

The Christian Worldview and the Transformation of Korean Society*

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ABSTRACT

In the 20th century, Korean society experienced a tremendous transformation. In this process, the Christian worldview has been a powerful driving force in the disclosure of modern Korea since the end of the 19th century, making a crucial contribution in overcoming the limitations of all the traditional worldviews such as Shamanism, Buddhism and Confucianism. Furthermore, since 1960s, Korean economy has been developing so fast that now Korea has been changed from an aid-receiving country into the aid-giving one.

It does not mean, however, that Korean Christianity has always been correct in every aspect. Korean churches still have many shortcomings that need to be overcome, such as some shamanistic elements, Confucian aspects, materialism and dualistic lifestyle. These problems should be continuously criticized as non-Christian elements and as obstacles to the proper unfolding of mature Christian culture in Korea. Furthermore, they must be overcome by reemphasizing the Christian worldview, the biblical spirit of responsible stewardship and the necessity of redeeming all the spheres of our lives. Then the Christian worldview can keep transforming Korean society and give a new vision as the hope for the future.

Key words: Christian worldview, Korean church, Korean society, transformation, dualism

* 이 연구는 한동대학교 교내 연구 지원 사업 제20140163호에 의한 것임.

This research was supported by project nr. 20140163 of Handong Global University Research Grants.

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2014년 12월 29일 접수, 2015년 2월 22일 최종수정, 2월 26일 게재확정

I. Introduction

By the grace of God, Korean churches have experienced enormous revival and growth over the last 100 years. At present, Korean churches are sending more missionaries throughout the world than any other country except the U.S.A., and some mega churches in the world are in Seoul. Therefore, from the perspective of church history, the Korean church will be remembered as one of the most successful and exemplary cases.

At the same time, Korean churches have made a decisive contribution to the development of modern Korean society. Even though they were not so many, Korean Christians were involved very actively in the independence movement during the period of Japanese occupation. They have produced leaders by establishing many schools. Public health was also promoted through various hospitals. Social welfare services, such as orphanages, have been provided through Christian ministries. Furthermore, Korean society in general has benefitted from the influence of the Korean Church in reducing smoking, drinking, gambling, social discrimination, gender inequality; and in promoting a thrifty life style, honesty, integrity, diligence; and in the idea of vocation as a calling from God. All these elements became the foundation of modern Korea in the 20th century. The foundation of this cultural transformation is the Christian worldview.

After 100 years, however, Korean churches are now facing a new transition period. Due to the powerful challenge of secularization, they are no longer increasing in numbers but rather are decreasing. Furthermore, the credibility of the Korean church is falling dramatically because of various scandals. Even though Christians number more than 20% of the whole population, not many of them are living as salt and light in the society. The Christian worldview has been emphasized by Korean churches, but it has not been consistently applied to every sphere of Korean society, such as science, politics and economy. This situation requires us to reflect more deeply and critically on the past of Korean church

history and to provide a new alternative for the future.

Nevertheless, we are witnessing God is still working in a very dynamic way in China and many other parts of the world. We also see that many Korean diaspora Christians are playing a very important role in this global era. For instance, we have seen that a second generation Korean-American, Dr. Michael Oh, has become the new Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer of Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, succeeding Dr. Doug Birdsall, on March 1, 2013.

With this situation in mind, this article first deals with how the Christian worldview has transformed Korean society for the last 100 years. After that, we will discuss what kind of new paradigm it should provide for the rest of this century in order to make a significant contribution not only to Korean society but also to global ones. After that, I will try to make a final conclusion.

II. The Christian Worldview and the transformation of Korean Society

1. The Contents of the Christian Worldview

It was Abraham Kuyper, a Dutch theologian and politician, who developed the biblical worldview systematically. He emphasized that the sovereignty of Christ should be manifested in every sphere of our lives. In order to teach this worldview more systematically, he even founded Free University (Vrije Universiteit) in Amsterdam in 1880. He concluded his opening address of this university by saying, “There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry, ‘Mine!’ (Kuyper, 1880: 35)¹⁾ The basic contents of this Christian worldview can be summed up as follows (Kuyper, 1983).”

1) In the original Dutch: geen duimbreed is er op heel't erf van ons menselijk leven, waarvan Christus, die aller Souverein is, niet roept: Mijn!†

1) The Lordship of Christ

Jesus Christ, to whom all authority in heaven and on earth is given, is the Lord of all and redeems every aspect of our lives. (Mt. 28:18) Therefore, we have to admit the headship of Christ and should not accept the dualistic worldview which separates the sacred and the secular sphere of our lives.

2) Creation: Cultural mandate

Creation means that the triune God has made this world beautifully and orderly. After making man in His image, God has given the so called 'Cultural Mandate' to develop and at the same time take care of His creation. (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:15) This mandate is given for a historical development and cultural unfolding.

3) Fall: Structure and direction

Due to the fall of Adam and Eve, sin has affected the whole cosmos and the present world is a distorted and broken one. But here *structure* and *direction* should be distinguished. Structure means created laws and norms for creation, whereas direction denotes relative deviation or conformity to norms. The former remains untouched by the fall because of God's common grace. But the latter depends upon the central orientation of the human heart toward or away from God. (Wolters, 2005)

4) Redemption: accomplished and applied

But God has sent Jesus Christ, His only Son, to redeem the whole universe. After Jesus has accomplished his redemptive work, the Holy Spirit has come to apply this redemption into each Christian individually and every Christian community collectively until the consummation. In addition, this redemptive work of Jesus extends over all of life. (Murray, 1955)

5) Sphere sovereignty

Each sphere of life (for example, family, church, state, company, etc) has its own distinct responsibility and authority as designed by God and no one area of life is sovereign over another. This is called *Sphere sovereignty*.²⁾ Therefore, neither church nor the state should seek totalitarian control over other spheres outside their limited competence.

6) The antithesis

There is a struggle in history and within every person—between the serpent and the woman (Gen. 3:15), the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness; between submission to and rebellion against God; between the age to come (already inaugurated in Christ) and this present evil age (of sin). This confrontation is called *the antithesis*.

7) No neutral ground

Therefore, theoretical thought can never be religiously neutral. All thinking and practice is shaped by worldviews and religious ground motives. (Dooyeweerd, 1954) All the areas of Christian life should be guided by this biblical worldview. (Naugle, 2002, Goheen & Bartolomew, 2008, Wolters, 2005)

2. The transformation of modern Korean society

The history of Korea can be called an experiment of various worldviews because shamanism, Buddhism and Confucianism have played a major role in each successive period. (Choi, 2006: 256-337) From the Ancient Chosun period (2333 B.C.-108 B.C.) and the Three Kingdoms period-- Koguryo (37 B.C.-668 A.D.),

2) In the original Dutch: *Soevereiniteit in eigenkring*.

Baekjhe (18 B.C.–660 A.D.); and Shilla (57 B.C.–935 A.D.)-- to the Unified Shilla Kingdom period (668–935), shamanism was the major worldview. When it could not lead the country any more due to its weak points such as seeking fortune through mystic magic and divination, fatalistic determinism, seeking simply earthly blessing, lacking an appropriate historico-cultural perspective and a proper ethic, a Buddhistic worldview was imported from China and it replaced shamanism. Later, it became dominant in the Koryo Kingdom period (935–1392). When Buddhism became corrupt at the end of the Koryo period, however, Neo-Confucianism was introduced from China and became the major worldview of the Chosun Kingdom (Yi dynasty) period (1392–1910). But at the end of the 19th century, Neo-Confucianism revealed its limits and weak aspects such as authoritarian hierarchy, gender discrimination, social inequality, etc. so it could not lead the Korean society any more but submitted to the imperial control of Japan.

The Christian message was introduced in this situation as a new alternative paradigm. The experiment with the previous three worldviews failed, opening a spiritual and mental vacuum among the Korean people. But now the biblical worldview seemed to be a new light of life to Korean society. Therefore, most leaders accepted this worldview for ‘opening up’ of Korea’s compass to show the direction for the future. Some major elements in this regard are as follows (Choi, 2006: 320–328).

1) The idea of Origin

As the origin of all, God revealed Himself in Christ as the personal God of Scripture who has overcome superstitious and polytheistic shamanism, syncretic Buddhism and Confucian belief in a sort of sky deity. The Christian worldview of the Creator of heaven and earth and thus the ultimate Origin of reality reformed all the former ideas of origin.

2) The view of man as the image of God

The biblical view of man as the image of God transformed the traditional viewpoints as well. This view of man, as the cultural agent for the service of God and his neighbor, and as a responsible person(*Coram Deo*) made an enormous impact on Korean society. This perspective radically confronted and changed the traditional shamanistic attitude of fatalistic determinism. By proclaiming the dignity of labor and reminding people of the equality of all occupations, the view revolutionarily changed the Confucian culture which had discriminated lower classes. Every person, it was said, can contribute to the development of the community by devoting themselves to their occupations.

3) The extension of women's rights

The extension of women's rights was another innovative idea advocated by the Korean church. At that time, women were not treated equally and men felt no embarrassment in public acknowledging their concubines. Their wives were helpless in the face of their husbands' indiscretions because remarriage by women was forbidden. The Christian worldview, however, restored the rights of women by stressing sexual equality and the need for women's education, arguing that educated mothers were better equipped to raise children and that the development of these human resources would eventually contribute to the general development of the country. Therefore a school for young girls was founded to train them to be superior wives and mothers, and to be workers for the Christian mission. Even though the traditional rigid class system was abolished by government reforms in 1894 (*Kabokyongjang*), true class levelling began within the church where all humans were proclaimed to be equal before God. This concept played a significant role in developing democracy in Korean society later.

4) Christian worldview as the tool for modernizing Korea

Having seen the traditional Qing China's defeat by a modernized Japan and having seen many powerful weapons and new technologies of the West, many Koreans were determined to abandon conventional thought and traditional culture in favor of modernization. Many non-Christians turned to Christianity as a means of modernization and disclosure (*gaehwa*) of Korean society. Through education, the missionaries brought knowledge of Western science and technology and introduced modern educational curricula. Early Korean Protestants regarded disclosure, education and religion as one and the same and believed that Christianity could provide the momentum for socio-cultural reform. Many schools were established by the Presbyterian churches. Especially in the first decade of the 20th century, it could be said that only the church had a complete educational system from the primary to the college level in the country. The old Confucian system of local academies had faded away, and the new Japanese government had not yet developed its own education program. Korean Christian leaders took the initiative in establishing schools that first linked together Korean nationalism and the Christian religion. Those Christian elites played an enormously important role not merely as church leaders but also as national leaders in the modern history of Korea.

5) The work of medical care and education

The work of medical care and education undoubtedly caused many Koreans to look favorably on the Christian faith. Since the first modern hospital was opened by an American missionary under a royal grant in 1885, many hospitals have been established by other missionaries. These medical institutions functioned both as a means to improve the general health care of the country and as an important evangelistic tool. The missionaries encouraged Korean Christians to learn modern science and technology as well as to believe in the gospel. So there was little

tension between faith and medical science. Also women were trained to be physicians. In addition, alcohol, tobacco and opium were banned in an attempt to improve people's health. Since then, this has become a sort of unwritten law in the Korean church.

6) The transformation of Korean economy

The thrifty lifestyle of Korean Christians helped the Korean economy overcome its bondage to Japan. Remarkable too was that the miraculous growth of Korean economy between the 1960s and 1990s closely paralleled the dramatic growth of Korean church in the same period. The spirit of stewardship and biblical worldview might have influenced the development of Korean capitalistic industry as Max Weber has argued. (Weber, 1934) Nowadays, Korean economy belongs to the top G-20 in the world, becoming from aid receiving to aid giving country.

7) The transformation of Korean traditional worldviews

The Christian worldview transformed Korean's traditional view of reality. Rejecting polytheistic shamanism, the Korean Church began to emphasize the importance of a rational way of thinking, and of modern science and technology. Criticizing the negative view of reality in Buddhism, Christian thinkers tried to be realistic, confronting the difficult situation at that time and attempting to overcome that situation rather than passively accepting it as their own fate. Against the traditional Confucian social class system, Korean Christians brought modern social values of freedom, equality, justice, peace and human rights to Korea and so served as a liberating force for those shackled under Confucian thought. It was also associated with movements for national independence and socio-political democracy, and the freedom of the press. In the 1960s and 70s, Korean liberal Christians played a significant role in resisting the oppression of human rights, the non-democratic military dictatorship and an authoritarian bureaucracy. They also

took part in social reform movements to improve wages and the working conditions among poor urban workers. All of these movements were accelerated by the biblical view of history, namely, the sovereignty of God in history, the eschatological victory of the Kingdom of God, and the linear, rather than circular or retrospective, conception of time.

8) The translation of the Bible into Korean

Just as it was the case in Europe after the reformation, the translation and publication of the Bible in the Korean language, *Hangul*, initiated the widespread use of the vernacular script. Many other Christian books were written in or translated into Korean. With the spread of the Korean Bible and hymn books the Korean script was also spread. These activities reduced illiteracy, and played an important role in breaking down the Chinese cultural hold of the Confucian upper class. The truth found in the Bible was easily available to the common people, which sharply contrasts with Korean Buddhism and Confucianism because their scriptures written in Chinese were almost inaccessible to the general public.

9) The Christian worldview as the liberating power

The prestige of this biblical worldview was reinforced by the presence of many Christians among the nationalists. In spite of the fact that there were also Christians who collaborated with the Japanese in the latter part of the colonial period, Korean Christianity never became associated as such with imperialism. Many Koreans, humiliated and frustrated by Japanese aggression, accepted Protestantism more readily because they associated it with deliverance from Japanese invasion. They sought a solution to the nation's dilemma in the Korean churches, also known for their energy and organizational capacity. After liberation and economic growth, Korean churches began to help other underdeveloped countries by sending missionaries and by supporting North Korean refugees

throughout the world.

The Christian worldview has been a very powerful driving force in the disclosure of modern Korean Society, making a crucial contribution in overcoming the demerits of all the traditional religions and worldviews in terms of their ideas and cultural structures and in unfolding modern Korean culture by directing it with its biblical perspective. This does not mean, however, that it has always been right in every aspect. Korean Christians have made some serious mistakes and still have many shortcomings that need to be corrected. Due to these problems, Korean churches are now facing their greatest challenge that requires serious and critical reflection. These problems will be dealt with in the following section from the biblical point of view.

3. The crisis of the present Korean Christianity

In the 21st century, the Korean church faces a serious crisis and decrease in terms of membership and influence. Furthermore, Korean Christians have often become the object of criticism rather than respect. The reasons might be summed up as follows:

1) Materialism

As most churches pursue growth, materialistic and shamanistic worldviews have crept into the minds of Korean Christians. Prosperity theology was introduced to justify material success as a blessing from God regardless of the way to achieve the goal. Furthermore, due to a new church building project, the financial burden became heavier to each member, so a special offering was often imposed. As a result, some disappointed protestant Christians converted to Catholicism.

2) Division

Korean churches have experienced too many divisions due to the political power struggle and trivial debates within local churches, synods and the general assembly. Even in one Presbyterian denomination, there are numerous sub-divisions. Some of them have even the same name. Due to this problem, the Korean church has lost credibility within Korean society. This problem has been the Achilles' tendon of Korean churches not only in Korea but also Korean diaspora churches in other parts of the world. (Choi, 2006)

3) Lack of morality

For many Christians, both leaders and lay people, their lives are not integrated with their confession of faith. Many leaders have committed sexual sins, plagiarism, and financial conflicts of interest; shadowy church administration has not shown the authentic sign of repentance and forthright leadership. Furthermore, young people oppose the Confucian authoritarianism followed by many church leaders.

4) The secularization of Christian schools and universities

Most Christian schools and universities in Korea have lost their Christian identity due to their commercial interests. Christians are held hostage by the incorrect idea that schooling is neutral so many young people from Christian and non-Christian homes continue to be drawn away from Christ and away from a dynamic Christian lifestyle. Government schools are regarded as neutral, not secular. Even in the textbooks and curriculum of some Christian schools, a worldview is promoted that says God is not relevant to how we learn about the world and our place and task in it even though they have regular chapels. This is absolutely antithetical to the gospel and to Kuyper's claim about the centrality of Christ in all of life. As for the once Christian universities, gradually they have compromised to the secular value by recruiting non-Christian professors. Science

and faith are not properly integrated by the Christian worldview but separated from each other. Therefore, they fail to produce future Christian leaders and so cannot make any significant impact in Korean society.

5) The challenge of Islam

The power of Islam is expanding worldwide, now reaching to Korea. It threatens even Korean churches through various ways such as international marriage, recruiting students by giving full scholarship when they go to the Middle East to study Islam, building many mosques in major South Korean cities and promoting many cultural exchange programs. However, Korean churches are not yet properly prepared for this challenge. The most serious danger of Islam is its non-tolerant attitude toward other worldviews. It limits the freedom of religion especially for Christians and oppresses those who do not belong to Islam.

6) The threat of postmodern pluralism

Postmodern relativism is gaining more support so that homosexuality, premarital sex and transgender issues are regarded as natural. Any kind of discrimination is criticized as dogmatic and intolerant. Korean churches have become, therefore, more defensive than before. At the same time, Korean Christianity has not developed an effective multi-cultural ministry to serve various kinds of increasingly multi-cultural families in Korean society. Rather, it still maintains traditional ministries for mainly ethnic Koreans.

7) The problem of dualism

The dualistic worldview of Korean Christians has made the wrong distinction between the sacred and the secular. It has produced so many Sunday churchgoers who live like non-believers during the week days. The consignment of the gospel out of the “public” space and into a so-called “private” sphere, which is a part of

the Enlightenment agenda, has hugely influenced contemporary Korean Christian lifestyle. This has happened to such an extent that while most Korean Christians are passionately concerned about world missions, they see little relationship between their faith and their vocation or the rest of their lives (family, politics, economic lifestyle and recreation, etc.). They have, therefore, failed to be the true light and salt in the society. As a result, Korean churches are facing severe criticism and are losing their authentic integrity.

Consequently, Korean churches are now facing a serious crisis and are at a tipping point where they can either go forward to further development or go backward and lose impact in both Korean and global society.

4. A new paradigm for the future

Then what kind of a new paradigm should we propose as an alternative for the future? I would like to suggest the following based upon our analysis in the previous section.

1) Restoring the biblical stewardship

The Christian worldview should criticize the danger of materialism in the Korean church. Pointing out the shamanistic way of thinking and life-style, we have to emphasize that we cannot worship God and mammon at the same time. (Mt. 6:24; Lk. 16:13) Instead, the biblical worldview can promote the spirit of Jubilee and the communal life model of the ancient Christian community described in the book of Acts 2. Bob Goudzwaard, a retired Dutch professor of economics, argues that we should not seek merely economic growth any more but rather emphasize the life-style of stewardship and so pursue the 'economy of care'(Goudzwaard, 2007: 205). It means that instead of merely accumulating wealth, we should practice sharing what extra we have.

Peter Hahne, a German Christian journalist, wrote his best-seller book, *Schluss mit lustig!: Das Ende der Spagesellschaft* (*Stop extra desire: The end of the fun society*) in which he emphasizes that we should control our desires and live a sober and thrifty life. (Hahne, 2009) Appreciating the fruit of our labor as God's blessing, we should fear the LORD (Ps. 128) and take care of our neighbors in need with Christian love.

In relation to this, we can think of using the church building with a new paradigm, for instance as a multiple complex space not only for worshipping God but also for serving the local community. Contemporary society needs the social involvement of evangelical churches. The Cape Town Commitment, the official document of the 3rd Lausanne Congress on world evangelization also admits this and emphasizes that the whole church should take the whole gospel to the whole world which has various problems. In this sense, John Stott suggests in his book, *Issues Facing Christians Today*, that Christian churches should emphasize the protestant work ethic (diligence, honesty, stewardship, frugality) in order to resolve the problem of unemployment and that each local church can do a lot of community activities such as a child-care program, kindergarten, elderly care, coffee shop outreach and work training, etc. One can remodel the traditional church building in order to do this kind of program. He even suggests that one can change the name church into 'Christian Center'. (Stott, 1990: 177-181)

Figuratively, new wine should be poured into new wineskins. (Mt. 9:17; Mk. 2:22; Lk. 5:37-38) The Korean church should go beyond secular materialism and the prosperity gospel and take the full mission of evangelism and social responsibility in balance. In order to do that, the Christian worldview should be able to provide a new alternative in this postmodern age without losing the essential elements of Biblical truth.

2) Restoring the Christian unity

In contrast to the Catholic Church, Korean protestant churches have been divided a lot. This problem should be seriously dealt with because Jesus prayed so desperately for the unity of Christians. (Jn. 17:21) In order to overcome this problem of split, Korean churches should attempt to restore and build up the unity if they share the same biblical worldview not only in domestic but also in international dimensions. Similar denominations with the same confession of faith can start discussing how they can restore the unity. If they cannot, due to the significant difference in the confession, they still can work together more closely in such areas as helping the poor, supporting North Korean refugees, etc. Then Korean society will admit the authority of the Korean church and began to listen to her voice.³⁾

3) Restoring the biblical morality

The ethical corruption of Korean church leaders prove that the Christian worldview has not been embodied in the daily life of Korean Christians. We need to thoroughly repent and practice discipleship at individual, local church, synod and general assembly levels. Korean Christian leaders should first be role-models of holy, honest and transparent lives. When something wrong has been found out, they should be ready to take full responsibility. Only then can the Korean church regain respect from Korean society.

One example might be removing all the chairs in the church where altar and pulpit stand. Most Korean pastors sit behind the pulpit or next to the altar for the

3) In this context, I have written a book, *Vision for Unity*(Choi: 2006) on the basis of my ministry experience in Cologne, Germany, where four different churches were united into one body of Christ and diverse denominations tried to work together. Furthermore, I have explained in this book how the Christian solidarity and unity between the West and the East German churches played the crucial role in reunifying two Germanys into one. The same miracle of unification can happen, I would argue, if Korean Christians began to restore the true unity in Christ.

whole service. But in the German protestant churches, for instance, there is no chair for the preacher at the altar area. He sits just in front row together with other members of the church. He goes forward only when he preaches. But in Korean churches, the chairs for pastor or elder looks like thrones where our God should sit. It might imply that they represent God and proclaim His message but it might also give a wrong impression to the modern congregation that the pastors look too authoritarian. It can result in losing the point of contact and communication with the society as well.

4) Restoring balanced ministry and preaching

The church calendar should be respected so that the congregation might understand the whole stream of God's redemptive plan throughout history. In connection with this, for instance, the day of Christ's ascension should be celebrated, on the following Sunday at least, considering its significance of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

The Biblical texts for sermons are quite limited in the Korean church. The whole Bible should be preached in three years for instance so that the congregation might hear the Word of God in balance. At the same time, Korean churches have lost the blessing of the Lord's Supper because they have emphasized the preaching ministry too much. It should not be misunderstood as a Catholic mass and so be practiced as often as possible. In this way, the balanced ministry and preaching can help restoring the true spirituality of Korean churches and this might impact to the Korean society as a healthy and leading group.

5) Restoring the Christian education and scholarship

In order to prevent the secularization of Christian schools and universities, Christian teachers and professors should try to restore the Biblical worldview and to integrate their teaching and scientific research with the Christian faith.

Furthermore, their faith and scholarship should go hand in hand with their sincere and authentic life-style as well. In this way, they can show an example to the students and train the leaders for the next generation.

In addition, the whole education system from kindergarten through elementary school to middle and high school to university level should be integrated with the religious education in church Sunday school and family education with the Christian worldview. In this way, Korean churches should demonstrate that they do not need any private education which costs too much time and money in Korean society. Through this kind of educational reformation, Korean Christians should be the catalysts for the transformation of Korean society and culture in the coming hundred years. Furthermore, we need to urgently re-educate pastors and Christian parents into the totality of the Lordship of Christ, and encourage them to provide elementary and secondary schools for our children that look at various disciplines from the biblical perspective. This is not an optional extra, but is an absolute necessity in order to preserve the identity of the Christians schools and universities. (Edlin, 1999)

6) Response to Islam

Against the challenge of Islam to the Korean society, Korean churches should develop total measures and strategies. For instance, they can develop Sunday school textbooks that teach what Islam is, and identify the weak points in its worldview as a way of immunization. Furthermore, various seminars or training programs can be developed to teach pastors and lay people about the Islamic worldview and its dangers together with an effective way to confront Muslims with a loving attitude and the biblical worldview.

7) Response to postmodern pluralism

The postmodern worldview is another great challenge to Korean society these

days. Postmodern relativism and religious pluralism with tolerance seem to be the main spirit of the time (*Zeitgeist*) and so are very critical against the conservative attitude of Korean Christians. As a response to this trend, the Christian worldview has to show its weak point, namely, that absolute relativism is a contradiction as such, Christians must present clear biblical standards and criteria as alternative. Such a worldview should help Korean churches give a strong voice to sensitive issues like homosexuality and so on. At the same time, it should also warn Korean Christians not to be too aggressive and radical toward other worldviews or religions so that they might show respect and decency. The Christian worldview should be open for the good aspects of other worldviews as a common grace but it ought to be conscious of the ultimately different directions.

On the other hand, however, the biblical worldview should strongly affirm a multi-cultural ministry and society as the expression of God's abundant creation. Korean society has been transformed from basically one ethnic community to a diverse, multi-cultural one. Unfortunately, however, Korean churches are still focusing on the Korean ethnic group as the main focus. Although some churches have English/Chinese/Japanese services for each ethnic group, they rarely have an integrating ministry such as joint worship service. The Bible clearly says that there is no favoritism in God. (Acts 10:34-35; Col. 3:25) Abraham was chosen to be a blessing to all nations. (Gen. 12:1-3) Therefore the Israelites should love Gentiles and foreigners. (Ex. 22:21, 23:9) The book of Ruth clearly shows that the Gentile people could participate in the blessings of God. Even the genealogy of Jesus includes the Gentile ladies. (Mt. 1:3-6) The Pharisees even admitted that Jesus was not swayed by men, because he paid no attention to who they are. (Mt. 22:16b) In addition, almost all kinds of congregations in the New Testament formed a multi-ethnic unity where Jewish Christians gathered together with the Gentile believers. (Gal. 3:28)

In order to be a global church and to make disciples of all nations, Korean churches need to transform their worship services with simultaneous translation

systems and power point presentations in Korean and English for example so that all kinds of people can join without any problem. In this way, the Korean church should be ‘a house of prayer for all nations’. (Mk. 11:27) Non-Koreans who have become Korean citizens should be able to be church leaders in Korean churches as well. Then Korean churches will be the universal church in the true sense of the word and be a channel of blessing for all nations. (Choi: 2013, 160-164)

8) All of life redeemed⁴⁾

The Christian worldview stresses that all of our lives should be redeemed. All kinds of professional Christians need to realize that they are called to serve their own areas for the kingdom of God. Furthermore, they need to gather together in order to share how they can realize and achieve the will of God in their spheres to make contributions not only in Korean society but also in the global community. In order to do that they need to pray and discuss among themselves through various gatherings. In this way, Korean Christians should not fall into the error of dualism but rather reveal the sovereignty of Christ in every domain of their lives to redeem it. Then, Korean society will be transformed by this kind of authentic and integrative effort of Korean Christians based upon the Christian worldview.

One example would be the area of business life. Christian businessmen should try not only to evangelize other colleagues in the workplace but also integrate their faith with business ethics so that through their vocations they might witness the gospel and transform the Korean society by more transparent, honest and fair trading. In this context, the “Nuremberg declaration” of the German Christian business leaders can be a good example:⁵⁾

A society is only efficient and socially at the same time, if it is “under the responsibility before God and men”, as stated in the preamble of the German constitution.

4) Cf. www.allofliferedeemed.co.uk

5) www.zukunftbrauchtwerte.de/ruckschau/numberger-erklarung

We are convinced that economic action needs Christian values with which you can take the lead.

Who is guided by God's standards,

- is committed to integrity, honesty, diligence, reliability, compassion and fairness in all aspects of life.
- rejects corruption, fraud, unfair wages, excessive salaries and severance pay off as much as greed, envy, avarice and slander.
- advocates for the protection of property, the environment and of Sunday as a day of rest, and is committed to the public good.
- encourages marriages, families and children as the basis of society.
- encourages his fellow citizens to live in union with Jesus Christ.

We strive to live according to God's standards, as found by way of example in the 10 Commandments.⁶⁾

Of course, there might be more suggestions. We should be open for all the other possibilities and be ready to reform ourselves first because the church of Christ is reformed but should be always reforming (*Ecclesia Reformataet Semper Reformanda*).

6) The original German version is as follows: NrnbergerErldrung

Eine Gesellschaft ist nur dann leistungsfahig und sozial zugleich, wenn sie "unter Verantwortung vor Gott und den Menschen" geschieht, wie es in der Praeambel des deutschen Grundgesetzes heisst.

Wir sind ueberzeugt, dass wirtschaftliches Handeln christliche Werte braucht, mit denen man in Fuehrung gehen kann.

Wer sich an Gottes Massstaeben orientiert,

- bemueht sich um Integritaet, Ehrlichkeit, Fleiss, Verlaesslichkeit, Barmherzigkeit und Fairness in allen Bereichen des Lebens.
- lehnt Korruption, Betrug, unfaire Loehne, bezogene Gehaelter und Abfindungen genausoab, wie Habsucht, Neid, Geiz und ueble Nachrede.
- setzt sich fuer den Schutz des Eigentums, der Umwelt und des Sonntags als Ruhetag ein und engagiert sich fuer das oeffentliche Wohl.
- foerdert Ehen, Familien und Kinder als Basis der Gesellschaft.
- ermutigt seine Mitbrgerinnen und Mitbuenger zu einem Leben in Verbindung mit Jesus Christus

Wir bemuehen uns, nach den MaBstaeben Gottes zu eben,

wie sie sich beispielhaft in den 10 Geboten finden.

III. Conclusion

The Christian worldview has been a powerful driving force in the disclosure of modern Korea, making a crucial contribution in overcoming the limitations of all the traditional worldviews in terms of their ideas and cultural structures and in opening up modern Korean culture by directing it with its Biblical perspective. This fact does not mean, however, that it has always been correct in every aspect. Korean churches still have many shortcomings that need to be overcome. For instance, some shamanistic elements have crept into Korean Christianity so deeply that worldly success is still emphasized as the sign of God's blessing. In addition, some Confucian aspects such as authoritarianism have made another serious impact on Korean churches. Furthermore, materialism has been a serious threat to the Korean Christians, making them more secular and corrupt. The dualistic lifestyle of some Korean Christians has been criticized as hypocritical. These problems should be continuously criticized as non-Christian elements and as obstacles to the proper unfolding of Christian culture in Korea. They must be overcome by emphasizing the Christian worldview, the biblical spirit of responsible stewardship and the principle of redeeming all of life spheres. Then Korean Christianity can keep transforming Korean society and give a new vision and light as the hope for the future.

“이 논문은 다른 학술지 또는 간행물에 게재되었거나 게재신청되지 않았음을 확인함.”

“This article has not been published or applied to publish in other academic journals.”

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기독교 세계관과 한국 사회의 변혁

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국문초록

20세기 한국 사회는 그야말로 상전벽해와 같은 급격한 변화를 경험했다. 19세기말에 복음이 들어오면서 중세적 전통사회가 가지고 있던 샤머니즘, 불교 그리고 유교의 한계점을 극복하는 새로운 세계관적 대안이 되면서 근대 시민사회로 탈바꿈하였다. 특히 1960년 이후부터는 경제 수준 또한 이전과 비교할 수 없는 눈부신 발전을 이룩하여 이제 한국 사회는 도움을 받는 입장에서 다른 개발도상국을 지원하는 입장이 되었다. 이러한 과정에서 한국 교회 및 기독교 세계관은 나름대로 적지 않은 공헌을 했음을 인정해야 한다.

그러나 새로운 100년을 맞이하는 한국 교회는 현재 물질주의, 이원론적 삶 등 여러 가지 어려움을 겪으며 위기에 처해 있다. 하지만 이러한 위기는 어떻게 극복하느냐에 따라 새로운 축복의 전기가 될 수 있다. 따라서 본 논문은 한국 교회가 이러한 문제들을 어떻게 극복하고 기독교 세계관의 본질을 회복하면서 책임지는 청지기 정신 및 모든 삶의 영역에서 구속을 이루어가야 하는 필요성을 강조함으로 한국 사회를 계속해서 변혁시키며 미래에 새로운 희망의 비전을 줄 수 있는 지를 다루고 있다.

주제어: 기독교 세계관, 한국 교회, 한국 사회, 변혁, 이원론