



Dear Pastor and Church Family,

January 2022

새해 복 많이 받으세요! Happy New Year! Scripture says in Hebrews 13:5-6, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." What a wonderful blessing to have confidence that the same omnipotent God who guided us, protected us, and used us for His glory last year will continue to do so throughout 2022. Perhaps this year will be the year that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ returns to catch away His own!

Using the recent spread of the "omicron variant" as justification, the government here has continued with its trend towards totalitarian control by suddenly expanding its "quarantine pass" system last month. Now, one must show digital proof of vaccination in order to use many facilities, even including small neighborhood restaurants. This "quarantine pass" must be renewed every six months and one must take booster shots as the government requires in order to maintain a valid pass. In addition to enacting universal mask mandates, engaging in exhaustive contact tracing, and operating a highly restrictive quarantine system, the national government has now essentially made taking COVID shots a mandatory requirement for basic participation in society. Some have even called for expanding the "quarantine pass" system to all religious facilities as well. While we readily acknowledge that there are a range of views on the ethics and efficacy of such policies, it is interesting to note that, in spite of this recent mandate and the fact that in some areas more than 90% of the population are "fully vaccinated," the daily number of reported COVID cases nationwide is much higher now than it has been at any time prior. Though the government repeatedly promised that it was leading the country back to "normal life," the number of "fully vaccinated" people being hospitalized for COVID-related conditions has risen to a level not seen before. However, unlike some other countries, protest against these extreme and possibly permanent measures is almost non-existent here in South Korea as most people are conditioned to unquestionably accept what the appointed government experts deem to be necessary. In fact, any degree of resistance to (or even skepticism about) the official narrative is seen as suspect and dangerous by many people here. In light of this reality, we feel that we have no choice but to comply with this "new normal" in order to be the effective witnesses for Christ that our Lord desires us to be. Our trust is in our Heavenly Father as we seek to do His will! We so appreciate your prayers for our health and safety while we communicate the truth in these last days.

The winter solstice has long been an important event to many Korean people and it is especially significant to the Buddhists in our city. Before distributing some Gospel tracts nearby, I observed many faithful Buddhists offering up prayers and performing rituals at a large temple on the morning after the winter solstice last month. The sincerity and devotion of these lost souls cannot be denied. However, it is imperative that they and all others that have yet to experience the miracle of salvation be lovingly confronted with the Gospel of Christ so that they may by faith in Christ's finished work turn from idols to the True and Living God. The somewhat cold response that we have so often encountered here has at times discouraged us. Yet we are reminded that our "labor is not in vain in the Lord." (I Corinthians 15:58) After distributing Gospel tracts on a street corner last month, the thought came to my mind, "Why do we even try to share the truth when so many seem completely uninterested?" However, as I went on my way I noticed a lady sitting on a park bench intently reading one of our Gospel tracts! Praying that the Lord would bless His Word, we continue to distribute Gospel tracts and work to build relationships for the purpose of planting the seed. We seek more opportunities to communicate the Gospel, desiring to bear fruit that remains for the glory of God. In all of this, we know that the Lord of the Harvest is at work and we eagerly anticipate Him giving the increase in His time.

Thank you for praying with us concerning the space that the Lord would have us to lease for the church we are planting here in the central district of Busan. We have continued to search but have not yet felt peace about signing a contract on any of the places we have been shown so far. Some that we have seen would have taken an inordinate amount of money to remodel, while others had a monthly rent which was higher than we could justify committing to. However, since more properties seem to become available weekly, I am confident that we are close to finding the right place. We truly desire to do the Lord's perfect will as we make this important decision.

Thank you so much for your faithful prayer and sacrificial financial support, especially during this special season of the year! It is such a great privilege for us to be partnered with you as we labor to communicate the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Korean people. May the Lord bless you as you serve Him in 2022!

Your Missionary,

Andrew Brown



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