, young adults, married couples, and professionals, but because of the limited amount of second generation Korean American pastors, churches turn to first of 1.5 generation pastors to lead the ministries. The first and 1.5 pastors work with what they can and there are many who are successful in their ministries, but the underlying want to have someone who has experienced the same circumstances is always apparent. There is a limit to which the first and 1.5 pastors could minister to the second generation Korean Americans population.

The limited resources lead to a repeating of history driving the second generation to find an English speaking congregation outside of their parent’s church or to the departure of the faith

completely. With the continuous growth of the second generation population and now with the introduction of the third and fourth generation Korean Americans, EM members are looking to find leaders who will guide them in building new places of worship for their young families. The important thing to keep in mind is that the need for second generation Korean American pastors just has not been able to keep up with the growth, but more and more second generation Korean Americans are entering seminaries and studying to become these needed leaders nationwide and globally. Now that recently, more second generation and even third generation Korean Americans are studying and training to be pastors the ability to rise a new congregation has become more attainable. A popular theme that is preached amongst these second generation leaders is the idea of inclusivity of all and not a differentiating that encourages a divide. Meaning, the focus with the first and second generation KM and EM was on the difference of language whereas the second generation is now putting emphasis on the similarity of language and humanness. Eunjoo Mary Kim states, “An abundant life with others is possible only by standing in solidarity with all people. Solidarity is based on the conviction that “Each person has become a particular reflection of the totality of others.””³ It is in this solidarity that the second generation desires to establish churches that look at similarities that are reflected from all of God’s children.

For the second generation community looking to plant a new church, the ministry is not being set up on the foundation of being different, but developed on the understanding of unity and similarity. The English speaking second generation is not looking to build something that is needed to fill a necessity, but it seeks to become a church that shares the understanding that all

³ Eunjoo Mary Kim, *Preaching in an Age of Globalization*, (Westminster John Knox Press. Louisville, Kentucky. 2010), 50.

are members of one Universal Church and not members of differing ministries based one factor, language. Sharon Kim further writes,

The leaders of these new churches aim to adopt what they perceive to be essential beliefs, symbols, and practices from diverse sources and to anchor them in their newly formed churches. Their goal is to create a new and distinct expression of spirituality with discernable fingerprints of their ethnic, racial, and generational selves. They do not want to remain in their ethnic religious enclaves, however, shut off from the larger society. Rather, their goal is to evangelize and welcome all people into their church without having to compromise their unique identities. They aim to do this by developing and reflexively practicing religion that is flavored by sources, including their ethnic culture...they are demonstrating that in today's society, particularly in racially and ethnically diverse cities such as Los Angeles, there are hybrid third spaces to inhabit.⁴

The notion of a *hybrid space*, is one that is compelling because the second generation Korean American church is looking to become this hybrid space that longs to provide a location where difference is not enforced, but the commonality of being the children of God is reinforced through the common language of love. The second generation movement to construct a church apart from the first generation should not be seen as a rebelling or a breaking away from the church, but as a formation of an ethnic group that is now a prominent community in the larger society.

A New Ethnicity

The ethnic relation to the Korean heritage is something that cannot be ignored or moved away from because the identity of being a Korean American will always be real in the lives of second generation Korean Americans. Nor would it be wise to move away from this reality because there is a distinct power in being associated with a group that has evolved from being non-English speaking immigrants to business owners and major contributors to the economic status of the geographical locations they are present in. The second generation Korean American population does not have the intent or agenda to be free from their Koreanness, but the vision is

⁴ Sharon Kim, *A Faith of Our Own: Second-Generation Spirituality in Korean American Churches*, (Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 2010), 3-4.

in the institution of being a new ethnic community. Not one that is defined as “second generation Korean Americans”, but as Korean Americans or simply as Christian Americans. This distinction between the two is not being made to differentiate the first and second, but to simply underline the citizenship and ethnic affiliation. Though it is just a matter of who was here first and second the ranking nature of the terms has indirectly contributed to the mindset of who is the adult and the child.

While explaining ethnicity Sharon Kim writes,
 ...that second generation Korean Christians in Los Angeles are not rejecting the faith of their parents in exchange for mainstream evangelicalism. Rather, those in my study who have left immigrant churches to develop independent churches are striving to fashion a distinct hybrid second-generation spirituality by appropriating elements from Korean Protestantism and various expressions of American Evangelicalism.⁵

The second generation EM members are not looking to abandon their parents tradition of faith, but to uniquely foster the faith they possess into a hybrid expression of Korean American religion and spirituality. The progress of creating a new ethnicity in the Korean American Christian population is one that has proven to be difficult. In order to better understand the current difficulties of second generation Korean American led churches two leaders at different locations were interviewed in the Orange County area of Southern California.

Church of Faith - Pastor S

Pastor S, lead pastor at Church of Faith, has a congregation of approximately 40 members who are all second generation or third generation Korean Americans. Pastor S belonged to a larger immigrant Korean American church and was the lead EM pastor until the church experienced difficulties within the KM and the church split into two locations. The split left the EM members in a situation where they were forced to make a decision to follow their parents or stay at the current location. During this process the EM members gathered and voted to form

⁵ Sharon Kim, *A Faith of Our Own: Second-Generation Spirituality in Korean American Churches*, (Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 2010), 8.

their own church and completely leave the immigrant church to become a self-sustained ministry. Initially, the church planting process was fueled by a passion to do everything opposite of what their parents had done and to institute a new church culture that did not label or limit one group strictly based on language.

With the passion and energy from the young working professionals and college students, Pastor S led the members to find a new location, market, and launch a new church facility in the Orange County area. In the beginning, the members attended and were excited about being away from the suppressing and demeaning comments of the KM, but as time progressed the church started to experience difficulties. Some of the difficulties were; consistent attendance, servitude, and financial stewardship.

While many members came on a weekly basis the attendance started to vary tremendously based on time of the year, when students were back from school, and calendar seasons. Another difficulty with attendance was the inherent evidence that new members stopped coming and soon it was hard to see any new faces. During the interview Pastor S mentioned, “we don’t see as many new people coming as before, and I think the reason is because we are too comfortable now. And when someone new comes we welcome and greet, but don’t know how to incorporate the new people into the church.”⁶ This was a very important statement because the notion of being comfortable and not being able to incorporate new visitors into the church is something that many Korean American immigrant EM churches experience. Often, the existing cliques or groups are too strong and too close preventing any new members from fully entering into fellowship with the congregation. This may be a natural occurrence, but it is one that needs to be dealt with in order to really establish a space that truly welcomes and nurtures new potential members.

⁶ Interview performed February 2016, in Anaheim, California.

Pastor S continued to address this issue and tried to train the existing members to become a more welcoming church, but the problem did not only lay in the incorporating of new people, but the reaching out and bringing new members to the church. Again, people had grown comfortable in having their own church and not putting the effort or energy to make it grow. The difference between the first generation immigrant church and the new second generation Korean American church can be found in the amount of effort that is placed in bringing new members to the church. The first generation immigrant Korean American churches are always looking to add new people to the church for physical growth, but some of the new first generation Korean American churches are not invested in doing outreach, but just resort to be comfortable in reaching those that are already in the same congregation.

The consistent in reaching nature of Church of Faith uncovered another difficulty, which was the issue of servitude. Many members previously were “serving” in the parent’s church as teachers, praise team members and administrators and the issue was not in the whether people knew how to serve, but the problem lay in who was serving. It was clear after a while that those who served were always the same individuals and when new initiatives were taken it was consistently the same people who volunteered to help. Pastor S understood that those who want to serve would and those who did not would not, but his concern was not in the service, but in having these people burn out and feel burdened about of church because of the amount of work that was allocated to them.

Many second generation Korean Americans who are members of a community that has a EM or KM encounter the same problem of feeling burdened to attend church because of the amount of work they are responsible to do. In the beginning, many people start with a desire to serve and contribute to the growth of the church, but as time progresses they burn out and lose

the passion that is needed in serving and become complacent developing a view of church as another place of work. This leads to members wanting to take a break and needing time to think about serving again in the church. The idea of burning out is something that I have personally experienced as a second generation Korean American can attest to as being something that almost discouraged me from volunteering my time in the church. Even at Glory Church, recently two members who were a part of the music ministry resigned and left the church because of the amount of work they had been given. The members did not leave the church with negative feelings towards the church, but the amount work they were handling did contribute to their decision to find a different ministry that was closer to their home.

But the larger problem that arises from the issue of servitude is the nature of the second generations pattern in giving back to God what is His through offering. At Glory Church the EM's offering compared to the KM was very small and the reason behind this was not only in the fact that they are smaller in size, but in the amount that was given. With at least 20 working professionals the offering should reflect a tithing pattern that would yield enough to support the lead pastor, but the amount received annually is not enough to pay for the staff needed for the English ministry.

The greatest difficulty is the amount of offering the members give to the church. The bible does not state the amount one should give, other than a tenth of everything, but rather encourages everyone give what they are able. As it states in Deuteronomy 16:17, "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you."⁷ The problem for Church of Faith and many second generation Korean American churches is that many EM members are used to giving what their parents had put in an envelope for them before service. The English speaking members of the Korean American church often do not practice tithing and

⁷ Deuteronomy 16:17, ESV.

give only when they are able. This is another difference between the first generation immigrant church and second generation Korean American churches. First generation immigrant Korean Christians did not just give their tithe, but also gave, thanksgiving, mission, special event, and everyday offering regardless if they had a lot or a little. They gave as much as they were able and many times sacrificed financially to give more back to God. This act of giving to God is something that the second generation Korean American EM Christians need to cultivate and expand amongst each other. The focus is not on the amount, but the consistency and awareness to give back to God what He has first provided. It is in this responsive nature of financial offering that a deeper trust and communication is developed between Him and His children. Currently, Church of Faith is facing financial difficulties and because of this the church is not able to fully support their pastor. Pastor S, to be able to provide for his family, has taken a few part-time jobs and his wife also works.

In order to develop a church the second generation Korean Americans need to become responsible with their attendance, participation, and financial giving. As explained throughout this research, it is essential that responsibility and ownership be taken by the second generation Korean American Christians. I do not write this from a perspective of criticism, but one of care for the better development of the Korean American Churches in the United States and internationally. Being a second generation Korean American I know firsthand of how my generation has so many strengths, but also so many areas that needs growth, rebuking and repentance.

Church of Grace - Pastor K

Pastor K, the lead pastor at Church of Grace, has within the past six months launched a new church with his current members. The members were mostly EM members at a prominent

immigrant Korean American in the Los Angeles area. The establishment of this church was not grounded on a church problem or split, but rather the EM had received the blessing of the KM to find a new location and plant a new fully English speaking church. Pastor K had served several years at the immigrant church, but with the blessing of the KM and the Senior Pastor, Pastor K planned and started the new ministry with mostly young working adults. This was possible because the church had previously experienced a split that placed the congregation in a very unstable condition and the church did not want to repeat history. The difference this time was that the KM was focused in blessing the EM and helping with a new plant to support the future of the English speaking second generation church instead of seeing the new establishment as a threat to their church's well-being. It has only been six months, but the ministry continuously sees newcomers and visitors at the church.

So far many of the members have been attending regularly with the exception of the college students who had gone back to school after the setting up of the church. Naturally during this process of growth, Pastor K has seen Church of Grace experience a few difficulties. Unlike Pastor S and Church of Faith, Pastor K's difficulties were not in attendance, or servanthood, but identity and affiliation. Pastor K shared, "Everything is going well, God has been good to our church, but if there is an obstacle it would be the members lack of pride. Pride in being members of Church of Grace. It's like we don't really know who we really are. We have a mission statement and vision, but we are not living it out."⁸ One of the difficulties Church of Grace is experiencing is a shortage of identity and assurance of what it means to be a member at Church of Grace. Meaning, the members just come to "a church" and not "their own church." Church of Grace for the members is still not "my church" it is still just a church that they are a part of. This is not something that is unique to this church, but something that many second generation

⁸ Interview with Pastor K in Los Angeles County, August 2015.

Korean Americans experience in their churches. As mentioned earlier, EM members go to their “parents church” and struggle to identify their spiritual community as their “own church.” Also Korean American Christians are stuck in between two different cultures and have a hard time making a connection between their Korean and American identities. The issue being faced at Church of Grace is something that needs to be overcome and will be overcome through the consistent reminder of their value in this church and their involvement in the growth of the congregation.

Like Church of Faith, Pastor K and Church of Grace is struggling financially because of the lack of giving in the member’s offering. Similar to Pastor S, Pastor K’s wife works and contributes to the financial well-being of the family. This is not necessarily a negative outcome because in many first generation immigrant Korean American churches, the Pastor’s wife is looked at as being someone who should not work and should be fully invested only in the betterment of the church. This is a strong statement, but this is the common consensus between many Korean and Korean American pastor’s wives. The wife is seen as someone who always be willing to help, always be available, always in the kitchen preparing, always cleaning the church, always playing the piano, always praying for the pastor, always knowing the functions of the church, and always sacrificing their careers for the church. With these expectations placed on the pastor’s wives, many lose the joy in serving and become burnt out quickly causing an internal struggle within the household. I believe the second generation church is trying to move away from this perspective and not place these expectations on the pastor’s wives, but again, naturally, it may not be possible for the EM pastor’s wife to always be at church because most work due to their financial state.

I have witnessed firsthand Korean and Korean American pastor's wives become ill mainly due to the stressed and burden that is placed on their shoulders simply because they are the pastor's wife. In the case of Church of Grace, the pastor's wife seemed more free to have a job and not be burden with all the responsibilities of the church. Granted, there are stresses that comes from having a husband that is not able to provide fully financially, but in this case the pastor's wife seemed to enjoy serving and giving her time when she is able and capable.

Insights

Through the process of meeting two different pastors at two different locations some presumed ideals were confirmed, but also proved wrong. The financial state of the churches were very similar in nature, where the congregation was not able to fully provide the financial support needed for the pastor their families. Both confirmed the fact that the second generation Korean American offering giving is something that the second generation needs to be work hard and be trained to do more diligently. Some factor that has not been considered is that the second generation have had more opportunities given to them by their parents sacrifice, but unlike their parent's the second generation also have a lot of debt. Many have school loans, and credit card debt that their parents did not have to struggle with. The hardships for some first generation was a matter of making enough to survive, while the second generation's concern is about making enough to pay for all the debt that has been accumulated. But this does not disqualify them from being responsible financially and giving to the church as much as they are able. The a major difference came in the way both churches were established, but the struggle of membership and consistency was something both encountered through the forms of participation and affiliation.

More importantly, the notion that the second generation need to become more responsible and take ownership was confirmed. Though both have planted their own church, the struggle

grow was directly connected to the maturity level of their servitude and stewardship. The second generation has much growing to do and the learning curve is high, but it is something the second generation Korean American Christians can attain. With the opportunity granted to them through the sacrifice of their parents, the second are positioned to flourish and have a better future, but until the “Ae Deul” decide to become take up the cross and own their faith the struggle may always persist. As a second generation Korean American I am hopeful that my generation, and the many more to come, will succeed and become followers who lead by example learning from the mistakes and growing in appreciation of the love that was shared through the first generation parents.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion - Future Implications

This project initially started with the idea and motivation to prove that the second generation Korean American church needs to be responsible and take charge of their faith by not letting their parent's labeling of English speaking "Ae Deul" affect their growth. Through the participation of Glory Church and its members the history of the church, surveys, interviews, meetings, and a website were all discussed to gain a better background of the set up and how the English speaking members are contributing to the well-being of the church as a whole. The finds proved that the members did feel like they had a voice in the church, but could not ignore the truth that they were labeled as "Ae Deul" and the difficulties that came from that labeling. Some aspects of the research were successful, while others were not as productive, but overall the project proved to be valuable. The ideas of mission, identity, responsibility, love, and the sacraments were also introduced and explained to develop a better overall understanding of how the second generation Korean American English speaking Christians functioned in church and what their perspectives were on these topics. There are many future implications for the second generation Korean American churches. But one thing that needs to be shared in more detail is the origin of how this difference of perspective started. In this concluding chapter, I will write mainly from personal experience and I am confident that many second generation Korean American Christians will be able to identify and connect with the claims that I make.

First Generation's Need for a Church and The Second Generation's Option for a Church

The first generation attended immigrant Korean American churches out of a necessity and

need to develop community for the betterment of their families and the building of a foundation in a foreign country. As a form of appreciation and gratitude many first generation Korean Americans give back to the church in the form of time or financial offerings. When giving I have witnessed many first generation Korean Americans give so much without holding anything back because they believe in what the church is going. The church for the first generation became a place where a common language was spoke, where friends were made, where Korean food could be consumed, where cultural activities could be experienced, and where networking took place. It was literally the epicenter of where anything and everything Korean could be had. So for many first generation Korean Americans it was important to attend church and it was a necessity for survival and development in a new country.

But on the other hand, second generation Korean's are not necessarily in need of attending a church because there are many other venues and outlets where they could become involved and plugged in. Many second generation Korean Americans make the choice to attend church and to live a Christian life. To be Christian becomes a very integral part of their lives and it is a natural expression of who they are and where they grew up. But it is clear that the second generation does not look at church as something that is needed, rather it become an option. The choice to attend church becomes a decision that the second generation makes not out of need of survival or adjustment, but simply as a form of expression. It is important to note that this difference between the first and second generation Korean American Christian population is very important. It is key in finalizing all the theories and ideals that were shared previously. The fact that one needed the church for survival and the other sees the church as an option is something that has led to the difference in style and understanding.

The benefits received by the church is appreciated by the first generation and through this

thanksgiving they give back while the second have entered and grown into a church without really understanding the gains the family have received. Without a strong sense of gratitude the second does not feel tied down to one location, and often church hops going from church to church shopping for the best place, while the first generation regardless of hardships tend to stay with the church they have built their roots in. Another factor that contributes to this staying through the hard times and storms is the idea that “we have helped develop this church.” at most immigrant Korean American churches the leader or elders of the church tend to be individuals who have been there since the planting of the church where there were only 12 members and worship services were held in the pastor’s apartment. With the time and effort put into the building of the church many first generation regardless of the situation tend to stay with the church because it is the church they have helped grow. For the second generation the church they grew up in is not a place they have invested much resources to, so leaving is not that difficult. But the difference between the first and second generation is that the first give financially to the church they have planted and often sacrifice a lot to keep it going, while the second plant a church and still struggle to give to the church. Not all second generation struggle with giving financially, but overall many have a hard time. It would be a lie to write here that all second generation have given and sacrificed as much as their parents have, but it would also be false to claim that none does. The difference comes with the amount of people who give in the first generation versus the second.

Remarks

In order for the second generation Korean American church to grow and develop as influential institutions the members need to sacrifice more and learn from the parents. The first generation does belittle the second with the term “Ae Deul,” but in order for a child to be

considered an adult they need to live a life that reflects maturity. A life that teaches and models for the third and fourth generation what it means to be responsible followers of God. Learning to give is something that is attained through continual practice and action. Growth can be reached when the body is well nourished, and adulthood is gained when true thanksgiving is given to God for His sacrifice on the cross. The second generation is ready, I believe, to learn, grow, and mature. So as the third and fourth generation Korean Americans are both entering society the distinction between KM and EM may disappear and at that point the discussion may not be how to establish a new perspective, but “how can we, the Korean descendants, remember those who have come before us and live in appreciation of being Korean American Christians?”

Final Personal Story

This project was initially prepared to identify a story that second generation Korean Americans had in common, but as the study continued and finding were encountered I learned that my personal calling guided the construct of this paper. I have a vision that God has given to me and this vision is to build, establish, support, consult, empower, serve, and help 100 different churches all over the world. For me, I define the church as being a gathering of two or more people with the same desire to worship and trust God. So the churches I build, establish, support, consult, empower, serve, and help are not only buildings, but also gatherings, small groups, underground meetings, retreats, conferences, seminars, etc... Whenever I shared my vision people have asked me, “how will you do it?” and my answer has always been the same, “God will show me.” Currently, I have built, established, supported, consulted, empowered, served, and helped 15 churches in my young pastoral career. This journey has taken to South Korea, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Kazakhstan, Chicago, New York, Utah, Los Angeles, and New Jersey. As a pastor I find myself gravitation towards churches that are in need and since my

calling I have done whatever I could to help whenever possible.

As a Christian, I have always found more courage and strength in understanding that faith is not only going to church, praying, giving offering, and participating in fellowship, but faith is also having confidence in God's promise in my life. For me when things become tougher, I remind myself of the promise and calling God has given to me and move forward. I believe that as child of God, I have to trust and believe in the promise and know in my heart, soul, and mind that God will pull through. That I am a tool created to better craft the work of God in this world.

I believe that as a second generation Korean American pastor I have particular traits and experiences that resonate with other second generation Korean American Christians. Of course, not all second generation Korean Americans have the same experience, but the beginnings and struggles are very similar. I have a heart and desire to continue with the work God has given to me and with only 85 more churches to build, establish, support, consult, empower, serve, and help I know that all 100 will be raised by God. The reason why I want to share this is because I know as a Christian there are difficulties and hardships that may prevent us from knowing our calling or even seeking to have a calling from God. But our God is a faithful God who makes a promise and keeps it.

Through this paper I learned more about myself and who I am. I was also reminded consistently through this paper my calling and reason why I continue with what God has entrusted me to do. The story of the second generation Korean American is the promise God has given to us. The promise that when we seek we will find and when we knock the door will be opened. As a second generation Korean American pastor I will always look to better build, establish, support, consult, empower, serve, and help God's church. Once God helps me reach 100 I will not stop, but continue and I believe God is raising up a new generation that will

become better crafted tools that further build, establish, support, consult, empower, serve, and help the gathering of individuals as the body and church of Christ.

Survey 1.1

EM/Young Adult Survey

Story Telling

Background

5. From a scale of 1-10, how important are stories? _____
6. How long have you attended this church? _____
7. What is your role in the church? _____
4. Do other family members attend this church? (Y/N) if Yes, who? _____

Open-Ended

11. What is a story?
12. What is your favorite story?
13. What is the story of the Church?
14. What is your story? (if someone asked you to say something about who you are)
15. What is the 1.5 or 2nd generation Korean American story in the church?
16. Please write any additional comments.

Survey 1.2

EM/Young Adult Survey

Church

Background Questions:

11. When did you first start coming to this church?
12. Who introduced you to this church?
13. How often do you come to church? (specifically this particular church)

Open-ended:

14. What is Church?
15. What do you enjoy most about church?
16. What do you enjoy least about church?
17. How involved are you in church?
18. Is this your church?
19. Do you feel the EM has a strong presence in the church?
20. If you could change anything about the church, what would it be?

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