

Jesus Feeds 1,800 People with Five Loaves and Two Fish

“Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.” (Jn 6:11)

The Lord loves our missionaries and shepherds. The Lord always wants to give comfort and refreshment to those who are faithful for the Lord and the gospel and are without name or fame. Knowing the heart of the Lord, Korea UBF planned a conference for them. Because offline meetings were impossible due to the corona pandemic, we decided to hold an online conference. In anticipation of the new things that God will accomplish, we wanted to find and give our ‘five loaves and two fish’ to the Lord.

1. Five barley loaves and two fish.

We first gave ‘five loaves and two fish’ of prayer to the Lord. Under the leadership of Shepherd Moses Kim, all Korean staff shepherds held online meetings in teams, had discussions, and prayed for the conference since February. We agreed that we need to hold on to a clear purpose of life in order to grow in true maturity. As a result, we decided on the theme of the conference to be “To know Christ” and agreed to study the book of Philippians at the conference. Continental Coordinator Missionaries Joshua Seo (Africa), David Lee (CIS), James Kang (Europe), Paul Kwon (Asia), Joshua Lee (Oceania), Steven Cho (South America), UBF International Headquarters’ Missionaries David Kim (USA) and John Seo (USA), and Shepherds Caleb Kim and Moses Noh of Korea held online meetings every Thursday and prayed together for the conference. Shortly after confirming that the participants of the conference were going to be UBF missionaries and national leaders, the representative of Korea UBF, Shepherd Moses Kim, wrote a letter to Pastor Ron Ward of Chicago HQ, asking him to help the English and Spanish speaking messengers and testimony sharers. Pastor Ron Ward responded that he would do his best to help. After that, the Korea headquarters and the Chicago HQ worked together to serve

the conference messengers and testimony sharers. The Lord was pleased with the ‘five loaves and two fish’ offerings of our unity and coworking.

We started looking for ‘fish loaves and two fish’ offerings of messengers and life testimony sharers. Due to the time difference, the conference had to be divided into three regions, and thus, many more messengers and testimony sharers were needed. We asked each of the Continental Coordinator missionaries to raise up ‘those who are participating in the suffering of Jesus Christ regardless of the size and the presence or absence of visible fruit’ as speakers the conference. We asked them to make half or more of the testimony sharer recommendations for female missionaries. Each Continental Coordinator missionary recommended people who have been deeply acquainted with Jesus Christ while participating in the sufferings of Christ in poor mission fields for a long time. Many recommendations were made for female missionaries who scarcely had any opportunities to be raised as speakers in the past. Because it was an online conference, the missionaries had to complete their messages and testimonies, go through rehearsals, and even shoot video recordings of it. When the messengers and testimony sharers submitted their video recordings, we translated them and added subtitles to their videos. We also got ‘five loaves and two fish’ offerings of special songs and performances. Missionaries and shepherds from all over the world voluntarily sent about 30 videos of special songs and special performances. These music videos were placed between the messages and life testimonies, making the conference even more beautiful.

We considered the ‘five loaves and two fish’ offerings of small group meetings to be particularly important. This was because the small group meetings was the only program that allowed people to communicate amongst each other during the online conference. So, we dedicated more time to small group meetings during the period of the short conference. The total time for the opening and closing messages, the main message, and the presentation of life testimonies was 4 hours, whereas the total time for small group meetings was 5 hours which included two group Bible studies and one group testimony sharing time. When organizing the small groups, we put missionaries and leaders from

different continents who had rarely had a chance to meet, so that they could have the opportunity to comfort and encourage each other. To make it easier for small group members to empathize and have more intimate conversations within a limited time, we organized groups ‘between people of similar age’ and ‘separated between men and women.’ Among the Korean shepherds who worked hard as small group leaders, those who served African, European, CIS, Middle Eastern, North American, and Latin American regions had to be awake at dawn in Korean time to serve the small group meetings. Nonetheless, all the Korean staff shepherds and their wives happily took on this hard task, thinking of the missionaries who are as precious as stars in the sky.

2. He gave to them as they wished.

Conference registration started on March 15th. Since it was not a conference that required a registration fee, we made it easy to register using Google Forms. Results for the final count was a total of 1,693 registered people. Of these, 1,110 were missionaries and 583 were national leaders. To serve a larger-than-expected scale conference, 126 Korean shepherds participated, so the total number of participants at the conference was 1,819. The group Bible studies consisted of 61 groups in Africa, Europe, CIS, Middle East, 32 groups in Asia and Oceania, and 139 groups in North and Latin America, with a total of 232 small groups. By language, there were 115 English GBS groups, 91 Korean GBS groups, 23 Spanish GBS groups, 2 Russian GBS groups, 1 German GBS group, etc. The general sessions were conducted as a Zoom webinars, and the group meetings were conducted either by the individual group leader's personal Zoom or by a common Zoom for each continent.

The opening message (Phil. 1) of Shepherd Moses Kim (representative of Korea UBF) was witnessed in common in the three continental regions. Paul wanted the gospel to be preached no matter what happened to him. Paul's earnest hope was that Christ might be exalted in him, whether he lived or died. Through this conference, Shepherd Moses Kim gave a clear direction for all the participants to renew their faith in the gospel and to have an earnest desire to honor Christ alone.

In Africa, Europe, CIS and the Middle East, Missionaries Nehemiah Lee (RSA), James Han (Austria), and Joshua Seo (South Africa) served the scripture from Philippians 2-4. Missionary Nehemiah Lee is serving the art chapter, where most of the students major in music. He testified that we can serve the Lord with one heart and one will when we embrace the heart of Jesus Christ, just as various musical instruments gather under the direction of one person to perform a beautiful orchestra. Missionary James Han was steadfastly serving the gospel work in the barren land of Austria when last year, he was fired from his job and suffered financial difficulties. However, he testified that our goal is to get to know Christ by sharing in suffering. Missionary Joshua Seo consecutively encountered armed robbers since the end of last year. He was shocked when an armed robber broke into his house right after he was appointed as a messenger for the conference. However, he overcame the shock and delivered the closing message of “always rejoice” with such joy.

Life testimonies were presented by Shepherd H. (M) from the Middle East and Missionary Grace M. (CRP) on the first day, and by Missionaries Joseph Jin (Norway), Susanna Y. (CKA), Deborah Park (Serbia), and Rebekah Im (Uganda) on the second day. Shepherd H. absolutely obeyed the Lord's command to preach the gospel to Muslim sheep. His life testimony of denying himself and remaining loyal to the mission field until the end made many people weep together. Missionary Grace M. was living in a place where she had to take a 120-hour round trip train ride for a 20-minute visitation to see her son, who joined the Russian army. If she were in her home country, she could have lived a comfortable life as a pharmacist, but to serve Russian sheep, she trusted in God alone and has been serving sheep in the cold Russian land for 28 years. Missionary Joseph Jin's life hit rock bottom when he suffered from a brain hemorrhage, but his health was fully restored by God's grace. Now, he is grateful for even the smallest things and is helping people who are sick in body and mind, sometimes as a doctor, sometimes as a friend, and sometimes as a lay missionary. Missionary Susanna Y. gave her testimony only in audio form with subtitles instead of a video because of her safety. After deeply accepting Jesus

as the Master of her life in the mission field, she is completely obedient to the Lord's command to preach the gospel. In a country where evangelism is prohibited, she walks around the city for 3-5 hours every day, attaching evangelistic tracts without missing a day. Missionary Deborah Park could not imagine life beyond the age of 30 due to her extremely unhappy family circumstances. However, God saved her, who was once like a dead person, and led her to become a missionary to Serbia. Although she had to do all sorts of work, God made her into a mother of nations who is now pioneering University of Novi Sad. Missionary Rebekah Lim is serving both campus mission and medical mission in Uganda. While trying to love people with God's love, she first deeply accepted God's love for herself. Driven by God's love of her, she shared her testimony of wanting to forsake herself and live a life of faith only in Jesus Christ.

In Asia and Oceania, Missionaries Michael Ho (Australia), Seungwon Kim (Korea), and J. Bunyan (AI) served the scripture from Philippians 2-4. Missionary Michael Ho was sent as a missionary to Australia from Hong Kong UBF. He testified that spiritual growth is the goal of salvation, and for this we must have the mind of Christ, and then we can appear as a light in this rebellious generation. Shepherd Seungwon Kim clearly testified that our goal is not to succeed outwardly, but to know Jesus and become like Him. With this goal, he has been pioneering the Wonchon chapter since 2008 even in the midst of hardship, serving vulnerable children and vulnerable sheep. To fully reveal the truths of the scripture passage, he made 7 video recordings of his message besides the practice rehearsal, and after finally completing the video recording, he even collapsed from exhaustion. Missionary J. Bunyan has been preaching the gospel in a variety of creative ways for 28 years in country A, where even locals should not share the gospel with people of other religions. He cheerfully testified based on his vivid experience that even in the midst of severe persecution and extreme poverty, we can rejoice in the Lord if we put Christ at the center, and that this is the fruit that God desires for us.

On the first day, Shepherd Active (AI) and Missionary Sarah Kim (Japan) gave their life testimonies, and on the second day, Missionaries Carol Ho (Australia), Paulin Hong

(Singapore), and Aroma Baek (B) gave their life testimonies. Shepherd Active was not originally a life testimony sharer but was later appointed to share his life testimony instead of Shepherd Samuel Palaka, who had caught the Corona virus. However, Shepherd Active also contracted Corona right after completing his life testimony, but right before the video recording. We prayed for his recovery. God not only restored his health, but also enabled him to complete the testimony video recording 8 days before the conference. The Lord saved him from the prison of idolatry and from fatalism caused by extreme poverty and is now using him as a fisher of people. Missionary Sarah Kim testified of God's grace in saving her from idolatry, lust, and sickness and establishing her as a mother of nations who serves the souls of Japan, a barren land of the gospel for the past 30 years. Missionary Carol Ho testified of the Lord who made her who was once full of worldly desires into a shepherdess and missionary. She was sent as a missionary to Australia in 2014 and has been serving the pioneering ministry of Brisbane, Australia holding on to the words of Revelation 2:10, "If you are faithful to death, you will be given the crown of life." Missionary Pauline Hong testified of the Lord who saved her who was once like a bruised reed and trained her as a woman of faith. Ever since she was called as a missionary to Singapore, she has been growing in knowing Jesus deeply for the past 20 years through the three crosses she carries, the cross of her career life, shepherd life, and family life. Missionary Aroma Baek was sent as a missionary to Country B, a poor Buddhist country in 1994. Country B had a civil war going on, and terrorism did not stop. She lived in a house frequented by cobras and thieves. She was once bitten by a scorpion that came into her house. She faced countless near-death experiences, but her God delivered her from all those threats. To this day, while living in a place which is like a wilderness, she still believes in the God who can make a river of His living word flow amidst the desert and who can make a way to raise disciples. She remains unwaveringly faithful to Him.

In North American and Latin American regions, Missionary Andrew Kim (Ecuador), Shepherd William Larson (USA), and Missionary Edith Nahera (El Salvador) served the scripture from Philippians 2-4 respectively. Missionary Andrew Kim testified that we can become of one heart and one mind only when we learn about Jesus, who emptied himself

until he died on the cross. He was determined to faithfully serve the poor and dangerous pioneering ministry of Ecuador, humbly working together for the glory of the Lord without comparing himself to other missionaries. Shepherd William Larson testified that the most important thing in life is to know Christ, and that that is the only and greatest benefit for us. He delivered a powerful message that in order to know Jesus, we must live like Jesus, and when we share in Jesus' sufferings, we will come to gain the resurrection of Jesus. Missionary Edith Nahera started pioneering El Salvador in 2006. El Salvador is a dangerous country full of poverty, broken families, and gangs. But she testified with tears in her eyes that we can do all things because the Lord is with us and strengthens us, and how Jesus is the reason and source of all joy.

Shepherds and missionaries Keegan Callis (Washington), Joshua Park (Victoria, Canada), Raoul (Seu, Mexico), Esther Bae (Puebla, Mexico), John Pringle (El Camino, USA), and Sarah Jang (Belize) shared their life testimonies. Shepherd Keegan Callis testified of a faithful God who is always with him even when he is weak or failing, a God who works all things together for the good of those who are called. Missionary Joshua Park worked with all his heart and strength to serve his family, be financially independent, and pioneer campus ministry. But in the face of the difficulties and financial hardships caused by his children's issues, he realized that what Jesus really wanted for him was that he would die to himself, know Jesus and be like Jesus. He has restored the joy of heaven and is helping campus sheep and his children. Shepherd Raoul once suffered greatly from the fear of the experience of losing his memory and the discord of his parents. God touched him with the words, "Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28) and gave him forgiveness and freedom through the grace of the cross. Now, God has appointed him as a servant of the Word and has made his mouth like a sharp sword to preach the Word every Sunday. Shepherdess Esther Bae thanked God for calling and saving her, who was once only a useless servant who could not speak well, was shy, slow, and had no power to work, and for how He is using her in His ministry of redemption. She faithfully ministers to her sheep and children, confessing that Christ alone is her gain. Shepherd John Pringle was moved by the grace of salvation that came

to him, who was once like a lost sheep, and began to invite students to study the Bible from morning to night. Married and working, he leaves work early in the afternoon, goes to campus, and serves the sheep until it gets dark and sometimes his legs hurt so much that he cannot walk. God is using him as a source of blessing for many college students. Sarah Jang retired in 2009 at the age of 62 and went to Belize as a silver missionary. The house she rented has no air conditioning and sandflies, lizards, mice, cockroaches, and mosquitoes make their appearances. However, she is helping many Belize students by opening up her home and making it into a women's common life.

The messages and life testimonies that were evidenced in the lives of these missionaries and shepherds were greatly moving for everyone who saw and heard them. What gave us grace and left as much of an impression on us as the main messages and the life testimonies, were the study of the Word and testimony sharing within the small groups. Just meeting missionaries and shepherds from different continents of similar age groups and sharing each other's pain and difficulties gave me great joy and comfort. Each of us faced a variety of challenges, including health issues, children's issues, financial issues, coworkers' issues, communication issues, parenting issues, loneliness issues, visa issues, and burnout issues. Despite all these difficulties, they preached the gospel diligently and served the campus sheep, but there were many who were discouraged because there was no visible fruit of discipleship. The more their hardships and pain, the more tears flowed during small group meetings. The missionaries could empathize and understand one another even if they heard a word about it, thus, if one missionary shed tears, others followed and shed tears. However, as we studied the words of the Philippians, we realized that the greatest blessing is to obtain the righteousness that comes from God only through faith in Jesus Christ. I have come to accept deeply that what Jesus wants us to do is not to pursue any outward or splendid achievements, but to know Christ through many sufferings at the place where He has called us. Once we realize that in order to know Christ, we must share in the sufferings of Christ, endure all the suffering to the point of death, and we set our inner direction towards reaching the glory of resurrection, the sorrow and pain caused by those sufferings will turn into joy and pleasure. The small

group testimony sharings were a time of crying and laughing, and it felt like fellowship of heaven.

We were able to fellowship with missionaries from other continents and national leaders through the small group Bible studies and testimony sharings. Through the Homecoming Day, we were able to have fellowship with shepherds from respective home centers that sent us out as missionaries. Due to the time differences, it was difficult to find one set meeting time that worked for everyone. In the case of centers that had sent out many missionaries, it was difficult to gather them all at once. Nevertheless, we reunited after a long time, shared of God's grace received from the conference, and shared topics of thanks and prayer, and through all of it, we were able to confirm our passionate love in Christ. Even on Homecoming Day, we often shed tears of joy and longing. The missionaries were grateful for the love of the home center shepherds who did not forget them and prayed for them. Home center shepherds were able to offer more effective intercession by seeing the faces of their missionaries and hearing their current status and prayer topics.

3. Gather the leftover pieces and let nothing be thrown away

We want to preserve all the grace that the Lord has given us in this conference so that none of it is wasted. The great advantage of this conference was that anyone who wanted to attend was able to attend. Because it was an online retreat, we did not have to take a week or two off to attend the retreat. There was no airfare, and no training fee. There were no restrictions on the location, so some attended the retreat program at work, some at the supermarket, and some at home, taking care of their children. As a result, there were many who attended the missionary leaders conference for the first time even though they had been out as missionaries for a long time. One missionary commented on this and said it felt like blood reaching the capillaries of every peripheral nerve. Above all, we are filled with thanksgiving for the good fruits borne through the united coworking of missionaries from all around the world in preparation for this conference. Thanks to the devoted service of the missionaries, national leaders from all over the world participated in this conference

and were able to study the Word in their own language and share God's grace with them.

In a survey conducted after the conference, 96% of the respondents rated it as a satisfactory conference. Upon looking at the reasons for such responses, we came to know that our missionaries and national leaders were able to re-examine the purpose of their life and renew their spiritual direction through the study of Philippians at this conference. The words "have the heart of Christ" and "to know Christ" were deeply engraved into their hearts. Through the Word of God, we met and fellowshiped with missionaries and national leaders from other continents, and each received comfort and joy. Missionaries and national leaders of similar ages became spiritual friends, had intimate conversations, and prayed for each other, gaining strength through it. In addition to the evaluations, the participants of the conference shared various opinions. We would like to listen to each of their opinions. We only gave our small 'five loaves and two fish,' but Jesus used them to feed 1,800 people. We give thanks and praise to our Lord for paving a new way where there had been no way, in a time when every way seemed blocked due to the corona virus. And for enabling us to overcome the limitations of time, distance, cost, and place and hold this conference where the gospel of Jesus Christ filled everyone's souls.

- Moses Noh (Secretary of Korea UBF)