

Firsthand Testimony of Christian Courage Amidst Communist Persecution in North Korea

One of the most moving presentations at the Cape Town 2010 Congress on World Evangelisation was presented by an eighteen-year-old North Korean girl, Gyeong Ju Son.

Gyeong Ju Son was born in Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea. Her father was a high-ranking communist government leader, an assistant to the North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il.

In 1998, when Gyeong Jun was only six years old, her father fell out of favour with the political leadership and the family fled to China. There her parents encountered the grace and love of God and were converted to Christ. A few months later, her pregnant mother died of leukemia.

"It was in the midst of this family tragedy that my father joined a Bible Study led by missionaries from South Korea and America and after a time his strong desire was to become a missionary to North Korea."

In 2001, her father was arrested by the Chinese police and deported to North Korea where he was imprisoned. Her father's faith was only strengthened during his three-year incarceration in North Korea. After Gyeong Ju Son was reunited with her father, he chose to return to North Korea. *"Instead of enjoying a life of religious freedom in South Korea, he chose to return to North Korea to share Christ's message of life and hope amongst the hopeless people of his homeland."*

In 2006, her father's work was discovered by the North Korean communist government and once again, he was imprisoned; and, as far as she knows, executed for refusing to renounce his faith in Christ.

In China, Gyeong Ju was adopted by a Christian family. Their love, compassion and protection of her made a deep impression. When they left for America, she was given the opportunity to go to South Korea. While waiting at the South Korean Consulate in Beijing, Gyeong Ju's life was

dramatically changed when she encountered the Lord Jesus Christ in a dream. He said: *"Walk with Me. Yes, you have lost your earthly father, but I am your Heavenly Father."*

She surrendered her heart, soul, mind and strength to the Lord Jesus Christ to do with as He wills. She was flooded with a deep love for the lost people of North Korea and of the need to bring the message of Jesus to them. This became her life's purpose. *"I look back over my short life and I see God's hand everywhere: six years in North Korea, eleven in China, and now in South Korea. Everything I suffered; all the sadness and grief, all that I have experienced and learned; I want to give it all to God and use my life for His Kingdom. In this way I also hope to bring honour to my father."*

Gyeong Ju Son is still a student and she intends to study political science and diplomacy at university and then to dedicate her life to working for the rights of the voiceless in North Korea.

"Brothers and Sisters here in this place, I humbly ask you to pray that the same light of God's grace and mercy that reached my father and my mother and now me, will one day soon dawn upon the people of North Korea, my people."

As one, the thousands of participants at the Cape Town 2010 Congress on World Evangelisation rose in a standing ovation with the most thunderous applause in praise to God and in solidarity with this young Korean girl and her vision for reaching North Korea for Christ.

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