

Trends and Changes in World Christianity

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When the Soviet Union performed the first lunar landing in 1959, crashing on the surface of the moon at high, some made bold claims that there is no God and religion would disappear by the end of the 20th century. However, today religions of all kinds are still alive and well. The *semen religionis* not only remains intact in man but does so with even greater fervor. Man is incurably religious and needs to have some answers for the big questions of life. He will not rest until he finds them because we are created in the image of God (Gen 2:27).

The population of the world almost doubled between 1970 and 2010. The United Nation lists the population in 2010 as 69 billion with a 1.2% annual growth rate.¹ The combined religious population adds up to 86.42% of the world's inhabitants, which shows that man is a spiritual being. Religion gives no sign of retiring. Christianity counts by far the largest percentage of adherents (33.2%, 22.9 billion), followed by Islam (22.4%, 15.5 billion), Hindu (13.7%, 9.5 billion), non-religious secularist (11.3%, 7.78 billion), Buddhist (6.8%, 4.68 billion) and others (12.6%).²

Christianity clearly remains as the primary global religion,³ while Muslims are concentrated mainly in the Middle East and North Africa, with Buddhists in South and East Asia. However, Muslims are increasing faster than Christians, not so much from conversion as from their higher birth rate (1.9%, Christians 1.2%).⁴ The now defunct dictator Col. Gaddafi of Libya once proclaimed with a smile on his face, 'Islam will take over the world without a shot.' He was referring to the rapid Muslim population growth in Europe.

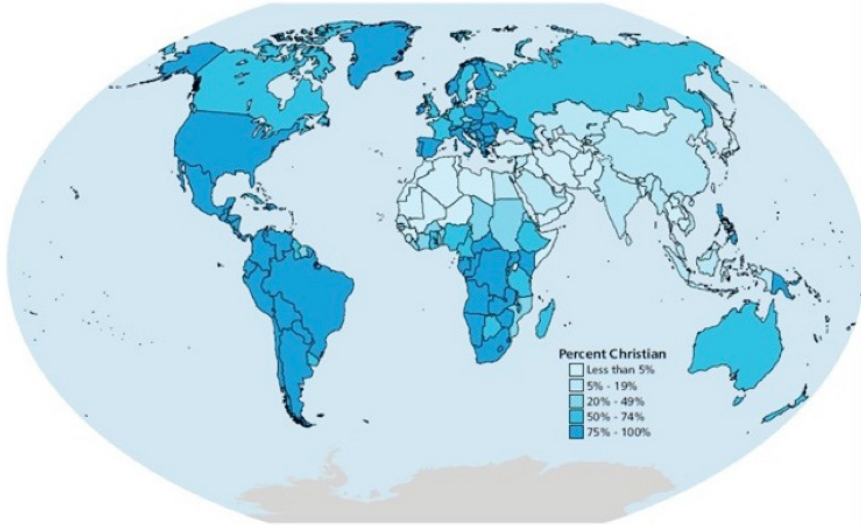
1. UN Population Division: The 2012 Revision, Department of Economical and Social Affairs, World Population Prospects, 2012, CD-ROM Edition.

2. Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross, eds., *Atlas of Global Christianity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 7.

3. Johnson and Ross, *Atlas of Global Christianity*, "Religions by global adherents," 7.

4. Johnson and Ross, *Atlas of Global Christianity*, "Religious growth rate," 7.

Christianity is no longer a Western ‘white-man’s religion’. Christians are now everywhere. The center of Christianity has shifted to the non-Western world. The countless sacrifices of Western missionaries and the efforts of indigenous Christians for the last 200 years were blessed by God and are bearing fruit even today.



OW, xxxi⁵

Evangelicals/Pentecostals/Charismatics on the Rise

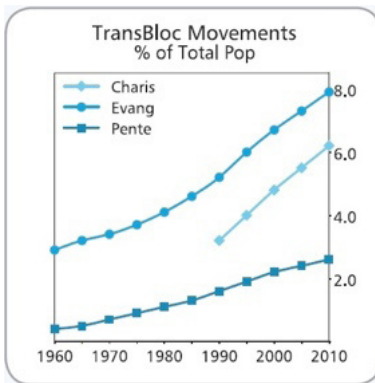
Christianity has slightly declined as a percentage of the world’s population since 1900; only Protestant, Independent and Marginal Protestant Megablocks have defied this trend. Roman Catholics constitute 15.77% of the world population while the rest of Christian groups combined represent 17%. Catholics (0.6%) and Orthodox (0.2%) are growing very slowly, lagging behind the world population growth rate (1.2%). Protestants (1.8%) and Anglicans (1.6%) are growing slightly faster than the global population. This growth comes mostly from the non-Western world.

The largest growth is observed among independent churches, mainly among evangelicals (2.6%), charismatics (3.4%) and Pentecostals (2.6%). Evangelicals emerged as a dynamic force following the revivals of the 18th and 19th centuries. Though North America is still leading the evangelical movement, evangelicals have been steadily growing in

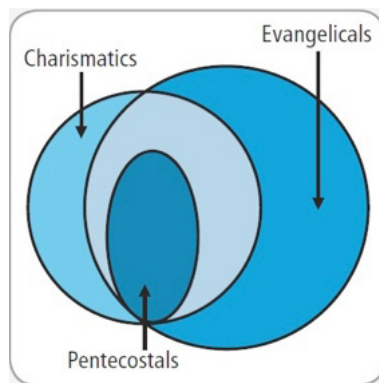
5. Jason Mandryk, ed., *Operation World* (7th Edition, Updated and Revised. WEC, Biblica, 2010), xxxi.

the regions of the Pacific, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Pentecostals sprang out of early 20th century revivals. Their growth was spectacular, from virtually no Pentecostals in 1900 to over 426 million in 2010.

Charismatics and Pentecostals are basically evangelical in faith and doctrine. In Asia, Africa and Latin America, they are not separately categorized as usually done in the West⁶. They have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and something to firmly believe in. They believe in the uniqueness of Christ, the gospel of salvation freely offered, the authority of the Scripture, the power of the Holy Spirit and daily personal communion with the Lord. Their foundation is not theological or academic debate or research in theology, Christology, soteriology, bibliology, pneumatology or *Missio Dei*. Their faith is a living and dynamic one — not mere theological knowledge or a set of doctrines — and focused enough to generate energy for life and ministry.



(OW, 4)⁷



(OW, xxxi)⁸

The churches are growing in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, in contrast to the stagnation or decline in the West and the northern hemisphere. More specifically they are growing in China, India, Sudan, Ethi-

6. In Asia the Pentecostals/Charismatics and the evangelicals all belong to the Asia Evangelical Alliance with no special distinction among themselves, though they have their own denominations. It is the same with the African Evangelical Alliance and the Latin American Alliance. However, the Western writers and speakers make the distinction, which is often objected by the evangelical leaders. Geoff Turnicliff, WEA GS, is one of those who disagree with such division. The Pentecostals/Charismatics share the common evangelical confessions of faith except the issues with tongues and healings. Many of the Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders serve as the officers of the evangelical alliances.

7. Mandryk, *Operation World*, 4.

8. Mandryk, *Operation World*, xxxi.

opia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Nepal, Mongolia and even Iran. It is noteworthy that the growth of the church is taking place in the countries that are or have had persecution.

During the annual board meetings of the Asia Evangelical Alliance we have a session to share the state of national alliances. We listen to the exciting news of the steady growth of churches in the most of the Asian countries. Evangelical churches are making good progress even under difficult challenges. During the decade of 1990-2000 evangelical mission agencies poured their energy into the outreach of the unreached people groups. Even my church adopted ten of these unreached groups and sent our missionaries to plant churches.

Everywhere in the world, including in North America, evangelical churches have been growing at a rate faster than any other world religion or global religious movement.⁹ During the same period — the period of Thanatology (God-Is-Dead theology), *The Secular City*, *Honest to God*, situation ethics, hippy culture and mass demonstrations on the streets against the Vietnam War— the major traditional churches were declining.

Not only the evangelical churches but also the post-World War II evangelical missions were an astonishing success story. However, most of the subsequent growth came from a new generation of indigenous evangelical movements around the world. Evangelicals numbered 89 million (2.9%) in 1960 and they have reached 546 million in 2010 (7.9%).¹⁰

Why Are Conservative Churches Growing?

Dean M. Kelley, a liberal Protestant, an executive with the National Council of Churches USA made a study in response to the decline of its mainline member churches, producing a book called *Why Conservative Churches are Growing*.¹¹ He showed that one of the main reasons of the decline was widespread theological liberalism in the churches at the expense of strong evangelical faith. Many mainline denominations since then recommended small group Bible studies and supported the ministry financially.

9. Mandryk, *Operation World*, 6. Mark Chaves made an attempt in his book to show that the growth of evangelical churches is not a fact, but he only shifted the reasons for the growth to other reasons rather than the negations of the evangelical growth. Mark Chaves, *American Religion, Contemporary Trends* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011). He still admitted that liberal Protestant churches are declining, 81.

10. Mandryk, *Operation World*, 6.

11. Dean M. Kelley, *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing: A Study of Sociology of Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972).

Global Prayer Movements and Networks

Prayer is the engine of any ministry. Prayer movements and networks multiply and grow as God's people join together to pray on an unprecedented scale and with greater focus and breadth. Movements on local, national and international levels are praying for communities, nations and peoples as well as on thematic issues. Sustained, informed and impassioned intercession is occurring as never before. The International Prayer Connect (IPC) links hundreds of prayer networks and ministries to focus prayer on common global concerns. Prayer movements such as The Global Day of Prayer, initiated in Cape Town, call for repentance. Tens of thousands if not hundreds of millions of Christians have participated in these meetings over the years.

The Prayer Expo in Korea at the Yeouido Plaza in 1980 attracted a million Christians from all over the world. Grassroots prayer networks such as 24/7 Prayer and the International House of Prayer draw thousands of young people into worldwide, unbroken streams of prayer and worship to God. There are many other prayer events and networks, including the International Day of Prayer for the persecuted church, 30-Day Prayer Network for Muslims, Global Prayer Digest, Praying Through the Arabian Peninsula, Call to Prayer Victims of Sex-Trade Trafficking, and the Viva Network World Weekend of Prayer for children at risk. Participants come together from different streams of churches for prayer. This is the reason spiritual fruits are experienced. When we pray, the Holy Spirit intervenes (John 14:12-18).

Holistic Mission

Aid, development and charity work across the globe escalated through the 1980s and 1990s, growing stronger into the 21st century. The civil sector (NGOs) is now the eighth-largest economy in the world, worth over \$1 trillion per year globally. More than ever the needs of the most vulnerable and needy are being addressed. A more holistic understanding of evangelical mission appeared within the church. Ministry that brings liberty to the oppressed and sets captives free reflects the heart of God, the values of the Scriptures and the role of the Church. The Lausanne Covenant (1974) and the recent Cape Town Commitment (2010) support evangelism with social responsibility.

Mission agencies such as World Vision, World Relief, Tearfund, Food for the Hungry, Compassion, MedAir and hundred of others do relief and development work with secular NGOs such as the United Nations, Médecins Sans Frontières, Oxfam, CARE International. Religious and non-religious agencies work together. It is only right that churches do also with one another.

The Growth of Non-Western Mission Endeavors

The globalization of the Great Commission movement has profoundly changed the face of mission. Since the late 1970s there has been a surge of interest and involvement in missions from the non-Western Majority World. Mission sending has recently gained or maintained momentum in countries such as Ethiopia, Nigerian, Brazil, Philippines, South Korea and even Han Chinese house churches. The USA still leads as the largest sending nation of foreign missionaries, but South Korea has replaced the UK as the second largest. The South Korean church sent out 550 missionaries in 1990; in the 20 years since the number has increased to 25,000 serving in 176 countries. That is more than 4,000% increase.

And still more are called to go to fulfill the Great Commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Han Chinese aims to retrace the historic Silk Road trade routes between Asia and the Mediterranean, with 100,000 church planting evangelists sharing Jesus along the way. This is called the 'Back to Jerusalem Movement'. Nigeria's Vision 2015 has a vision to send 50,000 workers in 15 years with the gospel across the north of Africa, also toward Jerusalem. Latin American movements send workers to North Africa, the Middle East and Europe. Pacific Islanders are building the Deep Sea Canoe Vision to send workers to other indigenous peoples. East and West, North and South are working together to finish the harvest.

Global Collaboration for the Great Commission Task

The globally heightened awareness of the size, complexity and evangelistic challenges of the Muslim world, largely through the events of 9/11, birthed in many believers a burden for Muslims. In the past 20 years and in spite of great challenges at present, more Muslims than ever before are coming to Christ, more workers serve in Muslim heartlands, more agencies focus on these regions and more sustained intercession for these peoples precious to God takes place.

We see unprecedented growth also in the midst of political crises in the Buddhist world, Mongolia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Thailand and even a small movement budding in Tibet. Likewise, upheaval in the Hindu world has drawn greater attention to this large swath of human population. Incredible growth in Nepal is occurring in the middle of civil war and continued turmoil. Unrest, religious violence, severe persecution and governmental neglect in certain parts of India create opportunities for the gospel harvest. Indian church growth stories are exciting. Christ is the greatest hope particularly for the Dalits/Untouchables.

Collaboration of the church on a global level now shapes prospects for finishing the Great Commission task. Several commemorative events were held in 2010 reflecting the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference. Most notable for evangelicals was the Third Lausanne Congress held in South Africa with the full cooperation of the World Evangelical Alliance, the AD2000 and Beyond Movement, GCOWE '95, Ethne Movement, Transform World Movement, Call2All, Finishing Task, the Billion Soul Coalition and many others.

Through the combined effort of the Bible societies and translation agencies, 95% of the world's population now has access to Scripture in a language they can understand. Vision 2025 aims to see a Bible translation program started in every language that needs one by the year 2025. The *Jesus* film has had several billion individual viewings worldwide since 1979 through the work of more than 1,500 Christian agencies. This has yielded over 200 million responses. The film is available in over 1,000 languages. Christian satellite TV and the internet, especially in the Middle East and West Asia, are reaching large numbers of Muslims.

Organizational unity has not been as important as spiritual unity for the Great Commission. Collaboration, networks and combined efforts for the same purpose produce many positive results for the Kingdom of God. He uses for His kingdom the diverse spiritual gifts of His people. Serious followers of Christ will dedicate themselves to the same goal as set before us by our Lord. They will collaborate with one another.

Increase of Muslim Background Believers

Muslim growth has been rapid, from 12.3% of world population in 1900 to 22.9% in 2010. However, 9/11 events and the recent years of radical Islamism terrorism horrify not only the world as a whole but also the moderate Muslim world. This often causes disillusionment and disgust among Muslims and leads them to be open to the person of Jesus Christ. So in recent years the number of 'Muslim background believers' (MBB) is rapidly increasing. Many anticipate a coming of harvest of millions into the Kingdom of God from among the Muslim world.

Satellite TV, radio and internet are powerful tools reaching Muslims and they are responding in unprecedented numbers. In 2010 alone 500,000 Muslims sent in responses by phone, email, and letter to TV programs (such as Al hayat TV¹²) designed for Muslims. Another

12. Al hayat (Life) TV, according to *Wikipedia*, is an Arabic Christian television channel started airing in Egypt in 2003, today in the Middle East, America, Canada, Australia and some of Europe, aims to support, equip and train the Muslim Background Believers. Imed Dabour and Rashid, Bold Questions, Al hayat TV, provided the information.

250,000 responded to internet programs. The number of conversions averages 1,500 per week. Resource materials were downloaded two million times during the past year. For the last seven years there were 1.5 million instances of feedback. Fifty house churches were started through the ministry of one satellite TV station.

MBBs often face severe pressure and even death in countries where the trickle of salvation is now a rushing stream. Muslims are very dear to God. Jesus Christ is Good News to them for eternal peace, which is unavailable in Islam.

What Should the Church Do?

Christianity has indeed become the most global of religions. There is no country without a Christian witness or fellowship of indigenous believers. In a very few cases, however, they must remain secretive. There are 14 countries with a resident Christian population of less than 1%, and a further 23 with less than 5%. There are some urgent tasks the church must perform if Christianity is to continuously grow.

First of all, among all the religious people of the world, Christians have suffered the most and are still suffering the most. This is happening due to severe or very severe governmental restrictions and persecution in 50 countries, 39 of them predominantly Muslim, six secular/Communist/Marxist, four Buddhist and one Hindu.¹³ During the 20th and 21st centuries more Christians were martyred than during the first 19 centuries put together. During this time people of other religions enjoyed substantial religious freedom in the traditionally Christian and democratic countries. We need to keep the persecuted Christians in our daily prayers. They are our family. When we Christians are hard pressed for our faith, we get stronger and are purified.

Secondly, nominalism is another major issue, not just in the West but everywhere. In many Christianized-countries in the West, most of the population needs to be re-evangelized. Living in the afterglow of a Christian heritage does not confer eternal salvation. Many traditionally Christian populations know little about personal faith in Christ, true repentance from sin, working out their salvation in a relationship with the living God and living a life of dynamic faith. Many others rely on 'good works' to earn salvation rather than trusting in and living out of God's free gift of grace or, living in post-Christian cultures, are indifferent to faith.

The majority of those who identify themselves as Christian do not actively practice their faith. While answering a question following his

13. Mandryk, *Operation World*, 2.

presentation in Istanbul, Turkey, on ‘Trends and Changes in the Orthodox Churches, from the Russian Orthodox Church’s Perspective’, Hegumen Ryabykh said that the Russian Orthodox Church is now less concerned with the issue of proselytism than it was in the 1990s.¹⁴ The church is concentrating more on the evangelization of the 80% nominal Orthodox Christians. The same problem exists in local churches everywhere.

This task is urgent for all churches. Rolf Hille states that nominal Christians are a common problem for all traditions and that evangelization within the traditional churches is an issue for evangelicals.¹⁵ Nominal Christians need to be re-evangelized. This is a big challenge. We can work together for the same purpose. If nominal Christians are won to Christ, we should rejoice — just as there is rejoicing in heaven — instead of angrily accusing evangelicals of proselytism as is often observed in some traditions. Churches must think of the universal family of God more than of their own parochial territories.

Thirdly, the Lord Jesus Christ gave His Church clear instructions after His resurrection and before He was taken up to heaven. His command is our main concern. We serve the Lord Jesus Christ who gave the church evangelistic, discipling, missional and global challenges.

- 1) The evangelistic challenge: ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation’ Mark 16:15); ‘repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem’ (Luke 24:47).
- 2) The discipling challenge: ‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you’ (Matthew 28:19-20).
- 3) The missional challenge: ‘As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world’ (John 17:18); ‘As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you’ (John 20:21).
- 4) The global challenge: ‘You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth’ (Acts 1:8).

14. Hegumen Ryabykh, “Trends and Changes in the Orthodox Churches, from the Russian Orthodox Church’s Perspective.” Consultation on Major Trends and Changes in World Christianity, Istanbul, Turkey, January 25-26, 2011, 1.

15. Hubert van Beek, “Report of the Consultation on Major Trends and Changes in World Christianity,” Istanbul, Turkey, Jan 25-26, 2011, 3.

The task before us is vast in scope. John P. Jones wrote in 1912, ‘This enterprise is not only the greatest that the world has ever known; it is also the most difficult of achievement.’¹⁶ Yet, we believe that the Great Commission is not merely an ideal to aspire toward but an achievable command given by the Lord.¹⁷ Jesus declared, ‘The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come’ (Mt 24:14). In each of the passages referenced above, the commissioning of the Church was accompanied by assurances of God’s power and authority and the very real presence of the Holy Spirit. The scale of the task before us is matched only by the greatness of the God who promises to accompany and empower us. To accomplish such a task, we need to be united in recognition of the oneness in faith, ministry and purpose, which already exists among us, serious followers of Jesus Christ the Lord, who binds us all in Him regardless of our traditions.

Personal Impact of the First Global Gathering of the GCF

In 2007 I had the privilege to attend the GCF gathering at Limuru, Kenya. I was assigned to a group of 30 people sharing their faith journeys. This profoundly affected me in my outlook of other Christians. I had been so preoccupied with the spiritual concerns of my own communities that I had not had opportunities to join with other Christians of diverse traditions and listen to so many faith journeys at one sitting.

I still vividly remember one Catholic priest in my group, who was president and theology professor at a Catholic University. He shared his spiritual struggles and conflicts as a theologian. He had no peace and no joy in his life-long theological studies but rather doubts, confusion and conflicts. He said that only a few years ago he had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. He became a new man. Until then periodic mass and communion had been a mere ritual for him and his life had been dry. But since that experience, he is excited with anticipation every Sunday. When he receives the bread and the wine, he is so moved that tears

16. Mandryk, *Operation World*, as is quoted, 27.

17. Mandryk, *Operation World*, 27. This is seen as a possibility based on the promise of Jesus Christ in Mathew 24:14. The ratio of Christian steadily increased to one in three today in the world. Ralph Winter, ‘The Task Is Possible,’ *Mission Frontiers* (1989), US Center for World Mission, introduced a non-Christian and Christian ratio chart of the diminishing task of world evangelization. AD 100 – 360:1, 1000 – 220:1, 1500 – 69:1, 1900- 27:1, 1950 – 21:1, 1980 – 11:1, 1990 – 7:1. In 2010 Christians consists of 33.2% of the world population, which means 3:1, *Atlas of Global Christianity*, 7.

often flow on his face. Now Jesus is real to him, not just a theological subject of Christology. He has a transformed life.

As I was listening to him, tears welled in my eyes as well because I understood exactly what he was talking about. He is a Catholic priest, a Catholic theologian and president of a Catholic University. But this experience was identical to mine as an evangelical minister, an evangelical theologian and president of an evangelical university. In Christ he was my brother. We both met Christ in a personal way. We have the same Father, the same Jesus and the same Holy Spirit. We belong to the same family of God.

That small group sharing opened my eyes to a new spiritual reality. I was surprised to discover that spiritually we were already one. This gave me sheer joy. Our oneness came not from theological agreement, nor our backgrounds, nor our churches, nor organizations, nor our outfits. Our stories centered primarily on one person, Jesus Christ. Also sitting next to me in the group was an Italian minister. He had heard the Gospel of Jesus during a tent meeting at a street corner and trusted Christ as his personal savior. Eventually he was called to serve the Lord. The central core of the spiritual transformation of these men was the same as for everyone who understands the gospel and trusts Jesus Christ the Son of God for their salvation. He is the answer for Christian unity. If we draw a circle around Him, all who share the similar spiritual experience will be included. But if we draw a circle around ourselves, many will be left out, even though we all belong to the same family of God.

My Journey with Jesus Christ

I was born into a Christian family in North Korea during the time of the Japanese military occupation and severe persecution of Christians. I grew up seeing our pastors and elders imprisoned and tortured by the Japanese police because they refused to worship the Japanese Shinto god. Rev. Joo Kichul, my faithful pastor, was tortured to death at the end of his seven years of imprisonment only half a year prior to the Japanese surrender in August, 1945, and the end of World War II. Under his strong leadership our congregation did not go to the Shinto shrine to worship when practically all of the Korean churches, both Catholic and Protestant, as well as Buddhists, Confucians and the entire people of Korea bowed before the Japanese god.

Following the Japanese surrender, Korea was forcibly divided into North and South by the Russians and the Americans against the will of the people; this divided condition remains until today. In our church one senior pastor died as a martyr during the 36 years of Japanese occupation. During the short five-year rule of the Communists between

1945 and 1950 before the Korean civil war, six of our other church leaders were killed (three pastors and three elders).

During those years Christian students were subjected to all types of corporal and mental punishment simply because they went to church on Sunday. Schools were ordered by the Communist government to force Christian students to give up their faith. Teachers slapped the Christian children on their faces, hit them with sticks or bamboo rulers on their palms or with an iron tube on their calves, threatened to expel them from school and often did expel them, hurled verbal abuses at them, detained them late at school, had them stand in the corridors with their hands up and ostracized them in front of the whole class while their peers sneered at them. Sometimes they were mob-lynched by classmates. Christian students were defenseless.

After three years of such physical and mental persecution, a pastor's son and I were the only two left still faithful to the Lord and the church. All other Christian students gave up, for it was too much suffering for them. My church and my mother in particular were great support and encouragement for me to remain faithful until the Korean War broke out in 1950 and we no longer had to go to school. My mother told me to leave home for South Korea during the war, where there is freedom, which I did as an eleven year old boy. My family and I have been separated between North and South Korea. I grew up like an orphan. But the Lord has been faithful to my life.

I stand here this morning before this august body of Christian leaders from all over the world and from all traditions, as a retired minister, a retired professor of systematic theology, a mission mobilizer, currently serving as President of Torch Trinity Graduate University, chairman of Asia Evangelical Alliance and World Evangelical Alliance and above all as a humble servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have known the eternal love of God for me in Jesus Christ. I have seriously sought to obey the Lord Jesus in all things, particularly His Great Commission and his prayer in John 17 for Christian unity. My life has been a long process of spiritual metamorphosis. While I was listening to the faith journeys of the GCF participants, I was startled to discover that in spite of the differences among the participants, we all shared a personal and common faith in Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior. Our spiritual experiences were the same. After all, we are brothers and sisters in Christ. I became keenly aware of oneness in Christ and that I belong to a great family of God in every denomination, every church and every country. I am only one member of a huge family.

What is the minimum requirement for us to be siblings in a family? Receiving life from parents! What is the minimum requirement to be members of God's family?—Receiving eternal life from the same heavenly

Father through Christ by believing in His Son. One may be healthy, while another may be ill. One may be better looking than another. One may be rich and another poor, one better educated than the other. These are not the requirements. If we are born of the same Father, we are His children. We may be called Roman Catholic, Protestant, evangelical, charismatic/Pentecostal or independent. But we share the same heavenly Father. We all are born of God, when we have faith in Christ. So we belong to one another. Therefore, no one has the right to deny our oneness and separate us from one another and the love of God that is in Jesus Christ. This is the given. We worship the same God.

The Apostle Paul exhorted us in his Epistle to the Ephesians:

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all (Eph 4:1-7). Amen!