



THE *Brown Family* MISSIONARIES TO SOUTH KOREA

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." II Corinthians 4:5

Dear Pastor and Church Family,

June 2020

Greetings from Busan, Korea! We hope you all are experiencing the peace that only our Lord can give. With the exception of a recent increase in new cases in the capital region, the Coronavirus situation here in Korea has been stable for several weeks. While life now is certainly not the same as it was three months ago, we are so grateful that the Korean government's response to this pandemic has not included "stay at home" orders or totally shutting down the economy. (In fact, the public buses and subway trains of our densely-populated city are still often packed with mask-wearing riders, standing shoulder to shoulder.) Over the past two weeks, most schools across the nation started in-person classes with a staggered schedule and a highly modified classroom configuration. An elaborate testing system found a few students to be infected with the Coronavirus upon their arrival at school. This, coupled with several recent community outbreaks of the virus, has raised the level of concern among the population. South Korea's initial success in dealing with the virus (a national total of less than 300 COVID-related deaths) has caused the bar of people's expectations to be set very high. Though many of the "expert predictions" from around the world about this pandemic have proven to be completely

incorrect, the Coronavirus (or at least the fear of it) will likely be here for quite some time. We now seem to be in a state of limbo as Koreans try to figure out what the "new normal" is going to be. The national government has implemented a policy of "distance in life," which, while not nearly as draconian as some policies in the United States, will likely remain in place indefinitely. The government also just announced a major plan to permanently reduce face-to-face contact in daily life by developing a digital society where everyone is "connected digitally" but "safely distanced." While technological progress certainly brings more convenience, those who believe the Scriptures will notice the drawbacks to such a plan. Reduced face-to-face contact ultimately means less opportunities to personally share the Gospel and it also makes it easier for a government to control its citizens. People will be conditioned to lead more socially isolated lives. We certainly need the Lord's wisdom in order to properly adapt to the challenges of the coming days. Please pray that we will glorify the Lord in all that we do.

We so appreciate your prayers for our family. By the grace of God, we are well and have been busy. The church we are serving at while we prepare to start our own church has been meeting for about a month now. We all wear masks and follow certain guidelines including maintaining an arm's length of distance from each other but there is no sense of panic and we are able to fellowship freely. Due to the sudden death of a church member's father last week, I traveled with the national pastor that we serve under to a distant province to attend the funeral. Sarah continues to faithfully attend weekly Korean classes with her tutor. I am currently studying online through a live video class which is the fifth and final level of a Korean language program operated by the immigration authorities. Last Wednesday night, I was able to deliver a sermon (in Korean) on Isaiah 66:1-2. With the Coronavirus situation greatly limiting our public outreach ministry, I had been praying for new opportunities to personally connect with people. Recently, while riding on an intercity train, the conductor surprisingly struck up a conversation with me. He was very curious about me being a missionary. He kept returning to my seat to talk between stops. It was quite unusual to have such a connection with a train conductor in that busy environment. After I introduced our Gospel tract to him, he gladly received it. Though this train conductor lives in a different city, he does have my contact information and I hope perhaps to see him again sometime. Last Friday afternoon, I had a friendly chat with a young convenience store clerk. Though other customers prevented us from talking for very long, he did receive our tract and my contact information. We continue to ask the Lord to open special doors for the communication of the Gospel during this time when regular public ministry opportunities are limited.

The national holiday of "Buddha's Birthday" is a very important day to the roughly one million professing Buddhists in our city of Busan. Postponed one month because of the Coronavirus, the festivities were scaled down and held last Saturday at temples across the city. One of the largest Buddhist temples in Korea is located about three miles from our house. In order to better understand these people whom we have been called to reach, I went to this temple to observe and was moved with compassion when I saw the multitude of lost souls blinded by false religion. After noticing several people outside the temple gate passing out pamphlets and advertisements, I thought, "What is preventing us from distributing Gospel tracts as well?" After praying together, Sarah and I decided that we had to do something. So, for the first time in three months, we went back on the streets as a family to distribute Gospel tracts. While wearing our government approved masks, we walked up and down a street near the temple gate, cautiously approaching people and giving politely in Korean: "Hello, please read this, thank you!" Not only was it surprising that no one got angry at us, but also that very few people refused to receive the tract they were offered. After not being able to distribute Gospel tracts for so long, it was truly a blessed time of ministry for our family. Even some of those coming straight from the temple received a clear presentation of the Gospel in written form. Since new Coronavirus outbreaks were reported over the last couple of days (including two outbreaks involving religious groups), it is not clear when we will be able to return to our regular public ministry routine. However, we praise the Lord for allowing us to have this special opportunity last week.

As the Coronavirus, along with its social and economic effects, continues to devastate the United States, we are praying for each of our supporting churches, and especially for those churches that are dealing with government imposed restrictions. Our hearts go out to those of you who are experiencing great financial difficulty at this time. Recent events remind us all that our hope must ultimately be in Christ, the "author and finisher of our faith."

Thank you so very much for your faithful prayer and sacrificial financial support. We are honored to be partnered with you for the sake of the Gospel going forth to the Korean people. May the Lord protect and bless you!

Your Missionary,

Andrew Brown



Andrew, Sarah,
& JoAnn Brown
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