ABSTRACT

The Evangelization of Secular Young Adults in South Korea:
Effective Principles for Conversion Growth among Protestant Churches

Since Protestant missionaries came to Korea in 1884, Korean Protestantism took

root in the soil of Korea and began to grow. In the history of Protestantism in South

Korea, the most remarkable growth occurred during the period of rapid modernization,

which happened from the 1960s through the 1980s. Since the 1990s, the growth of

Protestantism has stagnated and began to decline between 1995 and 1999.

This decline is partly caused by secularization in South Korea. Under the impact of

rapid modernization, the influence of religion significantly decreased. The force of

secularization impacts young adults more than older generations, presenting new

challenges to Korean Protestant churches. Young adults now have become the most

nonreligious age group in South Korea who often have a negative perception of

Protestantism.

This study explores the evangelization of secular young adults in South Korea. Two

major research agendas are investigated throughout this study. The first agenda is

concerned with the study of the characteristics of secularization in South Korea as a lens

to interpret the decline of Protestantism (chapters two and three). For this agenda, the

following three views on the secularization of society are used: the classical view, the

revisionist view, and the supply-side view. In addition, Martin Marty's controlled

secularity and the existential security theory of Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart are

helpful in delineating the character of Korean secularity in the unique religious and social

context of Korean society.

The second agenda deals with effective principles for conversion growth of young

adults. This study includes 45 interviews of new converts from secular backgrounds and characterizes important factors that influence their conversion (chapter five). The following four theories and perspectives inform the effective evangelization of secular young adults and interpret the interviews: ethos theory, relational network theory, indigeneity theory, and a process theory of conversion (chapter four). This study also features six churches in metropolitan Seoul, South Korea, that effectively reach out to secular young adults. The six participating churches are Dream Community Church, Kangnam Church, Nadulmok Church, Samil Church, Sarang Community Church, and Sungbok Church. Reflecting on the approaches and ministries of these six churches, the following five common characteristics emerge: 1) evangelism as a main goal of the church, 2) worship style that reflects the culture of young adults, 3) emphasis on prayer, 4) small groups where life and the Word of God are shared, and 5) emphasis on developing young adult leaders (chapter six).

This study provides several concluding thoughts by discussing missiological implications and suggesting revised approaches to the evangelization of secular young adults (chapter seven). First, the credibility of evangelists and the embodiment of the gospel message play a strong role in sharing the gospel with secular people who have many religious and spiritual options. Second, for secular people, "belonging" is crucial in "believing" the gospel message. Small groups are an important environment for the conversion of secular people. Third, understanding conversion as an event became less and less effective in evangelizing secular people who have little or no basic Christian knowledge and possess a negative perception on Protestantism. Viewing conversion as a process is meaningful and effective in evangelizing secular young adults in South Korea.
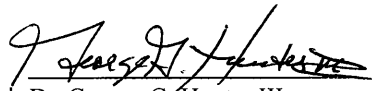
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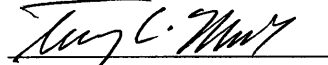
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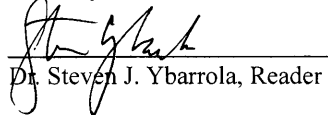
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Chapter 1

Korean Protestant Christianity's New Challenge:
The Secularization of South Korea's Younger People

One of the biggest challenges that Korean Protestant churches face is the
secularization of South Korea's young adults. More and more young adults are less
strongly influenced by religion than older adults and are the most nonreligious age group
in Korea, which is an area explored later in this study. As a pastor of young adults in a
local church in Seoul, I was involved for five years in attempts to evangelize secular
young adults, and therefore have firsthand experience with the difficulty involved in
effectively reaching them. My struggles as a young adult pastor coalesced into a strong
motivation for devoting myself to this study.

During my ministry, members of my young adult group would sometimes invite
their unchurched friends to our young adults group so they could hear the gospel message.
Some of these unchurched young adults came to church with their hair dyed yellow and
red. Rather than objecting to the gospel message, they seemed indifferent to it. To see
their lack of response to the gospel message was frustrating.

This dissertation is related to evangelizing secular young adults in Korea. An
important consideration to be aware of is that the research focus is upon Protestant
Christianity in South Korea. Therefore, any reference to "Korean churches" in this
dissertation should be understood as referring to Protestant churches in South Korea.

The target population of the research is "secularized Korean young adults." This
can be construed to mean young adults who have never been Christian or it can refer to
young adults who were nominally involved in the church at some point in their earlier life

but have since dropped out of church. This dissertation focuses more on the former, without excluding the latter.

Many Korean churches already have ideas and assumptions about how to reach Korean young adults. This research may confirm some of their wisdom on evangelizing secularized young adults and may debunk some myths, contributing to a new or revised paradigm for evangelizing secularized Korean young adults.

Statement of the Problem

Most Korean churches are not effectively evangelizing secularized young adults. Secularization in Korea has made the process of evangelizing more difficult. Additionally, more effective principles of evangelizing secular young adults remain obscured by traditional patterns of evangelism that are less and less effective.

Background to the Problem

Korean Christianity, especially Protestantism, was well known for its remarkable growth from the 1960s through the 1980s. Forty years ago, Koreans flooded into Protestant churches in response to street evangelism and nationwide mass evangelistic campaigns. In 1962, the number of Protestants (736,000) occupied 6.2 percent of the total South Korean population; the number grew to 19.7 percent (8,760,000) by 1995.

Korean Protestant church growth rates, however, have declined since the 1990s and, by 1999, Korean church memberships had declined compared to 1995. In 1999, 18.6 percent of the total population of Korea were Protestants, compared to 19.7 percent in 1995. According to 2005 census data, the Protestant population decreased from 18.6

percent in 1999 to 18.3 percent in 2005, although the decrease was not statistically significant.

The decrease of the Protestant population occurred while the religious population in South Korea grew. Compared to the 1995 census, the religious population of 2005 in Korea increased from 50.7 percent to 53.1 percent.[1] The growth of the religious population primarily came from Catholic churches. The number of Catholics increased from 4.6 percent in 1985, to 10.9 percent in 2005. Church growth writers have observed that where religious populations increase, the receptivity of people also increases.[2] However, many Protestant churches do not gather a harvest in growing fields.

Therefore, this dissertation will focus on the evangelization of the secular young adults (the 18-35 age group) in South Korea. Three trends suggest the magnitude of this new challenge. First, the percent of the religious population of the age group (48.2 percent in 2005) is below the Korean overall average percent of religious population (53.1 percent in 2005) and the 18-35 age group became the most nonreligious group in South Korea.[3]

Second, the influence of religion on young adults has continually decreased. Gallup Korea's research in 1984, 1989, 1997, and 2003 indicates that more and more young adults consider religion less important in their lives than older generations and feel that

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[1] The census data is available from http://www.nso.go.kr; Internet; accessed 4 April 2008.

[2] George Hunter, *The Contagious Congregation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), 119.

[3] Based on 2005 Census data, these age groups occupied the lowest religious population percentage among all age groups of South Korea. The census data is available from http://www.nso.go.kr; Internet; accessed 4 April 2008. The percent of religious population was calculated by this researcher.

the influence of religion on society is decreasing.[4] The detailed statistical data

concerning this trend will be provided in chapters three and four. Many Koreans—

particularly young adults—became indifferent to Protestantism, or even hostile to it.

Young adults are now perhaps one of the least receptive people groups to Protestantism in

South Korea, making evangelism a complex and challenging task.

Third, the percentage of young adult Protestants in the total Protestant population

has continuously decreased. According to census data of 1985, the percentage of young

adult Protestants comprises 30.8 percent of the total Protestant population. In 2005, the

percentage decreased to 22.2 percent of the total Protestant population. This decrease can

be partly explained by a decrease of the young adult population in South Korea over the

last twenty years, but it also seems to reveal that the Korean churches are losing young

adults.[5]

The actual denominational data indicates the reality is worse than the above census

statistical data. According to 2008 data of the Kosin denomination in South Korea

(237,635 members), the young adults group comprised only 11.5 percent of total

members of the denomination. In case of the Tong-Hap denomination (2,699,419

members), one of representative denominations in South Korea, the young adult group

comprised only 6.1 percent of total members of the denomination in 2009.[6] Therefore,

urgency exists to challenge churches in South Korea to connect with the young adult

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[4] Gallup Korea. *Hangukinui Jonggyowa Jonggyouisik* [The religion and religious consciousness of Korean people] (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2004), 70-71, 124-125.

[5] Sang-Wha Lee, *Cheongnyeondeuli Gyohoereul Tteonaneun 33gaji Iyu* [33 reasons for young adults' leaving the church] (Seoul: Peniel, 2007),13.

[6] The statistical data of Tong-Hap denomination are available from http://www.pck.or.kr/PckConference/PckBoardList.asp?ArticleId=61; Internet; accessed 8 January 2011.

population, to avoid the label that Protestantism is religion of the older generation.[7]

One major historical force that helps account for the difficulty of evangelizing Korean young adults is secularization. South Korea has never been a Christian country, nor has Christianity ever been a state-religion there, yet secularization has occurred in Korean society. The modernization process in South Korea significantly impacted social structure, people's thinking patterns, and religious values, especially during the period of remarkable church growth that occurred from the 1960s through the 1980s, which will be expounded upon in chapter three. When the modernization process reached a certain point, the *influence* of religion significantly decreased, and church membership strength stagnated, and then declined. The impact of secularization touches the whole of Korea, not only young adults, but young adults believe that the influence of religion on society has decreased more than the older adults believe.

Research Questions

Several research questions guide this study.

RQ1. What are the characteristics of Korean secularization? How is it different from secularization in the West? What is the shape of secularization in Korea?

RQ 2. What kinds of theories and perspectives might be helpful for informing the evangelization of secular young adults?

RQ3. What characteristics best describe secularized Korean young adults? Why are

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[7] Mira Han wrote a book concerning the education of Protestant Sunday schools for the ages from infants to college students in 2005. She was concerned about the change of number of Protestant Sunday school students in South Korea. In 1987, the number of Sunday school students comprised almost half of total Protestants, but in 2004 the number decreased by 23 percent. Mira Han, *Gaesingyo Gyohoegyoyuk* [Protestant church education] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2005), 125.

secular young adults not interested in the church and its message?

RQ4. What leads some secularized Korean young adults to Christ? What attracts them to churches? What kinds of experiences help move them toward faith?

RQ5. What are the characteristics of churches that effectively reach secular young adults in Korea? What kinds of ministries are the most effective in evangelizing secular young adults? What lessons can be learned from churches that are already effectively reach secular young adults?

Delimitations

This study's focus requires delimitations. First, while the possibility exists that other age groups in Korea share the characteristics of secularized young adults, this study is limited to young adults. Second, the research is limited to young adults who live in and around Seoul, the biggest city in South Korea; the young adults of metropolitan Seoul represent more than 25 percent of South Korea's total young adult population. Third, although many effective young adult ministries exist in Seoul, only churches that have experienced significant conversion growth, as defined below, are part of the case studies. Fourth, churches that grow mostly by transfers from other churches will not be part of the study. Fifth, six churches were selected for the study as representative of churches that have experienced the following: a) more than 14 percent net growth per year, and b) at least 15 percent of the net growth stems from conversion growth.[8] The six are not exhaustive of churches in and around Seoul that meet the criteria, but they represent a good sample. Sixth, my study does not include North Korea.

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[8] George Hunter, *The Apostolic Congregation: Church Growth Reconceived for a New Generation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 10. Hunter calls this type of growth apostolic growth.

Definition of Key Terms

(1) *Secularization*: The term "secularization" needs to be distinguished from "secularism." Secularism implies a philosophical perspective and an epistemological shift from a God-centered approach to an anthropocentric approach.[9] Since human autonomy and the power of reason are emphasized in secularism, exclusive humanism is emphasized and religion is relativized. "Secularity" refers to changed social settings that are caused by secularization's effect on cultures. Sociologists and historians usually define the meaning of secularization somewhat differently. However, they shape significant common perspectives.

Peter Berger defines secularization as "the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols."[10] Bryan R. Wilson believes that secularization means "the process whereby religious thinking, practice and institutions lose social significance."[11] George Hunter summarizes important commonalities among the definitions of secularization by saying it is "the withdrawal of whole areas of life and thought from the Church's influence."[12] Charles Taylor explains secularization as "the core of what we mean when we talk of this society being more 'secular' than that is that the lives of fewer in the former than in the latter are influenced by religious beliefs."[13]

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[9] Eddie Gibbs, "Secularization," in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Mission* ed. A. Scott Moreau (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 866.

[10] Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), 107.

[11] Bryan R. Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society* (London: Watts, 1966), xiv.

[12] George G Hunter III, *Church for the Unchurched* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 20.

[13] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The Belknap

In a South Korean context, one interesting fact about Korean secularization is that the religious populations increased under modernization. Questionable, however, is how much religious beliefs actually permeated the minds of people. A significant percentage of religious populations just want to attain peace of mind through religion, as will be demonstrated later. Though modernization undermined traditional religious values, it did not seem to give many people the answers they needed, but instead caused moral crisis, destruction of community, and materialism. Therefore, secularization in Korea means that the influence of religious beliefs decreases both in public and private areas of life in spite of the increased number of people who participate in some kind of religious activity. People seem to suffer from loss of direction, meaning, and belonging due to the lack of a substitute for religion.

(2) *Young Adults*: The age range that belongs to this group is difficult to define. Korean churches generally use the term *Cheongnyeon Daehakbu* to denote the young adult group, which means "unmarried" people who are attending college and college graduates or equivalent ages. Typically the age range of young adults in Korean churches is 18-29, but it can extend up to 35. Thus, this research adopts the extended usage of age in referring to young adults.

(3) *Conversion*: Many people use the term "conversion" in different ways. Conversion studies by psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, and theologians reveal a range of concepts. Even theologians may use the term differently from one another. Some people even include sanctification within the category of conversion. At least one writer, Paul Löffler, related conversion to sanctification, baptism, mission, and even

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Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 430.

social regeneration.[14] Since conversion experiences touch every area of our Christian life,

we need to clarify the basic meaning of it for this study.

Several sources help clarify the meaning of conversion for this study. After William

Barclay studied the meaning of conversion on the basis of *epistrephein* (also *strephein*),

he concluded that "the basic idea is that of a turn, a change of direction, a reversal of life.

So then, the basic fact with which we begin is that conversion is a turning of a man's

mind and heart and life in the direction of God."[15] George Morris summarizes the

meaning of conversion with two elements: "the negation of a preceding thought and

action and the affirmation of a new direction."[16] Richard Peace believes that conversion

involves both *metanoeo* and *pistis* (faith), which "activates repentance and moves it from

a mental decision to a behavior activity."[17] Therefore, the essential meaning of

conversion is turning away from one's sins to God. Peace claims the following three core

characteristics exist in Christian conversion through his exploration of the biblical

meaning of conversion: insight (into self and into Jesus), turning (from sin/hardness-of-

heart to Jesus by repentance and faith), and transformation (forgiveness, discipleship, and

new life).[18]

While the category of conversion is necessary and the meaning of conversion for

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[14] Paul Löffler, "The Biblical Concept of Conversion," in *Mission Trends*, no. 2 *Evangelization*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky (New York: Paulist Fathers, 1975). His major tone of this article is ecumenical. Along with his scholarly Bible study of conversion, he seems to insist "comprehensiveness" of conversion throughout this article.

[15] William Barclay, *Turning to God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972), 25.

[16] George E. Morris, *The Mystery and Meaning of Christian Conversion* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1981), 35.

[17] Richard V. Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 352.

[18] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 280-281.

this study is explained, the researcher also acknowledges that difficulty exists in providing crystal-clear criteria and definition in order to discern true conversion. Some mystery also exists in conversion experiences and God will be the final judge. Concerning the complex nature of conversion, Lewis Rambo points out that we have little choice except to let churches define it from within their tradition.[19]

(4) *Conversion Growth*: According to Donald McGavran, conversion growth occurs when "those outside the Church come to rest their faith intelligently on Jesus Christ and are baptized and 'added to the Lord' in His Church."[20] In contrast to that, transfer growth means "the increase of certain congregations at the expense of others."[21] This research adopts McGavran's definition of conversion growth.

(5) *Evangelism*: David Barrett traces the history of the concept of evangelism and summarizes two kinds of definitions for "evangelize." One definition is that "to evangelize means to preach, bring, tell, proclaim, announce, declare (the gospel), whether people accept it or not, whether they are then won or converted or not, although this is the intent."[22] The other definition of evangelism is that "to evangelize means not just to proclaim but to actually win or convert people to the Christian faith."[23] The ultimate difference between these two definitions of evangelism is based on the results of

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[19] Lewis R. Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1993), 3.

[20] Donald Anderson McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, rev. ed (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 98.

[21] McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 98.

[22] David Barrett, *Evangelize!: A Historical Survey of the Concept* (Birmingham: New Hope, 1987), 51.

[23] Barrett, *Evangelize*, 51.

evangelism. According to Barrett, upper-range Christian specialists prefer the first definition. These include professors of mission and evangelism, biblical scholars, and linguistic experts. Middle-range Christian practitioners, however, prefer the second definition. These include pastors, mission executives, and evangelists. Barrett concludes that "the truth lies at both extremes. Both interpretations are entirely correct. Either way, therefore, the Body of Christ badly needs both."[24]

This dissertation focuses more on Barrett's second definition, since this research is geared toward churches that effectively win secular young adults. However, the first definition will not be totally excluded because the two definitions are strongly interrelated. Even McGavran, who prefers the second one, highlights the importance of a seed-sowing presence among resistant populations.[25] In addition, Richard Peace demonstrates that the New Testament portrays the nature of conversion as both instantaneous and gradual.[26] Lewis Rambo, writing from a psychological perspective, also emphasizes the process-oriented nature of conversion.[27] In the actual practice of evangelism, therefore, clearly the second definition presupposes the first. Moreover, the terms evangelization and evangelism will be used interchangeably even though some distinctions exist between these two words.[28]

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[24] Barrett, *Evangelize*, 79.

[25] McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 260.

[26] Richard V. Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament: Paul and the Twelve* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

[27] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion,* 1.

[28] According to Barrett, evangelism was derived from the Greek word *euangelismos* and evangelization originated from the Latin *evangelizatio*. Evangelism usually meant methods and activities with an emphasis on methodology. Evangelization was "being developed to cover the concepts of the global spread of Christianity" with an emphasis on the necessary strategy and goals required to achieve this

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is divided into two parts. The first part is related to the phenomena of secularization where the following three views on secularization should be introduced to guide the interpretation of these phenomena: the classical view, the revised view, and the supply-side view. In addition, the insights of influential theorists such as Martin Marty, Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, and Charles Taylor are especially foundational for understanding the secularization of South Korea.

The second part offers several theoretical perspectives for informing the evangelization of young adults, including ethos theory, relational network theory, indigeneity theory, and a process theory of conversion.

These theoretical principles differ from Protestant folk wisdom among Korean church leaders regarding how best to evangelize secular young adults. First, the importance of passionate prayer is emphasized by most church people. Second, the importance of prayer leads to highlighting the power of the Holy Spirit in ministry. Third, the importance of love for lost people is emphasized. Fourth, bold preaching and other approaches to monologue presentations are considered indispensible approaches to evangelizing secular young adults, where evangelism becomes essentially the transmission of information about salvation. Fifth, many Protestants consider evangelism as an encounter or an event that involves persuading people to make a decision for Christ

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end. Barrett, *Evangelize*, 27. Since 1920 and especially after 1957, Protestant Christians mostly used the term evangelism rather than evangelization, and the Roman Catholics preferred the term evangelization, which would be related to its Latin origin. However, according to the author, "the actual terms evangelism and evangelization remained as synonyms to almost all Protestant and Anglican writers." Barrett, *Evangelize*, 51.

on the spot. Sixth, some church leaders totally (or primarily) depend on worship services for evangelism. Seventh, many church leaders place a priority on reaching inactive church members rather than reaching unchurched people. This research affirms some of these themes, disproves others, and deepens some. One purpose of this research will be to test the relative validity of the Korean Christians' folk wisdom for evangelizing young adults in Korea. Even the valid Protestant Folk Wisdom gives a necessary, but not sufficient, understanding for strategic evangelism in a time of discontinuity.

Research Methodology

To answer the research questions, two methodologies of research were used: academic research and field-based case studies.

Academic Research

Books and articles on secularization and major features of secularization written by both Western and Korean sociologists were explored. The theory of Western secularization is a very complicated one and has a long history of debate. Instead of contributing to the debate, more efforts were dedicated to identify major themes and characteristics of secularization for the purpose of evangelism. On that basis, books and articles of Korean sociologists who are interested in the phenomena of secularization in Korea were surveyed. Reviewing books and articles on Korean secularization reveals that much of their literature does not characterize some features of secularization in Korea that are different from those of Western secularization. In addition, they did not provide empirical data or phenomena that can support their assertions. Through this research, the

researcher studies secularization theories that have been used by Korean sociologists or church leaders to define the Korean experience of secularization, as compared and contrasted to western secularization via secularization history and secularity's features in South Korea.

Moreover, to provide empirical data of secularization in Korea and profile secularized Korean young adults, the results of surveys were used that had been conducted by Gallup Korea concerning religion and religious consciousness of Koreans in 1984, 1989, 1997, and 2003. These surveys have been conducted with the same questionnaires; as a result, we can trace the changes in the religious consciousness of Koreans. In addition, another survey of 2,000 Korean adults (1,000 Protestants, 354 Buddhists, 112 Catholics and 534 secular people) was considered important. The survey was conducted by Gallup Korea in 2004.[29] Also, other research done by the Christian Ethic Movement in South Korea in 2008, and the European and World Value Survey were used in the following chapters.

Case Studies

Multiple-case design helped direct this research. Six congregations have been identified that have experienced significant conversion growth for the past five years for the field research. These are the six participating churches: Kangnam Church, Dream Community Church, Nadulmok Community Church, Samil Church, Sarang Community Church, Sungbok Church.

The general rules, principles, and terms of Robert K. Yin were followed in my case

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[29] Hanmijun, *Hangukgyohoe Miraeripoteu* [A report on the future of the Korean church] (Seoul: Duranno, 2004).

studies.[30] He suggests six sources of evidence in conducting case studies: documentation, archival records, interview, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts.[31] Because of availability, the following four sources of evidence are emphasized in this study: documentation, archival records, interview, and direct-observation.

(1) Documentation: For the case studies, growth history and statistical data of church members were collected to understand and measure their effectiveness in evangelism. Mission statements indicated the "direction" of the churches. General information on their leaders, weekly and yearly programs described the churches' ministry work. In addition, reports and other articles about these churches appearing in the mass media and websites is considered as informative data.

(2) Archival Records: Some kinds of archival records were useful for this research, such as the South Korea census data of 1985, 1995, and 2005; and the membership data of the Kosin denomination in 2008 and of the Tonghap denomination in 2009.

(3) Interview: According to Yin, personal interviews are "one of the most important sources of case study information."[32] Even though interview questions were prepared in advance, my interviews were conversational in nature and had room for follow-up questions. The research interviewed pastors, leaders (in focus groups), and new converts who have been converted from secular background within the last three years in each church. For the interview with new converts, some new converts from other than the six

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[30] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Method*, 4th ed. vol. 5 of Applied Social Research Methods Series (California: SAGE, 2009).

[31] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research*, 101.

[32] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research*, 106.

churches were included in an attempt to get as many interviews as possible. This
interview schedules were as follows:

- Pastor of each young adult group – 90 to 120 minutes
- Group interview with 4 to 5 leaders of each young adult group – 60 minutes
- 45 new converts – 60 minutes each

(4) Direct Observation: The researcher attended their worship services to observe
their worship style, music, and to hear sermons by pastors, observing the extent to which
reflected the culture of the young adults. The researcher also attended Bible study groups
and leaders' meetings. The direct observation did not exclude participation (for example
the researcher also worshipped with them), but since the researcher had a long history as
a participant in Korean young adult ministry, the researcher was conscious to be objective
as possible.

Purpose of the Research

This research aims to contribute to the conversion growth of secular people,
especially young adults in South Korea, by characterizing the secularization in South
Korea as a perspective for understanding the decline of Protestantism, and by offering
informative principles and theories useful for reaching the secular in their unique context
of South Korea.

Significance of the Research

The first reason this study is important is that it investigates secularity in Asia,
especially South Korea. Secularization cannot be considered as a problem of Western

society alone. However, since the context of secularization in South Korea is different from that of the West, this study contributes to the body of knowledge regarding secularization by expressing the essential characteristics of secularity taking place in South Korea.

Reflecting on secularization in South Korea is meaningful, because it provides an interesting opportunity to study rapid social change and its implication on evangelism. Since Korean Protestant churches experienced remarkable church growth and subsequent secularization, the growth and decline of Protestant churches gives a significant perspective to the problems that growing global south churches may face in the future because of the modernization process.

Furthermore, few articles and books that relate the phenomena of secularization to evangelism were written in South Korea. Some sociologists take the issue of secularization and attempt to interpret the social and religious change in South Korea through the process of secularization. But few people realize the importance of different social and religious realities where the ministry of evangelism is concerned. Therefore, this study is meaningful for Protestant churches in South Korea that need to discern the appropriate approaches to the ministry of evangelism.

The second important reason for this study is to provide some alternative ways for evangelizing young adults. Many Korean church leaders have some folk wisdom in evangelizing people that has been passed down from their former generations. A changed context requires a new approach to evangelism. Perpetuating approaches and methodologies that effectively reaped the harvest during the period of high receptivity to Protestantism is not useful in the present context where the influence of religion has

decreased and many people have a negative perception of Protestantism. The time has arrived to rethink our approaches to evangelism, and some folk wisdom needs to be examined for effectiveness. Through the research, theoretical frameworks that inform the evangelization of secular young adults are suggested and examined. Moreover, this study includes the result of interviews of new converts from secular backgrounds. Since few books and articles in South Korea deal with the data regarding the conversion of secular people, this study provides a data resource for the conversion of secular people.

Furthermore, this study characterizes churches that effectively evangelize secular young adults, and in turn, inform church leaders about factors they need to emphasize for effective evangelism. To learn from effective workers who reap a great harvest where other workers return with empty hands is always wise.

Chapter 2

Representative Theories and Reflections on the Secularization of Societies

The topic of secularization has been debated for many years, especially in the area

of sociology of religion; but the debate does not seem to be settled yet. In the history of

reflection on secularization, some people argue for it, while others argue against it. Many

people have written on this topic, and the theories and reflections are often complex. This

chapter will draw a general picture of the secularization of a society in order to help in

the understanding of it, while introducing a representative range of the theoretical

perspectives.

Important to grasp are the general influential concepts of secularization because

many people use the term in different ways. Therefore, Larry Shiner's five concepts of

secularization and Charles Taylor's three story model for secularization theories will be

introduced to clarify the meaning of secularization.

The chapter will then present three views of secularization: a "classical" view, a

"revised" view, and a "supply-side" view. The classical view is the approach of the

strongest proponents of secularization among the three views. The supply-side view

objects to the term of "secularization" and suggests an alternative explanation of the

phenomena to which "secularization" typically refers. The revised view revises the

classical view, while acknowledging that the relationship between modernization and its

influence on religion needs to be taken seriously.

Finally, this chapter introduces the insights of influential theorists: Martin Marty,

Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, and Charles Taylor. Their insights are especially

foundational for understanding the secularization of South Korea.

A Notion of Secularization

Secularization occurred in the context of Christendom in Western society. Christendom germinated when the Roman Emperor Constantine allowed Christianity a privileged religious status and as a result, Christianity became a state religion in the Roman Empire. In the following centuries, the idea of Christianity substantially shaped the social, political, and cultural life of Western societies and governments that were founded on Christian principles. Darrel Guder refers to Christendom as "the system of church-state partnership and cultural hegemony in which the Christian religion was the protected and privileged religion of society and the church its legally established institutional form."[1]

George Hunter enumerates six watershed events in Western society that have led to the process of secularization and caused the disintegration of Christendom. First, secularization began with the Renaissance, from the mid-fourteenth century to the early sixteenth century. Renaissance influenced the process of secularization in three ways. Since the Greek philosophy was rediscovered during the Renaissance, people could hold another compelling worldview other than Christianity. In addition, the Renaissance redirected people's attention from theological matter to human progress. Moreover, the Renaissance provided a cultural soil, out of which humanism emerged.

Second, the Protestant Reformation contributed to the process of secularization. The Reformation turned people's attention from "the management of society and inward

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[1] Darrel L. Guder, ed., *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 6.

toward renewal, reorganization, and theological matters."[2] Third, the rise of nationalism is an important factor in the progression of secularization. The nationalistic spirit put an end to Christendom as a political body. Also, long warfare due to nationalism made people doubt the Church's God. Fourth, the rise of science significantly challenged Christendom's premises about humans and the universe. We can imagine how much science influenced people's thoughts as we consider the impact that the following people had on Western thought: Darwin, Marx, Freud, Newton, and more. Fifth, the Enlightenment escalated the process of secularization by the elevation of human reason causing the inevitable progress of humans. The Enlightenment provided a compelling and rival worldview replacing Christianity in modernity. Sixth, urbanization caused by the industrial revolution greatly pushed the process of secularization.

The concept of secularization is very hard to grasp and is multi-faceted. Since it has occurred in many, very diverse social, cultural, and religious contexts, difficulty exists when attempting to explain secularization in a couple of sentences. Larry Shiner emphasizes the point in the following: "About the only thing that can be said with certainty of the concept of secularization is that one can seldom be certain of exactly what is meant by it."[3] Before we delve into representative theorists and their reflections on secularization, to summarize several basic meanings of this subject is helpful.

Larry Shiner discusses five concepts of secularization.[4] First, secularization is often described as the decline of religion in terms of doctrine, values, and institutions.

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[2] George Hunter, *How to Reach Secular People* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992), 26-29.

[3] Larry Shiner, "The Meaning of Secularization," in *Secularization and the Protestant Prospect*, ed. James F. Childress and Davis B. Harned (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1970), 30.

[4] Shiner, "The Meaning of Secularization," 31-39.

Once, religion heavily influenced many societies and then religion lost most of its status

and influence. Second, secularization is often considered as 'conformity with the world,'

losing the significance of the next life and the supernatural, and adopting values of the

surrounding society. Third, secularization often means 'desacralization,' which is similar

to 'disenchantment,' as Max Weber puts it. Evil spirits and angels are largely removed

from society's consciousness and they become the object of experiments and

manipulation. Fourth, secularization is often considered as a 'disengagement of society'

or a 'differentiation of society.' It shows that a society once informed by religious

doctrine and influences, has now gained autonomy from religious influence, and thus

relegates religion to the area of private life. For example, a hospital doctor's opinion on a

certain disease is more valued than the opinion of a religious practitioner. Fifth,

secularization often means "the transposition" of beliefs and patterns of behavior from

the religious to the secular sphere."[5] Shiner features the example of the spirit of

capitalism as a secularization of Calvin's ethic. Along with Shiner's five concepts of

secularization, this study adds Charles Taylor's loss of transcendence from people's

worldview. He started, *A Secular Age*, with an important question: "Why was it virtually

impossible not to believe in God in, say, 1500 in our Western society, while in 2000 many

of us find this not only easy, but even inescapable?"[6] He adds that an important shift

must occur in people's thought patterns. For Taylor, "secularization" captures this crucial

change in people's lives and thoughts.

Though Shiner's five meanings of secularization represent distinct features of

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[5] Shiner, "The Meaning of Secularization," 38.

[6] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 25.

secularization and are helpful to understand secularization, they are limited because they are inter-twined and influence each other. For example, the concept of the decline of religion is also related to 'differentiation of society,' 'desacralization of the world' and 'decline of practice and belief of individuals.' In addition, the secularization theory has multi-dimensional aspects, including the decreasing number of church members, as well as the differentiation of society, which makes the debate much more complicated.[7] Therefore, explanation of the meaning of secularization in a multi-tiered way is appropriate for the purpose of clarity.

Thus, Charles Taylor suggests a three-story dwelling to describe mainstream secularization theory in a multi-level way.[8] The first floor symbolizes the claim that religious belief and practice have declined and the scope and influence of religious institutions have decreased. The "basement" represents explanations concerning how this religious decline happens, such as rationalization and loss of community. The "second floor" stands for the place of religion today, highlighting the consequences of secularization on religion. His three-story model helps to clarify the complexity of the secularization debate by assigning certain discussions of secularization to the proper floor. Taylor found wide agreement on the first floor. Shiner obviously agreed when he stated, "The decline thesis is one of the most widely accepted meanings of secularization."[9]

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[7] Even Rodney Stark and Roger Finke who are strong opponents of the secularization theory acknowledged at least one meaning of secularization by saying that "if this (differentiation of society) were all that secularization meant, and if we limited discussion to Europe, there would be nothing to argue about. Everyone must agree that, in contemporary Europe, Catholic bishops have less political power than they once possessed." Rodney Stark and Roger Finke, *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion* (Berkeley: University of California, 2000), 59-60.

[8] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 431.

[9] Shiner, "The Meanings of Secularization," 32.

However, Taylor found divergences in the basement and on the second floor. Therefore, the necessity to introduce three representative views on secularization emerges.

Three Views on the Secularization of Society

We have explored some concepts of secularization that make the issue very complicated. Regardless of its complexity, three representative positions on secularization can be categorized: the classical view; the revisionist view which deals with the issue of the second floor, the future of religion in secular society; and the supply-side view, which emphasizes the basement issue, pursuing different cause of decline of religion other than modernization. This segment explains those three views.

The Classical View

The main thrust of secularization is derived from the following classical secularization theory by Francois-Marie Arouet Voltaire, Auguste Comte, Max Weber, and Herbert Spencer: "Secularization involved a linear and inexorable decline of religion to the point of its disappearance."[10] Basically these authors believed that as modernization advanced, religions were on the wane and finally wiped out in a society. Though this extreme claim was no longer dominant in the twentieth century studies of secularization, it still has been echoed in slightly moderated forms.[11] Recent theorists, like Bryan Wilson, Roy Wallis, and Steve Bruce have represented versions of this

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[10] N. J. Demerath III, "Secularization and Sacralization Deconstructed and Reconstructed," in *The SAGE Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. James A. Beckford and N. J. Demerath III (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2007), 62.

[11] Philip S. Gorski, "Historicizing the Secularization Debate," in *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Michele Dillon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 111.

classical view. They offer similar explanations of the process of secularization.

Wilson provides a short definition of secularization in *Religion in Secular Society*, which became very influential in the field of sociology of religion, especially in secularization theory. He contends that secularization meant "the process whereby religious thinking, practice and institutions lose social significance."[12] In line with Wilson, Roy Wallis and Steve Bruce claim the following: "Modernization (itself no simple concept) brings in its wake (and may itself be accelerated by) the diminution of the social significance of religion."[13] Their notion of losing social significance includes both social differentiation combined with the beliefs and actions of individuals.

Wilson offers statistical evidence of secularization in England, such as the number of confirmations, Sunday school children, and Sunday-school teachers; all of which declined numerically. This, he believes, demonstrates the reduction of religious influence in England. He admits that religious influence cannot be completely assessed in terms of numbers, because numbers cannot gauge religious influence on government and public opinions. In addition, people might approve the doctrine of the church without commitment to the institutional church. Wilson, however, believes in "the evidence of the statistics as an index of secularization in the sense of the decline of religious influence and religious organization."[14]

Wilson enumerates the internal factors of religion and the social context that caused the process of secularization. As an internal factor of religion, he interestingly believes

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[12] Bryan R. Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society* (London: Watts, 1966), xiv.

[13] Roy Wallis and Steve Bruce, "Secularization: The Orthodox Model," in *Religion and Modernization*, ed. Steve Bruce (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 11.

[14] Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, 2.

that denominational diversity contributes to the process of secularization by "providing for the uncommitted a diversity of religious choice."[15] In addition, he points to the development of science, democracy, and rationalism as carriers of secularization in England.

The social context of secularization is expanded in Wilson's *Religion in Sociopolitical Perspectives*. The final chapter highlights that secularization is deeply related to the process "in which social organization itself changes from one that is communally based to societally-based system."[16] This change reflects changes from *Gemeinschaft* (local community) to *Gesellschaft* (individual and impersonal association). In *Gemeinschaft*, the role and relationships of people are based on a morality, which is derived from supernatural sources and has reference to supernatural goals, but in *Gesellschaft*, the skills, competences, and contractual relationships that have no references to supernatural sources are dominant.[17] Thus, the significance of religion has decreased in *Gesellschaf*.

While emphasizing the importance of social change in the process of secularization, Wilson highlights the importance of rationalization. He asserts that the social change is the product of the process of rationalization that affects economic, education, and political system, and customs which are related to human birth, aging, and death. The process of rationalization has made a huge impact on secularization.

Following Wilson's line of argument, Wallis and Bruce claim that, with

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[15] Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, 30.

[16] Bryan Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1982), 153.

[17] Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective*, 155.

secularization, "the social significance of religion diminishes in response to the operation of three salient features of modernization."[18] They contend that social differentiation, societalization, and rationalization are the three most salient features of modernization.

Through the social differential process, institutions gain their specialized roles and autonomy by practicing their own functions. Five hundred years ago, the institutional church of Europe provided health care, education, religious services, and welfare. However, now, the churches' roles have been divided, and each institution has its own autonomy and ruling. Therefore, the influence of religion has become marginalized and has retreated from public to private life. Wallis and Bruce also emphasize the influence of economic growth and the surfacing of several classes by social differentiation. Diversity and divisions made the situation difficult to accept a single religious worldview, and thus, Christianity became fragmented.

For societalization, the emergence of massive industrial enterprises, large and anonymous cities, and impersonal bureaucracies largely replaced the era of small scale kinship communities. Wallis and Bruce agree with Wilson, who argues, "Religion may be said to have its source in, and to draw its strength from, the community, the local, persisting relationships of the relatively stable group."[19] In the midst of competing moralities and concepts that are caused by social differentiation and societalization, "religion may retain subjective plausibility, but it does so at the price of its objectives taken-for-grantedness."[20]

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[18] Wallis and Bruce, "Secularization: The Orthodox Model," 8-9.

[19] Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective*, 154.

[20] Wallis and Bruce, "Secularization: The Orthodox Model," 13.

Moreover, the development of science and the advancement of technology substantially replaced supernatural explanations of matters in this world, and in many people supplanted the role of prayer. The transcendence, once presupposed, loses its plausibility and gives way to the cold rational facts that affects all areas of life.

Wilson acknowledges that the modernization process also was accompanied by discontent, the source of which lies in "the sense of alienation that a rational order induces."[21] However, efforts to revitalize religious life through religious small groups and discussion meetings would be short-lived, and only at the local level. He believes that "it does not appear that men will be able to remake the world we have lost, and …it is difficult to see how the otherwise irrevocable pattern of social order could be reinfused with religious inspiration."[22]

Wallis and Bruce seem to admit that their secularization thesis does not necessarily mean that this process is inevitable or irreversible.[23] Bruce also admits that the individual needs for religion might persist. He, however, also suggests that any reversal would likely be short-lived. In another article, he went one step further. He argues that "insofar as anything in this life is certain, it is that secularization of a certain type and extent is *irreversible*."[24] He claims that individual needs are the "result of biological and

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[21] Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective*, 177.

[22] Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective*, 179.

[23] Wallis and Bruce, "Secularization: The Orthodox Model," 27.

[24] Steve Bruce, "The Curious Case of the Unnecessary Recantation: Berger and Secularization," in *Peter Berger and the Study of Religion*, ed. Linda Woodhead, Paul Heelas and David Martin (New York: Routledge, 2001), 100. On a basis of Bruce's book, *Choice and Religion*, David Martin believed that Bruce argues for "steady irreversible decline." David Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 124.

psychological drives being shaped and articulated in a particular culture."[25] In a culture where individual rights and thoughts dominate, to form a consensual understanding of life's meaning and purpose is very difficult. People will interpret these questions differently and pursue answers in their own way. Therefore, he concludes that "unless we can imagine a reversal of the increasing cultural autonomy of the individual, secularization must be seen as irreversible."[26]

<div style="text-align:center">The Revised View</div>

The revised view basically agrees with the classical view, saying that the modernization process significantly impacts social structure, people's thoughts and religious values throughout the process of the shift from Christendom to modern society. Very hard to deny are the influence of modernization on religion, and to act and think as if nothing had happened. However, the revised view does not believe that the secularization process is irreversible and inevitable. Peter Berger, who recently revised his former classical view on secularization in the 1960s, is widely known for this revised perspective.

Peter Berger was once one of the strongest defenders of the classical secularization theory. Berger emphasized that the secularization process influences not only the social structural domain, but also the consciousness of individuals. He highlighted the loss of religious plausibility in society to the chief feature of secularization. According to him, "probably for the first time in history, the religious legitimations of the world have lost

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[25] Steve Bruce, "The Social Process of Secularization," in *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology of Religion*, ed. Richard K. Fenn (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 262.

[26] Bruce, "The Social Process of Secularization," 262.

their plausibility not only for a few intellectuals and other marginal individuals but for broad masses of entire societies."[27] People no longer believe that Christianity can provide meaning for their everyday lives. In place of religion, modernization, industrial capitalism, and rationalization, with the support of scientific and technological personnel, took over the economic and political arenas of America. Thus religion has been relegated to a private affair. This situation is related to the "subjectivization" of religion, which focuses on explaining religion as a psychological matter.[28]

Because of the loss of the plausibility of religion, plus the process of secularization, a pluralistic situation eventually developed.[29] Where Christianity once dominated, now many religions are tolerated and even compete with one another for members. As a result of pluralism, "the religious tradition, which previously could be authoritatively imposed, now has to be *marketed*. It must be 'sold' to a clientele that is no longer constrained to 'buy.'"[30] Free competition in a market situation impacted the very content of religion, which now mainly meets people's moral and therapeutic needs, and even de-emphasizes the supernatural to attract prospective customers.

Since modernization phenomena have been worldwide phenomena, Berger did not hesitate to apply the secularization process to non-Western worlds.[31] His position on secularization, however, was revised seriously. In 1992, he points out four failures of sociology due to the changed situation after the Second World War. One failure of

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[27] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 124.

[28] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 168.

[29] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 135. 138.

[30] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 138.

[31] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 171.

sociology was the classical secularization theory. Based on empirical evidence of the

global religious context, this secularization theory "was valid, and continues to be valid,

for one religion of the world, Europe, a few scattered territories, such as Quebec…and a

fairly thin stratum of Western-educated intellectuals everywhere."[32] In another article, he

refines and clarifies his later position:

> The world today, with some exceptions to which I will come presently, is as
> furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever. This means
> that a whole body of literature by historians and social scientists loosely labeled
> 'secularization theory' is essentially mistaken.[33]

Berger did not completely drop the secularization theory as a whole. He considers

Europe as the only place where the classical secularization theory still can be applied.

Such 'Europe exceptionalism' was driven by the fact that in the rest of the world,

religious vitality is flourishing. He features the growth of the conservative or orthodox

religious movement including evangelicalism in the U.S.A.; and the rapid growth of

Pentecostalism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, which can be partly understood as a

reaction against the modernization process.[34] According to Berger, counter-secularization

forces, shown by the resurgence of religions, coexist with secularization forces because

religions have great appeal, especially to people who are uncomfortable with the present

uncertainty caused by modernization. In addition, generally, secular views are possessed

by the elite, while large numbers of people who are not among the elite have resented this.

Religious movements, therefore, can appeal to people who feel this resentment.

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[32] Peter Berger, "Sociology: A Disinvitation?" *Society* 30 no. 1 (November 1992): 15.

[33] Peter Berger, "The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overview," in *The Desecularization of the World : Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, ed. Peter Berger (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 2.

[34] Berger, "The Desecularization of the World," 6.

In response to Berger's revision, Steve Bruce argues that Berger's recantation is unnecessary. First, he suggests that the growth of conservative and evangelical churches in America can be explained not by "the result of increased popularity" but rather by "population increase and increased longevity."[35] Second, urbanization in America happened later than it did in Britain by about seventy years, and now church attendance and membership is declining. Third, he believes that the social situation of the Second and the Third Worlds is different from the First World's. As the modernization process fully manifests itself, the Second and Third World will follow the same direction as Western society. Bruce presents Inglehart's massive cross-cultural surveys as good examples of "strong and almost universal connection between prosperity and a decline in commitment to religious orthodoxies."[36]

Some scholars acknowledge that since the modernization process happens in diverse social, religious, and cultural contexts, secularization is not at all linear. Philip Gorski notes the examples of Scandinavia and the Benelux nations. The Scandinavian countries experienced late industrialization, but they are the least devout of Western Europe. On the contrary, in spite of earlier urbanization and industrialization, Belgium's Christianity is relatively stronger. He also claims that "it is not at all clear that the twentieth-century downtrend is really part of a long-term decline."[37] Jay Demerath strongly argues that "we must reject all-or-nothing generalizations that apply to all individuals, all churches, all religious, all social classes, all communities, all regions, or

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[35] Bruce, "The Curious Case," 89.

[36] Bruce, "The Curious Case," 100. The Inglehart study will be featured later in this study.

[37] Gorski, "Historicizing the Secularization Debate," 112.

all societies."[38] In this point, Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart are quite correct when

they mention "secularization is a tendency, not an iron law."[39]

Therefore, some people try to revise the secularization theory, which allows them

to accept both decline and resurgence in this modernization process, avoiding

inevitability and linearity of religious decline. Callum G. Brown provides empirical data

to show an opposite trend from the classical secularization theory. He believes that

attendance at religious services and practices are the most important indicators of the

social significance of religion. So, he traced the percentage of church attendance in

Scotland, England, Wales, and the U.S.A., and the percentage of population in towns, to

examine the connection between church growth and urbanization. His assessment of

these countries shows a striking similarity; that church attendance increased in the midst

of urbanization. On the basis of his findings, he suggests a revised principle of the

secularization theory.

> The social significance of religion (1) can rise and fall in any social and economic
> context—pre-industrial, industrial, post-industrial; (2) does not decay automatically
> or irreversibly with the growth of human knowledge, rationality or technology; (3)
> does not decay automatically or irreversibly with industrialization or urbanization;
> …(5) can be challenged by fundamental social and economic change, and can
> suffer short to medium-term decay, but can adapt to the new context and can show
> significant long-term growth.[40]

Grace Davie uses the now-famous term "believing without belonging," to describe

"the persistence of the sacred in contemporary society despite the undeniable decline in

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[38] Demerath III, "Secularization and Sacralization," 64.

[39] Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5.

[40] Callum G. Brown, "A Revisionist Approach to Religious Change," in *Religion and Modernization*, ed. Steve Bruce (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 56.

churchgoing."[41] She believes that we should not underestimate the importance of nominal believers who attend church for special events such as weddings or funerals. "The wider public is not entirely indifferent to the activities of the religious institutions even if they take no – or very little – part in them on a regular basis."[42] As an example of this phenomenon, she studied the percentage of Europeans engaged in voluntary work by type of organization in 1990. In that survey, religion and church marked 5.8 percent, slightly lower than sports and recreation of 6.8 percent, which was the highest percentage activity. In resonance with her observation, she claimed that "people who cease to go to church undoubtedly lose their moorings in institutional Christianity. It should not be assumed, however, that they necessarily adopt secular alternatives."[43]

Robin Gill acknowledges the influence of secularization and notices the long-term decline of religious participation and belief, in the nations of Great Britain, Australia, the United States, and 10 European countries, on the basis of statistical data. However, he also argues that this decline has not been a linear process and suggests that "growing Western secularization is not the whole story."[44] Gill enumerates the following several countertrends: the growth of church attendance due to migration to cities of several immigration people groups; the growth of nontraditional or noninstitutional beliefs; and the persistence of a sincere belief in a personal God. He does not describe the future of

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[41] Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain Since 1945* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 94.

[42] Grace Davie, "The Persistence of Institutional Religion in Modern Europe," in *Peter Berger and the Study of Religion*, ed. Linda Woodhead, Paul Heelas and David Martin (New York: Routledge, 2001), 108.

[43] Davie, "Persistence of Institutional Religion," 104.

[44] Robin Gill, "The Future of Religious Participation and Belief in Britain and Beyond," in *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology of Religion*, ed. Richard K. Fenn (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 284.

religion as a prisoner of an iron cage of classical secularization theory, but rather predicts

the future of religious participation and belief in an open way.

> Thoroughgoing secularity is not the only option remaining in the future within Western societies. Secularity is likely to be a strong and growing feature in many Western countries. Nonetheless, other more varied patterns, resulting from migration, immigration, and a natural tendency to search for meaning, especially at moments evoking a crisis of personal identity, may also remain features of the Western religious map in the future.[45]

Based on the revised view of the secularization theory, this study acknowledges

that something like the classical secularization process has happened, especially in

Europe, and has undermined religious influences, evidenced by the decline of religious

practices and beliefs. This process, however, is not linear or irreversible. The referrant for

"secularization" in this study is essentially in harmony with the revised classical theory.

Along with the debate of linearity or irreversibility, the measure of secularization is

a very important issue. An interesting contrast occurs among scholars when they explain

the secularization of America and Europe. Roger Finke traces several types of statistical

data to examine secularity in America, such as the rates of religious attendance, church

contributions per member, and percentages of those who report that they believe in God.

He studies the church attendance rates for urban areas and rural area. He discovers that

the rates of church attendance grew until 1980. In addition, these rates were higher for

urban areas than rural areas in 1890, 1906, 1926, and 1980. Moreover, the more

demanding churches drew more people. On the basis of the data, he concludes that "the

indicators of modernization reviewed in this essay show no support for the [classical]

model...In the case of the USA, the advent of modernization has not been a source of

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[45] Gill, "The Future of Religious Participation," 291.

religious decay."[46]

Wallis and Bruce, who are strong proponents of the classical or the orthodox view of secularization, acknowledge that no evidence of long-term decline was found in terms of church attendance in the USA. However, they more emphasize people's values of religious belief when they argue for American secularity. They claim, "While these rates (weekly attendance rates) show considerable stability, various studies show signs of the substantial modification of religious belief, and the attenuation of supernaturalism."[47] They emphasize the degree of belief rather than numbers when explaining America's secularity.

In line with them, Bryan Wilson comments on the secularization of America. Since religious memberships have increased over several decades more rapidly than population growth, America seems to be, superficially, a highly religious country. However, according to Wilson, America is a nation "in which the sense of sacred, the sense of the sanctity of life, and deep religiosity are most conspicuously absent."[48] Thus, Americans demonstrate high church attendance in a secularized society. He explains that this high attendance of Americans was caused by people's attempts to attain their national identity through religion.[49] In addition, Wilson argues that the values of American religions have been subordinated to the values of society. Therefore, "though religious practice has

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[46] Roger Finke, "An UnSecular America," in *Religion and Modernization*, ed. Steve Bruce (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 164.

[47] Wallis and Bruce, "Secularization: The Orthodox Model," 20.

[48] Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, 88.

[49] Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, 90. Wilson introduced that the first generation of immigrants hold their religious conceptions; the second generation tended to desert the churches, and to assert American nationality. The third generations became Americanized, but they need the confirmation of identity and nationality by religion. Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, 100.

increased, the vacuousness of popular religious ideas has also increased: the content and meaning of religious commitment has been acculturated."[50]

Wilson's classical view emphasizes the change of American's value systems to support the real secularity of America, but in order to demonstrate European's religiosity the revised view highlights the European's persistent belief without their need to belong to a religious institution. Occasionally European countries are suggested as a good example of the secularization theory by proponents of classical secularization theory, especially in terms of the decline in church attendance. Some scholars who have the revised view argue against Europe's secularization, saying that European countries hold strong religious values which influence the culture and many people have deep seated religious beliefs. Grace Davie's 'believing without belonging,' and Jean-Paul Willaime's 'France is a secular country whose culture is Catholic,'[51] are representative approaches, as mentioned before.

Therefore, for a comprehensive understanding of secularization, one needs to appreciate both religious attendance and practices, along with values and beliefs. Norris and Inglehart suggest three indicators to measure secularity: religious participation, religious values, and religious beliefs.[52] For religious participation, they asked how often people attend religious services and how often they engage in prayer outside of those services. For religious values, they asked people how important God and religion were in

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[50] Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, 98. Wilson wrote this several decades ago. Net membership is now declining, though his concluding observation is still defensible.

[51] Danièle Hervieu-Léger, "The Twofold Limit of the Notion of Secularization," in *Peter Berger and the Study of Religion*, ed. Linda Woodhead, Paul Heelas and David Martin (New York: Routledge, 2001), 124. In his article, Hervieu-Léger asserted that the notion of secularization must have two limitations. He suggested that it should be applied to Europe case and it does not penetrate deep culture of people yet.

[52] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, 40-41.

their lives. For religious beliefs, people were asked whether they believed in heaven, hell, life after death, or the existence of the soul. These ways of measuring secularity will be used in this study's research concerning South Korea.

<div align="center">The Supply-Side View</div>

In contrast to the position of the classical and revised secularization theorists, some sociologists believe that the secularization theory that combines the modernization process with religious decline no longer has validity. They argue that "after nearly three centuries of utterly failed prophesies and misrepresentations of both present and past, it seems time to carry the secularization doctrine to the graveyard of failed theories, and there to whisper, 'Requiescat in pace.'"[53]

Rodney Stark and Roger Finke move further than Berger's 'Europe Exceptionalism,' and strongly question the validity of the secularization theory. They reject the classical and revised secularization theory and have replaced it with a new theory of supply-side secularization –informally a "religious economies model." They suggest four major reasons for their rejection of the secularization theory.

First, many people assumed 'an age of faith,' especially during the medieval period, when ordinary people were much more pious than people in recent centuries. Stark and Finke contend that this concept is misleading, stating evidence to support it is largely lacking. Based on historical documents and surveys, they argue the following:

> As for the ordinary people, during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, they rarely heard mass *anywhere*, most entering a church only for wedding, funerals, and christenings (if then), and their private worship was directed toward an array of

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[53] Stark and Finke, *Acts of Faith*, 79. "Requiescat in pace" means "Rest in peace."

spirits and supernatural agencies, only some of them recognizably Christian.[54] In addition, religious participation in many countries in northern and western Europe was very low prior to the beginning of modernization.[55]

Second, Stark and Finke contend that subjective religiousness remains high even in many secularized countries in Europe. They feature the example of Iceland, which is considered to be the most secularized country. According to the World Value Survey, only two percent of the population attends church weekly, but 81percent of Icelanders express their belief in life after death, and 88 percent of the population believes that a human has a soul. Their argument is that the modern European people are as religious as they were in the Middle Ages in terms of subjective religiousness.

Third, they hypothesize that if modernization really affects people's beliefs, then surely scientists would be the most irreligious group. They tested their hypothesis using the research of the American psychologist James Leuba. In 1914, he sent questionnaires to a random sample of scientists who were registered in *American Men of Science*. Approximately 42 percent of his sample of famous scientists took the position on prayer, which is similar to that of fundamentalists.[56] This survey was repeated in 1996, by Edward J. Larson and Larry Witham, and the result was that 39.3 percent of famous scientists took the same position of 41.8 percent in 1914.

Fourth, they point to several religious situations that do not seem to be compatible with the secularization theory. To begin with, they show that the collapse of Soviet

[54] Stark and Finke, *Acts of Faith,* 63.

[55] Stark and Finke, *Acts of Faith,* 62.

[56] Stark and Finke, *Acts of Faith,* 73.

Communism illustrated that efforts to eradicate all religions, (a situation similar to the

secularization process) have failed, even after several generations of effort. In addition,

commitments to Islam increase in the midst of modernization. Likewise, folk religions in

Asian countries such as Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong continue to thrive.

The secularization theory has highlighted the decline of demand for religion, but

Stark and Finke observe that the demand for religion seems to be constant. Therefore,

they propose "dropping the term *secularization* from all theoretical discourse."[57] Stark

and William Sims Bainbridge support the theory of constant demand for religion when

they propose a general theory on religious commitment. According to them, humans seek

reward, although some desired rewards are limited, or do not exist. When the desired

rewards are unavailable, people search for compensators—"faith" that the reward will be

gained. They believe that "the most general compensators can be supported only by

supernatural explanations," and religion "refers to systems of general compensators based

on supernatural assumptions."[58] Therefore, the demand for religion does not decline.

In contrast to the secularization theory that postulates decline from the demand-

side, the religious economies model deals with the problem of supply-side. Stark and

Iannaccone believe that the economic model of "the market" can be applied to this

religious situation. The core idea of this model is based on the following: "to the degree

that a religious economy is competitive and pluralistic, overall levels of religious

participation will tend to be high. Conversely, to the degree that a religious economy is

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[57] Rodney Stark and Laurence R. Iannaccone, "A Supply-Side Reinterpretation of the 'Secularization' of Europe," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 33 (1994): 231.

[58] Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, "Towards a Theory of Religion: Religious Commitment," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 19 (1980): 123.

monopolized by one or two state-supported firms, overall levels of participation will tend to be low."[59] They attribute a high level of religious vitality in America to intense competition, due to pluralistic religious denominations such as Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Episcopalian mainline churches, as well as the Southern Baptist Convention and the Pentecostals.

Such competition is thought to mobilize clergy and church members into the mode of attracting new members, and is helpful to provide diverse religious options. In contrast, the low level of religious participation in Europe has been caused by lack of any competition because many European countries have been more or less monopolized by state or "established" churches. Their claims oppose Berger's understanding of the relationship between religious pluralism and vitality. Berger believes that diversity undermines plausibility, which leads to the loss of vitality of religion. Therefore, the claims of Stark and Iannaccone concerning religious pluralism and vitality became a much-debated issue.

Though a religious economies model sheds some insight, its claim that it replaces the secularization theory is overstated. Stark and Bainbridge believe that the role of emergent sects essentially keep the same rate of demand to compensate for the loss of power of the traditional leading churches. Bruce points out that an apparent loss of demand-side occurred, especially in England after the traditional leading churches declined.[60] He also highlights that the religious diversity of America has been exaggerated because in "mostly rural parts of the USA, evangelical Protestantism enjoys

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[59] Stark and Iannaccone, "A Supply-Side Reinterpretation," 233.

[60] Wallis and Bruce, "Secularization: The Orthodox Model," 26-27.

'established' status in the dominance of its clergy and members over matters of social policy."[61]

In addition, Gorski points out that a religious economies model faces troubling difficulties in explaining some cases.[62] First, countries that are monopolized by Catholicism show the highest levels of religious participation, and Protestant countries have the lowest. However, countries that have mixed religions generally fall in between the two. This fact does not match with the prediction of a religious economies model. Second, the decline of religious vitality from the late nineteenth century that continued to the 1960s was not caused by a religious monopoly, because the regulation of religious institutions loosened at that time. After critically reviewing the existing research evidence on religious pluralism and participation, Mark Chaves and Philip S. Gorski argue that "the empirical evidence does not support the claim that religious pluralism is positively associated with religious participation in any general sense."[63] In some cases, religious pluralism correlates to religious participation, but it does not in other cases. Moreover, David Voas, Daniel V.A. Olson, and Alasdair Crockett present significant interpretational flaws in relating positively between religious pluralism and participation. They claim that "the correlations arise not necessarily because religious pluralism has a real effect on participation but because of previously overlooked mathematical association between the

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[61] Steve Bruce, "Pluralism and Religious Vitality," in *Religion and Modernization*, ed. Steve Bruce (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 178.

[62] Gorski, "Historicizing the Secularization Debate," 114-115.

[63] Mark Chaves and Philip S. Gorski, "Religious Pluralism and Religious Participation," *Annual Review of Sociology* 27 (2001): 262.

pluralism index and religious participation rate."[64] They show that the "expected correlation can be positive or negative and depends on the nature of the size distributions of the religious groups across geographical areas in a particular data set." On the basis of such findings, Norris and Inglehart argue that a religious economies model was "fundamentally mistaken in trying to generalize from the distinctive American experience to the world as a whole."[65]

Insights of Three Representatives on the Secularization of Society

Many people have written books and articles on the phenomena of secularization. Following are descriptions of four authors who are qualified representatives of the secularization of societies. Their insights are very important to this study.

Martin Marty's *The Modern Schism*

Martin E. Marty, who was professor of Modern Church History at the University of Chicago Divinity School and has authored numerous articles, wrote a very important book concerning secularization. In his book, *The Modern Schism: Three Paths to the Secular*, he argues that three different aspects of the process of secularization exist in Europe, Great Britain, and America: utter secularity, mere secularity, and controlled secularity.

"Utter secularity" means maximal secularity. This happened on Western continents. Utter secularity did not only watch the decline of Christianity, but also devastated

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[64] David Voas, Daniel V.A. Olson, and Alasdair Crockett, "Religious Pluralism and Participation: Why Previous Research is Wrong," *American Sociological Review* 67 (2002): 213.

[65] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, 216.

Christian doctrine. It was anti-Christian and against the idea of God. People in the Western continents thought of "the Christian legacy as representing bad faith, not faith; enslavement, not freedom; falsehood, not truth."[66]

"Mere secularity," which happened in England, does not attack Christianity, but it indicated a situation where Christianity is largely ignored by people because of their preoccupation with mundane pursuits. The main rationale for making this change came from the industrial revolution which, in turn, caused substantial social changes that encouraged people to worship power and material goods. Instead of being influenced by agnostic books and the profound philosophical ideas of secularists, people gradually became "tired, thoughtless, distracted; old parochial forms had lost their functions and old appeals had lost their drama. Religion offered them little and seemed to be superfluous. They went their own way."[67]

"Controlled secularity" prevailed in America, vis a vis what occurred in both European forms. Like Europe, America also experienced industrialization, and the industrial city became dominant after 1870. However, contrary to England, institutional religion greatly expanded and progressed in America during this period. Some people may argue that, since the religious situation is different from that of Europe, it seems unfair to call America a secularized country. In spite of this fact, Marty argues that America was secularized because religious forces "were boxed in....religion acquiesced in the assignment to address itself to the personal, familiar, and leisured sectors of life while the public dimensions – political, social, economic, cultural – were to become

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[66] Marty, *The Modern Schism*, 19

[67] Marty, *The Modern Schism*, 73.

autonomous or to pass under the control of other kinds of tutelage."[68] Thus, compartmentalization of religion is a very important concept when describing American secularity.

American secularity can be described by the observation of transformed symbols. When Americans experienced sudden social changes, they needed transformed symbols to help them "cushion the shock of change and suggest that some things at least remained continuous."[69] For example, the focus of salvation shifted from other-worldly affairs to include this-worldly affairs. These transformed symbols thus supported America's ideas of 'self-made people' and the gospel of wealth. Marty explains that, in contrast to the thought of the Puritans who had taught their children to be suspicious of the rich, Americans were being encouraged to get rich from the mid-nineteenth century.[70] In controlled secularity, Christianity had substantially been shifted to become subservient to American culture's values, vision, agenda, and more.

<div align="center">Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart's Sacred and Secular</div>

Pippa Norris, the McGuire Lecturer in Comparative Politics at Harvard University and Ronald Inglehart, professor of political science at the University of Michigan, acknowledge that the classical secularization theory has been challenged by many critics. Nevertheless, these authors affirm the validity of the secularization theory and claim that

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[68] Marty, *The Modern Schism*, 98.

[69] Marty, *The Modern Schism*, 103.

[70] Marty, *The Modern Schism*, 123.

"no single theoretical framework has yet won general acceptance to replace it."[71] In addition, they do not believe that the decline of religion in the process of secularization is irreversible or linear, describing secularization as a 'tendency' not an 'iron law,' and believe that their theory is "not deterministic or teleological."[72] They, however, are still proponents of the secularization theory because they believe that "the importance of religion in people's lives will gradually diminish with the process of human development."[73]

Norris and Inglehart contribute in two ways to the study of the secularization theory. First, they add the aspect of existential secularity to the existing theories of Weber (rationalization) and Durkheim (social differentiation) in explaining the decline of religious influence on religious value and participation. The theory of Norris and Inglehart is a concrete way to grasp the process of secularization. Using their theory of existential security, they work to explain variables in the secularization theory including the case of America. Second, because the debate on secularization is ambiguous, secularity is not easy to measure. They investigated widely-accepted indicators of secularization: religious values (the importance of religion), participation (frequency of attending church or temple and prayer or meditation), and beliefs.

Norris and Inglehart studied extensive data from international surveys. Their study relied on the World Value Survey, executed from 1981 to 2001, regarding public values and beliefs in seventy-six countries, including almost five billion people (over 80% of the

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[71] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, 11.

[72] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, 54.

[73] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, 54.

world population) and covering all six continents. Their study also included other sources such as Gallup International Polls, the International Society Survey program, Eurobarometer surveys, the Human Development Index (annually produced by the United Nations Development Program), the Religious Freedom Index, and more. They classified countries as postindustrial, industrial, and agrarian societies according to the Human Development Index, which combines levels of knowledge, health, and standard of living. The religious cultures of countries are categorized as Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, and other.

Based on this massive research, they claim that the "the absence of security as critical for religiosity."[74] In their writing, security refers to freedom from various risks and dangers including human rights violations, epidemics, poverty, natural and manmade disasters, and more. People in poor countries, whose security is threatened by risks and dangers, are more religious than people in rich countries who have more secure conditions through advanced technology, trained healthcare professionals, welfare systems, and other institutions. For those countries, even though they retain residual religious identity, values and symbols in their life, people will increasingly become indifferent to traditional religious leaders, and institutions, and fewer people will engage in their traditional religious activities.[75] Moreover, Norris and Inglehart believe that in more secularized countries, religion plays a less important role in politics than in developing countries, because many of the more industrial and secular countries have a shrinking population, due to a reduced birth rate.

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[74] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, 14.

[75] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 18-19.

These authors explain religion's increase in spite of the worldwide diffusion of secularity in terms of fertility.[76] Since poor countries have comparably higher population growth due to their higher fertility rates and the population of rich countries is starting to decline and stagnate due to their lower fertility rates, the world as a whole becomes more religious despite the diffusion of secularization and industrialization in many parts of the globe.

Norris and Inglehart acknowledge the importance of predominant religious cultures that influence modernization's effect on religious beliefs and practice. Therefore, a culture's uniqueness and its variations, accompanied by their specific religious culture, needs to be considered in spite of similar levels of economic developments.[77] They also point to the existence of a generation gap, especially in countries with rapid economic growth, such as Korea and Taiwan. The authors emphasize that "in such societies, the young should prove least religious in their values, attitudes, and practices while the older cohorts should display more traditional orientations, since basic values do not change overnight."[78]

The theory of existential secularity is helpful in resolving long-time challenges to the secularization theory, as in the American case. North America and Western Europe share similar levels of affluence and education, established democracies, and Christian heritage. However, the striking differences in religiosity between America and Europe

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[76] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 231.

[77] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 28.

[78] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 28.

countries, (though American religiosity has been exaggerated),[79] has produced some counterevidence concerning secularization theory. Norris and Inglehart claim that the factor of human security, especially conditions of socioeconomic inequalities, makes a difference in people's religiosity. The U.S. and Ireland show a comparatively high religiosity and both demonstrate high economic inequality.[80] Even in an affluent society, economic inequalities drive religiosity. Unemployed African Americans living in the inner city, poor immigrants, and farm laborers who all suffer long-term poverty have contributed to the relatively high religiosity in the U.S.A.

Difficult to settle is the debate on religious revival in post-communist Europe, due to lack of reliable data in the era of Communism. On the basis of the World Value Survey, however, Norris and Inglehart demonstrate that the religiosity of post-communist Europe varies according to existential security. The most successful countries in terms of political stability and economic growth in the post-communism era (such as Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic) tend to be less religious over succeeding generations than low income and politically unstable countries such as the South Caucasus and Central Asia where revival of religions occurs.[81]

Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age*

Recently, Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age* has shed light on the phenomenon of secularization and widened our understanding of the topic. He summarizes three

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[79] Norris and Inglehart pointed out the weekly or more attendance decreased from 35 percent in 1972 about 24 percent in 2002. Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 92.

[80] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 106-107.

[81] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 114-117.

consequences of secularization.[82] First, in pre-modern society political organizations and almost all areas of life were connected to some type of faith or adherence to God. However, in modern society these connections are lost, and religion becomes a more private matter. Christianity tends to retreat from public arenas. Second, the number of people who attend ritual or ceremonial practices is falling off, especially in Europe. Third, a shift occurs in society from where belief in God is unchallenged and unproblematic to where Christianity is considered as one option among many.

Taylor wrote *A Secular Age* focusing on this third consequence of secularization. He is interested in the change of a "default option,"[83] or "background,"[84] in people's minds. In the past, most people took Christianity for granted as the default option. In a secular age, "for more and more people unbelieving construals seem at first blush the only plausible ones."[85] Taylor believes that exclusive humanism is developing in this secular age. He suggests that, in a secular age, "the eclipse of all goals beyond human flourishing becomes conceivable; or better, it falls within the range of an imaginable life for masses of people."[86]

A Secular Age describes a very detailed process of losing sense of transcendence and the rising of exclusive secularism in Europe. Taylor observed that the emergence of providential deism was an important step forward for secularity in the late seventeenth and eighteenth century. The basic idea is that "the plan of God for human beings was

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[82] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 1-3.

[83] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 12.

[84] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 13.

[85] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 12.

[86] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 19-20.

reduced to their coming to realize the order in their lives which he had planned for their happiness and well-being."[87] Narrowing divine providence to humanity's happiness and well-being, Christianity became a mere anthropocentric religion. This anthropocentric shift in the process of secularization helps explain Korean secularization, which is the focus of the next chapter.

Though classical secularization theory prophesizes that "modernity must bring secularity in its train,"[88] Taylor doubts modernity's alleged victory over religion, because modernization itself caused several problems. Taylor calls it "the malaises of modernity." When people put aside transcendent perspectives in their lives and live in this-worldly framework such as science and technology, there is a price to pay. He summarizes three forms of the malaise modernity may take: "(1)The sense of the fragility of meaning, and the search for an over-arching significance; (2) the felt flatness of our attempt to solemnize the crucial moments of passage in our lives; (3) the utter flatness, emptiness of the ordinary."[89] In this situation, Taylor believes that people live under the "cross pressures," between a closed this-worldly framework and the traditional belief in God. People feel inadequate under this pressure. However, we should not assume that these malaises automatically make people return to traditional Christianity because they could seek solutions or meet their needs in immanence or new forms of religion.

Taylor describes the profoundly changed belief systems of the last half century, changes caused by a cultural revolution since the 1960s. According to him, the North

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[87] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 242.

[88] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 550.

[89] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 309.

Atlantic nations became societies driven by individualism. "Do your own thing" and "be

yourselves" were important slogans in those days. People liked to express themselves in

their own ways. No one had a right to interfere with me for my own good. Choice is good,

but authority is suspicious. Since more people searched for their own authenticity, Taylor

calls this time 'the age of authenticity.' In this self-oriented society, "the religious life or

practice that I become part of must not only be my choice, but it must speak to me, it

must make sense in terms of my spiritual development as I understand this."[90] Their

concern for salvation was profoundly blended with their pursuit of well-being and

prosperity under this influence of individual consumer culture, a culture fueled by

affluence, emotion, expression, and happiness.[91] However, according to Taylor, many

young people are searching for more than prosperity, yearning for spiritual depth, and a

more direct experience of the sacred.[92]

Usually spirituality has the connotation of being opposed to institutional religion.

Since people search for spirituality in their own way, various spiritual practices are

accepted.[93] People may combine Buddhism with Christianity or retain just "a vague non-

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[90] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 486.

[91] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 490. Taylor introduces a person's complaint: "why would I go to mass, they say to themselves, when my next-door neighbor is doing as well as me, perhaps even better, and he doesn't go." Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 490.

[92] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 506.

[93] Taylor puts it another way by using the word of "fragilization." For him, fragilization means that "greater proximity of alternatives had led to a society in which more people change their positions, that is, 'convert' in their lifetime, and/or adopt a different position than their parents. Life-time and intergenerational switches become more common. But this has nothing to do with a supposed greater fragility of the faith they end up with....On the contrary, the faith arising in this contemporary predicament can be stronger, just because it has faced the alternative without distortion." Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 834. See footnote 19. Robert Jay Lifton's "protean man" also describes this fragilization Taylor explains. Protean man has easily changeable self-identity or self-image through interaction with other cultures and ideas. Lifton believes that this protean man style occurs in world-wide sense, not confined to young people. He suggests that "historical (or psychohistorical) dislocation" and "flooding of imagery" through the flow

doctrinal kind of belief."[94] Grace Davie's 'believing without belonging' can be an expression of this kind of spirituality. Alternative spiritual practices such as astrology, meditation, and alternative therapies emerge. Taylor uses the term 'nova effect' to describe people who use these various spiritual or religious options. Therefore, Taylor's position on secularization is similar to a revisitionist's view. He projects his hope in a secular age in the following manner:

> My own view of 'secularization'… is that there has certainly been a 'decline' of religion. Religious belief now exists in a field of choices which include various forms of demurral and rejection; Christian faith exists in a field where there is also a wide range of other spiritual options. But the interesting story is not simply one of decline, but also of a new placement of the sacred or spiritual in relation to individual and social life.[95]

Other people joined Taylor's hope. Norris and Inglehart also believe that people in post-industrial countries "are becoming increasingly indifferent to traditional religious values, but they are not abandoning private or individualized spirituality."[96] Norris and Inglehart argue that the pursuit of meaning will still persist in secularization, saying that "the need for meaning becomes more salient at high levels of existential security so that, even in rich countries, although church attendance is declining, spiritual concerns more

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of post-modern culture by aid of mass communication network are important historical development in creating protean man. Historical dislocation happens when protean man considers traditional value as irrelevant confronting with new value system, but he cannot abandon it. Robert Jay Lifton, "Protean Man," *Partisan Review* 35(1968): 16.

[94] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 519. For example, God exist, Christ was a good man and an example to be followed; people should lead decent lives on charitable terms with their neighbors, and those who do so will go to Heaven when they die. Taylor quotes from John Wolffe, *God and Greater Britain* (London: Routledge, 1994), 92-93.

[95] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 437.

[96] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 74.

broadly are not disappearing."[97] Robin Gill also describes various options people will

face, such as the following:

> The current situation in the West is sometimes depicted as the culture of
> postmodernity, or at other times as simply the fragmented nature of postindustrial
> societies. In either case it is argued that the future will increasingly consist of
> incommensurable groups (some religious and some secular) in which individuals
> will seek reassurance and certainty in a situation of confusing pluralism. In terms
> of this scenario, there will no longer be any dominant metanarratives in Western
> societies.[98]

Conclusion

Though the supply-side view ardently argues against the secularization theory itself,

which shed some insights on my study, sufficient reasons to drop the term "secularization"

are not found. Modernization strongly impacts people's lives and thoughts and leads to

the decline of religious influence.

The revisionist theory is still relevant. Since the revisionist theory acknowledges

that the secularization process is not irreversible or inevitable, this approach resonates in

some cases where the religious population grows in the process of secularization, such as

in South Korea. Moreover, the revisionist view recognizes the growing interest in

spirituality and meaning of life as a result of the malaises of modernity, as featured by

Taylor.

Additionally, to confine these phenomena merely to the European case is

unnecessary. As Norris and Inglehart's vast research support, the secularization of

societies is a world-wide phenomena. Moreover, since every society has different social,

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[97] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 75.

[98] Gill, "The Future of Religious Participation," 289.

cultural, and religious contexts, the shape of each form of secularity might be different, as Marty describes. Finally, as Taylor and the revisionists assert, people in a secular age are still searching for spirituality or meaning in life, though they face various options or answers from which they can select. Room for evangelism exists in this secular age. This material provides the foundation for exegeting South Korea's experience of secularity, the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Secularization in Korea

We delved into theories and representative ideas on secularization in the previous

chapter, especially the secularization of Western societies. As Martin Marty describes,

secularization proceeds in different ways, because of the unique religious, historical, and

social contexts each society possesses. Christianity never predominated in Korean society

as it did in the Western society. The features of modernization in Korea and its pace have

been different from the Western societies. What are the characteristics of Korean

secularity? Which theoretical perspectives help explain South Korea's experiences and

Christianity's challenge?

This discussion begins with the conclusions of Korean sociologists who have

explored secularity since the late 1970s. Then this chapter explores the historical,

religious, and social contexts in Korea that are related to the secularization of Korea,

since this context contributes to South Korea's distinct form of secularity. This chapter

will show that Korean religious contexts, which strongly highlight this-worldly blessings

such as wealth and health, contributed to the spread of secularization in South Korea. At

the same time, the social context in the process of modernization that was driven by

securing existential security is also an important factor. Finally, the chapter examines

three indicators of secularity: religious practice, religious values, and religious beliefs.

Preliminary Studies on Korean Secularization

As Korean society modernized, several Korean sociologists and sociologists of

religion published books and articles on secularization. This section reports and appraises their views on the country's secularization.

Although the term secularization was introduced to Korea in 1960, the debate was revolving around the validity of secular theology rather than a sociological approach to secularization itself.[1] Since sharply contrasting positions on secular theology were between liberal and conservative parties in Korean Protestant churches, this theological debate left a schism between the groups in the late 1960s.

According to Sung-Kun Kim, who studies the secularization of Korea in a historical perspective, Dong-In Lee is the first sociologist of religion in Korea to introduce the theory of secularization to Korea.[2] In 1978, he addresses the theory of Western secularization in his thesis on secularization, but does not deal with how these theories applied in Korean society, which has a different social and religious context.

In 1985, Gue-Sik Kwon, a Protestant church elder, introduces four theorists of secularization: Bryan Wilson, Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, and Robert Bellah. He concludes that during secularization, institutional religion declines and the religious influences on society decrease. He observes, however, two important problems in applying secularization to Korea. First, the number of people who claimed religious experiences increased at the time when industrialization and modernization were advancing. Second, Confucianism and Buddhism were not institutionalized in Korea, and yet they permeated the everyday life of most Korean people. Thus, difficult to correlate is

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[1] Sangwoon Jung, "Sesokhwa Sidaeui Seonggyeolsinhak," [Holiness theology in secular age] *Hangukgidokgyowa Yeoksa* 16 (2002): 102-103.

[2] Sung-Kun Kim, "Yureopjungsimjuuiwa Hangukui Jonggyosahoehak: Sesokhwaironeul Jungsimeuro," [Eurocentrism and Korean sociology of religion: focus on the theory of secularization] *Damnon* 201 (2005): 181.

the influence of those religions with the theory of Western secularization, based on the observations of institutionalized religion.[3]

Won-Gue Lee contributes to the discussion of secularization in Korea by providing empirical data concerning secularization. He published several books and articles on the subject and claims that theories of Wilson and Berger apply reasonably well in the Korean context based on Gallup Korea's research of religion and the religious consciousness of Koreans.[4] Unfortunately, since this article was published in 2000, the results of the Gallup research from 2004 are missing.

Lee categorizes and analyzes questions under major themes from the theories of Wilson and Berger. Through the theory of Wilson, Lee measures the influence of religions on society and individuals. Using Berger's theory, he measures the extent of privatization, pluralism, and relativistic attitudes toward religion. Based on statistical data, Lee concludes that secularization is progressing in Korea. Religious influence in Korean society has decreased and the plausibility of religions is diminishing, while privatization and pluralism are increasing. Thus, he argues that many parts of the theories of Wilson and Berger can be applied to Korean society and that Korean society is experiencing a process of secularization.[5]

Jae-Young Jung has tried to explain the reason for the growth of Korean conservative churches in the 1970s even as secularization occurred. He applies the theory

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[3] Sung-Kun Kim, "Yureopjungsimjuui," [Eurocentrism] 185.

[4] Won-Gue Lee, "Hangukjonggyoui Sesokhwa: Gyeongheomjeok Yeongu," [An empirical study of secularization of Korean religions] in *Hanguksahoe Eodiro Gago Inna* [Where is the Korean church going] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society, 2000), 121-179.

[5] Won-Gue Lee, "Hangukjonggyoui Sesokhwa," [An empirical study of secularization] 170-173.

and analysis of Peter Berger, which was explained in the previous chapter. Jung defines the term "conservative church" as churches not interested in social action that seek to transform the structures of society. In 1972 the number of progressive church members who were involved in social action exceeded the number of conservative church members. However, by 1980 the situation was reversed, and conservative members exceeded progressive members.

Jung contends that in the late Chosun dynasty, Confucianism lost its privilege as Korea's civil religion, and the nation and religion were separated. Korean society in time became pluralistic, with many religions—Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, and Shamanism—competing with each other. In this competitive religious market situation, every religion placed numerical growth as the number one priority.[6] During this competition, religions retreated to more private arenas of life. The message of Korean conservative churches reflected this situation by emphasizing material blessings through faith to meet people's needs. Pursuing material blessings became the most important goal of faith,[7] blessings to meet the needs of people during the time of industrialization and urbanization. Rather than being involved in social issues, conservative churches spent most of their money on building church facilities and campaigning for church growth. Thus, conservative churches' numerical growth was faster than progressive churches. This explanation of Jae-Young Jung is similar to the description of Marty and Wilson regarding the growth of American churches that supported American values rather than

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[6] Jae-Young Jung, "Sesokhwawa Hangukgyohoeui Seongjang," [Secularization and the growth of Korean churches] in *Hyeondae Hanguksahoewa Gidokgyo* [*Modern Korean society and Christianity*] (Seoul: Handul, 2006), 219.

[7] Jae-Young Jung, "Sesokhwawa Hangukgyohoeui Seongjang," [Secularization and the growth of Korean churches] 221-222.

challenging them.

Chai-Sik Chung, a scholar known world-wide as a sociologist of religion, is probably the person who has most appreciated both the worldwide influence of secularization, and has most understood the unique religious context of Korea, as he explains the process of secularization. He describes secularization as a process where people doubt the credibility of religious beliefs and experiences, while they ignore the supernatural dimensions of the human condition.[8]

Chung explains the religious situation when Protestantism was introduced in Korea in the 1880s.[9] Confucianism had lost its vitality and had become a dead tradition that only the privileged class supported and narrowly focused on the relationship between family members. In addition, Buddhism was marginalized by Confucianism during the Chosun dynasty, and it became mixed with superstitious and blessing-focused Shamanism. Shamanism became a totally this-worldly religion and emphasized material blessing. These religious traditions did not disappear; they deeply influenced Korean Christianity.[10] At the same time, modernization and secularization brought about pluralism, materialism, a state of anomie, loneliness, and the destruction of community.[11] Therefore, he maintains that the soil that encouraged secularization and the privatization of religion came from three sources: this-worldly Shamanism, family-oriented

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[8] Sung-Kun Kim, "Yureopjungsimjuui," [Eurocentrism] 182.

[9] Chai-Sik Chung, *JeonTongui Yeonsokgwa Byeonhwa: Dojeonbanneun Hangukjonggyowa Sahoe* [Korean religion and society under challenge: continuity and change] (Seoul: Acanet, 2004), 231-277.

[10] Chai-Sik Chung, *JeonTongui Yeonsokgwa Byeonhwa* [*Korean religion and society under challenge*], 257.

[11] Chai-Sik, Chung, *JeonTongui Yeonsokgwa Byeonhwa* [*Korean religion and society*], 272-274.

Confucianism, and the culture of globalized capitalism.[12] The process of Korean

secularization is therefore intermingled with a couple of religious contexts and with

globalized capitalism, and is almost impossible to disentangle from these influences.

Hee-Sung Kil, a professor of Sokang University, believes that modernization is

inevitable. Modernization includes industrialization, new technologies for economic

growth, democracy in politics, and accompanies the secularization in religious-

sociological aspects. Furthermore, secularization is the main key for understanding

modern Korean society and culture. He, however, acknowledges that secularization

brought about a loss in the meaning of life, and crisis in thought due to the decrease of

religious influence. To fill the gap in modern Korean society, his proposal is to recover

the Confucian values that have influenced Korea for more than five hundred years as the

civil religion during the Chosun dynasty. His approach is related to attempts to restore

traditional values through the resurgence of Confucian beliefs.[13] He maintains that a

census of the population in 2005 shows that Confucians were below one percent of the

whole Korean population, but the influence of the belief system continues to be strong in

the lives and morality of Korean society.

Chul Lee introduces Stark and Iannaccone's supply-side interpretation approach in

explaining church growth and decline in Korean church growth. He believes that the

supply-side theory is more appropriate than the demand-side approach in Korean

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[12] Chai-Sik, Chung, *JeonTongui Yeonsokgwa Byeonhwa* [*Korean religion and society*], 276.

[13] Hee-Sung, Kil, "Dongyangjonggyowa Gongdonggachi: Hanguksahoewa Yugyojeok Choesojuui," [Eastern religion and common value: Korean society and Confucian minimalism] *Jonggyosegye* 31 (2003): 58-59.

context.[14] He writes of the problems in Korean Protestant churches such as fierce competition, and the immorality of some church leaders.

Sun-Kun Kim chose eleven of these scholars and evaluates their theories in terms of the problem of Eurocentrism.[15] Overall, since he includes and summarizes many famous sociologists in Korea, his article provides a good guideline for studying secularization theory in the Korean context. Throughout his article, he criticizes scholars who adapted the Western theory of secularization without providing any meaningful critical evaluation. Unfortunately, however, though he describes the problem of Eurocentrism, he does not suggest any Korean contextualized perspective on secularization. He essentially repeats the problem of Eurocentrism as do other sociologists.

Reflecting Korean sociologists' writings, regarding secularization in Korea, Kyung-Hwan Oh's contribution is invaluable to the present study. He identifies two problems in the study of Korean secularity.[16] First, Korean scholars have not carefully enough considered the unique Korean contexts, but instead merely appropriate Western theories of secularization. Second, these scholars do not provide empirical data to support their conclusions and rely too heavily on secularization scholars such as Bryan Wilson, Peter Berger, and Rodney Stark.

This study has discussed that the most appropriate secularization theories to explain the secularization of South Korea are Marty's controlled secularity and the

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[14] Chul Lee, *Sahoeane Gyohoe Gyohoeane Sahoe* [Church in a society and society in the church] (Seoul: Baekui, 2006), 55-57.

[15] Sung-Kun Kim, "Yureopjungsimjuui," [Eurocentrism] 174-206.

[16] Gyong-Hwan, Oh, *Jonggyosahoehak* [Sociology of religion] (Seoul: Sukwangsa, 1990), 405.

existential secularity of Norris and Inglehart. When we consider the social and religious

contexts of Korea in relation to the process of modernization, this will become clearer.

The Religious Context: Pursuing This-Worldly Blessing

Several religions have been adopted by Korean people and they have deeply

influenced Korean people's minds and thoughts. Shamanism is the oldest religion in

Korea. The origin of Shamanism in Korea is shadowy, and is difficult to trace in terms of

the exact date when it entered Korea.[17] However, Shamanism's long history can be

assumed, because of the Dan-Gun myth, the founder of the Korean nation in 2333 B.C.,

was regarded as a great shaman.[18] Therefore, obviously Shamanism has existed in Korea

long before the coming of Buddhism and Confucianism from China.

Buddhism, which was first introduced to Korea at the end of the fourth century,

was adopted as the national religion by Silla in 535 A.D., and it became the state religion

after Silla unified the Three Kingdoms of Koguryo, Baekje, and Silla. In the Koryo

Dynasty (935-1392), which dominated the Korea peninsula after the fall of Silla,

Buddhism was also a national religion. Confucianism, which was imported from China,

was a dominant religion during the later Chosun Dynasty (1392-1907). The Chosun

Dynasty persecuted Shamanism and Buddhism, hoping for their extinction. The Buddhist

monk and shaman were regarded as the lowest class in the Chosun Dynasty—which had

a strict, hierarchical class system. However, the influence of Shamanism did not

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[17] Jung-Young Lee, "Concerning the Origin and Formation of Korean Shamanism," *Numen* 20 (1973): 135.

[18] Jung-Young Lee, "Concerning the Origin and Formation," 149.

diminish.[19] Confucianism in the Chosun Dynasty was a societal ethical and educational

system, governing and controlling people's relationships. The people lacked a strong

belief in the transcendent beings who could have dealt with the problems of everyday life

of people in the streets. In addition, Confucianism is the religion of the upper elite class

who ruled during the Chosun Dynasty.[20] Therefore, Confucianism on the elite level and

Shamanism on the popular level, were complementary to each other in the Chosun

Dynasty.[21] Buddhism in the Koryo Dynasty was the only religion of the ruling classes

and it did not permeate the lives of the common people. Tong-Sik Ryu maintains that "in

Korea it was generally not the poor but members of the elite ruling class—the rich and

powerful—who adopted the major religions that came in from China."[22]

When Protestant missionaries entered into Korea, they found these religions

intermingled with each other without conflicts. A Protestant missionary, Homer B.

Hulbert, observes that "As a general thing, we may say that the all-round Korean will be

a Confucianist when in society, a Buddhist when he philosophies and a spirit-worshipper

when he is in trouble."[23] Another missionary, G. Herber Jones, describes the mixture of

religions in the Korean minds as follows:

> While theoretically the Korean recognizes the separate character of the three cults

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[19] In Chosun Dynasty, Shamanism and Buddhism were greatly synchronized. Buddhism adopted a lot of elements of Shamanism to appeal popular people. Jun-Sik Choi, *Hangukui Jonggyo, Munhwaro Ikneunda* [Reading Korean religion through the lens of culture] vol. 1 (Seoul: Sagejul, 1998), 52.

[20] James H. Grayson, "Elements of Protestant Accommodation to Korean Religious Culture: A Personal Ethnographic Perspective," *Missiology* 23, no. 1 (2003): 54.

[21] Jun-Sik Choi, *Hangukui Jonggyo* [Reading Korean religion], 56-57.

[22] Tong-Sik Ryu, "Shamanism: The Dominant Folk Religion in Korea," *Inter-Religio* 5 (1984): 13.

[23] Homer B. Hulbert, *The Passing of Korea* (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1909), 403-404.

of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shamanism, practically they lie in his mind as a confused, undigested mass of teaching and belief, hopelessly intermixed and chaotic. He believes in all three. He personally takes his own education from Confucius; he sends his wife to Buddha to pray for offspring, and in the ills of life he willingly pays toll to Shamanite Mu-dang (a female Shaman) and Pan-su (a male Shaman). The average Korean is thus a follower of all three systems, in the hope that by their united help he may reach a happy destiny.[24]

However, the most fundamental and influential religion to determine Korean

religiosity is Shamanism, because it has formed the basic religious worldview

"underlying the mental landscape of Koreans."[25] Tong-shik Ryu maintains that

Shamanism is "the heart of all folk religion in Korea," and it has significantly affected the

major established religions.[26] Jung-young Lee believes that "Shamanism was the soul of

Korean culture and a key to understand the Korean way of thinking."[27] Hulbert, who

acknowledges the mixed religions in Korea, also observes the significant influence of

Shamanism especially in the times of crisis.

> The underlying religion of the Korean, the foundation upon which all else is mere superstructure, is his original spirit-worship. In this term are included animism, shamanism, fetichism and nature-worship generally….Buddhism was too mystical to appeal to the people in its more philosophic aspects, and as it came in as fashionable state religion, its spectacular character was its chief recommendation. Confucianism, on the other hand, was too cold and materialistic to appeal to the emotional side of his nature, and so became simply a political system, the moral elements of which never found any considerable following among the masses. But both these systems eventually blended with the original spirit-worship in such a way as to form a composite religion.[28]

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[24] G. Heber Jones, "The Spirit Worship of the Koreans," *Transactions of the Korean Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1 (1900): 39.

[25] Andrew Eungi Kim, "Christianity, Shamanism, and Modernization in South Korea," *Cross Currents* 50 (2000): 116; Andrew E. Kim, "Korean Religious Culture and its Affinity to Christianity: The Rise of Protestant Christianity in South Korea," Sociology of Religion 61 (2000): 117-133.

[26] Tong-Sik Ryu, "Shamanism: The Dominant Folk Religion in Korea," 8.

[27] Jung-Young Lee, "Relationship Between Christianity and Shamanism in Korea: A Historical Perspective," *Asia Journal of Theology* 10 (1996): 337.

[28] Hulbert, *The Passing of Korea*, 404.

Korean Shamanism believes in the existence of a Supreme Being who rules over the world. However this Supreme Being is not concerned with people's everyday lives, because He is too holy and powerful to be involved in the everyday lives of the people in the street.[29] This Supreme Being is called Hananim; that became the name of God in the Bible in Korea. Protestant missionaries in Korea adopted this name for the Supreme God in Korea in order to share the God of the Bible with the Koreans between 1904 and 1906.[30] Lesser gods also exist such as spirits concerning the moon, the sun, the earth, and stars, souls of people who died unhappily, and ancestors who bring life and death and good fortune and bad. When a crisis happens in life such as a disease or calamity, people believe that lesser gods are angry at people. When people ask for this-worldly blessings such as good fortune, health, or wealth in life, people also believe that these lesser gods can provide these things. In these cases, people ask for shaman priests to provide rituals called *gut* to appease these gods or ask for blessings from them. These priests or mediums connect gods to people while they are participating in *gut*s by dancing, singing, and drinking wine, which usually concluded in religious ecstasy.

Therefore, Korean Shamanism is characterized by a strong emphasis on this-worldly blessings such as material wealth, health, and other issues of personal and family well-being.[31] The goal of Shamanism is to get blessings and to dispel misfortunes and diseases. It does not address concerns about morality and social matters. The purpose of

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[29] Moon-Sang Kwon, "Hangukjeongtongmunhwawa Hangukgyohoeui Sesokhwa," [Traditional culture in Korea and the secularization of Korean church] *Seongkyeonggwa Sinhak* 38 (2005): 140-141.

[30] Sung-Deuk Oak, "The Indigenization of Christianity in Korea: North American Missionaries' Attitudes Towards Korean Religions, 1884-1910" (Ph. D. dissertation, Boston University, 2002), 299.

[31] Byong-Suh Kim, "The Explosive Growth of the Korean Church Today: A Sociological Analysis." *International Review of Mission* 74 (1985): 70.

worship in Shamanism does not lie in adoring the Supreme Being itself, but instead, in securing His blessings.

Not only has Shamanism existed for such a long time, it has also transformed each imported national religion, fitting each into a shamanistic worldview for the Korean people. According to Andrew Eungi Kim, "Its influence was so profound that newly introduced religions, including Buddhism and Christianity, had to compromise with and absorb elements of Shamanism in order to be accepted by the Korean populace"[32] Young-Hoon Lee also agrees that Shamanism has had a strong influence: "Shamanism has become the folk religion throughout Korean history from pre-historic ages till today....Shamanism mixed itself with these religions(Buddhism and Confucianism) and thus survived in history."[33]

Several important examples of this transformation exist. The original goal of Buddhism is to be enlightened and to enter the Nirvana by means of accumulating good works and endless self-discipline. Classical Buddhism has nothing to do with getting material blessings and good health in this world. However, Korean Buddhism lost its main goal because of the influence of Shamanism. Common Korean people visit the temple "not to understand the truth of Buddha but to manipulate religious power and to exploit its possible benefits for their own ends."[34] The core beliefs of Buddhism seem to be distorted by focusing on such things as having success in school entrance exams, and

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[32] Andrew Eungi Kim, "Christianity, Shamanism, and Modernization in South Korea," 116.

[33] Young-Hoon Lee, "The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea: Its Historical and Doctrinal Development" (Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1996), 18.

[34] Moses Bang-Seok Lee, "Transforming the Korean Church : the Conceptual Transformation of Shamanistic Bok to the Biblical Concept of Blessing" (Ph.D. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1994), 95-96.

achieving money and good health. For example, the temple *Samsungkwak* that consists of the mountain gods of Shamanism, the seven gods of Taoism, and the saints of Buddhism has existed since the Chosun Dynasty. All of these gods are believed to control wealth, long life and blessings, and are worshiped. Lee explains that "Buddhism became the Buddhism of the Korean people through shamanistic influence."[35]

The case of Confucianism is the same as Buddhism. The philosophy of Confucius "teaches that humans can establish an ideal state by exercising proper control of the mind."[36] The goal of Korean Confucianism redirects from polishing *doh*, which means heavenly truth concealed deep inside of human minds, to acquiring blessing. Korean Confucianism substituted for *doh*, Shamanism's quest for blessing individuals.[37] The purpose of worshiping ancestors is not for the sake of the ancestors, but for the sake of descendents who want to avoid their ancestors' curses.[38]

The relationship between Shamanism and other Korean religions is essentially the same as the relationship between Shamanism and Korean Christianity. Jung Young Lee summarized this relationship well. Though Protestant missionaries adopted the name of the Supreme Being used in Shamanism, the rituals of Shamanism were considered primitive and superstitious.[39] However, as the influence of Shamanism increased during the 1940s to 1960s, when Korean people experienced severe political chaos and serious

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[35] Jung-Young Lee, "Relationship Between Christianity and Shamanism," 345.

[36] Moses Bang-Seok Lee, "Transforming the Korean Church," 110.

[37] Moses Bang-Seok Lee, "Transforming the Korean Church," 131.

[38] Won-Gue Lee, "Hanguk Jonggyomunhwaui Teukseonge daehan Yeongu," [A study on the characteristics of religious culture of Korea] *Sinhakgwa Segyeo* 60 (2007): 147.

[39] Jung-Young Lee, "Relationship Between Christianity and Shamanism," 335-336.

economical poverty, Shamanism began to influence Korean Christianity. Though

mainline Protestant churches in Korea kept orthodox teachings taught by Bible believing

missionaries, the Shamanistic ethos, which is embedded within Korean culture and

people's mindset, was resurgent. With regard to material blessing, Shamanism's focus on

worldly personal blessing seemed to converge with a social emphasis becoming "a

significant part of the Christian congregational life."[40] Lee also claims, "No matter how

much Christians wanted to be disassociated from Shamanistic sentiments, they could not

do it. They could not avoid Shamanism, for as the folk religion of the Korean people, it

became the foundation of their way of life."[41]

Won-Gue Lee identifies five characteristics of the religious culture in Korea:

broadminded latitudinarianism, passionate emotionalism, this-worldly utilitarianism,

harmonious syncretism, and shamanistic *gibokism* (literally, means exclusively pursuing

blessing). For broadminded latitudinarianism, he mentions the fact that imported religions

in Korea, except Catholicism in the early stage of its entry, were not persecuted, and they

became state religions as Buddhism did in the Silla and Koryo Dynasties and

Confucianism in the Chosun Dynasty. Concerning passionate emotionalism, Korean

people are very passionate and emotional, which is seen especially in Shamanism and

more recently in Protestant Christianity. For this-worldly utilitarianism, Shamanism and

Confucianism are prime examples, since they focus on an ethical system for this-worldly

life. Harmonious syncretism is seen in the multi-tier religiosity and in the influence of

Shamanism in infiltrating other religions, as previously mentioned. Lee acknowledges

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[40] Byong-Suh Kim, "The Explosive Growth of the Korean Church," 70.

[41] Jung-Young Lee, "Relationship Between Christianity and Shamanism," 338.

that social, economic, and geopolitical factors determine people's religious cultures. Lee, however, highlights the influence of Shamanism in forming the religious culture in Korea. He concludes that this-worldly *gibokism* forms the distinct religious culture in Korea rather than any ethical and philosophical emphasis.[42]

Nae-Chang Han supports Won-Gue Lee's idea about the distinct religious culture in South Korea. He compares the two poles of subjective religious orientation: extrinsic and intrinsic orientation. Originally, these two concepts are used by Gordon W. Allport and J. Michael Ross to inspect the general assumption that church attenders are more prejudiced on social issues, including ethic issues, than nonattenders. This assumption had been supported by other research.[43] For Allport and Ross, "the extrinsically motivated person *uses* his religion, whereas the intrinsically motivated *lives* his religion."[44] Persons with an extrinsic orientation use their religion to meet their own needs. Extrinsic orientation is instrumental and utilitarian to "provide security and solace, sociability and distraction, status and self-justification. The embraced creed is lightly held or else selectively shaped to fit more primary needs."[45] In contrast to the extrinsic orientation, people with an intrinsic orientation find that their ultimate needs are met in religion, and they regard others' needs as less important. Therefore, they make many efforts to internalize and follow the embraced creed. Allport and Ross sense that the inner experience of religion

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[42] Won-Gue Lee, "Hanguk Jonggyomunhwaui," [A Study on the characteristics] 161; Chai-Sik Chung, *Jonggyowa Sahoebyeondong* [Religion and social change] (Seoul: Yon-Sei University, 1982), 264.

[43] Gordon W. Allport and J. Michael Ross, "Personal Religious Orientation and Prejudice," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 5, no. 4 (1967): 432.

[44] Allport and Ross, "Personal Religious Orientation and Prejudice," 434.

[45] Allport and Ross, "Personal Religious Orientation and Prejudice," 434.

should be considered in measuring the relationship between religion and prejudice. Considering extrinsic orientation as less healthy than intrinsic orientation, they concluded that intrinsically motivated people are "significantly less prejudiced than the extrinsically motivated."[46] Obviously, people who are immersed in a religion, (in this case Christianity which encourages love and self-sacrifice with intrinsic orientation) become less prejudiced in ethnicity and other issues.

Nae-Chang Han pays attention to the religious orientation differences between the Western and Eastern societies, especially in Korea. The Korean religious orientation is disposed to be extrinsic, which contrasts with the Western concept that considers the extrinsic orientation as unhealthy.[47] Based on his research of Korean people, he concluded that persons with more extrinsic orientation showed also more intrinsic orientation.[48] In Korea, intrinsic orientation is deeply related to extrinsic orientation. In addition, he explains that Korean religions such as Buddhism and Confucianism supports this relationship. *Mahayana* dominated Korean Buddhism and it focused on reducing *karma* by the accumulation of good works. Doing good is also related to being blessed. Therefore, the desire to be blessed is closely related to the intrinsic beliefs of Buddhism. Confucianism shows strongly the this-worldly tendency as mentioned before. The religion of Confucianism itself believes that it is the instrument of constructing the ideal society. If we mention the extrinsic orientation of Shamanism, it would be redundant. Han demonstrates that Korean religions are inclined to extrinsic orientation.

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[46] Allport and Ross, "Personal Religious Orientation and Prejudice," 441.

[47] Nae-Chang Han, "Dongseoyang Munmyeongeseo Jonggyoseong," [Religiosity in oriental and western cultures] *Jonggyo Yeongu* 36 (2004): 181.

[48] Nae-Chang Han, "Dongseoyang Munmyeongeseo," [Religiosity in oriental] 193.

Based on the unique religious context in Korea, we can say that pursuing this-worldly blessings and concerns, under the influence of Shamanism, contributed to the spread of secularization.[49] The secularization that has occurred in South Korea is a variant of Marty's "controlled secularity."[50] Marty sees the characteristic form of secularization in the United States to be the shift of Christianity to a subservient role in relation to the values, vision, and agenda of American culture. Similarly, religion in South Korea, including Christianity, Buddhism, and Confucianism, has often been shifted to be subservient to people's personal agendas—essentially the same personal agenda traditionally addressed by Shamanism.[51] While Protestant church leaders have made great efforts to advance the Christian movement in South Korea since the1960s, also true is that many Protestant churches have emphasized obtaining this-worldly blessings such as wealth and health in the face of people's needs.

This uncritical acceptance and application of the Shamanistic value system to the needs of people permeated churches with capitalistic materialism through the process of modernization. Protestantism came to believe that the most important signs of God's

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[49] Moon-Sang Kwon, "Hangukjeongtongmunhwawa,"[The traditional culture in Korea], 147. It should be noted that he refers to the concept of secularization as losing transcendence and mainly talks about secular theology rather than secularization of Korea from the sociological perspective. However, his point of relating traditional religious culture and secularization is quite valid and gives us a good insight. As mentioned before, Jae-Sik Chung also briefly mentioned the relationship between this-worldly concern of Shamanism and Confucianism and the secularization of Korea.

[50] Martin E. Marty, *The Modern Schism*, 95-142. Marty argues that there are three different aspects of the process of secularization in Europe, Great Britain, and America: utter secularity, mere secularity, and controlled secularity. "Utter secularity" means maximal secularity, which is related to anti-Christian and against the idea of God. "Mere secularity," which happened in England, does not attack Christianity, but indicates a situation where Christianity is largely ignored by people because of their preoccupation with mundane pursuits. "Controlled secularity" prevailed in America, where the value of religion has become submissive to traditional American values.

[51] Byong-Suh Kim, "The Explosive Growth of the Korean Church," 70; Jung-Young Lee, "Relationship Between Christianity and Shamanism," 338; Andrew Eungi Kim, "Christianity, Shamanism, and Modernization," 116.

blessing were the wealth and size of the church. Churches that achieved rapid membership growth were considered to be good churches, regardless of the means they used, leading to a kind of "Numerolatry" in modern Korean society.[52] This unbalanced emphasis desensitized church people to morality and the importance of discipleship. Although the controlled secularity of Korean Protestantism contributed to fulfilling the needs of people at that time, it eventually enhanced the secularization of Korean culture by creating a negative perception in society through the revelation that the supposedly countercultural church actually conformed to the values of Korean society.

Additionally, modernization fulfilled the previous needs of the population (for securing health and material blessings). People who once sought help from religion, now found that their needs would be partially satisfied by the medical system and economic growth, the products of modernization. Therefore, the influence of religion on society and personal lives diminish, as modernization progresses.

The Social Context: Ensuring Security

The Korean social context in which modernization happened also played a role in forming a distinctive secularity in South Korea along with the religious context. This section describes a characteristic of Korean secularity by exploring a brief history of the modernization of Korea in the Korean social context. The next section will interpret the influence of modernization on Korean religions by examining some statistical data.

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[52] Eun-Sik Cho, "Korean Church Growth in 1970s: Its Factors and Problems," *Asia Journal of Theology* 10, no.2 (1996): 356; Bong-Ho Son, "Some Dangers of Rapid Growth," in *Korean Church Growth Explosion* ed. Bong-Rin Ro and Marlin L. Nelson (Seoul: Word of Life, 1983), 335.

A Brief History of Korean Modernization

The process of Korean modernization and subsequent secularization occurs in a short time span compared to the long history of Western modernization. Four major watershed events can be identified in the process of modernization and the subsequent secularization in South Korea.

First, the secularization of Korea began with the differentiation of society at the end of the Chosun dynasty, especially since 1876. This period is called *Kewhagi*, literally meaning the blooming period, which ended in Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910. Korea was known to the outside world in the nineteenth century, as the "Hermit Nation" or "Land of Morning Calm." The ruling class of the Chosun Dynasty tried to resist the influence of Western countries in order to keep Korea's Confucian identity.[53] Their efforts failed because the power of Western technology was irresistible, and it trampled the dwindling power of Confucianism. In 1876, Korea began to accept Western influences.

The entry of Western modernization catalyzed several changes in Korea society. As modernization started, the distinct concept of religion had begun. At that time, religion and society were so deeply intermingled that Korean people did not have a distinct concept of religion.[54] They only had a vague concept of religion, since they saw no difference between religion and life. Furthermore, the several Korean religions mixed

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[53] Chai-Sik Chung, *JeonTongui Yeonsokgwa Byeonhwa* [*Korean religion and society*],233-236; Chai-Sik Chung, *Korea, Religious Tradition, and Globalization* (Seoul: Institute for Modern Korean Studies, 2001), 10-11.

[54] Jong-Suh Kim, "Geundaehwawa Hanguk Jonggyoui Gaenyeom," [Modernization and the concept of Korean religion] in *Jonggyowa Yeoksa* [Religion and history], ed. Institute of Research on Religious Issue in Seoul National University (Seoul: Seoul University, 2006), 167.

with each other without conflicting, and this multi-tier religiosity was challenged by the

incoming Protestant Christianity in 1884. A personal and ultimate concept of God became

prominent and the importance of community of belief became evident, which accelerated

the forming of an indigenous religion at the end of the Chosun Dynasty.[55] Jong-Suh Kim

believes that religious pluralism in a modern sense, in which religions compete with each

other, came in with modernization.[56]

The separation of educational systems also had begun. In the Chosun Dynasty, the

educational system was governed by Confucianism, without any distinctions between

religion and education. But in 1895, Confucianism, a civil religion of the Chosun Dynasty,

began to weaken because the government abolished the long-held requirement that a man

had to pass a Confucianism exam prior to entering government or public service.[57] In

addition, many mission schools run by Protestant missionaries accelerated the

differentiation of education by not teaching Confucianism in education.

Similarly, the differentiation of medical service had begun in hospitals run by

Western missionaries. Traditionally, Korean people believed that diseases were caused by

spirits, and that religious rituals could heal people. With the inception of Western medical

system, the influence of religion on healing decreased. Also, the differentiation in the

political arena had begun, although the political system of Chosun Dynasty was totally

governed by Confucianism. In 1904, the Mission Treaty that allowed the missionaries

independence in religious activities was concluded, and this independence spread to the

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[55] Jong-Suh Kim, "Geundaehwawa,"[Modernization] 182-183.

[56] Jong-Suh Kim, "Geundaehwawa,"[Modernization] 183.

[57] Charles Allen Clark, *The Korean Church and the Nevius Methods* (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1929), 230.

Korean people. Jong-Suh Kim claims that the modern changes in education, medical services, and the political arena eventually changed the concept of religion. Before the entry of western influence, religion impacted almost all areas of life, guarding the national status quo as well as teaching and healing people. After that time, however, religion became more focused on belief in sacred beings and religious practices.[58]

The second watershed of Korean modernization was Japan's annexation of Korea, which was an important cause of Korean secularization. During the colonial days (1910-1945), Korean modernization was carried out under the control of Japan, who had already absorbed Western culture and created Japanese ways of modernization that were not initiated by Korean people. Kyung-Dong Kim describes Korean modernization at that time, saying "Japan built in Korea certain material and institutional infrastructures necessary for the colonial rule and introduced new ways of life to push for a Japanese style of modernization."[59]

Korean cities were also developed, beginning with the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910, building administrative and distributive centers to exploit Korea's natural resources.[60] In addition, the hard-pressed rural economy pushed many people to the cities. In the Japanese annexation of Korea, the rate of urban growth was so rapid that it was faster than Germany's urban growth rate, which itself exceeded that of the U.S.A.

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[58] Jong-Suh Kim, "Geundaehwawa,"[Modernization] 176.

[59] Kyung-Dong Kim, "Modernization As a Politico-Cultural Response and Modernity As a Cultural Mixture: An Alternative View of Korean Modernization," *Development and Society* 43, no. 1 (2005): 11. Therefore, if some people assert that Japan's annexation of Korea actually helped to make Korean modernized, it is very absurd. It should be noted that Japan's purpose of pushing Korea toward modernization in Korea was to exploit Korea better.

[60] Thomas O. Wilkinson, "The Pattern of Korean Urban Growth," *Rural Sociology* 32 (1954): 35.

and France.[61]

Third, the Korean War (1950-1953), which devastated the whole nation for three years, was one of the most important factors for accelerating the process of secularization in Korea. Kyung-Dong Kim and On-Jook Lee elaborate on the Korean War's severe effects on the modernization of Korean society. To begin with, the disruption of cultural traditions was serious. Being a Japanese colony, many traditional elements of Korean culture had already been partly destroyed. However, "the shocks and impairments incurred not only in the artistic and literary communities but also in the normative culture and value orientations, the scars of which we can still see today."[62] In addition, the cultural vacuum created by the Korean War began to be filled by foreign cultures. Moreover, all forms of social organizations such as the family, social groups, institutions, and more were reorganized by new principles to meet the needs of Korean society, which now mainly emphasized the importance of economic growth. Furthermore, a great change occurred in social stratification. Since entire families were impoverished and almost every physical and economic resource was destroyed, an equalitarian spirit emerged. The rigid social structural system of the Chosun dynasty, which distinguished inherent *yangban* (rulers) and *chonmin* group (servants), was smashed.

Fourth, since the 1960s, modernization has emerged full speed ahead. The situation of the Korean society had changed greatly since then. The first president, Seong-Man Rhee, resigned in 1960, and Jeong-Hee Park, by a military coup, became the second president. From 1961 to 1979, Korea started to build a modernized society and made

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[61] Wilkinson, "The Pattern of Korean Urban Growth," 33.

[62] Kyund-Dong Kim and On-Jook Lee, *The Two Koreas: Social Change and National Integration* (Seoul and Edison: Jimoondang, 2003), 116.

significant economic progress. Jeong-Hee Park adopted economic growth as the policy of

first priority, since people knew it was important to rebuild Korean society after the

Korean war that had brought social chaos. Kyung-Dong Kim regards the modernization

process as "international acculturation."[63] He suggests that Jung-Hee Park's

modernization was the first attempt at indigenous modernization, because Korean people

now took the initiative.[64]

Economic growth drove modernization in this period. Kyung-Dong Kim asserts the

following, "The early 1960s now began to see the earnest emergence within the society of

autonomous attempt at indigenous definition of modernization as a national program in

terms of the planned economic development."[65] In this period, the Koreans had achieved

dramatic economic growth, called "the miracle of Han River." The table below clearly

shows the rapid economic growth in Korea through statistical data concerning the Growth

National Product and GNP statistics per capita .

Table 1. Economic growth in Korea from 1953 to 2007

Year	1953	1960	1970	1980	1990	1994	1997	1998	2000	2005	2007
Per Capita GNP($)	67	79	253	1,597	6,147	9,459	11,176	7,355	11,292	17,531	21,695

Source: Data from Statistics Korea, *Tonggyero Bon Hangukui Baljachwi* [Reviews on development of Korea through statists], 1995, http://epic.kdi.re.kr/epic/epic_view.jsp?num=17454&menu=2 (accessed February 9, 2010).

Along with the rapid economic growth, industrialization and urbanization were

conspicuous in Korea. In 1949, 17.2 percent of the total population of Korea lived in

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[63] Kyung-Dong Kim, "Modernization As a Politico-Cultural Response," 4.

[64] Kyung-Dong Kim, "Modernization As a Politico-Cultural Response," 15.

[65] Kyung-Dong Kim, "Modernization As a Politico-Cultural Response," 20.

cities, compared to 74.4 percent in 1990.[66] Korean urban growth was characterized by its

"rapidity and spatial concentration in a few large urban centers."[67] Major urban growth

due to industrialization has occurred since the 1960s.[68] This process was so rapid that

"urban population jumped from 8.9 million in 1960 to 38.5 million in 1995. The

urbanization ratio increased from 35.8 percent in 1960 to 86.4 percent in 1995."[69] The

population of the six largest cities occupies 56.3 percent of the total urban population,[70]

which creates a great deal of regional inequality. The change of the industrial structure

demonstrated compressed industrialization in Korea. The following table shows these

changes.

Table 2. Urbanization ratio and the change of industrial structure

	Population Living in Cities (%)	Primary Industries (%)	Secondary Industries (%)	Tertiary Industries (%)
1960	39.1		-	-
1965	-	58.5	10.4	31.2
1970	40.7	50.4	14.3	35.3
1980	56.7	34.0	22.5	43.5
1990	73.8	18.3	27.4	58.3
1995	78.2	13.6	23.9	62.5

Source: Data from Statistics Korea, http://nso.go.kr and Korea social index,
http://index.go.kr/egams/stts/jsp/potal/stts/PO_STTS_IdxMain.jsp?idx_cd=1200 (accessed February 10, 2010).

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[66] Kyund-Dong Kim and On-Jook Lee, *The Two Koreas,* 126.

[67] Yong-Woong Kim, "Industrialization and Urbanization in Korea," *Korea Journal* 39 (1999): 44.

[68] Suk-Nam Moon points out that one characteristic of Korean urbanization came from the fact that Korean urbanization preceded industrialization because of the poverty of rural people that caused migration to the cities after the Korean War. In Western countries, urbanization is closely related to industrialization from the beginning of it. Suk-Nam Moon, "The Pattern and Characteristics of Urbanization in Korea," *Journal of the International Association of Comparative Korean Studies* 2 (1999): 50.

[69] Yong-Woong Kim, "Industrialization and Urbanization in Korea," 44.

[70] Yong-Woong Kim, "Industrialization and Urbanization in Korea," 47.

Korean Modernization and Its Impact on Religions in Korea

These rapid social changes have significantly impacted religions in Korea.

Interesting to trace are the changes of religious populations along with social change.

Many reasons explain the growth or decline of religious populations, but this section

focuses mainly on social change and its impact. This change is an important reason for

the expansion of a religious population, especially in times of rapid modernization.

Presented here are statistical data to demonstrate the tremendous religious growth during

the period of modernization.

Table 3. The changes of religious populations since 1962[71]

Year	Buddhists	Percent of Buddhists(%)	Protestants	Percent of Protestants(%)	Catholics	Percent of Catholics(%)	Percent of Religious Population(%)
1962	687,000	2.6	736,000	2.8	590,000	1.8	7.5
1970	4,943,000	15.7	3,192,000	9.5	779,000	2.5	27.7
1983	7,507,059	18.9	5,337,308	13.5	1,590,,625	4.0	39.2
1985	8,059,624	19.9	6,489,000	16.1	1,865,000	4.6	42.6
1991	11,729,000	27.1	8,037,000	18.6	2,477,000	5.7	54.0
1995	10,321,012	23.2	8,760,000	19.7	2,950,000	6.6	50.7
1999	12,038,299	26.3	8,500,200	18.6	3,199,000	6.9	53.6
2003	11,921,360	25.3	9,330,000	19.8	3,312,000	7.6	53.9
2005	10,726,463	22.8	8,616,438	18.3	5,146,147	10.9	53.1

[71] The sources of these data are various. The data of 1962 and 1972 come from the yearbook of Korean religion. In 1983 government provided the first nation-wide religious population data by census. Ihum Yun, *Hangukjonggyoyeongu* [The study on Korean religions] (Seoul: Jipmundang, 1988), 218-219. At that time the population of Confucianism are 1.99 percent of total population. The data which religious institutions provide seem to be exaggerated. For example, the percent of religious population of 1982 was 77.7 percent based on reports of each religion. Therefore, the government's data are the most reliable, but it is difficult to get earlier data before 1983. Before 1985, the religious population means the summation of Buddhists, Protestants, and Catholics, the biggest three religions in Korea. The data of 1980 come from Jung-Suck Rhee, *Secularization and Sanctification* (Amsterdam : VU University, 1995), 228. The statistics from 1985 to 2003 are from the Korean National Statistical Office which is available from http://www.nso.go.kr; Internet; accessed 10 March 2005. Growth rate and percentages are calculated by me.
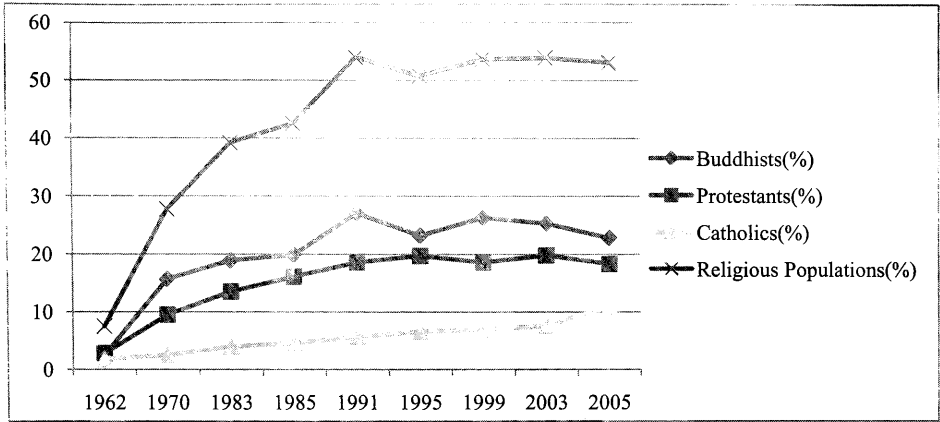
Figure 1. The change of religious populations since 1962

The religious population had significantly grown during the rapid modernization from the 1960s to 1980s. This growth continued until 1991, but after 1991, the growth seemed to stagnate. Several scholars diagnose this phenomenon and suggest reasons for religious growth during the rapid modernization.

Gil-Myung Noh suggests social factors and religious factors that contributed to the religious growth at that time.[72] For social factors, he emphasizes the influence of rapid industrialization and urbanization that caused great uneasiness or anxiety. First, people's anxiety grew because of the instability of the social structure caused by rapid economic growth, and the political instability from the two dictators, President Jung-Hee Park and Du-Hwan Jun. Second, a sense of comparative depravity spread among people due to economic inequality. Third, people lost their sense of traditional community due to rapid urbanization, and the sense of communal authority that had previously supported them.

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[72] Gil-Myung Noh, "70nyeondae Hangukjonggyoui Seongjanggwa Apeuroeui Jeonmang," [The religious growth and future prospect in the 1970s] in *Hanguksahoe Eodiro Gago Inna* [Where is Korean society going], ed. Korean Sociological Association (Seoul: An Institute for Modern Society, 1983), 91-96.

This uneasiness and anxiety drove people to pursue a religion they believed they could trust.

For religious factors, Noh emphasizes the successful growth of Christianity. He enumerates several reasons for the growth of Christianity. He suggests that Christianity embraced both low and middle class people, those who faced difficulties in adjusting to a rapid modernizing society, and that this religion highlighted community to the people who searched for an alternative when they lost their traditional support system due to urbanization.

Chi-Jun Noh analyzes reasons for the rapid growth and later stagnation of Protestant churches in terms of an inverted J-curve, which shows that some factors that initially contribute to growth begin to work as an obstacle.
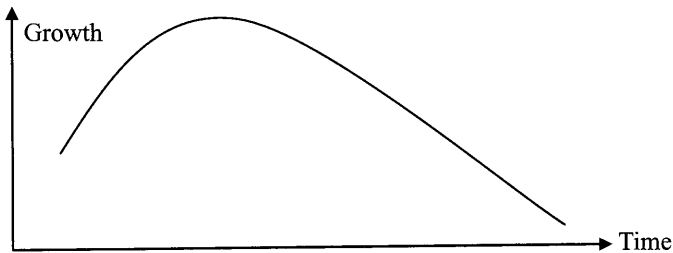
Figure 2. Inverted J-Curve.

Chi-Jun Noh suggests three cogent factors that caused the inverted J-curve.[73] First, anxiety caused from social, political, and economic instability worked as a pushing factor to religion by the 1980s. The Korean populace felt a sense of relative deprivation by the rapid economic growth, social displacement by rapid urbanization, and political uneasiness caused by the two dictatorships. These disquiets, and the threats from North

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[73] Chi-Jun Noh, *Hanguk Gaesingyo Sahoehak* [The sociology of Korean Protestantism] (Seoul: Hanwool, 1998), 18-37.

Korea, drove people to seek solace in religion. However, since the 1990s, when most Koreans accomplished economic growth at some level and advanced democracy by ending military dictatorship, they adjusted themselves to a new social structure. Also, the threat from North Korea decreased by the fall of the Soviet Union in 1990. Then, the drawing factor of anxiety from social and political reasons lost influence.

Second, Chi-Jun Noh considers modernization itself as a factor for the inverted J-curve. From the very beginning of Protestant Christianity, the image of Protestantism has been closely related to modernization. In Korea, Protestantism became a highway to Western modernization in the time of the Japanese annexation, and the Korean people assumed that they could get help from Protestants in order to achieve independence. After the Korean War, many foreign relief agencies gave aid through Protestant churches, and therefore Protestant Christianity was considered as the religion of those Western countries that protected Korea from the threat of North Korea. The people's association with aid and relief agencies contributed to the growth of Protestantism. However, Koreans are becoming concerned as they now react to modernization, concerned that traditions have been forgotten, and so there has been a resurgence of traditional beliefs since the end of 1980s. Therefore, the interest in Protestantism, a Western religion, has decreased.

Third, the goal of having larger church attendance at each church advanced Protestant church growth for a time. However, the perceived materialism and nominality of many of attenders eventually inhibited Protestant church growth.

Sung-Ho Kim also highlights the deep relationship between the insecurity caused by modernization and the religious growth in Korea.[74] He adds that conflicts in values,

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[74] Sung-Ho Kim, "Rapid Modernisation and the Future of Korean Christianity," *Religion* 32 (2002):

along with political and economic inequality, and social change accelerated the sense of

insecurity in Korean society. He claims that traditional values such as fatalism, asceticism,

authoritarianism, and family-centered collectivism conflicted with the imported Western

values. So, when Korean society became a political democracy and enjoyed economic

stability, the number of religious participants began to stagnate; all this has happened

since the 1990s.

Korean people had to rebuild their society, and they experienced rapid social

change through the modernization, after having suffered from the severe chaos and

poverty of the Korean War. During that time they desperately pursued economic progress

and social security, which were the most pressing felt needs at the time. In the following

text, Byong-Suh Kim connects Korean church growth to shamanistic material blessings

and the felt needs of Korean society:

> In the industrialization process, the Korean masses wanted to achieve a better life
> through whatever means were available to them; thus they came to the church as
> some clergymen stressed, and even promoted, a better life here and now. This
> appeals strongly not only to the poor but also to the middle class who have a strong
> sense of relative deprivation.[75]

Predictably, Korean religious growth, including Protestant church growth, has

stagnated since the middle of the 1990s. Won-Gyu Lee asserts that in the 1990s, Korean

politics became stable and the resulting economic growth decreased the need to search

for God. These factors made people less dependent on God and thus caused a decrease in

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28-29. Won-Gyu Lee also points out the problem of political, economic, and social insecurity contributed to the growth of Protestant churches. Won-Gyu Lee, "Sahoebyeondonggwa Hangukgyohoeui Mirae," [Social change and the future of Korean churches] *Sinhakgwa Segyeo* 62 (2008): 341-343. Byong-Suh Kim also claims that political insecurity and social insecurity were the main factors that caused Korean church growth. Byong-Suh Kim, "The Explosive Growth of the Korean Church," 65-69.

[75] Byong-Suh Kim, "The Explosive Growth of the Korean Church," 70.

Korean church strength.[76]

Norris and Inglehart's existential security theory is very useful in explaining the social context of secularity. First, although Europe experienced a long history of gradual modernization, Korea has experienced it in a very short time span. Kyung-Sup Chang calls the kind of modernity that Korea has experienced a "compressed modernity."[77] The compressed modernity accompanied rapid social change, which drove people to pursue security.

Second, the uniqueness of Korea's modern history has driven Korean people to pursue existential security as their most urgent need. Their modern history has included Japanese annexation, the Korean War, post-war social chaos, widespread extreme poverty, and the continuous threat from North Korea. Thus, the major thrust of Korean modernization has been rapid economic growth, while modernization itself has become related in order to obtain security.

Third, under the influence of Shamanism, Korean people (especially on the popular level of society) have strong inclinations to secure this-worldly blessings such as longevity, material blessing, and health. They have practiced extrinsic religiosity, understanding and using religion as an instrument to obtain these this-worldly blessings for security in this life.

Norris and Inglehart use the Human Development Index to measure the extent of a nation's development. If an HDI score goes over 0.90 and mean per capita GDP goes beyond $29,585; these countries are then considered as 'postindustrial societies,' which

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[76] Won-Gyu Lee, *Hanguksahoe Eodiro Gago Inna* [Where is the Korean Church Going], 280.

[77] Kyung-Sup Chang, "Compressed Modernity and Its Discontents: South Korean Society in Transition," *Economy and Society* 28 no. 1 (1999): 30.

probably show less religiosity than agrarian and industrial societies. The table below

demonstrates the change of an HDI score in Korea over twenty five years. According to

this table and picture, Korean society marked an HDI score over 0.90 around 2003, and

per capita GNP reached $20,000 in 2007, although it did not exceed $29,000. The

changes in these data correlate to the change in the religious population in Korea. When

the HDI scores of Korea were relatively low, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, rapid

religious population growth happened.[78] As HDI scores increased, the number of

religious participants stagnated.

One more advantage exists in using the existential security theory. The classical

view on secularization believes that as modernization proceeds, the religious population

decreases. Since religious growth in Korean society increased rapidly in the rapid

modernization era, it seems to be the opposite of the prediction of the classical view.

However, this happened in England and America in a similar way, as Callum G. Brown

observed.[79] As HDI scores in Korea approach the average HDI scores of OECD nations,

the growth of the religious population stagnated, especially after 2003. The existential

secularity theory can resolve this discrepancy by using the change of the HDI score as

mentioned before.

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[78] Norris and Inglehart believed that "The sharpest reduction in religiosity occurs following the first stage of societal modernization, in the shift from agrarian to industrial societies. The second stage is also associated with a modest erosion of religiosity, but this step is far less dramatic." Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, 71.

[79] Callum G. Brown, "A Revisionist Approach," 42-48. Even Wallis and Bruce acknowledge two cases which can undermine the secularization process: cultural defense and cultural transition. When people defend their cultural identity which is embedded with their religion and experience rapid cultural transition, people can resort to religion in the midst of modernization. Wallis and Bruce, "Secularization: The Orthodox Model," 17-18. Robin Gill takes the example of Korea to explain the fact that migration to cities can contribute to church growth. Robin Gill, "The Future of Religious Participation," 286.

Table 4. The changes of a Human Development Score in Korea

Year	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006
HDI Score	0.722	0.76	0.802	0.837	0.869	0.927	0.933

Source: United Nations Development Program Webpage, http://undp.org (accessed February 19, 2010).
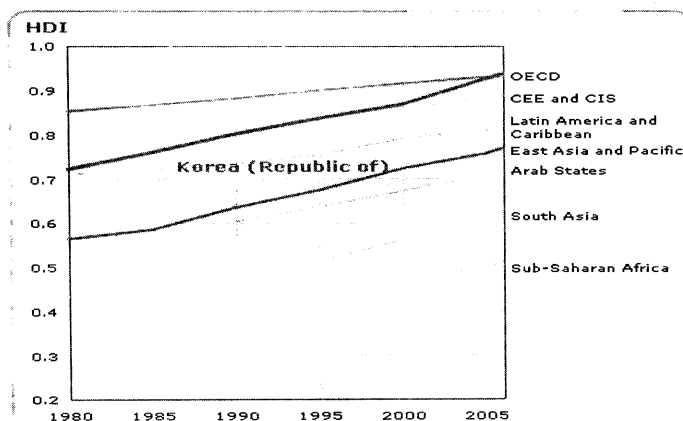
Figure 3. The change of HDI score and its comparison with OECD countries.

We can demonstrate the validity of this characterization of Korean security by looking at a small resurgence of religion near the end of 20th century. On December 3, 1997, Korean society decided to ask for emergency relief loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to resolve the financial crisis in Korea. Massive layoffs, a large scale restructuring, and bankruptcy of many companies followed. People call it "IMF colonization," as they experienced this national economic collapse.[80] Through this difficulty, the economic inequality and anxiety of people re-emerged and the security of people was shaken again. This event seemed to cause the growth of the religious population from 50.7 in 1995 to 53.6 percent in 1999. Korea completely paid off the

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[80] Kyung-Sup Chang, "Compressed Modernity and Its Discontents," 31.

money borrowed from the IMF on August 23, 2001. Although Korea experienced another financial crisis, Korea's economy stagnated until the worldwide financial crisis in 2008.

Indicators of Korean Secularization

Chapter two discussed three indicators used to measure secularization: religious participation, religious values, and religious beliefs. South Korea's secularity is, indeed, suggested in the statistical data, which reflects these three indicators. The most useful longitudinal data comes from Gallup Korea's research of religion, and the religious consciousness of Koreans, conducted in 1984, 1989, 1997, and 2004. Each time, Gallup Korea did interviews with about 1,500 people who were randomly selected nation-wide. This research used the same questionnaire each time, in order to clearly demonstrate the changing religious consciousness of Koreans.

Religious Practice

The decreased growth rate of the religious population is strong evidence for the secularization of South Korea, as mentioned before. Another indicator of measuring religiosity is how many times religious people actually practice their religion. According to Gallup Korea's research on religions and religious consciousness of Korea, people who participate in rituals more than once a week and who pray more than once a day decreased in 2004, compared with those people in 1997 and 1984, though the decline is not sharp .

Table 5. The frequency of religious practice

Year	1984	1989	1997	2004
The percent of People who Participate in Rituals more than Once a Week.	38.5%	40.6%	41.7%	36.0%
The percent of People who Pray More Than Once a Day.	40.6%	42.5%	39.7%	34.3%

Source: Data adapted from Gallup Korea. *Hangukinui Jonggyowa Jonggyouisik* [The religion and religious consciousness of Korean people] (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2004), 75-77.

Religious Values

To test people's religious values, Gallop Korea asked people the following question: "How important is religion in your life?" The table below shows people who think that their religion is very important or a little important in their personal life. The number of people who consider religion as very important in their personal life has decreased.

Table 6. People who consider religion as very important in their personal life

Year	1984	1989	1997	2004
The percent of People who believed that religions are very important in their personal life	24.0%	28.9%	22.1%	18.8%

Source: Data from Gallup Korea. *Hangukinui Jonggyowa Jonggyouisik* [The religion and religious consciousness of Korean people] (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2004), 70.

Gallup Korea also asked, "Do you think the religious influence on our society has increased or decreased?" Table 7 below shows the percent of people who believe that religious influence on society increased.

Table 7. Religious influence on society

Year	1984	1989	1997	2004
The percent of people who believed that religious influence on society increased	67.9%	70.4%	59.3%	53.9%

Source: Data from Gallup Korea. *Hangukinui Jonggyowa Jonggyouisik* [The religion and religious consciousness of Korean people] (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2004), 124.

In addition, Gallup Korea asked how important religions were in people's personal lives. The tables below show people who think that their religion is very important or a little important in their personal life. The religious influence on private life significantly decreased among Buddhists and people without religion (see table 8). The decrease of religious influence on personal life among people without religion is meaningful to Christian evangelism, because it may make it less likely that they will consider religion when they experience a crisis in their lives. Along with Buddhism, Catholicism and Protestantism have experienced some declining influence upon Korean people.

Table 8. People who consider religion as very important or a little important in their personal life according to their religion

	Buddhists	Protestants	Catholics	People without religion
1984	88.2%	97.4%	96.5%	48.4%
1989	77.1%	96.1%	95.7%	43.9%
1997	77.5%	96.1%	88.7%	38.5%
2004	68.2%	89.9%	82.1%	29.4%

Source: Data from Gallup Korea. *Hangukinui Jonggyowa Jonggyouisik* [The religion and religious consciousness of Korean people] (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2004), 71.

World Value Survey data also signifies that the importance of religion marginally decreased in people's lives. One interesting point is that people who responded very negatively steadily increased without fluctuation. This reflects the decreasing influence of religion in Korean society.

Table 9. Important in life: religion

	1990(%)	1996(%)	2001(%)	2005(%)
Very Important	25.6	20.0	23.3	21.1
Rather Important	28.0	31.2	28.9	25.8
Not Very Important	34.6	33.0	31.4	34.5
Not at all Important	11.7	15.9	16.4	18.6

Source: Data from EUROPEAN AND WORLD VALUES SURVEYS FOUR-WAVE INTEGRATED DATA FILE, 1981-2004, v.20060423, 2006. The European Values Study Foundation and World Values Survey Association; http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org (accessed February 24, 2008).

Moreover, religion does not seem to be very meaningful in many people's actual daily living. When people were asked to choose two important things in their current life, most of them chose health, money, happy family life, and peace of mind. The table below clearly indicates these preferences. We can see that the importance of good friends increased from 12.4 percent in 1984, to 20.3 percent in 2004. The importance of wealth rapidly increased after the IMF's bailout in 1997.

Table 10. Important things in their current life

Items	1984	1989	1997	2004
Good Friends	12.4%	13.1%	16.3%	20.3%
Happy Family Life	40.8%	42.2%	38.4%	30.8%
Wealth	10.9%	12.8%	14.0%	30.6%
Health	56.0%	62.3%	62.4%	60.9%
Peace of Mind	25.4%	24.7%	29.4%	22.6%
Religion	10.8%	10.0%	7.1%	4.5%

Source: Data from Gallup Korea. *Hangukinui Jonggyowa Jonggyouisik* [The religion and religious consciousness of Korean people] (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2004), 103.

Religious Beliefs

Religious beliefs are an important indicator for measuring people's religiosity. Gallup Korea's research is considered a more important source for measuring this indicator than the World Value Survey. Two reasons exist for this. First, questions of the

World Value Survey regarding religious beliefs such as belief in heaven, hell, life after death, or existence of soul do not seem to reflect beliefs of Buddhism and Confucianism. Second, some survey questions and data are not available in some years.

Regarding Christianity, the Gallup researchers asked about creation and the last judgment by the Supreme Being. The agreement with these beliefs of Christianity declined in all religious people, including people without religion. The table below shows the percentage of people who responded positively to these beliefs. Figure 4 and 5 categorized the above answer according to people's religions. Catholics showed the sharpest decline when speaking of these two beliefs, although an increase in Catholic members is evident.

Table 11. The percent of people who responded positively to Christian beliefs

Beliefs	1984(%)	1989(%)	1997(%)	2004(%)
The world is created by Supreme Being	46.1	44.9	41.8	35.4
All people will be judged by Supreme Being at the end of the world	34.5	33.1	29.3	22.1

Source: Data from Gallup Korea. *Hangukinui Jonggyowa Jonggyouisik* [The religion and religious consciousness of Korean people] (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2004), 88.
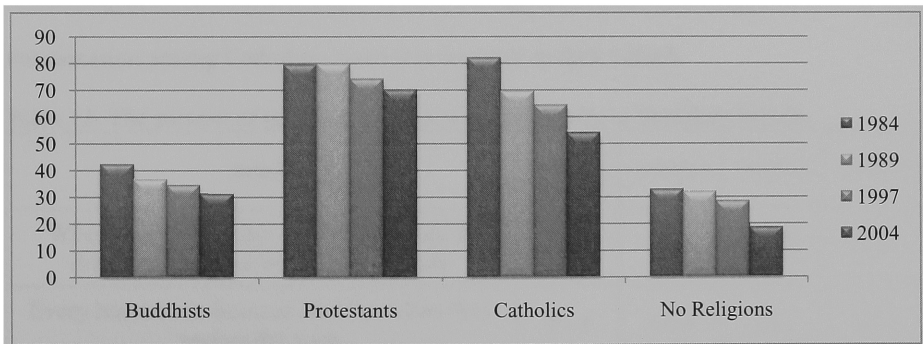
Figure 4. People who positively responded to creation.
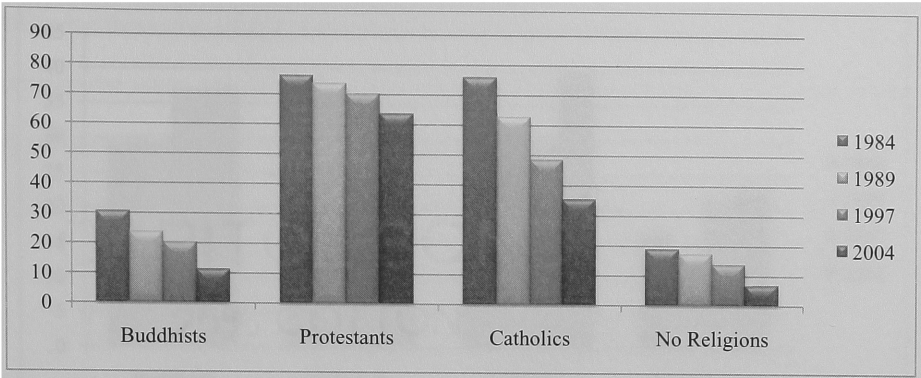
Figure 5. People who positively responded to the final judgment.

Concerning Buddhism, the Gallup research asked about the doctrine of reincarnation and emancipation, which means that every human can become Buddha if he or she realizes the truth. Belief in the doctrine of reincarnation increased, but the doctrine of Buddhist emancipation decreased. The table below shows the percentage of people who responded positively to these beliefs. Figure 6 and 7 categorize the above answers according to people's religions. Interesting to note is that people responded differently to these two beliefs. For the doctrine of reincarnation, the percentage of people who positively responded rose somewhat, but fewer people believed in the Buddhist doctrine of emancipation. Also interesting is to find a sharp increase in the doctrine of reincarnation among Catholics, since it is contrary to their beliefs.

Table 12. The percent of people who responded positively to Buddhist beliefs

Beliefs	1984(%)	1989(%)	1997(%)	2004(%)
When people die, they will reincarnate in different forms of life in the next life	20.7	20.0	25.7	27.4
Every human can become Buddha when they realize the truth	49.4	45.5	35.4	29.9

Source: Data adapted from Gallup Korea. *Hangukinui Jonggyowa Jonggyouisik* [The religion and religious consciousness of Korean people] (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2004), 90.
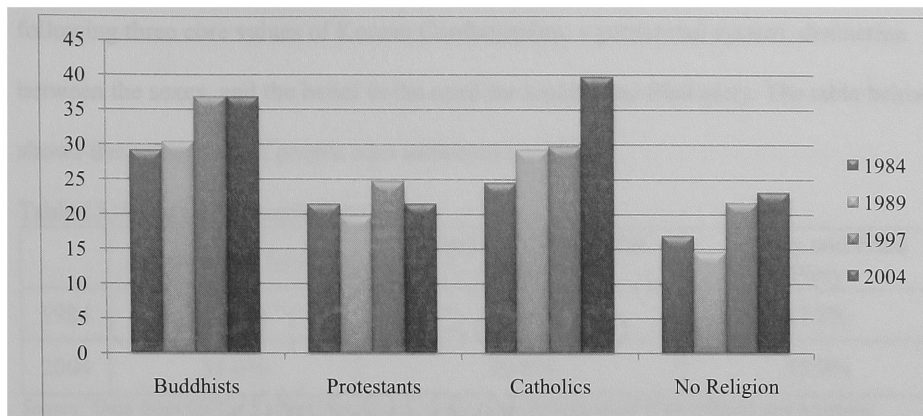
Figure 6. People who positively responded to reincarnation
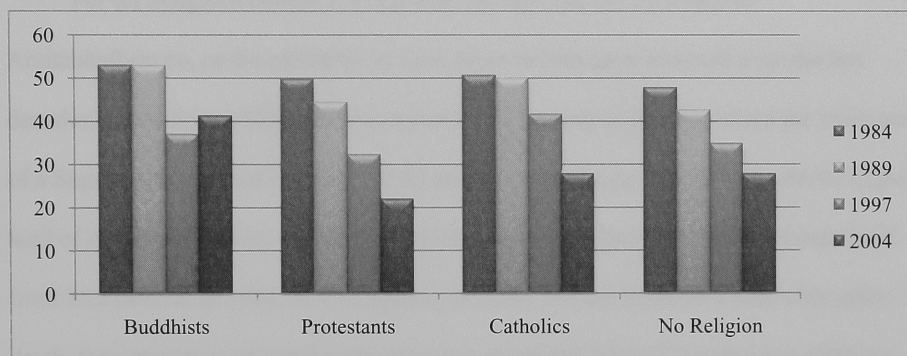
Figure 7. People who positively responded to Buddhist emancipation.

For Confucianism, a census of the population in 2005, shows that Confucians were now below one percent of the whole Korean population,[81] and the Gallup Korea's research shows a decrease in the influence of Confucianism. This research focused on the

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[81] However, some reservations exist in receiving the result of the census data as a concrete data for Confucianism. Since Confucian beliefs have influenced the Korean society for five hundred years during the Chosun Dynasty, measuring how many people actually adhere to the Confucian beliefs is very difficult. This is a limitation of self-identification research methodology in a census of population, Ihum Yun, *Hangukjonggyoyeongu* [The study on Korean religions], 221. In case of Shamanism, it is more difficult to measure its practices because of dual attitude toward shamans or Shamanism. According to Chong-Ho Kim, "It would be wrong to assume that Korean use shamans because they like Shamanism or because they are familiar with the shamanic world. Even though shamanism is indigenous in Korea, Koreans do not welcome shamans in public...people are not proud, but ashamed, of their use of shamans." Chong-Ho Kim, *Korean Shamanism: The Cultural Paradox* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2003), 7.

following three core values of Korean Confucianism: a patriarchal system, distinction between the sexes, and the belief in the need for loyalty and filial piety. The table below shows the percentage of people who answered positively.

Table 13. Measure of Confucian values

	A Patriarchal System	Distinction Between the Sexes	Loyalty and Filial Piety
1984	69.7%	72.9%	47.8%
2004	51.6%	39.4%	35.9%

Source: Data from Gallup Korea. *Hangukinui Jonggyowa Jonggyouisik* [The religion and religious consciousness of Korean people] (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2004), 84.

For the religious beliefs in a Supreme Being/God, the pure land of Amitabha/heaven, or the existence of soul, these beliefs have lessened over the last decades. According to Gallup Korea research, 30 percent of people denied the existence of a Supreme Being/God in 1984, but 45 percent denied it in 2004. For the belief in pure land of Amitabha/heaven, the percentage of people who denied its existence increased from 35.8 percent in 1984, to 42.6 percent in 2004. For the belief in a soul's life after death, the percentage of people who denied it increased from 27.7 percent in 1984, to 34.2 percent in 2004. These three beliefs maintained the same level of over 70 percent, or slightly increased, among Protestants, but it decreased among Catholics—especially in the area of belief in a Supreme Being/God from 83.9 percent in 1984, to 59.7 percent in 2004. The belief in a Supreme Being or God decreased the most among people without religion. In 1984, 35.4 percent of people without religion positively responded to the belief, but in 2004, only 23.3 percent of people positively responded.

Three indicators of the secularization of Korea unanimously demonstrated the decline of religious participation, value, and beliefs. Even though the religious population

slightly increased from 1995 to 1999, the religious population's numbers have remained the same or stagnated since then. When we compare the growth rate between 1960s to 2005, as the Korean society went on the post-industrial track, we notice the church growth rate tremendously declined. Some people may argue that Korean society still retains a high religiosity, but the decline of these three indicators captures the secularization of Korea, as the Korean society becomes economically secure and more confident of rapid economic development.

However, important to note is that the decline of religious practices, values and beliefs does not mean that people are not open to a reality beyond this world. Norris and Inglehart indicate that people in rich countries are still looking for the meaning of life, despite their high levels of existential security. The authors argue that "although church attendance is declining, spiritual concerns more broadly are not disappearing."[82] The same quest for meaning continues in Korea as well. According to the World Values Survey, Korean people are thinking more and more about the meaning and purpose of life. In 1982, only 27.9 percent of the Korean population thought often about the meaning and purpose of their lives, compared to 41.3 percent in 2001. This is a significant change. In South Korea, seemingly the more that secularization takes hold, the more people are thinking about their purpose in life, because the answers that formerly were provided by traditional religion and society no longer impact people. They must seek elsewhere to discover life's meaning. This would be called a 'cross pressured' situation, as Taylor describes in the previous chapter. Room still exists for the spreading of religious beliefs, depending on how religions approach secular people in each situation.

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[82] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 75.

Table 14. Thinking about meaning and purpose of life in Korea

Frequency	1982	1990	2001
Often	27.9%	39.2%	41.3%
Sometimes	53.7%	55.2%	50.2%
Rarely	10.2%	4.4%	6.7%
Never	4.1%	1.3%	1.7%

Source: EUROPEAN AND WORLD VALUES SURVEYS FOUR-WAVE INTEGRATED DATA FILE,
1981-2004, v.20060423, 2006. The European Values Study Foundation and World Values Survey
Association; http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org (accessed 10 April 2008).

Conclusion

Both specific religious context and social context in South Korea contribute to the

process of secularization in South Korea. Religious context has addressed this-worldly

blessings such as wealth, health, and successful life since Shamanism entered the Korean

society. The application of the Shamanistic value system to Korean Protestantism

eventually enhanced secularization in South Korea by creating a negative image in

society. Social context from destruction of society during the period of the Korean War,

the chaos of society before and after the Korean War, and the compressed modernization

process in a very short time span all drove people to pursue this-worldly security. The

growth and then decline of the numbers in the religious population since the 1960s

marched to the beat of the modernization process, the process that focused almost entirely

on economic development. As the Korean society became stabilized, the pushing factor

that once moved people to religions, decreased. Thus, Marty's controlled secularity

explains the religious context of secularity of South Korea, and Norris and Inglehart's

existential security theory helps to explain the social context of secularity in South Korea.

The decline of the three indicators that measure secularization, such as religious

participations, values, and beliefs, demonstrate the phenomenon of secularization in Korea. The importance of religion in personal life and society significantly decreased, while the percentage of people who are searching for the purpose of their lives increased. In this changed social and religious context, Christianity is mandated to evangelize secular people. Thus, we need to theorize about approaches to secular people in Korea, which is the task of the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Theories and Perspectives for Informing
the Evangelization of Secular Young Adults in South Korea

Evangelism methods that once proved fruitful in one context often do not seem to

work in another context. For example, effective ways of evangelism in the era of

Christendom may not be as effective in a secular society.[1] Therefore, changing social and

religious contexts typically requires different approaches in doing evangelism. Previous

chapters observed significant change in the religious milieu in South Korea as well as in

European society. South Korean society, which was receptive to various religions for

many years, has become indifferent to religion. More and more people in South Korea

have the perception that the influence of religion on society and the individuals living in

it are decreasing. This chapter will introduce several important theories and perspectives

for informing the evangelization of secular young adults in South Korea.

The first part will introduce preliminary studies that took seriously the changed

social and religious contexts while trying to reach secular people. The second part will be

devoted to informing the following four theories and perspectives that seem to be

important in reaching secular young adults in South Korea: ethos theory, relational

network theory, indigeneity theory and a process theory of conversion. This research has

not discovered any new and revolutionary way of evangelism that is exclusively effective

in reaching secular people. However, some established theories and perspectives are

especially relevant for effective evangelism in a secular society where the influence of

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[1] Stuart Murray, *Church after Christendom* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2004); Bryan P. Stone, *Evangelism after Christendom: The Theology and Practice of Christian Witness* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2006).

religion diminishes and alternative options for religions, such as science, leisure sports, and neo-paganism, prevail. These four theories and perspectives will provide guidelines in the analysis of the field research data in the next chapter.

Preliminary Studies on Evangelizing Secular People

Donald Soper, who was a great Christian apologist and served as an open air advocate of Christianity at Tower Hill in London for fifty years, sensed that the religious atmosphere in England had changed and people in England had become secular.[2] He introduces the following result of a survey about the religious state of the people:

> It was found that only ten percent of the people go to church; and many of those who don't go to church have forgotten the name of the church they stay away from....there is a growing community which does not remember the Songs of Zion learnt at mother's knee, which cannot recite the Lord's Prayer, and which has no nostalgia for religion whatsoever. These are the true pagans, in the accepted and classical sense of that word.[3]

Soper informed five generalizations about secular people, which are quite helpful to understand them.[4] The first change in people caused by secularization is a move from basic knowledge to fundamental ignorance about Christian matters. In Christendom, even common illiterate people knew a great deal about Christianity. Today, most people simply do not know about basic Christian matters.

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[2] Donald Soper, *The Advocacy of the Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1961), 11.

[3] Soper, *The Advocacy of the Gospel, 88-89.*

[4] Donald Soper, *The Advocacy of the Gospel*, 9-23. His points are also summarized by George Hunter. See Hunter, *The Contagious Congregation*, 86-97. In this book, Hunter suggests five strategies for communicating the gospel to resistant secular people. First, the church must provide instruction. Second, stressing on dialogue is required to engage about widespread religious doubt. Third, Christians need to demonstrate their credibility to engage people's curiosity about Christianity. Fourth, we need to speak explicitly to basic human needs to demonstrate the relevance of Christianity. Fifth, we need to provide Christian koinonia. Hunter, *The Contagious Congregation*, 97-101.

Second, a change has occurred in consciousness from a death to a life-orientation. In the past, epidemics, pestilence, illness, and famines threatened people's lives. People were preoccupied with death, and concerned with the survival of personal identity and consciousness beyond death. In modern society, with the aid of medical knowledge, life expectancy doubled, compared to most of recorded history. So, today people are significantly less death-oriented and more life-oriented.

Third, according to Soper, most important is the shift from guilt to doubt. According to him, "the profound sense of personal guilt has almost disappeared."[5] This does not mean that people are not guilty anymore, nor that guilt does not continue to be a real and conscious problem for people. People tend to attribute guilt to groups, parents, or society more than to themselves.

The fourth change in persons caused by secularity is a shift from a sense of need for Christianity to a sense of curiosity about Christianity and Christians. Once, virtually all people knew of their religious needs and believed Christianity could meet those needs. Today, secular people do not generally perceive the nature of their needs, and so they do not perceive Christianity's relevance. The credibility of Christianity has been significantly challenged. Noteworthy is that secularity does not mean irreligiousness. Secular people are still religious,[6] but in many ways on the contrary, more secular people are seekers, searching for a more satisfying worldview.[7]

Fifth, a shift from belonging to alienation needs to be considered. In Christendom

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[5] Donald Soper, *The Advocacy of the Gospel*, 18.

[6] Hunter, *The Contagious Congregation*, 87.

[7] Hunter, *Church for the Unchurched*, 20.

people felt like they belonged to a greater degree. But people feel alienated in three of their major relationships as a consequence of secular urbanizations: alienation from nature, political power, and neighbors.

Soper also exposes three problems of evangelistic preaching in his time. First, it demanded responses from people too soon, without considering people's personality and giving enough time to think of what it means to be a Christian or to deal with some arguments about Christianity. Second, in relation to that, evangelistic preaching tried to appeal to people's emotions too much without adequate intellectual preparation for being a Christian. Third, Soper argues that "there is no obvious and irrefutable evidence that the results of such evangelical efforts are effective in creating a higher quality of human life."[8] He laments that a great portion of the evangelistic approach made people comfortable in a cradle even after they became Christians, staying there permanently, which can be called "permanent infantilism."[9] He believes that believing in Christ should make a difference in people's lives and it can be accomplished when the evangelistic message appeals to people's wills.

Since the significance of evangelizing secular people emerged in Western society, the meeting of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches held in Mexico City, from December 8th to 19th, 1963, devoted one section to the topic "The Witness of Christians to Men in the Secular World."[10] In this article, several suggestions were made about witnessing to secular people, though they were not

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[8] Donald Soper, *The Advocacy of the Gospel*, 84.

[9] Donald Soper, *The Advocacy of the Gospel*, 85.

[10] Ronald K. Orchard, *Witness in Six Continents: Records of The meeting of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches* (New York: Friendship, 1964), 150-155.

fully developed, but only gave a general glimpse of witnessing to secular people. First,

the pattern of mission must encounter the real needs of secular people. Second, its form

of communication must be dialogue, adopting contemporary language and modes of

thought. Third, the Christian message should deal with total relationship of secular people

in this world: to self, to each other, and to God. Fourth, the Christian message should

liberate secular people for service to their community, not just address their inward

person.

In 1977, Professor J. Russell Hale of the Lutheran Theological Seminary chose six

diverse counties in the U.S.A., where more than fifty percent of the population was

unchurched, and researched who are these unchurched Americans: Orange County

(California), Polk County (Oregon), Waldo County (Maine), Sarasota County (Florida),

Marion County (Alabama), and Boone County (West Virginia).[11] The national average of

unchurched people was thirty-eight percent. His research represents eleven types of

unchurched people.[12]

After interviewing 165 unchurched people, Hale provides five implications for

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[11] J. Russell Hale, *Who are the Unchurched? An Exploratory Study* (Washington, D.C.: Glenmary Research Center, 1977).

[12] These are eleven types of unchurched people: 1) The Anti-Institutionalists who consider organized church as non-essential or inimical to true religion 2) The Boxed-Ins who felt their lives restrained and controlled by church or Christianity 3) The Burned-Out who feel that their energy has been consumed by the church 4) The Cop-Outs who never committed to the church and are just occasional attendance in Sunday school or special activities or program of the church 5) The Happy Hedonists who find the fulfillment of life's purpose in momentary pleasures 6) The Locked Outs who feel that the church has closed their door against them by neglecting, rejecting, or discriminating them , as an opposite to the Boxed-In. 7) The Nomads who continuously move and transfer to another place for several reasons, never belong to a community in a long time 8) The Pilgrims who describe their religious beliefs as in the process of formation. They only showed tentative stance toward the truth. 9) The Publicans who perceive the church as be full of Pharisees who judge their lives, but they cannot live up to their teachings. This type of unchurched people constitutes the largest group of the unchurched. 10) The Scandalized who reject the church on the basis of the church's disunity 11) The True Unbelieves who are atheists, deists/rationalists, and humanists/secularists. Russell Hale, *Who are the Unchurched?* 39-44.

churches in evangelizing unchurched people. First, active listening must precede effective proclamation. The unchurched really wanted to be heard. Hale claims that "Listening on the part of the 'teacher'…which conveys trust and acceptance of the other is the requisite element in the communicating process."[13] Second, Christians need to proclaim the gospel without offending unchurched people. Whether offensiveness exists in our communication of Christianity, the real offensiveness must lie in the gospel itself, not in the communicator's style or attitudes. Third, American communities have their own mentalities that form a context for individual personalities. Christians need to understand the ethos of each community they want to reach. Fourth, approaches to the unchurched must be different according to the types of people. Fifth, churches need to be renewed, acknowledging their sinfulness and asking forgiveness.

In relation to Hale's research, Edward A. Rauff's research is also interesting. Rauff chose the same six counties Hale had researched, but his project addresses why unchurched people join the church, though he does not explicitly denote the unchurched people as secularized people.[14] Rauff suggests the following several reasons for their joining the church: the influence of Christian people; family relationships and responsibilities; the search for community; personal crisis; a feeling of emptiness; the end of rebellion; the journey toward the truth; the response to evangelism; the reaction to guilt and fear; God's kairos; church visits during funerals, weddings and church programs; and the influence of pastors.

Christopher Walker distills the following five intensely felt needs of secular people

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[13] Russell Hale, *Who are the Unchurched?* 91.

[14] Edward A. Rauff, *Why People Join the Church* (New.York: The Pilgrim, 1979).

that can be met by Christian faith in an Australian context: the desire for self-

transcendence, the concern for meaning and direction in life, the desire that life be

enjoyable and challenging, the longing for fullness of life and maturity, and concern for

social justice.[15] His five desires of secular people can work as five points of engagement

with secular people and suggest which direction evangelistic ministries need to go.

N. T. Wright wrote a book for pre-Christian people to explain about what

Christianity essentially is.[16] Part I of his book is devoted to four areas for which the

world is looking: the longing for justice, the quest for spirituality, the hunger for

relationship, and delight in beauty. He considered the four areas as "Echoes of a Voice"

with which God calls people to Christianity. For example, people are hungry for justice,

because people have a common sense of justice in their minds that was given by God.[17]

People like independence (especially Western people), but they also hunger for

meaningful relationships. The biblical message is that people are made for relationships,

for relationships with one another, the created order, and the Creator. In addition, Wright

believes that since "beauty is *both* something that calls us out of ourselves *and* something

which appears to feelings deep within us,"[18] it can be an echo of voice that calls us to

reflect God's glory.

Wright also describes the resurgence of interest in spirituality as the eruption of the

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[15] Christopher Walker, *Connecting with the Spirit of Christ: Evangelism for A Secular Age* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1988),

[16] N. T. Wright, *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006)

[17] C.S. Lewis had the same approach in developing sense of God. He argued that people have common moral law to sense that this is right things to do. These common moral laws are given to humans by transcendent being, God. C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1960), 3-25.

[18] N. T. Wright, *Simply Christian*, 44.

hidden spring that modernism has stifled for so many years. He believes that renewed interest in spirituality reflects the existence of a God who loves people and wants them to know and respond to that love. When people have been thirsty for water for a long time, they will drink any water, even if it is polluted. Therefore, "by itself 'spirituality' may appear to be part of the problem as well as part of the solution."[19] Wright expresses that the quest for spirituality highlights the importance of spiritual experiences that lead to relativism, accepting almost everything that works for the individual. These four areas of yearning can work as four points of contact with secular people.

George Hunter introduces the problem of secularization and its implication for evangelization in *How to Reach Secular People*. First, he refutes three myths about secular people. Secular people do not have religious consciousness and moral consciousness; they are philosophically sophisticated and reject Christianity on rational grounds. Second, Hunter also profiles characteristics of secular people and suggests themes and strategies for reaching them. Third, recognizing the importance of process for secular people to adopt Christianity and the gospel message rather than instantaneous events, he suggests four models that feature how secular people become Christians: John Wesley's Order of Salvation(awaken-class meeting-justification-sanctification); Agnes Liu's Triangle Scale; Hunter's Target Model (the image barrier, the culture barrier, the gospel barrier, and the total commitment barrier); and the Multiple Conversation Model (rather than single confrontation). Fourth, he introduces characteristics of churches that reach secular populations.

Among Hunter's four models, Agnes Liu's Triangle Scale captures this

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[19] N. T. Wright, *Simply Christian*, 25.

researcher's attention, because it comes from the context of evangelizing secular Chinese working-class people whose cultural background is closer to the Korean culture than to Western people's. After interviewing converted Christians, she suggests a triangle scale with three sides consisting of attitudes, experiences, and theological knowledge. According to her research, secular people begin to change their attitude toward Christianity from boring to liking by relating to and identifying with Christians they like. After that, they are attracted to worship services and church. Next, they begin to like Jesus Christ. In the middle of attitude changes, they experience the power of God by experiences, such as answered prayer and healing of sickness. In addition, they experience the forgiveness of sins, transformed lives, and salvation from sins. In the middle of these experiences, secular people become open to Scripture and theological knowledge. Interesting is that the influence of Scripture and the appeal of theological knowledge come as the last stage of the conversion process.

Hunter also deals with the urgency and necessity to reach out to secular people in *Church for the Unchurched.* Here he provides case studies as specific and concrete ways to learn the reproducible principles of churches that reach secular people. He recognizes that a new apostolic age has come because the time is similar to the ancient apostolic age. He claims that Christendom has collapsed and people are increasingly "receptive to, and searching for, a satisfying worldview."[20] But he also laments that though a new opportunity for reaching secular people has come, many church leaders do not see the ripe harvest field. Many Christians' evangelistic efforts return with empty hands.

Drawing people's attention to the new harvest field, Hunter introduces the term

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[20] Hunter, *Church for the Unchurched,* 23.

"the apostolic church."[21] According to him, the apostolic church and its leaders believe that they are called and sent by God to reach a secular, pre-Christian population. Second, their theology and message are rooted and centered in the gospel of early apostolic Christianity. Third, they adopt the language and culture of the targeted population to communicate the gospel message. Fourth, they are not a new kind of church but rather have appeared before in the history of mission and evangelism, such as with the Pietists and Methodists. After researching nine apostolic congregations, Hunter introduces ten characteristics of churches that successfully reach out to secular people. He summarizes the following three distinctive categories of nine apostolic congregations: culturally relevant congregations, small-group shaped congregations, and lay-ministry driven congregations.

Lee Strobel, who was a former atheist and journalist and experienced conversion through the ministry of Bill Hybels, can help with our understanding of unchurched people. In *Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry and Mary*, Strobel identifies his fifteen observations of the minds of unchurched people, such as "Harry had rejected church, but that doesn't necessarily mean he rejected God," "Harry doesn't just ask, 'Is Christianity true?' Often, he's asking: 'Does Christianity work?'" "Harry has legitimate questions about spiritual matters but he doesn't expect answers from Christians" and "Harry doesn't just want to know something; he wants to experience it."[22]

One of the contributions of Strobel's book is to inform us of five spiritual sticking

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[21] Hunter, *Church for the Unchurched*, 28.

[22] If you want to see the fifteen observations of Strobel on unchurched people see Lee Strobel, *Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry and Mary: How to Reach Friends and Family Who Avoid God and the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 44-81.

points that unchurched people may experience before they come to Jesus Christ.[23] First, they might respond to our evangelism by saying, "I can't believe." Strobel analyzes that this response is related to intellectual and emotional blocks. For an intellectual block (for example, the authority of the Bible), he encourages them to pursue the truth with honesty and sincerity. For emotional blocks (for example, the fear of deep intimacy with God and people and some relationship problem with their fathers), he advises them to visit a Christian counselor. Second, unchurched people might say, "I don't want to believe." This case is occasionally related to a life issue they should give up if they believe in Jesus, but they do not want to do so. We need to tackle the problem of what is hidden in this smoke screen. Third, unchurched people might say, "I don't know what to believe" when various people give them different interpretations of the same Bible verses. Strobel highlights that though some portions of the Bible are difficult to interpret, the central message of the Bible is very clear. Fourth, some unchurched people might say, "I do believe, isn't that enough?" Strobel suggests dealing with this response by informing that intellectual agreement is not enough and they must receive Jesus Christ. Fifth, when unchurched people say "I don't want to believe what they believe," we need to correct their stereotypes by showing authentic Christianity.

Bill Hybels, who has prioritized reaching out to unchurched people since he began Willow Creek Community Church in 1975, develops the following seven steps to lead uninterested, unmotivated, and unchurched Harry to a place of spiritual maturity: 1) A friendship develops between Harry and a Willow Creek attender; 2) The attender shares a verbal witness with Harry; 3) Harry visits a Willow Creek weekend meeting, which is

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[23] Lee Strobel, *Inside the Mind,* 103-120.

designed for unchurched individuals; 4) Harry begins attending "New Community," a midweek worship and teaching meeting; 5) Harry joins a small group; 6) Harry uses his gifts in serving; 7) Harry becomes a good steward of his finances.[24] This seven-step strategy works "at the heart of Willow Creek."[25]

Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg (who worked as evangelism director at Willow Creek for many years) identify three ingredients in becoming contagious Christians. Building relationship with secular people and having clear communication of Christianity with them are on the list, as mentioned in their seven steps. They added "the prerequisite of high potency" to the list in order to describe characteristics of contagious Christians; authenticity, compassion, and sacrifice.[26] Hybels and Mittelberg emphasize four elements of attractive authenticity. First, Christians need to be themselves, not trying to appear as someone else. Second, Christians need to express their emotions frankly. Third, Christians need to have the courage to confess their failures and make things right. Fourth, Christians need to proclaim and live the truth with bold conviction. According to Hybels and Mittelberg, "Seekers have little respect for weak Christians. Deep down they're looking for somebody—anybody—to step up and proclaim the truth and then to live it boldly."[27]

Robert N. Nash, associate professor of Religion and Philosophy at Shorter

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[24] G.A. Pritchard, *Willow Creek Seeker Services: Evaluating a New Way of Doing Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 23-24.

[25] G.A. Pritchard, *Willow Creek Seeker Services*, 26.

[26] Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg, *Becoming a Contagious Christian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 53-94.

[27] Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg, *Becoming a Contagious Christian*, 64.

College in Rome, Georgia, suggests two things in reaching secular people.[28] First, while he affirms Matthew 28:18-20 as an important missionary text, he believes that John 20:21, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you (NIV)," should be a biblical foundation for reaching secular people.[29] Rather than focusing on teaching, baptizing, going, and discipling as one-way communication with a sense of superiority over other worldviews and religions, he highlights the necessity of presence, building relationship, engaging and dialoging with secular people. John 20:21 turns our attention to Jesus' model of reaching people, which demands reconsideration of a broader understanding of Jesus' life, ministry, and message. Second, Nash captures the importance of recovering the joy and authenticity of the Christian life from which evangelism comes. He argues, "The church's effort to reach secular people is finally and fully dependent upon this ability of the church to reduce the influence of secularism within its own ranks and to restore the full sense of what it means to be Christian in the world."[30]

Most Korean scholars use the term "secularization" to depict the corruption of the Church rather than describing a certain population in terms of evangelism. Few articles discuss the secularization of society for the purpose of informing evangelism. John Hong adapts Marty's three modes of secularization and suggests how to reach three kinds of secular people.[31] For "utterly" secular people, Christians need to minister to their needs, including physiological, security, and intellectual (*diakonia*). For "merely" secular people,

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[28] Robert N. Nash, "Reaching Secular People," *Review and Expositor* 101 (2004): 511-521.

[29] Nash supports his idea by quoting John Stott at the Berlin Congress on World Evangelism in 1966 and Samuel Escobar. Robert N. Nash, "Reaching Secular People," 515-516.

[30] Robert N. Nash, "Reaching Secular People," 520.

[31] John Sung-Chul Hong, "Sesokhwawa Hoesim,"[Secularization and conversion] *Gidokgyo Sasang* 434 (1995): 82-99.

faithful relationships between Christians and them need to be developed, meeting their deep loneliness and longing for meaning in life (*koinonia*). For "controlled" secular people who attend church faithfully, but are not interested in biblical life, Christians need to share or proclaim the central message of the gospel (*kerygma*).

Ki-Young Hong also suggests evangelism models for secular people.[32] He examines some models in Hunter's book, *How to Reach Secular People*, such as John Wesley's Order of Salvation, Agnes Liu's Triangle Scale, and Hunter's Target Model. He also adds James Engel's Count Down Model and Joseph Aldrich's Life-Style Evangelism to the above three models. Engel's Count Down Model helps us understand the spiritual decision-making process of people. The scale goes from -8 to eternity in growth. This model starts with -8, which means having awareness of a Supreme Being but does not have effective knowledge of gospel. Zero stands for the regeneration stage and the plus numbers measure the degree of sanctification.[33] Aldrich's life-style evangelism highlights the importance of social network in evangelism, demonstrating the transformed life-style of Christians in everyday life. After evaluating models in a Korean context, he concludes that Aldrich's model would best fit a Korean context because the Korean society overall is very relational and group oriented, in spite of some differences between generations.

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[32] Ki-Young Hong, "Sesokjeokin Saramdeuleul wihan Jeondomodele gwanhan Yeongu," [A study of evangelism models to reach secular people] in *Tongjeonjeok Seongyo* [Integral mission] (Seoul: Mulgaesimeunnamu, 2008), 365-391.

[33] If you want to see this scale in detail, please see James F. Engel and Wilbert Norton, *What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 45. There are some weaknesses in Engel's scale. See ED Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2006), 184-186.

Four Theories and Perspectives on Reaching Secular People

Among many theories and perspectives on evangelism, four theories are especially worth remembering in reaching out to secular young adults in South Korea. This does not mean that to consider other theories and perspectives is unimportant and useless, or that these four are only applicable to reach out to secular young adults in South Korea. Under the influence of globalization, the life style of young adults in South Korea, Japan, and the United States shares some characteristics. Nevertheless, the following four theories and perspectives will more inform the evangelization of secular young adults in the context of South Korea: ethos theory, relational network theory, indigeneity theory, and a process theory of conversion.

Ethos Theory

The importance of the ethos of church leaders and community needs to be investigated. Ethos theory is becoming increasingly important in the context of the secularization of Korean society, which will become clearer when we later see the implication of this theory. Church growth in Korea is deeply related to the credibility of churches within Korean society. We will begin by gleaning some insights of the ethos theory from rhetorical sources.

In the field of rhetoric, the authenticity or credibility of a communicator is crucial in persuading people, including intrinsic ethos (intelligence, character, good will, and more) and extrinsic ethos (ancestry, reputation, rank, prestige, and more). Aristotle first writes about the three modes of persuading: logos (the content of the message), pathos

(engagement in the audience's emotions), and ethos (credibility of spearkers).[34]

Augustine emphasizes the power of credible living. He insists that "the life of the speaker has greater force to make him persuasive than the grandeur of his eloquence, however great that may be."[35] Erasmus also underscores the credibility of an orator in effective communication. He argues that once propositions and arguments are devised, they need to be proven. Important ways for orators to prove their arguments comes from not only the use of appropriate logic and support data, but also their credibility increases in the audience' perception by the orator's use of thoughtfulness, virtue, and good will. The credibility of an orator itself can be a strong proof of what an orator teaches or preaches.[36]

George Campbell's emphasis on sympathy is also important. He teaches that orators need to adapt themselves to the audience in order to be understood by them or to influence them. Sympathy is especially the "one main engine by which the orator operates on the passions."[37] Thus, the apparent conviction of the truth an orator speaks can influence even the wisest hearers.[38] In addition to the orator's sympathy toward the audience, sympathy from the audience to the speaker is important. According to

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[34] Edward P. J. Corbett and Robert J. Connors, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University, 1999), 32.

[35] Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, excerpted in *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*, 2nd ed., ed. Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 482.

[36] Desiderius Erasmus, *Ecclesiastes*, excerpted in *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*, 2nd ed., ed. Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 646.

[37] George Campbell, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, excerpted in *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*, 2nd ed., ed. Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 937.

[38] Campbell, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 937.

Campbell, two ways exist in undermining sympathy in hearers. One is caused by a low opinion of the orator's intellectual abilities, and the other is caused by a bad opinion of the orator's moral character. Campbell believes that the morality of the orator is even more important than the intelligence of the orator.

Kenneth Burke also merits our attention. One of his contributions to rhetoric is that he highlights the importance of identification in the process of persuasion. In *A Rhetoric of Motives*, identification is the key to his concept of rhetoric. He explains the relationship between persuasion and identification in the following way:

> A speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identification; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and his audience.[39]

Burke sees identification as "consubstantiality," which makes people "acting-together" having "common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, and attitudes."[40] Recognizing the implication of identification in persuasion, he suggests identification as "an accessory to the standard lore" of rhetoric.[41]

Along with rhetorical theory, the example of early Christianity highlights the importance of credibility. In early Christianity, evangelism experienced serious obstacles. First, the message of the gospel that proclaims a crucified criminal as Lord was a huge barrier in evangelizing Jews, Romans, and Greeks. The main message itself did not seem to be attractive to ordinary people in the early times. Second, rumors against Christians

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[39] Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, in *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*, 2nd ed., ed. Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 1340.

[40] Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, 1326.

[41] Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, 1325.

about topics such as atheism, incest, and cannibalism spread negative images in societies. Becoming a Christian meant joining a social plague. Under these circumstances, Christians "were universally regarded as the sort of people who might be guilty of crimes like these."[42] How could people dare to become Christians in the midst of such prejudices towards Christianity? Third, to maintain a normal social life was difficult after becoming a Christian, because many aspects of social life, such as attending gladiatorial shows, business contracts, enlisting as a soldier, and more, were quietly related to idolatry and immorality. These social activities were not accepted in Christianity.

How were the early Christians able to triumph over these barriers? One of the important ways that early Christianity overcame barriers was adherence to a high moral life among Christians.[43] The early Christians stood out in their chastity, their hatred of cruelty, their payment of taxes, and their civil obedience. Their true fellowship and their joy in life even under serious persecutions made a great impact on society. In addition, true love among Christians should be added to the list of holy Christian living. Laying much emphasis on the link between evangelism and holiness of life is a prominent feature both in the New Testament and in second century literature. Hunter suggests three questions to investigate the credibility of people—"Do Christians really live by what they believe? Does it make any real difference in their lives? Could Christianity change the world?"[44]

Helmut Thielicke suggests that the real crisis in the preaching of German churches

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[42] Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church,* rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 64.

[43] Green, *Evangelism*, 175.

[44] Hunter, *The Contagious Congregation*, 95-96.

in the 1960s did not lie in the forms of preaching itself, but rather in if the preacher was a credible, convincing witness.[45] The credibility of the preacher became the real issue to preaching in German churches. Thielicke diagnoses that the real factor that makes secular people in a pub or a restaurant who are accustomed to numerous advertisements and propagandas be attentive, is not the content of the message they hear, but whether the witnesses live by their message.[46] The fact that people really practice what they say makes them credible. Unfortunately, Protestantism, according to Thielicke, "has given far too much thought to faith and far too little to the problem of credibility."[47] He believes that the reason why our message is boring and irrelevant comes from the fact that we do not live by our faith. He asserts that "the man who bores others must also be boring himself. And the man who bores himself is not really living in what he —so boringly— hands out."[48] Since Christians, including preachers and Church leaders do not struggle with what the gospel means in their daily life, their evangelistic messages cannot touch and be relevant to secular people who face real economic and social problems in everyday life. Thielicke calls it another "Docetism" to feature "nonproductive flow of words which is no longer geared into real life as men live it."[49]

Ethos should be emphasized more, especially in the Korean context. According to census data from 2005, the population of Protestants decreased by about 144,000 (1.6

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[45] Helmut Thielicke, *The Trouble with the Church: A Call for Renewal*, trans and ed. John W. Doberstein (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 65.

[46] Thielicke, *The Trouble with the Church*, 16.

[47] Thielicke, *The Trouble with the Church*, 15.

[48] Thielicke, *The Trouble with the Church*, 9-10.

[49] Thielicke, *The Trouble with the Church*, 80.

percent) while that of Roman Catholics increased by 2,100,000 (74.4 percent).[50] The remarkable growth of Catholicism captured our attention because it happened when Korean society was advancing toward secular society, where the influence of major religions such as Buddhism and Protestantism stagnated or decreased. Some sociologists have tried to analyze why Roman Catholics accomplished noticeable growth. Sung-Don Cho, a Korean sociologist and Kyung-Hwan Oh, a Catholic Priest, believe that the number one reason for their growth comes from their credibility (ethos) in Korean society.[51] Catholic churches have taken part in Korean social issues for several decades, and the lives of priests and nuns have given good impressions to Korean people. On the contrary, Korean Protestant churches have lost their credibility in society by recent consecutive immoral episodes in Christian leaders' lives.

Sung-Ho Kim also supports their analysis of the growth of Catholicism. The sharp contrast in terms of growth between Catholicism and Protestantism resulted from the fact that "Korean Catholicism has had greater social credibility than Korean Protestantism."[52] According to him, the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) significantly influenced Korean Catholicism. In 1974, the first Korean Cardinal, Soo-Hwan Kim emphasized that "the misson of the church should be primarily directed to the poor and oppressed" in an

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[50] http://www.nso.go.kr; Internet; accessed 4 April 2008. The percentage of religious population was calculated by this researcher.

[51] Kyung-Hwan Oh, "Gatolrik Sinjaui Gwalmokhal manhan Jeungawa Geu Yoin," [An analysis of the reason for recent remarkable growth of Catholic] in *Geudeuleun Wae Gatolrik Gyohoero Gateulkka?* [Why do they go to Catholic], ed. Sung-Don Cho and Jae-Young Jung (Seoul: Yeyoung, 2007), 26; Sung-Don Cho, "Mokhoesahoehakjeok Gwanjeomeseo Boneun Hangukgyohoe Maineoseu Seongjange daehan Wonin Bunseokgwa Daean," [An analysis and suggestion regarding minus-growth of Korean Protestant churches with the perspectives of pastoral sociology] in *Geudeuleun Wae Gatolrik Gyohoero Gateulkka?* [Why do they go to Catholic], ed. Sung-Don Cho and Jae-Young Jung (Seoul: Yeyoung, 2007), 63-65.

[52] Sung-Ho Kim, "Rapid Modernization," 34.

address to a bishops' meeting in the Vatican.[53] This direction of social participation did

not appeal to Korean people in the 1960s. Since the 1970s, the concern of social

participation for justice and democracy began to appeal to Korean people because they

began to realize the negative aspects of modernization, such as the oppression of the

human rights of the working class and poor people. As a result of the social participation

of Korean Catholicism, Myung-dong Cathedral in Seoul became a Mecca of

democratization. The consistent concern for social welfare, justice, and democratization

of Korean Catholicism has greatly enhanced the social credibility of Korean Catholicism.

On the contrary, Korean Protestantism began to lose social credibility among Korean

people. Korean Protestantism used most of their money to build or extend church

buildings, mainly focusing on numerical growth. Kim supports this idea in the following

statement: "Just as the conservative Protestant acceptance of material blessing

contributed to membership growth since the 1960s, so its unconditional acceptance of

material culture resulted in a partial collapse of its credibility from the mid 1980s on."[54]

The Christian Ethic Movement in Korea had nationwide telephone interviews with

1,000 people concerning the credibility of Korean Protestantism in 2008.[55] The result of

this research is shocking. The percentage of people who do not trust Protestant churches

was 48.3 percent; only 18.4 percent of people answered that they trust Protestant

churches. In addition, 50.8 percent of people answered that they cannot trust the words

and deeds of Protestants. When asked which religious institution they trust the most, 35.2

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[53] Sung-Ho, Kim, "Rapid Modernization," 30.

[54] Sung-Ho, Kim, "Rapid Modernization," 33.

[55] The result of this research and articles that are related to this research are accessible by http://trusti.kr.

percent of people responded that it is Catholic churches. The following table shows the

credibility of religions among Korean people. To improve the credibility of Protestant

churches, 42 percent of the people suggested that Protestant church leaders and church

members should live up to what they say.

Table 15. The most trustable religion

Religions	Catholicism	Buddhism	Protestantism	None
Percentage of People (%)	35.2	31.1	18.0	15.7

Why is Korean Protestantism losing social credibility among Korean people

compared to Korean Catholicism? Won-Gyu Lee's study illuminates a reason for the

difference of credibility between Catholicism and Protestantism.[56] He identifies religions'

two ways of enhancing social morality: preventing antisocial deviant behaviors and

encouraging altruistic behaviors. He examines the religion of criminals who committed

crimes from 2003 to 2005 and the number of social welfare facilities managed by

Protestants. He discovered that the crime rate by religious people is much lower than

those of people without religion. The criminal offense record shows that criminal

offenses of people without religion consisted of 44.4 percent of total crimes, but the

crimes of people with religion represented 32.0 percent of total crimes. However, when

we compared the criminal offenses of Protestants to that of Catholics, the number of

Protestant criminals per person almost tripled that of Catholics. For the number of social

welfare facilities, those facilities run by people with religion are much higher than those

by people without religion. (83.3 percent verse 16.7 percent). Interestingly, facilities run

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[56] Won-Gyu Lee, "Jonggyowa Dodeokseongui Gwangyeoe daehan Yeongu," [A study on the relationship between religion and morality] *Sinhakgwa Segyeo* 64 (2009): 125-173.

by Protestants almost tripled those managed by Catholics (54.2 percent verse 17.5

percent).

The number of Catholic adherents increased from 2,950,000 to 5,146,147, but

Protestants decreased from 8,760,000 to 8,616,438 during the period of 1995 to 2005. In

addition, a negative image of Korean Protestantism permeated Korean society during this

period. According to statistical data, Protestantism is stronger in encouraging altruistic

behaviors, and Catholicism is stronger in preventing antisocial deviant behaviors.

Determining where Catholics retain stronger moral values than Protestants is difficult.

Why do Korean people believe that Catholicism is more credible than Protestantism? Lee

argues that gaining respect and credibility among Korean people does not depend on how

many people with religion participate in altruistic behavior, but rather depends on how

fewer people with religion commit crimes.[57] Antisocial deviant behavior becomes a

subject of criticism. He believes that the continuous exposure of deviant behavior by

Protestant church leaders in the media causes a strong negative view of Korean

Protestantism.

The credibility of religion is closely related to Hunter's image barrier to

Christianity. On the basis of his interviews with converts from secularity, he identifies

three image barriers secular people need to cross.[58] The first image barrier is that secular

people with an Enlightenment worldview, or who are confident in human reason, assume

that Christianity is untrue. The second assumption is that Christianity is irrelevant to their

lives. The third image problem considers Christianity as boring. Along with these three

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[57] Won-Gyu Lee, "Jonggyowa Dodeokseongui" [A study on the relationship], 166.

[58] Hunter, *How to Reach*, 85-86.

image barriers, when Korean Protestantism is losing credibility and secular people do not trust Protestant churches, this image problem significantly impedes their acceptance of the gospel.

Dong-Min Jang believes that the stagnation of Korean church growth is significantly related to the negative image of Protestant churches within Korean society.[59] He divides the history of Korean society after the first inception of Protestantism in 1885 into the three eras of pre-modern, modern, and post-modern.

In the pre-modern period, Korean Protestantism left a good impression on Korean people because Protestantism is a door to importing the modern power of western society and many Protestants were involved in the independence movement from Japan. In the modern era, Protestantism supported the rapid economic growth and anti-communism of Korean society by highlighting the beliefs in progress through the blessing of God and the importance of industry in the work ethic. However, in the post-modern era, when Korean society began to criticize the problem that the modernization process had caused, it was not long before Korean Protestantism was also criticized by Korean society particularly for their stance regarding the problems of ecology, the rights of women, and commercialism.

Protestant churches in Korea are regarded as an extremely self-righteous and exclusive group, and therefore are an obstacle to harmony in a pluralistic society. Jang diagnosed that Korean society has become a post-modern society that tolerates different ideas, religious beliefs, and values. However, the Protestants' attitude toward other religions and values is very exclusive and self-righteousness, believing that they are the

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[59] Dong-Min Jang, "Hangukgyohoe Imijisa," [A history of images of Korean churches to Korean society] *Mokhoewa Sinhak* 184 (2004):51.

only people group who procure the truth. Protestantism is regarded as an arrogant and stubborn religion and it is this attitude that becomes an obstacle to the evangelization of secular people. Thus, Jang argues that Korean Protestant churches need to overcome the image of materialism, *gibokism* (exclusively pursuing blessing), and authoritarianism for evangelization in the 21st century in South Korea.[60]

<div align="center">The Relational Network Theory</div>

The importance of interpersonal relationship is meaningful in reaching out to secular young adults in South Korea. Within the Chinese macro-culture, the Korean culture is deeply embedded with relationships. Craig Storti expounds upon the different approaches between an individualist culture and a collectivist culture concerning the perception of personal identity.[61] For an individualist culture, the smallest unit of survival is the individual and the needs of the individual are more important than those of the group. For a collectivist culture, the smallest unit is the primary group, including family. For young adults, the pressure and influence of their peer group is stronger than that of older people. This is why Gi-Young Hong highlights the importance of relationship in reaching out to secular people, as mentioned before.

Relational network theory addresses the two dimensions: social network theory and the importance of community. The social network is very important in evangelism. Donald McGavran confirms the decisive function of social network in evangelism. In *The Bridges of God*, he contrasts two different mission approaches; the Mission Station

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[60] Dong-Min Jang, "Hangukgyohoe Imijisa" [A history of images of Korean churches], 56.

[61] Craig Storti, *Figuring Foreigners Out* (Boston: Intercultural, 1999), 25.

Approach and the People Movement Approach. McGavran criticizes the mission station approach because it separated converted people from their relatives and friends. Therefore, little church growth occurred. However, the people movement approach focused on whole groups of people deciding to become Christians. He discovered the importance of interpersonal relationships in evangelism and called them "the bridges of God" over which the gospel passes.[62] George Hunter confirms the importance of interpersonal relationships and claims that "churches grow as they reach out across the social networks of their credible believers, especially their newest Christians."[63]

The social network theory appears to be important in the diffusion of any innovation. Everett M. Roger studies how an innovation is diffused in society. The process of the diffusion of innovations looks similar to the process of conversion, imagining an individual who tries out the new innovation of Jesus in his/her life. Based on his research, he suggests a model of five stages in the innovation-decision process; the knowledge (awareness) stage, the persuasion stage, the decision stage, the implementation stage, and the confirmation stage.[64]

Rogers suggests two important channels by which information flows from one individual to another; mass media and interpersonal network. The mass media channel is

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[62] Donald McGavran, *The Bridges of God* (New York: Friendship, 1955), 24.

[63] George Hunter, *To Spread the Power* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1987), 35.

[64] He explains the five stages as follows: "1. Knowledge occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) is exposed to an innovation's existence and gains an understanding of how it functions. 2. Persuasion occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) forms a favorable or an unfavorable attitude towards the innovation. 3. Decision takes place when an individual (or other decision-making unit) engages in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation. 4. Implementation occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) puts a new idea into use. 5. Confirmation takes place when an individual seeks reinforcement of an innovation-decision already made, but he or she may reverse this previous decision if exposed to conflicting messages about the innovation." Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovation*, 5th ed. (New York: Free Press, 2003), 169.

"the most rapid and efficient means" to inform an audience about the existence of an innovation, but "interpersonal channels are most effective in persuading an individual to accept a new idea."[65] He adds that the interpersonal networks are more effective if two or more individuals are homophilous, having similar social, economic, and personal character. In an interpersonal network, the role of opinion leaders who influence others' opinions cannot be exaggerated. The opinion leaders who are trustworthy, and competent with a certain innovation, significantly impact others' opinions. Rogers concludes that "the heart of the diffusion process is in modeling and imitation by potential adopters of their near peers' experiences with the new idea. In deciding whether or not to adopt an innovation, individuals depend mainly on the communicated experience of others much like themselves who have already adopted a new idea."[66] The fact that diffusion of innovation occurs mainly through interpersonal networks significantly supports the importance of social networks in evangelism.

Rodney Stark advances an interesting argument in *The Rise of Christianity*. In many parts of this book, he mentions the importance of relationship or interpersonal attachment in the process of conversion. Many evangelists who focus on mass evangelism believe in the centrality of a doctrinal appeal. Contrary to those assumptions, Stark argues that "modern social science relegates doctrinal appeal to a very secondary role, claiming that most people do not really become very attached to the doctrines of their new faith until *after* their conversion,"[67] and "the basis for successful conversionist

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[65] Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovation*, 18.

[66] Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovation*, 330-331.

[67] Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (San Francisco: Harper-Collins, 1997), 14-15. This position was thoroughly reflected in a book, Stark and Finke, *The Acts of Faith*, 114-138.

movements is growth through social networks, through *a structure of direct and intimate interpersonal attachments.*"[68]

Emotional bonding between a convert and an advocate is a consistent and important finding in the study of conversion. While a connection with a charismatic leader can be dramatic and important for some converts, the most typical connection is between advocates and converts within their friendship and kinship networks, or relationships fostered by the advocate for the sake of helping followers become people of faith. Many scholars have found that "the major 'pathway' for conversion is via friendship and kinship networks."[69]

Harry Poe points out that people in a mobile society hunger for relationship. Among people groups, younger generation—Poe calls it the postmodern generation—are more relationship-oriented and conversation-oriented people groups. According to Poe, "The postmodern generation will not visit the church building. They will not go to the lecture. They will not join the organization....They are interested not in institutions but in relationships."[70]

The importance of interpersonal relationship leads to the significance of the importance of community or small groups in evangelism. Symbolic Interactionism sheds light on the process. It holds that people "act toward things on the basis of the meanings

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[68] Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, 20.

[69] Lewis R. Rambo, "The Psychology of Conversion," in *Handbook of Religious Conversion* ed. H. Newton Malony and Samuel Southhard (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1992), 171. This is also an emphasis of friendship evangelism. See Arthur G. Mcphee, *Friendship Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978).

[70] Harry Lee Poe, *Christian Witness in a Postmodern World* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 34.

that the things have for them,"[71] and "sees meaning as arising in the process of interaction between people"[72] Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann also believe that a society is constructed by human interaction or a human product, following the footsteps of Symbolic Interactionism. They explain that a society has both a objective and subjective reality.

They characterize the objective reality of society as institutionalization and legitimization. The origin of institutionalization is habitualized actions that are predictable in the future by forming a pattern and are transmittable as a tradition. This institutionalization experiences the process of legitimization, which "produces new meanings that serve to integrate the meaning already attached to disparate institutional process."[73] It also provides the role of maintaining socially constructed reality.[74]

This objectively constructed social reality and structures need to be internalized by individual members of a society, which means subjective reality. The internalization of reality consists of two levels; primary socialization and secondary socialization. Primary socialization is "the first socialization an individual undergoes in childhood, through which he becomes a member of society. Secondary socialization is any subsequent process that inducts an already socialized individual into new sectors of the objective

[71] Herbert Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspectives and Methods* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1969), 2.

[72] Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism*, 4.

[73] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden: Doubleday, 1966), 85.

[74] They defined reality as "a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition (we cannot wish them away)." Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, 1.

world of his society."[75] For primary socialization, the identification of a child with significant others experiencing a variety of emotional ways is very important.[76] By this identification, the individual's first world has been firmly constructed and established in his/her consciousness.[77] Primary socialization is more deeply rooted in people's consciousness and less vulnerable to outsider influence of a society than the secondary socialization.[78]

In addition, the internalized subjective social reality has been maintained by the relationship with other people in an embodied routine everyday life. Therefore, they claim the following: "Subjective reality is thus always dependent upon specific plausibility structures, that is, the specific social base and social processes required for its maintenance."[79] They consider religious conversion as transformation of subjective reality and the process of re-socialization.[80] They highlight the importance of the religious community in people's conversion, which features the role of significant others in the socialization process and "replicates childhood experiences of emotional dependency on significant others."[81] Therefore, they conclude, "It is only within the religious community, the *ecclesia*, that the conversion can be effectively maintained as

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[75] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality,* 120.

[76] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality,* 121. Significant others are the people who are in charge of the process of socialization of an individual. It could be parents and other people. He/she would be influenced by significant other in both cognitive and emotional ways.

[77] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality,* 126.

[78] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality,* 136.

[79] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality,* 142.

[80] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality,* 144-145.

[81] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality,* 145.

plausible....Saul may have become Paul in the aloneness of religious ecstasy, but he could *remain* Paul only in the context of the Christian community."[82]

George Hunter features a strategy the Celtic Christians adopted when they reached out to the Irish, which is still valuable to evangelize secular people. They realized the importance of community in their outreach, and they evangelized as a team.[83] A sent-out community penetrated the target population, relating to them, identifying with them, and engaging in friendship, conversation, and ministries. Their community demonstrated a new lifestyle and they showed their hospitality by welcoming refugees, seekers, visitors, and other guests. This fellowship in a community played an important role in the process of people's conversion. The Celtic model contrasted with the Roman model.[84] In the Celtic model, people first established fellowship, engaged in conversation and ministries, and then were invited to commit. In the Roman model, the message was presented to people, an invitation was given, and then they joined the community.

Several people highlight the importance of community in reaching younger generations. Rick Richardson, who has many years of ministry experiences in reaching secular young adults through InterVarsity Christain Fellowship, emphasizes the importance of community in evangelism, especially in the context of the cultural shift to postmodernity and post-Christian. When the Protestant faith dominated a society, people had a widely shared conception of God, prayer, sin, and more. Since people are less knowledgeable on Christianity in a secular society, they need more time to make

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[82] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality,* 145.

[83] George Hunter, *The Celtic Way of Evangelism*: *How Christianity Can Reach the West* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2000), 47.

[84] Hunter, *The Celtic Way*, 53.

decisions and more teachings on basic Christianity. The process of conversion takes longer. In addition, he observes that most people today have faith in the context of a community. Community needs to be involved in all the process of conversion and to be the context of it, rather than calling for new converts to join a community after conversion. He argues, "Evangelism today is about helping people belong so that they can come to believe."[85]

Brad Kallenberg, a professor of religious studies at the University of Dayton (Ohio), uses the example of learning a second language from scratch to highlight the importance of community in evangelism. He believes that the process of conversion looks like a process of learning a new language. If people want to learn a new language, they need to immerse themselves into a community of native speakers and to practice the languages in that community. Likewise, a supportive community where secular people can practice the new language of belief in Jesus Christ and see embodied Christian life is required in effective evangelism.[86] In addition, since newly converted people gain new identity from the community to which they belong, community is an indispensible environment of the conversion process.[87]

Indigeneity Theory

The theory of indigenous Christianity is well established in mission studies.

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[85] Rick Richardson, *Reimagining Evangelism: Inviting Friends on a Spiritual Journey* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity, 2006), 50.

[86] Brad J. Kallenberg, *Live to Tell: Evangelism for a Postmodern Age* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2002), 47-64.

[87] Brad J. Kallenberg, *Live to Tell*, 64.

Churches that are culturally relevant to the population they want to reach tend to reach greater numbers, by identifying with people and adapting to their language, their style of leadership, worship, music, the church architecture, etc.. They do this more than other churches that are indifferent to the culture of targeted people.[88]

Cultural relevance in Korea is important in evangelizing young adults because Korean society has experienced significant generational differences.[89] Due to rapid social change, the values and culture of young adults are significantly different from those of older generations. On the basis of research in 43 industrialized countries from the 1990-1991 World Values survey, Ronald Inglehart found "Korean society to have the widest generation gap,"[90] and "She is undergoing an exceptionally rapid rate of cultural change."[91]Thus, cultural relevance is deeply related to generational relevance. Since the cultural differences between younger and older generations in Korea is acknowledged, some churches have developed worship services designed for young adults. These services try to adapt to the music, values, and leadership styles of young adults.

Dean Flemming provides a strong biblical foundation of contextualization by arguing that the New Testament itself is the good example of contextualization. He believes that "All four Gospels...are attempts to contextualize the story of Jesus for different audiences. Paul's letters are models of doing context-oriented theology for the

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[88] Hunter, *To Spread the Power*, 35.

[89] Lie John and Myung-Kyu Park, "South Korea in 2005: Economic Dynamism, Generational Conflicts, and Social Transformations," *Asian Survey* 46 (2005): 56-62.

[90] Eun-Young Na and Jae-Ho Cha, "Changes in Values and the Generation Gap Between the 1970s and the 1990s in Korea," http://ekoreajournal.net (accessed April 29, 2009). This paper was originally published in *Hanguksimrihakhoeji* 13, no. 2 (1999): 37-60.

[91] Ronald F. Inglehart, "Modernization and Postmodernization: Changing Korean Society in Global Perspectives," *Sahoegwahakgwa Jeongchaekyeongu* 12 (1995): 138.

diverse churches and situations he addressed."[92] Therefore, he claims that "contextualizing the gospel is inherent to the mission of the church."[93]

From the very beginning of the history of evangelism and mission, we find efforts to present the gospel in culturally relevant ways. Some dangers of distorting or diluting the gospel were apparent in attempting to contextualize the gospel for Greeks and Romans. However, early Christians accomplished the task in courageous ways, birthed from their passion for evangelism. Andrew Walls presents the view that incarnation of Jesus itself is translation because "When God in Christ became man, Divinity was translated into humanity, as though humanity were a receptor language."[94] Reflecting the fact that the New Testament was written in Greek, he emphasizes that "the very words of Jesus come to us in Greek dress."[95] Michael Green also points out that the Kingdom of God was translated as "following Jesus" in order to avoid political misunderstanding.[96] In addition, "adoption" was common practice in Roman society, but it is not a Jewish concept except as used in some allusions to it, like Moses. However, Paul chose this term to explain an important aspect of the gospel to the Gentiles.

Donald McGavran recognizes the importance of indigenous principles in church growth. Even though indigenous ways of evangelism are different from each other in very different contexts, and depend on the culture of reached people, he asserts that "the

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[92] Dean Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2005), 15.

[93] Dean Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament*, 25.

[94] Andrew F. Walls, "The Translation Principle in Christian History," in *The Missionary Movement in Christian History* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1996), 211.

[95] Walls, "The Translation Principle," 32.

[96] Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 167.

more indigenous the type of evangelism used, the more likely it is that many will respond."[97] Following the indigenous church principle, in 1955, McGavran proposed the homogeneous unit principle. The homogenous unit principle (HUP) resulted from McGavran's thirty years of ministry in India. He believes that humanity consists of a "mosaic" and each piece of the mosaic can be called a homogeneous unit that is different from other pieces ethnically, economically, and/or educationally. McGavran usually describes the HUP in this way: "Men like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers."[98]

This principle of a homogeneous unit proposed by McGavran was attacked by numerous critics because it seems to break the unity of the church and encourage separation and discrimination.[99] However, the belief of the HUP is that to become a Christian does not require leaving one's culture, relatives, and clans. His purpose in asserting the HUP was the belief that a conversion should not be a racial or social matter, but rather, a theological one.[100] If people believe that becoming a Christian means betraying their tribes and relatives, this misunderstanding prevents them from becoming Christians. With such a requirement, the growth of the church would be small. In addition, McGavran proposes that these tendencies of people are not necessarily contrary to the teachings of the Bible. The HUP is an example of the importance of a culturally relevant

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[97] McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 391.

[98] McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 223.

[99] C. Rene Padilla, "The Unity of the Church and the Homogeneous Unit Principle," in *Exploring Church Growth*, ed. Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); Samuel Escobar, "Evangelism and Man's Search for Freedom, Justice, and Fulfillment," in *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, edited J.D. Douglas (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975).

[100] McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 215-216.

approach in evangelism.

Recently Eugene Peterson captured the importance of the use of language in reaching secular people. In *Tell it Slant*, he highlights The Travel Narrative (Luke 9:51-19:44). The Travel Narrative was told by Jesus during a journey from Galilee to Jerusalem via Samaria where most people were hostile to Jews, and as a result messianic messages were refused. Peterson believes that the area of Samaria symbolized "the life of the Christian between Sundays" where secular people and ideas dominated.[101] Thus, the way of Jesus communicating with people can inform us on how to use our language in evangelizing secular people.

He suggests two ways to use our language in reaching secular people. First, casual language rather than religious talk dominated the Travel Narrative. Rather than using religious talk that only Christians can understand, "the Travel Narrative has Jesus speaking in informal, non-structured language, much of it not explicitly 'religious,' in the course of the relaxed and spontaneous incidents that occur 'on the way' through Samaria."[102] Second, Jesus tells stories, especially parables, which can be called mini-stories. Peterson points out that Jesus is actually getting closer to Jerusalem where he will die; and these conversations will be the last lesson Jesus can give to the Samaritans during His life on earth. Rather than stick to direct and explicit messages, Jesus tells many parables and stories. Peterson claims that "Jesus circles around his listeners' defenses. He tells parables. A parable keeps the message at a distance, slows down

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[101] Eugene Peterson, *Tell it Slant: A Conversation on the Language of Jesus in His Stories and Prayers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 17.

[102] Eugene Peterson, *Tell it Slant,* 18.

comprehension, blocks automatic prejudicial reactions, dismantles stereotypes."[103]

Stories are effective ways of communicating Christianity with secular people who are

resistant or indifferent to the gospel message.

    A seeker service at Willow Creek is a good example of engaging in people's culture

in order to reach out to the unchurched. Their seeker service adapts the conversational

language and music style of the targeted population in order to make them comfortable. It

also uses drama to engage the imaginations and feelings of the targeted people who grew

up under the influence of television. To address their needs and make the biblical

message relevant to their everyday lives, a psychological approach (for example,

Christianity is introduced as the way of achieving ultimate self-fulfillment) is

prevalent.[104] A Willow Creek style seeker service is very influential in Korean churches

that target secular young adults. Two pastors this researcher interviewed are deeply

influenced by the seeker services of Willow Creek and they in turn are important speakers

in reaching secular young adults in South Korea. Although indigenous Christianity

always has the possibility to distort or dilute the gospel message,[105] irrelevant

Christianity is as dangerous as syncretism. Alan Hirsch takes a step forward by criticizing

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[103] Eugene Peterson, *Tell it Slant,* 20.

[104] G. A. Pritchard, *Willow Creek Seeker Services*, 137-144, 223-239.

[105] Pritchard points out some syncretistic approaches in seeker service of Willow Creek. First, Bill Hybels mainly focused on the love of God, losing balance between love and holiness of God. Second, since seeker services adopt the approach of marketing under the influence of Robert Schuler, it could distort the content of the gospel itself to fill the need of prospective consumers, unchurched people. Third, about 80 percent of participants of seeker service, according to Pritchard, are already Christians. Since they only hear the message of Christianity 101 targeting unchurched people, without being challenged by sanctification, it is difficult for them to move to the discipling stage. Fourth, a seeker service is designed to persuade the audience, so it could manipulate the audience. Fifth, due to the frequent use of psychology, psychological terms such as "boundary" and "codependency" replace biblical love, faithfulness, and dedication. Pritchard points out that attenders of seeker services are encouraged to participate in self-help groups (e.g. Alcoholic Anonymous), which are run by other organizations, and one of the requirements of these organizations was that individuals could not evangelize.

that the seeker service is still based on "come" and "the evangelistic-attractional pattern." He believes that this approach can only reach middle-class people, not significantly crossing cultural barriers like the fringes of society. Rather than "come" and "attractional approach," he argues that we need to "go" and take "incarnational life style."[106]

A Process Theory of Conversion

Rick Richardson suggests two paradigms of evangelism: sales persons and travel guides on a spiritual journey.[107] He believes that the former paradigm, which mainly focused on giving information and closing the deal at that moment, dominated twentieth-century evangelism. Contrary to this, he argues that we need another paradigm that mainly emphasizes the overall process of conversion by being a guide on people's spiritual journey. He also suggests that the best image of evangelism is that of being a matchmaker of a marriage to Jesus Christ.[108] He supports this image of evangelism because the culmination of the overall process of relationship with Jesus Christ is commitment and dedication to Jesus Christ, hence the metaphor of marriage. In addition, the Bible highlights the importance of the union with Christ in our faith, which is the dominant analogy in marriage. Moreover, marriage includes not only joining one another but also joining the other's family, which is emphasized in baptism. The conversion process usually leads to joining the Christian community.

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[106] Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2006), 127-139. He delineate incarnational life style: presence, proximity, powerlessness, and proclamation. Proximity means mixing with people from every level of society.

[107] Richardson, *Reimagining Evangelism*, 15-20.

[108] Richardson, *Reimagining Evangelism,* 132.

This section introduces several ways of viewing conversion as a process, which is necessary because the sales person model still prevails in South Korea. Many churches still practice street evangelism or focus on a one-time event to introduce friends and acquaintances to the gospel message in order to persuade them to accept Jesus Christ as their savior.[109] However, these approaches do not seem to be effective in evangelizing secular young adults whose image of Protestantism becomes more and more negative and decreases in influence.

Lewis Rambo's stage model offers a promising psychological approach to conversion experiences, which is valuable in explaining some processes of conversion of young adults in South Korea. In addition, Richard Peace's analysis of Mark as a process of change of disciples' attitudes towards Jesus Christ forms a biblical foundation for viewing conversion as a process. Lastly, the five thresholds of Don Everts and Doug Schaupp work as a good illustration of process conversion, reflecting how postmodern young adults move from unbelief to belief.

Rambo's Stage Model for Religious Conversion

Lewis Rambo maintains that conversion is a process of religious change that takes

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[109] J. I. Packer believes that this is evangelism of the modern type. He characterizes it as follows: "Evangelism almost acquires the character of a periodic recruiting campaign. It becomes an extraordinary and occasional activity, additional and auxiliary to the regular functioning of the local congregation. Special gatherings of a special sort are arranged, and special preachers are commonly secured to conduct them. Often they are called 'meetings' rather than 'services'; in some places they are called 'revivals'; in any case, they are viewed as separate and distinct from the regular worship of God. In the meetings, everything is directly aimed at securing from the unconverted an immediate, conscious, decisive act of faith in Jesus Christ." J. I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1990), 292. Packer argues that this type of evangelism was invented by Charles G. Finney. On the contrary to evangelism of modern type, Puritan evangelism characterizes "long-term, broader-based, deeper-digging, church-,community- and friendship-centered, oriented more to worship and less to entertainment. Modern evangelism is only likely to reap where Puritan evangelism has first sowed." Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, 301.

place in a dynamic set of force fields involving people, institutions, events, ideas, and experiences. As the basis of the assertion, he suggests a stage model of conversion to serve as a framework for the investigation of several psychological, anthropological, and social approaches. This stage model consists of the following seven stages: context, crisis, quest, encounter, interaction, commitment, and consequences.[110] These stages do not always follow each other sequentially, and stages can reciprocally interact.

Context is more than the first stage. Rather, it is the total environment that holds the social, cultural, religious, and personal aspects, in which conversion happens. The following are two kinds of contexts: macrocontext and microcontext. The macrocontext is the cultural and social milieu of the larger environment and the microcontext is the more immediate world of the family, ethnic group, religious community, and local neighborhood. Due to high mobility, rapid social change, and the erosion of a unified culture, the influence of the macrocontext on the individual increases. Thus, the secularization of society in South Korea becomes a significant macrocontext to consider for effective evangelism.

The Crisis stage also plays an important role in the process of conversion by generating a religious quest. This crisis may be religious, political, psychological, or cultural, or a life situation that opens people to new options. Two basic types of crises are important to the conversion process. The first is to "call into question one's fundamental orientation to life"[111] by death, suffering, and other painful experiences. The second type of crisis may be mild, but is the type of "...the proverbial straw that breaks the camel's

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[110] Lewis R. Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University, 1993), 17.

[111] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 46.

back."[112] Cumulative events can be included in the second type of crisis. However, those pathological aspects of life are not the only elements that open people to new options. Development or fulfillment can also be strong motives to start people's spiritual journeys. In addition, evangelistic activities can work as "externally triggered crisis."[113]

The third stage is Quest. Quest is a process in which "people seek to maximize meaning and purpose in life, to erase ignorance, and to resolve inconsistency."[114] Rambo introduces Seymour Epstein's following four basic motivations for conversion: the need to acquire pleasure and avoid pain, to possess a conceptual system, to enhance self-esteem, and to establish and maintain relationship. Rambo added to Epstein's model the motivation of the need for power, such as the power to heal, the power to succeed, power over death, and more.

The fourth stage is Encounter. This stage involves the contact between the potential convert and the advocate, and takes place in a particular setting. Rambo reveals in the study of conversion that in the past many scholars focused on converts rather than advocates. However, the characteristics of advocates such as secular attributes, religious beliefs, and theory of conversion are also influential to dynamic interplay.[115]

In the Interaction stage, the potential convert learns more about the teachings, lifestyle, and expectations of the group. The group provides various opportunities, both formal and informal, for people to be more fully incorporated into the group. This stage is

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[112] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 46.

[113] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 55.

[114] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 56.

[115] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 66.

closely related to the encapsulation process that creates worlds of certain religious groups. Following are the four elements of the encapsulation process: relationships, rituals, rhetoric, and roles.[116] First, many scholars agree that the formation of close relationship is crucial in the conversion process because it enables potential converts to feel accepted at a deep level, to give vitality to new orientations, and to provide confirmation and consolidation of one's religious orientations. Second, rituals enable potential and recent converts to begin to understand and embody the new way of life. In addition, rituals have both deconstructive aspects that break down old patterns of behavior and thoughts in order to reconstruct aspects that affirm new ways of life, including healings. Third, potential converts need to learn the language of religious groups regarding such terms as sin and salvation. Moreover, rhetoric is related to learning systems of interpretation and conceptualization of their lives. Fourth, roles function in the conversion process as a means for people to see themselves in a new way because the recent converts are assigned to certain roles such as missionary, student, and more.

The sixth stage is Commitment. The five most common elements of the commitment stage are decision making, rituals, surrender, testimony manifested in language transformation and biographical reconstruction, and motivational reformulation. First, decision making is not just an internal process, but is also influenced by relationship with friends and family. Second, at the heart of conversion rituals is "the difficult combination of saying no and saying yes."[117] Commitment rituals are "bridge-

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[116] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 103.

[117] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 127.

burning events."[118] Third, surrender is "the inner process of commitment and is one of the most difficult aspects of conversion to understand."[119] Surrender is turning away from the old life toward a new life by the power of God's grace. Fourth, testimony is the narrative witness of a person's conversion. It entails the two interacting processes of language transformation and biographical reconstruction. Conversion gives converts opportunities to reinterpret their lives in order to gain a new meaning of it. Fifth, motivations for conversion vary from person to person and are multiple, complex, and cumulative. Rambo believes that "motivation itself is transformed in the process of language transformation and biographical reconstruction."[120]

The seventh stage is Consequence. Many scholars believe that "authentic conversion is an ongoing process of transformation."[121] Conversions not only have personal consequences, but also sociocultural and historical consequences for the convert's group. In addition, conversion produces theological consequences such as relationship with God, relief from guilt, a sense of mission, celebrating involvement with and membership in a new community.

Peace's Approach to Conversion

Richard Peace's *Conversion in the New Testament* illuminates the biblical foundation for understanding conversion as an event and a process. He explores two conversion types of the New Testament; Paul and the twelve disciples. He believes that

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[118] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 128.

[119] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 132.

[120] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 139.

[121] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 146.

Paul's conversion was instantaneous, but the conversion of the twelve, based on the book of Mark, was gradual. Since these two cases are reported in the New Testament, he claims that both instantaneous and gradual conversions are biblical. In this section, Peace's analysis of the Gospel of Mark, which demonstrated the conversion as a process, will be emphasized.

Peace believes that the Gospel of Mark can be divided into the following two parts, except for a prologue (1:1-15) and an epilogue (15:40-16:8): (1) 1:16-8:30, and (2) 8:31-15:39. In addition, each half of this gospel again consists of three units. So, the Gospel of Mark consists of the following six units in total: (1) 1:16-4:34, (2) 4:35-6:30, (3) 6:31-8:30, (4) 8:31-10:45, (5) 10:46-13:37 and (6) 14:1-15:39) (excluding the prologue and an epilogue). Each unit reflects the disciples' views of Jesus. Through these six units, we can trace how the disciples' views on Jesus changed. Out of this structure of Mark, Peace extracts the "six-step process" of the conversion of the twelve.

In unit one (1:16-4:34), the twelve initially views Jesus as simply a great teacher. The title of "teacher" is revealed most clearly in 1:22, 27. "The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law" (1:22, NIV). In addition, he demonstrates his teaching by showing his power to cast out demons and heal many people.

In unit two (4:35-6:30), their view of Jesus as a gifted teacher is challenged by the incident on the Sea of Galilee where Jesus reveals that he has the power over the wind and waves. He also demonstrates his power and authority by casting out thousands of demons. And Jesus has the power over death, which is revealed when Jesus brings a young girl back to life. The twelve come to realize that Jesus in not merely a great teacher,

but also a prophet. Jesus calls himself a prophet (6:4) and the words of King Herod acknowledge that Jesus is a prophet: "Others said, 'He is Elijah.' And still others claimed, 'He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago'" (6:15, NIV).

In unit three (6:31-8:30), Jesus is revealed as the Messiah. The incidents of feeding five thousand and four thousand reminded people of Moses. Jesus is the Messiah of the Israelites who was sent by God to save them. In the same way, the healing of the deaf and the dumb man and the blind man exemplifies the healing of the disciples. The eyes, ears, and mouth of the twelve are opened now. The confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi reveals that the understanding of the twelve concerning who Jesus is moves forward to acknowledging He is the Messiah.

In unit four (8:31-10:45), Jesus predicts His suffering in four cycles of story. He reveals what kind of Messiah He is. He describes Himself as the Son of Man."He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again" (8:31, NIV). Jesus is not the Messiah who politically liberates the Israelites from the oppression of Rome.

In unit five (10:36-13:37), the Messiah is not only the Son of Man who gives His life to people, but also the Son of David who rules and judges as the King, like David. Blind Bartimaeus proclaims Jesus as the Son of David two times.

In unit six (14:1-15:39), as a result of his passion on the cross, Jesus' real identity is revealed. He is the Son of God (15:39), which comes through the confession of the centurion who stood in front of Jesus. When the high priest asks Jesus, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus confirms His identity by saying, "I am."

On the basis of exploring two types of conversion experiences in the New Testament, Peace describes that many contemporary evangelical methodologies are based on Paul's conversion, assuming that Paul's conversion is the standard model of conversion in the Bible. Therefore, "encounter evangelism" such as mass evangelism, personal evangelism, and media evangelism prevail in America. Peace believes that encounter evangelism produces many nominal Christians who do not understand the meaning of conversion. In the case of the disciples, they need time to grasp who Jesus is and what the meaning of conversion is. Therefore, Peace suggests that "process evangelism,"[122] which acknowledges the gradual nature of conversion and people's different stages in their spiritual journeys, should be practiced along with encounter evangelism.

The Five Thresholds of Don Everts and Doug Schaupp

Don Everts and Doug Schaupp, campus ministers of Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship, identify five "thresholds" as a path to faith, when young adults in a postmodern context, especially in campus setting, are converted to Christianity. They interviewed more than 2,000 converted people from 1996 to 2007, and their five thresholds proved helpful to the understanding of the nature of conversion of young adults in giving direction to people's conversions.

The first threshold is from distrust to trust. This process happens when people begin to trust a Christian as their starting place. Doug Schaupp reports, "What most of our friends told us is that the process of coming to faith really gained traction for them

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[122] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 309-329.

once they started to significantly trust a Christian….It seems that people must move through this threshold into trust in order for them to continue on to Jesus."[123]

Threshold two is moving from being complacent about Jesus to having curiosity about him. People can stay in a stage of trusting a Christian, but never be interested in Jesus or religious stuff. Therefore, Christians need to provoke curiosity by asking thought-provoking questions and living Christian lives that are different from those of non-believers. By crossing this threshold, the door to Jesus opens widely, and people begin to stare at Jesus.

Third, people cross the third threshold by moving from being closed to being open in order to change in their lives. People feel their own lack in their lives and are looking for answers, which makes them open to new ways of life. According to Everts and Schaupp, "Out of five thresholds, becoming genuinely open to change is often the most difficult to overcome."[124] For helping people cross this threshold, important is being a friend who can kindly sit and be "patient" with them and who can "challenge" them with harsh and intense questions. Everts believes that we need to live in a tension by taking "the harder both-and path."[125]

The fourth threshold is the move from meandering to seeking. After opening to change in their lives, people "needed to lean into the journey they were on and decide to purposefully seek final answers, a resolution. They needed to become *seekers*."[126] Everts

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[123] Don Everts and Doug Schaupp, *I Once Was Lost: What Postmodern Skeptics Taught Us about Their Path to Jesus* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2008), 30-31.

[124] Everts and Doug Schaupp, *I Once Was Lost,* 69.

[125] Everts and Doug Schaupp, *I Once Was Lost,* 82.

[126] Everts and Doug Schaupp, *I Once Was Lost,* 86.

and Schaupp make a distinction between "phantom seeker" and "a true spiritual seeker."[127] The former do not have urgency and have not determined to begin a journey toward God. True seeking is not just a vague spiritual curiosity, pursuing spiritual experience with the divine.[128] Everts and Schaupp strongly suggest that exploring the Bible where answers are should be central in crossing the fourth threshold, which cannot occur merely by relying on talking and explanations.

The final threshold is to cross the threshold of the Kingdom itself. People need to repent, to believe, and to give their lives to Jesus. This stage is similar to various traditional models of evangelism that call for decision and commitment. Though a comfortable and "pressure-free process" is most needed around threshold two and three, people are required to commit and repent at threshold five.[129] Postmodern evangelism does not necessarily blur the line of repent and commit. Everts and Schaupp argue that "Letting people just slide causally and vaguely across the line sounds very postmodern-sensitive, but with such as laissez-faire approach we keep people from knowing there is even a line to cross. We don't help them move from being lost to being redeemed."[130] The heart of postmodern evangelism lies in helping secular people cross the previous thresholds, while not deemphasizing threshold five.[131]

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[127] Everts and Doug Schaupp, *I Once Was Lost,* 86.

[128] Everts and Doug Schaupp, *I Once Was Lost,* 87.

[129] Everts and Doug Schaupp, *I Once Was Lost,* 107.

[130] Everts and Doug Schaupp, *I Once Was Lost,* 107.

[131] Everts and Doug Schaupp, *I Once Was Lost,* 107-108.

Conclusion

This chapter delved into four important theories and perspectives that need to be considered in reaching out to secular young adults in the context of South Korea. The ethos theory explains why recently Korean Catholicism has attracted many people and accomplished significant growth and why Korean Protestantism is losing members. The relational network theory, including social network and the role of community plays a very important role in impacting secular young adults to accept Christianity. The indigenous theory urges engagement in the subculture of young adults by adapting their language, music style, and use of media. Since the Korean society has experienced the widest generational gap, the cross-cultural approach is required in adopting their culture. Viewing conversion as a process is also important in evangelizing secular young adults in South Korea where the negative image of Protestantism prevails and the influence of religion is decreasing. The next chapter will analyze interviews with newly converted people from secular backgrounds in order to determine which factors influenced in their acceptance of Christianity.

Chapter 5

Insights from Recent Converts from Secularity

We have much to learn from the conversion experiences of new converts, especially from their secular background. At one point secular people who had been indifferent to religion and even hostile to Protestantism began to visit and stay in churches, finally dedicating their lives to Jesus Christ. What attracted them to visit churches? What made them return and stay at churches? How did they become Christians? These are important questions. This chapter presents an analysis from forty-five interviews with Korean young adults who recently converted from a secular background to Christianity.

First, to summarize several characteristics of Korean secular young adults is necessary in order to understand their life situations. Not many published or non-published articles or books have been written on Korean young adults, but this chapter distills three important characteristics of Korean young adults in terms of their economic life, their attitude toward religion (especially Protestantism), and some general characteristics of their values and behavior.

Additionally, this chapter analyzes the result of the interviews in order to see what factors are important to their conversion. As a summary of the analysis of interviews, this chapter proposes a model for explaining conversions of secular young adults in South Korea. This model consists of four stages and shows which factors are significant for different stages of conversion.

Characteristics of Korean Young Adults

Older generations tend to judge younger generations negatively based on their prejudices, life experiences and values. Prior to negative judgment, understanding the social and religious situation that young adults face is worthwhile. Description of the characteristics of young adults is difficult. When a question about characteristics of young adults was asked to fifty journalists, producers in broadcasting stations, and social scientists, most of them answered that they did not know well, but sensed the young adults were different in some ways.[1] The following description of the characteristics of young adults reflects the consensus of interviewed church leaders and some articles by field ministers who have been involved in evangelizing and discipling young adults in Korea.

Competitive Life in Pursuing Stable Jobs

The most significant characteristic of Korean young adults comes from their unstable economic situations. After receiving bailouts from the International Monetary Fund in 1997, the social and economic situation of South Korea changed significantly. Nation-wide layoffs turned approximately one-third of regular jobs into temporary positions. Suk-Hun Woo estimates that only 10 percent of young adults can find decent jobs that guarantee an adequate paycheck that supports an economically stable life,[2] and the average paycheck each month people in their twenties receive, especially on irregular jobs, will probably be around ₩880,000 ($ 700). Therefore, Woo named young adults in

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[1] Suk-Hun Woo and Kwon-Il Park, *88Manwonsedae* [A generation of 700 hundred dollars] (Seoul: Radian, 2007), 93.

[2] Woo and Park, *88Manwonsedae* [A generation of 700 hundred dollars], 10, 241.

South Korea *88Manwonsedae* (A Generation of Seven Hundred Dollars).[3] Because of the unstable job market in South Korea, young adults have to win cut-throat competitions in order to find stable jobs. A winner-takes-all social system prevails.

Therefore, most young adults who are serious about their future really have no time to relax. Korean teenagers are required to study very hard in order to enter good universities that offer them a high probability in becoming part of the 10 percent of young adults who have high paying jobs. Most Korean teenagers study at private educational institutions after public school hours to make good scores on their university entrance exam, which is similar to the SAT in America. Even after they are admitted to universities, they must keep a high GPA rating and high scores in English Tests such as TOEFL (Test Of English as a Foreign Language) or TOEIC (Test Of English for International Communication) to acquire high paying jobs. Most of their time and energy become absorbed in studying materials that relate to jobs in the future. Many spend their time preparing for civil service examinations that lead to comparatively secure jobs. Though most young adults enjoyed wealth in their childhood, (compared to older generations), and were reared in a consumer culture, they have watched their parents' economic crisis since 1997, and they have experienced the highly competitive job market after they graduate from universities. Therefore, Ho-Gi Kim, a professor of sociology at Yonsei University named the twenty-somethings "a trauma generation"[4] because of the social and economic traumas they have experienced. They are deeply concerned about their futures and feel that they have no time to reflect upon their lives or to think about their

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[3] Woo and Park, *88Manwonsedae* [A generation of 700 hundred dollars], 20.

[4] http://www.kukey.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=12709# (accessed June 14, 2010)

values. Survival itself is their main issue, which forms obstacles to their conversion to

Protestantism. In the following excerpt, Charles Taylor exactly describes the situation of

Korean young adults, while he actually pictures that of Europeans:

> The level of understanding of some of the great languages of transcendence is
> declining; in this respect, massive unlearning is taking place. The individual pursuit
> of happiness as defined by consumer culture still absorbs much of our time and
> energy, or else the threat of being shut out of this pursuit through poverty,
> unemployment, incapacity galvanizes all our efforts.[5]

Research conducted in 2004 by Hanmijun (a meeting for the preparation of the

future of Korean churches) using the method of face-to-face interviews explains why

some people left their religions. The biggest reason was the busy-ness of life (27.8

percent). Other reasons are lack of assurance of belief (11.1percent) and being tired of

religion (9.4 percent).[6] Another research conducted by a popular Christian magazine

company in 1992, with the method of distributing questionnaires to university students,

shows that only 8.4 percent of non-Protestants did not attend church at that time because

of the busy-ness of life. Although the method of research and the content of the questions

are different between the two researches, they demonstrate that busy-ness of life

significantly influences people's religious life.

Attitude toward Religion

Young Korean adults show two kinds of attitudes toward religions, especially

Protestantism. First, they do not consider religion as important to their lives. Chapter

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[5] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 727.

[6] Hanmijun and Korea Gallup, *Hangukgyohoe Miraeripoteu* [A report on the future of the Korean church] (Seoul: Durano, 2005), 100. This result includes both young adults and older generations. The detailed data according to age were not provided.

three explains that the influence of religion on individuals and society has decreased and

religion is not as important for their actual lives under the impact of secularization. In the

research of Gallup Korea in 2004, secular Korean people were asked why they did not

have religions. The interviewees answered that they had increasingly become indifferent

to religion. The following table clearly shows this change.[7]

Table 16. The percent of people who do not have religion because of their indifference to it

Year	1984	1989	1997	2004
Percentage of People	9.1%	10.4%	26.4%	37.3%

Analyzation of the results in terms of age is even more interesting. The age group

(18 to 29 years of age) who answered that they did not have religion because of their

increased indifference consists of 44.3 percent of total responses, which is higher than the

average percent of people (37.3 percent). This means that Korean young adults are more

indifferent to religion than older generations.

If we analyze the result of Gallup research in 2004, regarding the importance of

religion in life (in chapter three) according to age, it shows that Korean young adults also

consider religions less important than do the older generations. Approximately 55 percent

of interviewed people answered that religion is important in their lives. The people who

considered religion as important in life was 51.7 percent in 18 to 24 year-old group, 52.4

percent from 25 to 29 year-old group, and 50.2 percent from 30 to 39 year-old group.[8]

The same Gallup research asked about people's perception of the amount of

religious influence on Korean society. If we analyze this question in terms of age, the

[7] Gallup Korea, *Hangukinui Jonggyowa* [The religion and religious consciousness], 67.

[8] Gallup Korea, *Hangukinui Jonggyowa* [The religion and religious consciousness], 204.

result of young adults is lower than that of the average of Korean people.

Table 17. The influence of religion on society

Age	Growing (%)	Declining(%)	Similar(%)
Total	53.9	14.5	31.6
18-24	44.5	22.9	32.6
25-29	42.5	21.0	36.5

Source: Data adapted from Gallup Korea. *Hangukinui Jonggyowa Jonggyouisik* [The religion and religious consciousness of Korean people] (Seoul: Gallup Korea, 2004), 265.

Norris and Inglehart observe this religious gap between generations. According to them, "Postindustrial societies show a sharp and steady decline in religiosity from the oldest cohort born in the interwar years down to the postwar cohort, and then a more modest slide down to the sixties generation."[9] This is applicable to the Korean context.

Second, a tendency toward anti-Protestantism in South Korea has increased in recent years. Chapter three indicates that the Korean church has suffered from a negative image because of some moral issues, which diminishes its influence on society, plus the church has a net decline in memberships. In relation to that, an incident happened in July 2007, which accelerated anti-Protestantism.[10] A Korean short-term mission team to Afghanistan was kidnapped by Taliban rebels. Two of the 23 hostages – the pastor who led the team and another man – were fatally shot; other team members were released by negotiations between the Korean government and the Taliban. The Korean government agreed to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan (actually it was decided prior to the

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[9] Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular,* 77.

[10] Dong-Moon Kim, "Hangukgyohoeui Seongyo, Geu Yangsanggwa Bipan," [Phenomena and criticism on missions of Korean churches] in *Muryehan Bokeum* [The rude gospel], ed. Je3sidaegeuriseudogyoyeonguso (Seoul: Sanchaekja, 2007), 33. Jin-Ho Kim, "Anti Gidokgyoui Saibeo Tereo vs./and Gidokgyoui Gonggyeokjeok Haeoe Seongyo," [The cyber terror of anti-Protestantism vs./and the aggressive missions of Korean Protestantism] in *Muryehan Bokeum* [The rude gospel] ed. Je3sidaegeuriseudogyoyeonguso (Seoul: Sanchaekja, 2007), 109.

kidnapping) and to end all missionary works in Afghanistan.

This incident caused much criticism of Korean Protestantism.[11] Several questions were raised by typical Korean people, especially by non-Christians: Why did the mission team go there in spite of the warning of the Korean government? (Afghanistan was classified as a dangerous country to travel to at that time); Why should the Korean government spend a lot of money as ransom to save hostages who disregarded government warnings? Why did the church send a missionary team to Afghanistan where they were unwelcome by the indigenous people? Why did the church push its own beliefs and values without respecting other people's religion and culture? As a result, many Korean people came to believe that the foreign missions of Korean Protestant churches could work against national interest and that they practiced without permission from the targeted society.[12] They also hold the perception that the exclusive and self-righteous ways of the foreign missions of Korean Protestantism in Afghanistan reflect the general attitude of Korean Protestantism, which is one of the most serious criticisms of Korean Protestantism.[13]

Several anti-Protestant organizations have been formed since 2000.[14] A leader of anti-Protestantism (they also attack Catholicism) is the Citizen's Movement Coalition of Anti-Protestantism (www.antichrist.or.kr), formed in 2000, which has approximately

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[11] Thus, the most influential monthly Christian magazine, *Ministry and Theology* dealt with anti-Protestantism in January 2008.

[12] Jin-Ho Kim, "Anti Gidokgyoui Saibeo Tereo" [The cyber terror], 109-110.

[13] Chan-Kyung Lee, "Bangidokgyo Dancheui Ipjang,"[The position of anti-Protestantism organization] *Mokhoewa Sinhak* 223 (January 2008): 61-62.

[14] Sung-Woo Bae, "Gyeoljipdoen BanGidokgyo Seryeok, Gasangeul neomeo Ilsangeuro," [Concentrated power of anti-protestantism goes into everyday life beyond cyber space] *Mokhoewa Sinhak* 223 (January 2008): 51-59.

15,900 members. Another organization is the Gallery of Dcinside Religion

(http://gall.dcinside.com), formed in 2004, became the sphere of activity after the

kidnapping in Afghanistan. Anti-Protestantism spreads via the internet, influencing young

adults. Almost all of the church leaders interviewed acknowledge the influence of anti-

Protestantism on young adults.[15] Research conducted by the Korean Campus

Evangelization Network, by distributing questionnaires to some 1,400 university or

college students in 2009, demonstrates that young adults holds negative views of the

exclusivistic attitude of Protestantism. Non-Protestant students enumerate the following

three biggest reasons for decline of Korean Protestantism: self-righteous and exclusive

evangelistic activity (34.8 percent), the loss of good image due to immoral incident of

church leaders (28.0 percent), and Protestants' failing to live out their faith (7.7

percent).[16]

<div align="center">The Generation of P</div>

Since the 1990s, Korean people have been referring to "generation X" in order to

describe young people who showed significant difference in behavior and value

compared to older people. As mentioned in chapter four, South Korea has experienced a

wide generational gap, which is rooted in rapid social change. Thus, older generations are

required to work at understanding the younger generation, especially young adults in

contemporary South Korea. Discussions about Generation X were prevalent in South

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[15] Yun-Bok Lee, "Focus on Campus Issue 2009" (paper presented at the annual conference of Korean Campus Evangelization Network, Seoul, December 1, 2009). He also selects anti-Protestantism as one of campus issues in 2009.

[16] Nam-Ho Kang, "Cheongnyeondaehaksang, Geudeuleun Nuguinga" [Young adults: who are they] (paper presented at the annual conference of Korean Campus Evangelization Network, Seoul, December 1, 2009).

Korean society twenty years ago, but these discussions do not fit the next generation.

Also, supportive proved data is lacking.[17]

Recently Cheil Worldwide, the biggest marketing company in South Korea, presented a report on young adults.[18] The company did an in-depth analysis of 1,600 young people (from 17 to 39 years of age, nation-wide) in 2003. The report named young people as "The Generation of P" because they actively "Participate" in social issues with "Passion" and "Potential power," hence becoming "Paradigm-shifters" in Korean society. Some people believe this report is unreliable because it covered almost two different generations under the category of the Generation of P. Dong-Yun Lee argues that high school students and a 39 year-old business man are unlikely to have the same social consciousness.[19] In addition, a report on Generation P of Cheil Worldwide was presented for marketing purposes rather than social and cultural studies. Although the report may contain biased information on young adults in South Korea, it reflects some important characteristics of young adults.

The report shows that the P Generation has been reared in different backgrounds from that of older generations. First, they have been reared in the milieu of increased political democracy that emerged at the end of the 1980s. They also enjoy more political and social freedom compared to former generations. Second, they have sensed the influence of globalization since the 1990s, after which Korean people gained the freedom

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[17] Hee-Song Yang, "Cheongnyeonsayeokeul uihan Sedaeihae," [An understanding of generation for young adults ministry] *Evangelical Generation* 1 (Spring 2005): 143.

[18] This report is available on web pages. You can find it through google search.

[19] Dong-Yun Lee, "Psedaeneun Eopda" [No the generation of P] http://article.joins.com/article/article.asp?ctg=12&Total_ID=186391 (accessed June 16, 2010).

of foreign travel. Third, they enjoy the power of the information technology via the

internet and mobile communication devices. Fourth, since they have tasted the benefits of

wealth due to rapid economic growth from their childhood as compared to former

generations, they are influenced by consumerism.

The report identifies five core characteristics of the P Generation that can be

summarized by the acronym CHIEF:

> (1) Challenge – they pursue newness and change, rejecting established authority
> and the stereotype of the older generation
> (2) Human Network –they like to share information with other people and get
> together with those who share the same values and hobbies. In addition, they value
> the importance of human relationships.
> (3) Individual- they frankly express their feelings and thoughts and respect
> individuality and diversity. They are annoyed by people's interference in their work.
> (4) Experience – they place their own experience and feelings over other people's
> opinions. They want to experience diverse areas of life rather than be an expert on
> a single area.
> (5) Fun/Feel – they pursue fun and pleasure and judge something on the basis of
> likes and dislikes rather than good and evil. They prefer media with sound and
> picture over print media.

These five core characteristics of the P Generation can serve as one useful basis for

understanding Korean young adults and offer meaningful implications for reaching out to

secular young adults. The P Generation actively participated in the election of the

President in 2002, cheered games for the World Cup by the thousands in 2002, and held

candlelight protests for social issues, which makes them plausible candidates as active

participants in gospel-sharing. The implications of the characteristics of the Generation P

in evangelizing secular young adults will be dealt with in chapter six. We turn our eyes to

focus on recent converts from a secular background. What lessons can we learn from

their conversion experiences to use in evangelizing secular young adults?

Insights from Interview

Forty-five new converts from secular backgrounds were interviewed, in order to study what brings them to churches and what attracts them to Jesus Christ. They did not all have the same religious background and some were more exposed to Protestantism than others. In addition, their conversion experiences are varied with differing factors that led them to Christ. Regardless of the rich diversity of their conversion experiences, they presented valuable insights and lessons for evangelizing secular young adults. General information on the 45 interviewees is first introduced, and then their conversion experiences are interpreted.

General Information on the 45 Interviewees

The interviews took place from June 2008 to August 2008. Forty-five interviewees from nine different churches in Seoul and Ilsan, which is a new town built around Seoul where the population is rapidly growing. Among the nine churches, six are the churches used for compilation of this research. Because of the hectic busy-ness of young adults and their pastors in South Korea, time was extremely difficult to set for interviews. Therefore, seven interviews were done by email exchanges combined with telephone interviews; the rest of the interviews were done face-to-face.

The following table shows the range of age of the interviewees. More than 80 percent of interviewees are in their twenties. Among the interviewees, 18 people are male and 27 are female.
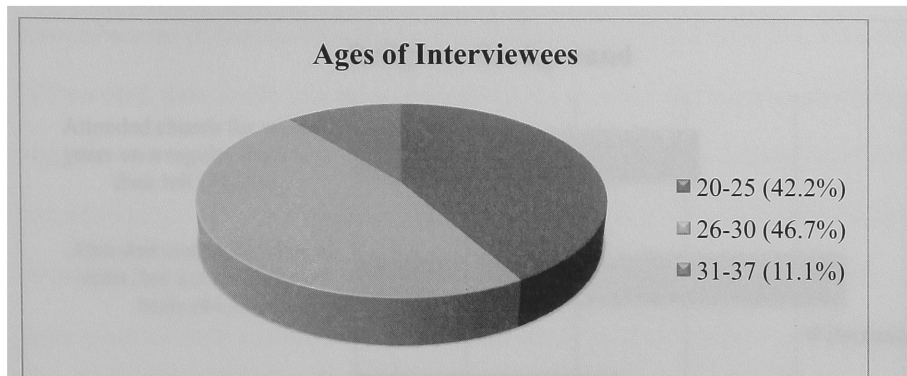
Figure 8. Ages of Interviewees.
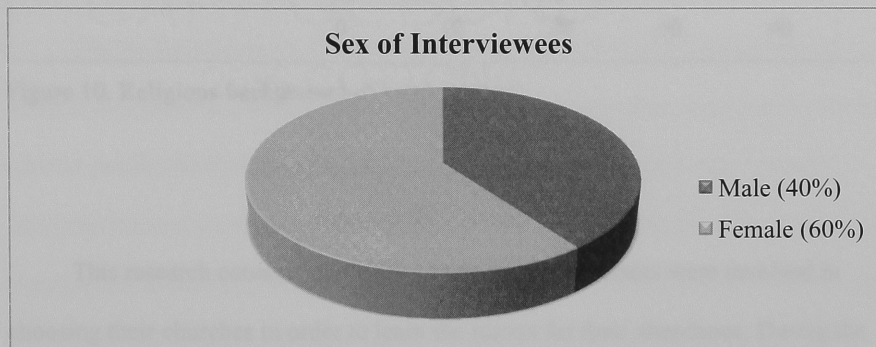
Figure 9. Sex of interviewees.

The interviewees' religious backgrounds fall into three groups. The first group almost never attended church. Though some of them attended churches just a few times in their whole life, they had no specific religion in which they believed. Eleven out of 45 people fall into this first group. The second group attended church for several years in their childhood, but not on a regular basis. They just attended several times per year, especially on special occasions. Twenty of 45 people fall into the second group. The third group attended church regularly for several years, but they stopped, and their religious activities did not mean anything to them. Fourteen of 45 people fall into the third group.
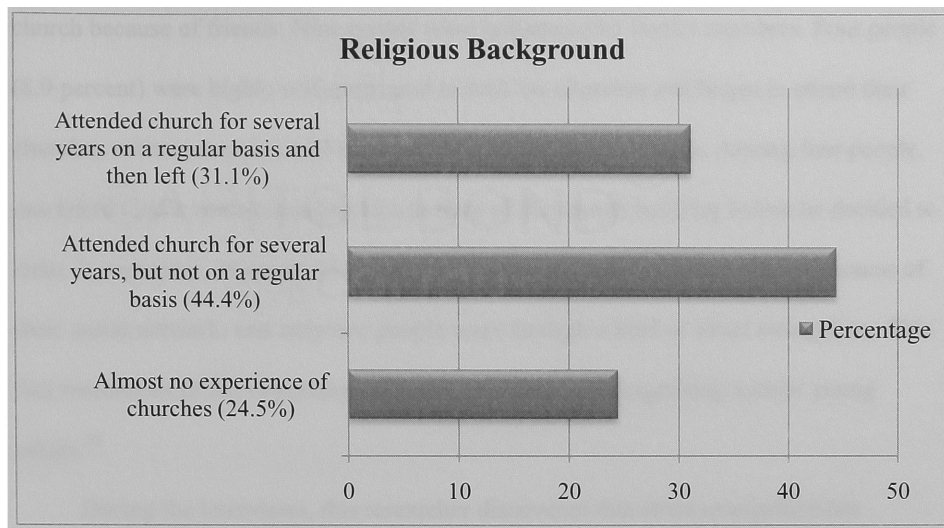
Figure 10. Religious background of interviewees.

Reasons for Coming Churches

This research contains questions concerning what factors were involved in choosing their churches in order to learn the reason for their attendance. During the interviews, this researcher realized their difficulty in deciding the single most important factor that brought them to church, because several factors were involved in their decisions. Some interviewees were highly motivated to attend church and some even took the initiative in calling their Christian friends to ask them to take them to church. Others were reluctant to attend church and had to be persuaded to go to church by Christian friends and family members. For young adults, friends seem to be more influential than family members to the young adults' initial visits to the church. However, obviously the most direct reasons for their visits come from the influence of Christian friends and family members.

In the analysis of the interviews, the fact became evident that 30 people went to

church because of friends. Nine people were influenced by family members. Four people (8.9 percent) were highly self-motivated to look for churches and began to attend their churches without any previous relationship with the church people. Among four people, one heard God's voice consoling him in front of the church building before he decided to enter. In summary, 39 out of 45 people (86.7 percent) began to attend church because of their social network, and only two people went through a kind of street evangelism. This fact reminds us of the importance of social networks in evangelizing secular young adults.[20]

During the interviews, this researcher discovered that street evangelism has become less and less effective, especially in influencing secular young adults, because several people clearly indicated that they hate that kind of impersonal, exclusive, authoritative, and one-way method. However, street evangelism should not be totally disregarded. It works for some people who are receptive to Christianity. The researcher spoke with one who was evangelized by church people on the street and another who was visited by church people when she was hospitalized. However, both of them actually looked for the church they attended. Street evangelism should not be rude. More creative ways to contact people on the street and in other places are needed.

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[20] George Hunter, "The Bridges of Contagious Evangelism: Social Networks," in *Church Growth: The State of the Art*, ed. C. Peter Wagner, Win Arn, and Elmer Towns (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1986), 69-81.
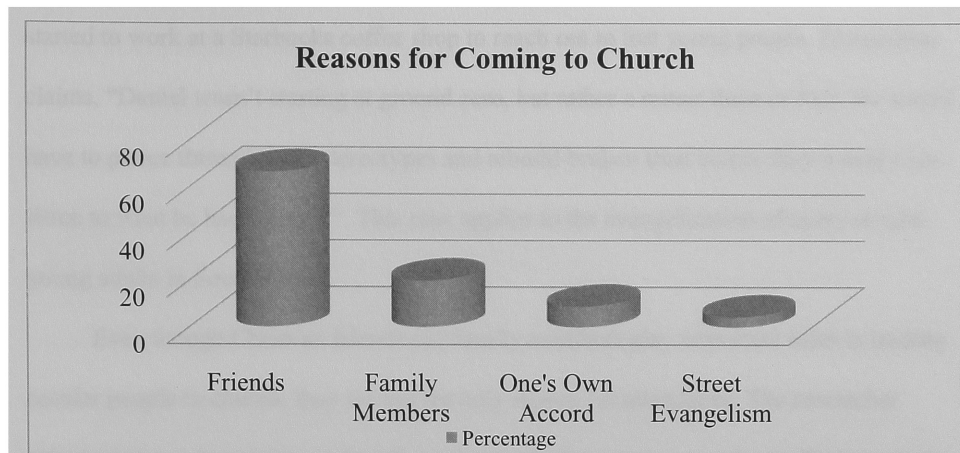
Figure 11. Reasons for Coming to Church.

To reiterate, 30 out of 45 people began to attend church through their Christian

friends. Among these 30 people, 16 explicitly explained why they are interested in

Protestantism. Some people were initially hostile to Protestantism because of their

negative image of it. They became attracted to Protestantism because they were attracted

to "credible" Christians who seemed to be different. They seemed to hold different value

systems, to look happy, to demonstrate transformed lives, to be extremely stable, to know

the purpose of life, or to show an accepting and loving spirit. Since the interviewees

knew that the credible Christians were different because they believed in God, a serious

curiosity to know their God was triggered. The role of credible Christians in the

evangelization of secular people is related to crossing the first two thresholds of Everts

and Schaupp; from distrust to trust and from complacency to curiosity.

In addition, credible Christian friends were able to remove negative images of

Protestantism, and secular young adults felt they could accept invitations to visit church.

Rich Richardson introduced the story of Daniel, a youth pastor of a large church. He

started to work at a Starbucks coffee shop to reach out to lost young people. Richardson claims, "Daniel wasn't starting at ground zero, but rather a minus three or four. He would have to pierce through their stereotypes and rebuild broken trust before they would even listen to what he had to say."[21] This case applies to the evangelization of many secular young adults in South Korea.

Even though Christian friends and family members play important roles in leading secular people to church, they are not the only reason for attendance. The researcher asked what was happening in their lives that made them more receptive to Protestantism and churches, and learned of other happenings in their lives. Twelve out of 45 people did not remember what made them more receptive to Christianity, but 33 out of 45 recalled specific events or situations that made them more receptive when they attended churches. Six of the 33 people suffered from experiences of failure such as failing a civil service exam, testing for special admission into good universities, or a university entrance exam. Eight out of the 33 people suffered from low self-esteem and depression. Six out of the 33 suffered from loneliness due to long-term exam preparation, mandatory military service, and studying abroad. Six out of the 33 felt emptiness, having lost purpose in their lives or feeling tormented by doubts. Other people experienced major surgery or were involved in car accidents. A couple of people suffered from economic crises. The table below summarizes this analysis.

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[21] Richardson, *Reimagining Evangelism*, 65-66.

Table 18. Crisis of new converts

Items	Percentage
Low self-esteem and depression	17.8 (8 People)
Experiences of Failure	13.3 (6 People)
Loneliness and physical fatigue	13.3 (6 People)
Sense of emptiness of life and doubts about lives	13.3 (6 People)
ETC (big surgery, car accident, economic crisis, and break-up with boy or girl friends.	15.6 (7 People)
Nothing happened in their lives	26.7(12 People)

Lewis Rambo discusses the importance of crisis among people who experienced conversion, as we studied in Chapter 4. According to Rambo, "some sort of tension in the people's lives triggered a religious quest."[22] Crises paved the way to searching for supernatural beings and to their turning to church attendance in many cases. Literature of the church growth movement indicates that people's feelings of crisis arising from dissatisfaction with themselves and their lives, combined with individual stress makes them "receptive" to Christianity.[23] On the other hand, some new converts claimed that they did not come to church because they needed something or looked for benefit from church life, but emphasized their genuine motives of coming to church. For them, credible Christian friends and family members were the influence. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that life crises significantly motivates people to turn toward a church and open their hearts to God and Christianity. This fact relates to the existential security theory of Norris and Inglehart. When foundations of life were shaken, this crisis paved the way to religion. When they experienced a crisis in their lives, then attending church in their childhood or their "credible" Christian friends or family members seemed to trigger

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[22] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 47.

[23] Hunter, *Contagious Congregation*, 112-115.

them to return to Protestant churches among the several religions in Korea.

Reasons for Returning to Churches

Some people who visit a church for the first time do not to go back again. Their quests for religion can be just a one-time event. So, why did new converts come back? The researcher asked them what factors caused them to return to the church. Several factors seem to intermingle, therefore to single out one major reason for their returns is difficult. Counting multiple responses on this question, the most frequent response is the experience of loving and welcoming relationships with young Christian adults in various small groups. Thirty out 68 responses described the loving and welcoming relationships with fellow Christians. Sixteen out of 68 responses indicated the importance of the pastors' sermons. Based on this result, relationships are even more important than preaching in making young secular adults return and stay in church. This table shows the result of interviews on this question.
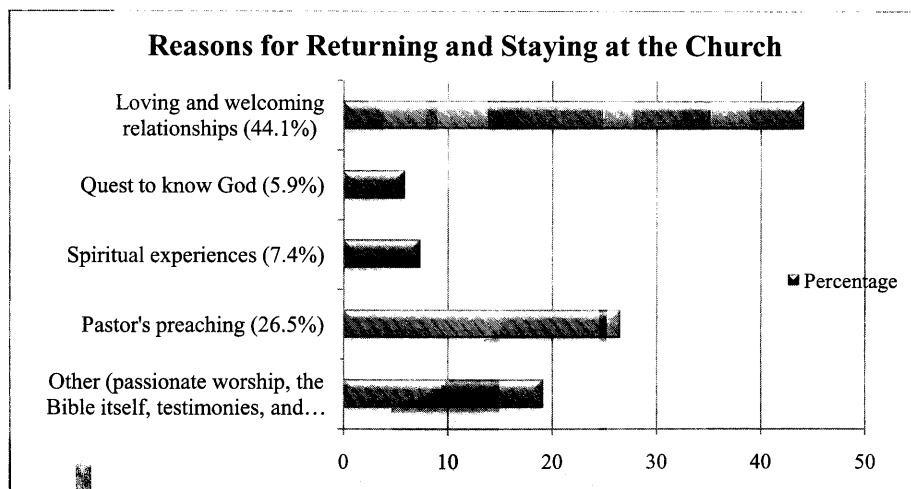

Figure 12. Reasons for returning to and staying at the Church.

Preaching is a powerful reason for a young secular adult's returning to stay at a church, especially when the initial preaching was relevant to people's context. Also true is that sometimes secular people may need a certain amount of time before preaching affects their worship experience. However, loving and accepting relationships are important tools to hold secular young adults within a church until the sermons finally reach them. The level of religious activity in their childhoods and adolescences does not make a difference in measuring the importance of preaching as the reason for their stay at churches. Seven out of the 16 people were regular church attenders for several years. The remaining nine people had not been involved in religious activities.

These loving and welcoming relationships were made in small group settings, such as regular Bible study groups, specific ministry teams, and small groups for hobbies like biking, badminton, and soccer. The experience of being loved and accepted by small group members left indelible positive imprints on secular people's minds. These loving relationships work as an antidote to the negative images towards Protestantism, in helping with unlearning negative images and relearning positive images. Too many calls and contacts from the church may put too much pressure on first time visitors. One interviewee informed me that young adults want to be loved and cared for, but dislike being annoyed and interfered with. A blurry border, it is true, but obviously phone calls, texting, and eating together are good ways to develop relationships with young adults.

Influence of Worship Style on Attending Church

My interviewees come from nine different congregations, including six case-study

churches. Among nine congregations, the Dream Community Church and Nadulmok Community Church have different worship styles from the other churches. Dream Community Church has movie worship every week, which targets unchurched people by connecting secular movies to the sermon. Nadulmok Community Church provides a weekly seeker service, using drama and music. These will be explained in the next chapter. The remaining seven churches have a separate worship service for young adults that consists of praises and a sermon, while their worship styles are similar to each other.

Almost all nine interviewees from the Dream Community Church and Nadulmok Community Church described that their worship styles are fresh and interesting, and helpful in their assimilation into Christian worship. One interviewee explained that for her to adjust to church attendance would have been difficult without the movie worship. However, nine interviewees who participate in seeker services and movie services indicated that the most impressive influence did not come from the fact that these worship services use drama and movies unlike most churches, but from the fact that these worship services talk about their lives and are extremely relevant. These worship services begin where secular young adults are.

Five of 45 interviewees mentioned that they felt threatened during worship services because of loud prayers from the congregations and praises accompanied by raised hands and tears. Some thought that these people must be religious fanatics. Since they trusted their friends and liked people with whom they worshipped, they got over these negative feelings. However, interesting is that 12 interviewees said that praise songs were really moving and touched their hearts, even though they could not understand the meaning of the praise songs' words. Music and poems seem to be powerful and effective in reaching

young adults.

The overall worship style itself does not seem to make a big difference. Many churches offer separate worship services for young adults, which consist of praise songs and a sermon, making the service less formal. This research did not find any liturgical worship service for young adults. These more relaxed young adult worship services attract young adults, if these praise songs and sermons are relevant to their life and their struggles. According to the interviews, most interviewees were concerned more about friends and acquaintances than the worship style.

Ways of Conversion

One important characteristic of the conversion of secular young adults shows that their conversions are usually a process rather than an event. Many interviews recalled some important events that made decisive impacts on their turning to God, but before they reached such events, they experienced the process of conversion that led them. During the 45 interviews, the researcher found that 10 people were still in the process of turning to God and I eliminated these responses from this investigation. Three out of 35 interviewees experienced conversion as a one-time event or "encountering," if we use Richard Peace's term. The remaining 32 responses all indicated that their conversion was a process. They gradually changed their perspectives of themselves and Jesus, experienced turnings and transformation. Several people felt antipathy toward street evangelism, which grabs people on the street or campus and presents the gospel, expecting people to receive Jesus and turn to God on the spot. They were deeply bothered by this one-way and coercive street evangelism that is based on the idea that conversion

is one-time event or encounter rather than a process.[24] This researcher's interviews demonstrate that it is much more effective to understand conversion as a process in order to reach out to secular young adults. Guiding the process is as important as the moment of receiving Jesus Christ in their hearts.
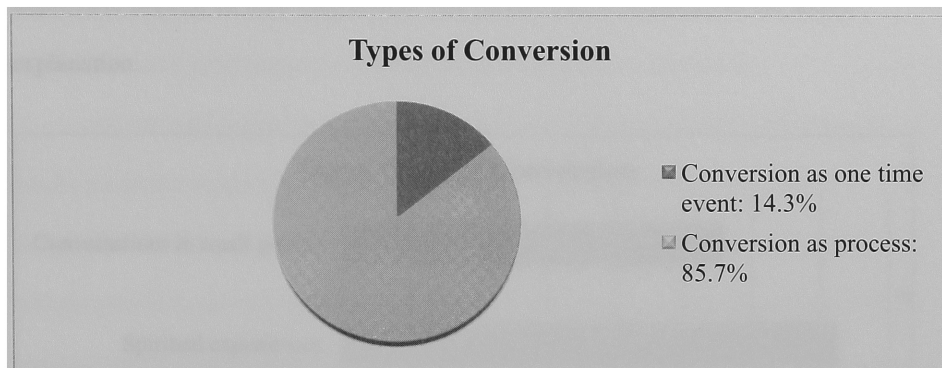
Figure 13. Types of conversion.

The road to conversion was not various and multi-faceted. Since "God has his own secret stairway into every heart,"[25] several ways might exist in order to pass through the above three core characteristics in conversion. Three major paths of conversion of secular young adults in South Korea became evident while implementing the interviews. These ways work not as exclusive means against each other, but as a confluence of three streams into a river of conversion. However, one certain stream is more influential than the other two in the conversion of a person. The three ways are preaching and teaching by pastors, conversation about life and God's Word in small groups led by lay leaders, and spiritual experiences. Thirteen out of 35 valid responses indicated that the sermons and

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[24] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 285-288.

[25] Morris, *The Mystery and Meaning*, 160.

teachings of their pastor are most influential to their conversion. In addition, 13 out of 35 responses marked spiritual experience in daybreak prayer services, summer or winter retreats, or special prayer meetings as the strongest impact on their conversion. Moreover, nine out of 35 responses believe that conversation in small groups left the most impressive imprint on their conversion. The picture below summarizes the above explanation.
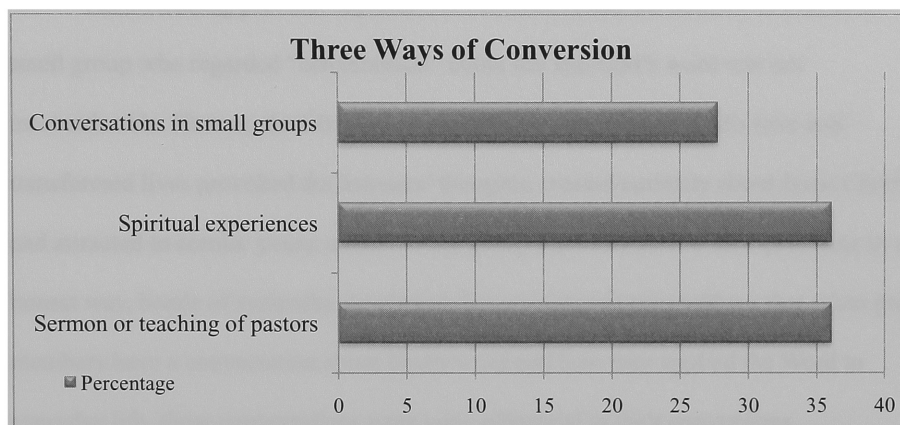
Figure 14. Three Ways of Conversion.

As many people assume, pastoral preaching and teaching were important and influential to a secular person's conversion. One important characteristic of effective sermons is "relevancy" to a young adult's life. Since effective sermons were prepared from the viewpoint of non-believers, they scratched the itchy spots and gave answers or solutions to problems with which they were struggling. In addition, they were applicable, so secular young adults could apply the sermons they heard to everyday life.

The importance of teaching should not be disregarded. For several weeks, pastors taught classes that explained basic Christianity and the message of the gospel. When secular young adults attended these classes and heard the gospel message intensively and

repeatedly, they understood basic Christianity and their misconceptions about Christianity were corrected.

Additionally, classes that taught basic Christianity were more influential when the hearts of attendees were opened through relationships and conversations formed in small groups and other places. Among 35 responses, more than 70 percent of interviewees were deeply involved in small groups, regardless of their ways of conversion.

An interesting part that captures our attention is that the number of people in small group who regarded "conversation" about life and God's word was not inconsiderable. Hearing the life story of people who experienced God's love and transformed lives provoked the listeners' thoughts, created curiosity about Jesus Christ, and attracted to secular young adults. When group members shared their problems in a honest way, bonds of sympathy developed. Several interviewees told me that when group members have a conversation about God's word and how they applied the Word to everyday life, these conversations were very influential to their conversions.

As mentioned before, young adults like to participate in activities and prefer two-way communication to one-way communication, as opposed to a coercive one-way communication. Therefore, they are called the P Generation. Reflecting this characteristic of young adults, a small group is an effective environment for conversion, especially for young adults. Conversations in small groups helps secular young adults gain new insights about themselves and Jesus, encourages them to turn to God through love and examples from life, confirms their transformation in Jesus Christ, and nourishes them to grow in Jesus Christ.

As mentioned in chapter four, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann understood the

conversion experience as a transformation of subjective reality and the process of re-socialization. They argue that the most important vehicle of maintaining the new transformed reality or re-socialization process is conversation, especially accumulated and consistent conversation.[26] This illuminated the significance of conversation in small groups, especially for creating and maintaining conversion experiences, but does not mean that the significance of proclamation of the gospel message is less valued. Instead, the word of God can be effectively shared in a conversational way through the fellowship with Christians.

In relation to the importance of fellowship with Christians in conversion, the concept of significant others is helpful. Significant others are the people who are in charge of the socialization process. As children absorb the concepts and values from parents (or other people who influence them) regarding the social world, people have their own significant others (parents or other people) who help their process of socialization. They are influenced by significant others with "emotionally charged identification."[27] Like the process of socialization, the re-socialization process into the world of Christian faith requires significant others through whom secular people absorb values, ideas, norms and the behaviors of faith or church. Fellow Christians in small groups and mentors of faith must assume the role of significant others. Berger and Luckmann remind us that "in conversation with the new significant others subjective reality is transformed."[28]

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[26] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, 140.

[27] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, 130.

[28] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, 146.

Another interesting part of the interviews concerning the ways for conversion comes from the fact that the same numbers of people were influenced by sermons and teachings as were impacted by spiritual experiences. Among the thirteen people who had spiritual experiences during their conversions, nine people were seeking God and were touched by indelible moments of meeting God during their earnest prayers and meditations. Some people were persuaded by God through several answered prayers. They were convinced that God exists and loves them. People who experienced God had no difficulty in accepting Jesus Christ, pursuing God further, and becoming sincere Christians. Spiritual experiences are important factors in secular people's conversions, and are effective tools of persuasion. Interestingly, 12 out of 13 people with noticeable spiritual experiences were deeply involved in small groups and had been nurtured by small group members. After their spiritual experiences, small groups became an important tool for confirming their transformations and encouraging continual growth.

Before finishing the analysis of interviews regarding conversion, to describe the ten interviews that were eliminated will be helpful because those ten had not yet been converted to Christ. These ten people were recommended by young adult pastors because they were believed to have had conversion experiences. They were believed by others to be sincere believers and had been involved in ministries with their young adult groups. When asked to tell the story of how they came to believe in Jesus Christ, some answered that they believed in God because they received answered prayers, or they had some feelings of God's leadership. Some people only believed in the existence of God and did not know Jesus Christ and his redemption yet. Through these answers, this researcher realized that the meaning of conversion needs to be clarified. Some people only believed

in the existence of God or had some kind of spiritual experience instead of being truly converted. Sincerity and deep involvement in ministry do not always guarantee true conversion experiences.

Kent Philpott gives useful insights for the discernment of people's conversion experiences.[29] He deals with the issue of true and false conversion. He attempts to present some guidelines on how to discern true conversion. This is an important issue in conversion because it is closely related to our actual salvation. If people remain in an unconverted state, assured of their salvation, it is a very dangerous situation. Acknowledging the seriousness of this topic, he suggests two guidelines to discern true conversion experiences.

First, Philpott makes a strong distinction between Christianization and true conversion. He claims that people who have been simply Christianized are not truly converted. Christianization can take place when people adopt the lifestyle and philosophy of Christianity without a heart change through Jesus Christ. People can attend worship, be involved in church work, and live a morally clean life without accepting Jesus Christ. Another way of Christianization, the author explains, is the side-effect of some methodologies of our evangelism such as altar calls and the use of sinner's prayer. According to Philpott, "Providing a 'means' or techniques for someone to become a Christian or accepting some show of spirituality as a sign of conversion is no longer acceptable to me and is inconsistent with how I now view biblical conversion."[30] He actually stopped using the standard invitation. However, his main concern is not the altar

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[29] Kent Philpott, *Are You Really Born Again?* rev.ed. (Mill Valley, CA: Earthen Vessel Publishing, 2005).

[30] Philpott, *Are You Really*, 4.

call itself, but the fact that people who respond to an altar call or pray the sinner's prayer can identify their coming forward to the pulpit and prayer with their conversion without any change of heart. People can believe they are converted because they came forward and prayed the sinner's prayer. An altar call is an important way to evaluate our effectiveness in evangelism. However, it could cause unexpected side-effects. William Payne supports Philpott's point when he says, "Coming to Christ involves a response of the mind, heart and will of the sinner (produced of course by the operation of the Spirit), but it is a dangerous thing to link this so closely to any form of altar call."[31]

Second, Philpott acknowledges the diversity of conversion experiences. However, he believes that, though each conversion is unique, common factors of true conversion experiences definitely exist. The most important criteria he suggests are *"conviction of sin and a growing attraction to Jesus"*[32] For him, these two are the most important criteria, and helpful in discerning true conversion experiences.[33]

Some interviewees felt strong guilt, knowing that they were sinners before God, but they did not know about the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ. Therefore, in some cases my interview time turned into an opportunity for evangelism, sharing the gospel message again. Rev. Hyung-Kook Kim claimed that a growing necessity in South

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[31] William Payne, "Are Altar Calls Biblical?" http://www.trinity-baptist-church.com/download/altar.pdf (accessed January 25, 2008).

[32] Philpott, *Are You Really*, 45.

[33] Along with these two important criteria of true conversion, Philpott suggests 10 signs of conversion, which may not be standard, but acceptable: a sense of peace and relief, baptism, identifying with Jesus (new attitude towards Him), developing a relationship with God, realizing the seriousness of sin, experiencing rejection for standing up for Jesus, being in the fellowship of a church, witnessing to others about the gospel, growing into the fullness of Christ, and leaning to give. He also mentions signs of conversion from 1 John: *"trusting in Jesus for salvation, loving our brothers and sisters and turning away from sin."* Philpott, *Are You Really*, 52.

Korea is the ability to discern true and false conversion, especially in times when people show increased interests in spirituality.

<div align="center">Carriers of the Gospel Message</div>

When secular young adults return to and stay at the church, some people play the role of sharing the gospel in order to lead them to Christ. Pastors, small group leaders, or mentors of faith could share the gospel with them. The interviewees were asked who shared with them the way to become Christians. Replies included that several people may share the gospel with them several times in various situations such as worship, small group, or Bible study. This "redundancy approach" is required to reach out to secular people because the meaning of the gospel might be hard for them to grasp.[34] When asked this question, they tried to remember a meaningful encounter with the gospel message among their several exposures to it. Since some people could not remember specific situations or people, only 32 valid responses were received out of 45 interviews. A couple of people offered multiple responses.

Among the interviews, 10 out of 32 responses mentioned sermons, Bible study programs, or discipleship training courses led by pastors. However, 22 of 32 responses indicated small groups or Bible study groups led by fellow young adults. Small groups are extremely important in the conversion experiences of secular young adults because they provoke their quest for searching further for God. A small group is the place where stories are shared by group members who have experienced God's love, where mutual understanding of the Bible is explored, and vivid examples of being Christians are

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[34] Hunter, *How to Reach Secular*, 89-91,103.

presented. In addition to small groups, mentors of faith effectively share the gospel message with some seekers.

The role of fellow Christian young adults needs to be highlighted in the interviews. Since leaders of small group and personal mentors have generally a much deeper personal relationship with new converts and are more accessible to them than pastors, they can be more effective carriers of the gospel message. The gospel message travels well along the pathway of relationship in the case of young adults.
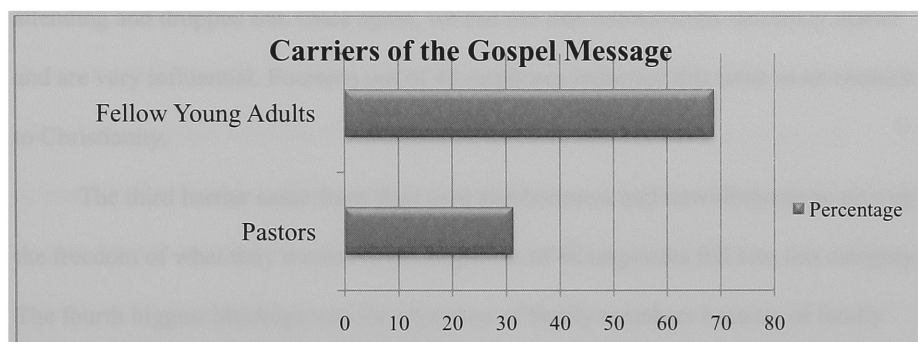
Figure 15. Carriers of the gospel message.

Obstacles to Becoming Christians

As some factors help them become Christians, other factors hinder young adults. When asked what almost kept them from becoming Christian, the interviewees indicated four obstacles. The biggest barrier was a negative image of Christianity. They experienced bad, selfish behavior by Christians and they were deeply disappointed by them. In addition, when they attended church for a while, they were hurt by the words and deeds of Christians, especially adult church members. Some interviewees' parents passed down negative images to their children, because of incidents at their churches.

Other people hold negative prejudice against Christians without sufficient proof. Sixteen out of 48 (multiple responses were accepted) responses maintained that a negative image of Christians was a barrier to their becoming Christians.

The second biggest obstacle was relationship with non-Christian friends. Having been busy all week in work or study, they spent much time on the weekend with their non-Christian friends. Hanging out with non-Christian friends consumed their time, making church attendance difficult. If they had no friends at church, they lost interest in attending and dropped out. Once again, we can see that relationships definitely matter and are very influential. Fourteen out of 48 responses indicated this issue as an obstacle to Christianity.

The third barrier came from their own stubbornness and unwillingness to give up the freedom of what they wanted to do. Eight out of 48 responses fell into this category. The fourth biggest blockage was the objection of family members because of family religions and value systems. Family members did not give them the freedom to choose their own religion. Five out of 48 responses mentioned the objection of family members. The below table summarizes the results.
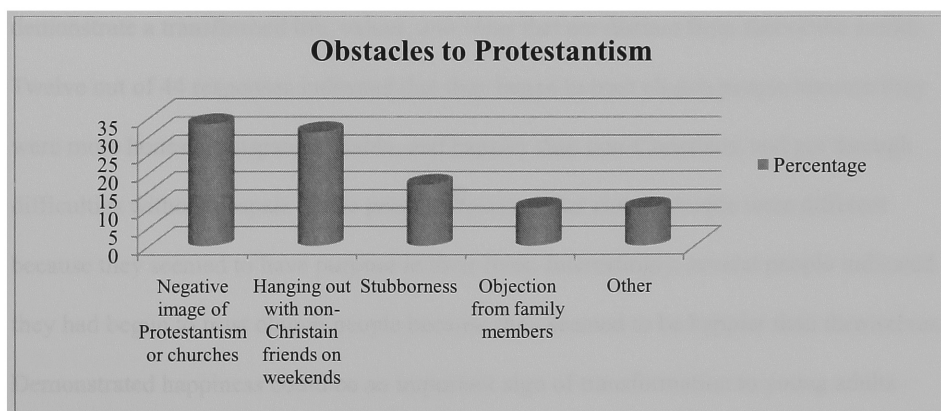
Figure 16. Obstacles to Protestantism.

Factors That Make Church People Credible

The interviewees mentioned several factors that made church people credible to them, either before or after they decided to attend church. Allowing for a couple of multiple answers, 44 responses were valid and four interviewees did not indicate specific factors that led them to trust church people. The most important factor that made secular young adults trust church people was their loving, consistent concerns and care for them. Twenty-three out of 44 responses indicated the significance of such concern and care. The result shows the most important way to gain the trust of secular young adults is to show consistent care. In addition to this, sympathy without criticism and judgment was critical. Some interviewees said they were deeply impressed when church people sympathized with their sufferings and hardships without judging and criticizing. They revealed that it was difficult to find such sympathy outside churches, because people outside are busy raising their voices but few want to hear another's opinion. However, church people heard their stories with deep sympathy and compassion. Listening to other people's stories is an important way of showing love to secular people.

The second significant way to gain trust from secular young adults was to demonstrate a transformed life, values, and ideas that are distinct from that of the world. Twelve out of 44 responses indicated that they began to trust church people because they were more honest, transparent, stable, and happier than non-Christians, and got through difficulties without despair. Some people explained that church people were different because they seemed to have purpose in their lives. Interestingly, several people indicated they had begun to trust church people because they seemed to be happier than themselves. Demonstrated happiness could be an important sign of transformation to young adults

who have suffered pressure and stress without the means to handle such events.

Additionally, interesting is that only four out of 44 responses mentioned that Christians who had dedicated their lives to God made them trust church people. Attitudes toward people matter even more than attitudes toward God for secular young adults. This graph summarizes the result of my interview on this matter.
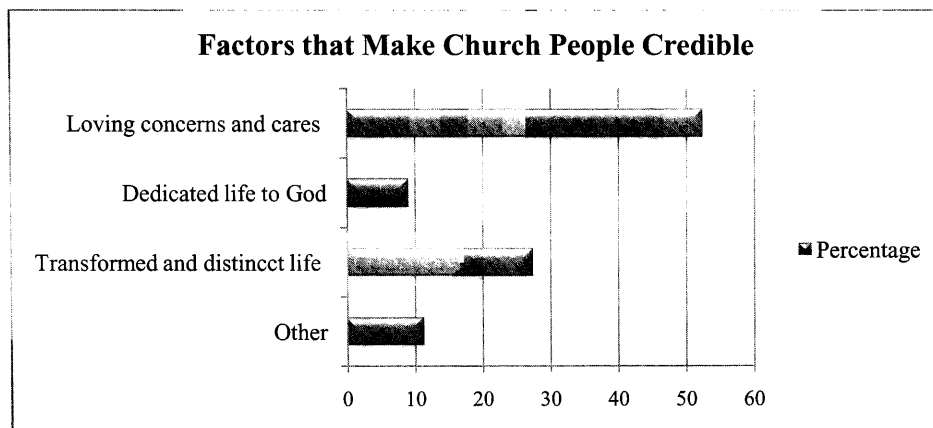
Figure 17. Factors that make church people credible.

Movement from Secular Young Adults to Christians: A Triangular Prism Model

As a summary of the insights gained from the interviews, this researcher proposes a model for describing the diverse conversion experiences of secular young adults in South Korea. In this model, this researcher depicts the process through which a secular young adult visits a church, returns and stays at the church, and makes a decision for Christ. In addition, indication is made of the several factors that influence the process and are involved in it. At first, this researcher worked to discover the most influential factor in the conversion of secular young adults. As the interviews proceeded, the researcher realized the emergence of four stages in the conversion process of secular young adults, and that

the important factors of each stage are different.

Devising such a model required much thought because the conversion process is complicated and involves human and divine factors simultaneously. Conversion is a mysterious cooperation of God and human. Many people consider the conversion process as the work of the triune God. In 1 Kings 18:37, God is depicted as the subject who turns people's minds. God's initiative and centrality in conversion are clearly revealed in the Bible. The triune God is involved in the work of conversion. God's love and grace also demonstrate that conversion is God's work. Therefore, George Morris asserted that "God is originator and indicator, the source and goal of Christian conversion"[35]

Paradoxically, the Bible also features human involvement in conversion. God requires us to repent. In addition, He calls us to join in His redemptive work. Even James Packer, a strong Calvinist, acknowledges human responsibility, using the term *epistrepho*. According to Packer, "where *epistrepho* is used transitively, of 'converting' someone to God, the subject of the verb is not God, as we might have expected, but a preacher (Lk 1;16; Jas 5:19f; Acts 26:17f)."[36] William Barclay mentions the following five means of conversion God used in the early church: preaching, debating, healing power, personal witness, and the Scripture.[37]

Moreover, difficult to develop is a model for explaining the conversion experiences of secular young adults because of the diversity involved in conversion. A limitation exists in the following model in this sense, which is helpful in the development of a

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[35] Morris, *The Mystery and Meaning*, 42.

[36] Eddie Gibbs, "Conversion in Evangelistic Practice," in *Handbook of Religious Conversion* ed. H. Newton Malony and Samuel Southhard (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1992), 278.

[37] Barclay, *Turning to God*, 31-45.

model for conversion of young adults in South Korea and can be used to better understand their conversion process. The model below illustrates the conversion of many Korean young adults. The base side of this model is named The Work of the Triune God because of its foundational nature in Christian conversion, which guides the whole stages of this model.
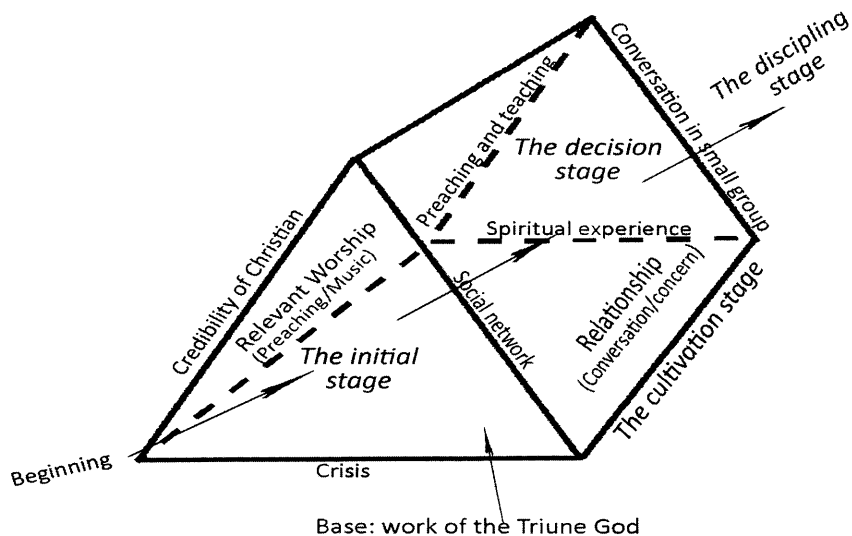
Figure 18. A model for the conversion process of Korean young adults

This model consists of the following four stages: initial, cultivation, decision, and discipleship stages. The initial stage describes the process of how secular young adults who are indifferent or even hostile to Protestantism become interested and visit churches for the first time. The interviewees replied that the following three factors are deeply involved in the initial stage: credibility of Christians, personal crisis, and social network. When secular young adults begin to trust Christians, they listen to their words and ask questions about what makes these Christians different from the rest of the people in this world. Along with the observing the credibility of Christians, personal crises that secular

young adults experience make them more receptive to Protestantism. Social networks also play an important role in leading to an initial church visit. These three factors are entangled with each other.

Persoanal
Crisis

Credibility
of
Christians

Social
Networks
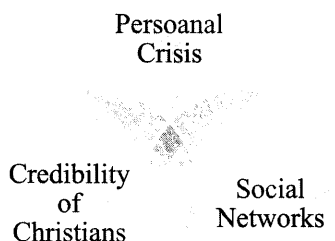
Figure 19. The initial stage.

The next stage is cultivation. This stage opens the minds of secular young adults to Protestantism, correcting their prejudice toward Protestantism and church, and encouraging them to pursue their quest further. Cultivating the minds of secular young adults comes from relevant worship experience, especially preaching and the bonding of relationship. If music, drama, movies, and especially preaching reflect their life situations and address their problems and concerns, these tools are relevant to secular young adults and produce in them a great interest in Protestantism.

Moreover, bonding relationship through conversation and the demonstration of loving concern in small groups and other mentoring situations makes secular young adults feel comfortable and they acquire a sense of belonging. While they build intimate relationships, conversations about life and God's Word opens up their mind and encourages them to pursue their spiritual quest further. Sharing testimonies and experiences of answered prayers in small groups are very influential. In addition, loving

concern, a welcoming atmosphere, and open attitudes toward secular young adults create a sense of belonging. Relevant worship experiences and bonding relationships in the cultivation stage help secular young adults gear up to the next stage.
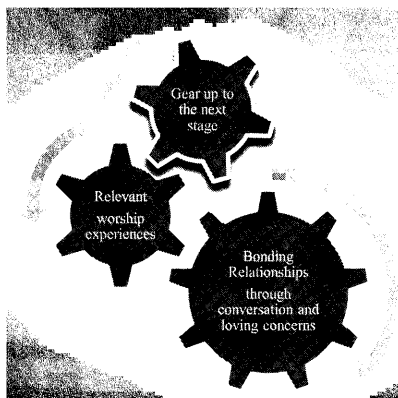
Figure 20. The cultivating stage.

The third stage is the decision stage. Secular young adults decide to repent and turn to God, dedicating their lives to Jesus Christ. Some people struggle for a long time until they burn their bridges and set their hearts on Jesus, but other people cross the line in a short time-span through special experiences and events. Mentioned earlier were the following three important ways that lead to this decision: preaching and teaching, spiritual experiences, and sharing life and God's words in small groups. Other ways to turn to Christ may exist, because God can use all types of means to convert people. However, these three ways were important in the interviews. Figure 21 illustrates the decision stage.
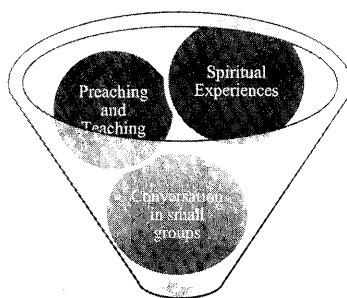
Conversion Experiences

Figure 21. The decision stage.

The decision stage is not the final stage in Christian life. The fourth stage is the discipleship stage and it is a person's decision to follow Christ that leads them to this stage. Through the continuous nurturing of these new converts, they live as life-long followers of Jesus Christ. As Berger and Luckmann explained, this stage features "secondary socialization" into the life of the alternative community that shares the new worldview.

The shape of this model looks like a prism that separates light into its spectral colors. This model can show the diverse and beautiful colors of conversion just as a prism shows light. The shape of the model also looks like a tent where people are allowed to pause before they move to next stage of Christian life, the discipling process. Hopefully this model will help people understand what is going on in the tent of conversion.

Conclusion

This chapter studied several characteristics of young adults in Korea and distilled three that are meaningful to evangelizing secular young adults. Their very competitive lives explain their deep anxiety and busy-ness. Their hostile attitude toward religion

demonstrates that we need to deal with their negative image of Protestantism, which sometimes has been passed down from their parents, before we began to evangelize them. Characteristics of Generation P show us how to approach them when we share the gospel with them.

For most secular young adults, the conversion experience is a process rather than a one-time event. This study proposes a model to understand their conversion that consists of four stages: the initial, the cultivation, the decision and the discipleship stage. Each stage has specific factors that encourage secular young adults to move to the next stages, and the role of bonding relationships in small groups makes a strong impact on the decisions of secular young adults throughout the three stages, along with the influence of the words of God in various forms. The next questions are what kind of ministries lead secular young adults to Christ, and what insights can we learn from the six churches that are growing because of the conversion of secular young adults? The next chapter deals with these questions.

Chapter 6

Insights from Churches That Effectively Reach Secular Young Adults

Churches that effectively evangelize secular young adults typically share several important characteristics. Insights from their ministries give significant lessons to other churches that want to reach this population. This chapter introduces these characteristics and the approaches to evangelistic ministries that these churches follow.

This research project identified six churches in South Korea that experienced net growth of more than 14 percent per year for the past five years, and at least 15 percent of their new members represent conversion growth from the world in that they confess new faith and they have no church from which to transfer.

Reflecting the approaches and ministries of these six participating churches, five characteristics are distilled that are especially relevant for effective ministries to young adults. The situation is not coincidental that the characteristics of young adults reflect some characteristics of the six participating churches. After explaining the five characteristics of an effective young adult group, a section will be devoted to introducing their approaches to evangelistic ministries. Some reflections regarding their ministries will follow.

Presenting Six Participating Churches

Six churches are chosen, not only because they meet the standards suggested in the introduction, but also they suggest an influential model to inform other churches regarding reaching out to secular young adults in South Korea. Following are the six

participating churches: Kangnam Church, Dream Community Church, Nadulmok Community Church, Samil Church, Sarang Community Church, Sungbok Church. Among the six churches that participated, half of the churches have separated their young adult groups from the rest of the congregation, and the other half of the churches were already primarily composed of young adults. Kangnam Church, Sarang Community church, and Sungbok Church were all found with separated young adult groups, while Dream Community Church, Nadulmok Community Church, and Samil Church had no need to separate young adult groups due to the young ages of their congregations. For the first group, the characteristics and evangelistic ministries of young adult groups will be described, however, for the second group, such characteristics and evangelistic ministries are included in the churches as a whole.

(1) Young adult group of Kangnam Church

Kangnam Church, a Presbyterian church, is located in Norangjin, a part of Seoul where numerous private educational institutions flourish that are dedicated to the preparation of young adults for civil service and teacher certificate examinations. Thus, many young adults from all over South Korea live in the area, Kangnam Church has 3,800 in attendance, including 1,200 young adults. In 1998, the attendance of young adults of 100 grew to 1,200 in 2009. The situation is unusual in South Korea to have such a large portion of young adults in a traditional church with a below 5,000 membership. Rev. Samuel Lee was the director of six young adult subgroups at Kangnam Church. Since these subgroups worship together and are deeply related to one another, it was not necessary to focus on a specific subgroup at Kangnam Church.

(2) Young adult group of Sarang Community Church (University 8)

Sarang Community Church is a Presbyterian mega church with 35,000 attendance in 2009 and a representative church in Korea concerning disciple training and equipping lay leaders. This church regards reaching young adults as a mission field and sends out a well-known young adult minister, Jik-Han Ko, as a missionary to campuses with full financial and spiritual support, demonstrating their deep concern for young adults. Eight subgroups of young adults (20 to 26 years old), have a total of 2,500 to 3,000 in attendance. I researched a subgroup called University 8, and interviewed Rev. Sung-Jun Baek, the group's director.

(3) Young adult group of Sungbok Church (Ezra Community)

Sungbok is a Presbyterian traditional church located in northern Seoul. Rev. Young-Sup Oh, came to Sungbok in 2003, only 40 people attended and did so with a greatly depressed mood (the whole congregation of Sungbok at that time was 1,500 to 2000 attendance). Oh has rebuilt that young adult group, which grew into 170 attendance in 2009.

(4) Dream Community Church

Dream Community Church, a Methodist church, was planted in 1997 targeting young adults, so most members of the Dream Community Church are young adults. This church has compassion for lost people and attempts to communicate the gospel with people outside of the church in a culturally relevant manner. Senior Pastor Jung-Wan Ha is a very famous minister who adopts the culture of young adults. He pioneered the "movie-sermon," using video clips from movies to link the Biblical message to secular young adults in his sermons. Dream Community Church highlights two tools: disciple training and communicating the gospel in a culturally relevant way.

(5) Nadulmok Community Church

Nadulmok Community Church, a nondenominational church, was planted in 2001 with 100 lay people, pursuing the formation of a biblical, authentic, and transformative community in a city. Senior Pastor Hyung-Kook Kim served on the staff of Inter-Varsity Fellowship for five years, and earned his M.Div and Ph.D. degrees in the New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Chicago. They worship at a Christian high school by renting, believing that the essence of the church is people, not a church building. Nadulmok Community Church is well-known in South Korea for their seeker-sensitive worship and house churches. Most members of Nadulmok Community Church are young, and about 80 percent of church members are in their twenties and thirties.

(6) Samil Church

Samil Church, whose nickname is "young church," is a representative Presbyterian church in Korea concerning young adult ministry. Senior Pastor Byung-Wook Jun often serves a role as a main speaker in numerous young adult meetings. He began his ministry with 80 church people as Senior Pastor of Samil church in 1994. Samil church grew to 16,000 persons in worship attendance by April, 2009. The main thrust of the growth of this church comes from young adults. Among 16,000 members, 10,000 are unmarried young adults. Jun is a prolific author and published a book on his ministry at Samil Church in 2002.

Five Characteristics of Effective Young Adult Ministries

When we reflect the practices and ministry of the six participating churches, the following five characteristics are noticeable: they consider evangelism to be a main goal

of church; they provide relevant worship services that reflect the cultures of the young adults; they address the spiritual needs of the young adults highlighting passionate prayer; they emphasize participation in small groups where the life and Word of God are shared, which serve as basic communities for the young adults; and they prioritize developing young adult leaders. This section of the chapter develops these five characteristics, which are considered helpful to establishing effective young adult groups.

<div align="center">Evangelism as a Main Goal of the Church</div>

One common factor of the six participating churches is their strong emphasis on evangelism. Their deep concern for evangelism is reflected in the way they define the goals and mission of their churches. Some churches have a goal concerning evangelism that turns out to have a hollow and non-foundational center. But these six churches regard evangelism as a major goal, though not their exclusive goal, using efforts based on highly valuing reaching out to the secular population. Reaching pre-Christians as a main business of the church is one of the main emphasis of the church growth movement as a whole.[1]

Byung-Wook Jun, who published his ministry at Samil Church, clearly mentions the three-fold goals of his church.[2] First, in relation to God, the church exists for worship. Through worship services, Christians are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live abundant lives and to maintain spiritual vitality. Second, in relation to Christians, the Church exists

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[1] McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 23-40; Donald McGavran, *How Churches Grow: The New Frontier of Mission* (New York: Friendship, 1966), 67-76.

[2] Byung-Wook Jun, *Gijeoki Sansiki Doeneun Gyohoe* [A church where miracles become common] (Seoul: Kyujang, 2001), 66-75.

to train Christians. The Church should be a boot camp, not daycare center. Third, in relation to society, the Church exists for evangelism. Jun claims that both the Church and its organizations can provide social services and relief efforts for society, but only the Church can give the gospel to society. Without evangelism, Christians and churches can become spiritual swindlers. The acronym for the three-fold goals of the church is REM (Revival of worship, Education of Christians, and Mission). Jun practically highlighted the revival of worship first, because Christians need to regain spiritual vitality through worship before they become involved in ministries. Then they need to be trained, after which they begin to do missions. However, Jun clearly states that the church exists for evangelism,[3] based on 2 Timothy 2:4, which reads, "God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth (NIV)." The Church exists as a tool for fulfilling God's redemptive works. Under this understanding of goals of the Church, Samil Church members are devoted to many evangelistic ministries such as campus evangelism, street evangelism, offering evangelistic meetings, home missions, and several short-term mission trips.

Nadulmok Community Church has the following four goals: 1) a community to exist for seekers who are outside of God, 2) an authentic community to love neighbors, 3) a well-balanced growing community in relations with God, fellow Christians, self, and the world, and 4) a transforming community encompassing all areas of life.

Although Nadulmok does not set an exclusive goal for evangelism, Nadulmok clearly declares that their church exists for the reaching out to seekers.[4] Hyung-Kook

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[3] Byung-Wook Jun, *Gijeoki Sansiki* [A church where Miracle], 70.

[4] From the webpage of Nadulmok Community church, http://www.nadulmok.org/church/our_church.jsp (accessed November 23, 2010).

Kim told me that Nadulmok provides weekly seeker sensitive services, called worship service with seekers at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. because these times are ideal for Christians to enjoy a spiritual service and share this time with seekers. When he planted the church, he avoided advertising Nadulmok's worship with seekers because he was afraid that Christians would take all opportunities to attend that service. Along with weekly worship with seekers, the church's network of house churches are very supportive of seekers and work as a welcoming community. .

Dream Community Church was planted to win young adults and to make disciples of them.[5] Jung-Wan Ha mentioned that the main business of Dream Church is discipling, but his understanding of discipling is closely related to evangelism.[6] He claimed that Dream's seeker sensitive worship needs to be understood in the context of the Great Commission rather than a program or a means of church growth, focusing on evangelism by relating the gospel message to the culture of young adults.[7] To provide weekly seeker sensitive worship was a burden for the Dream Church, right from the beginning, because of limited resources. However, Ha has continuously held a strong concern for seekers and kept weekly seeker sensitive worship for ten years, which demonstrates their strong concern for young adults.

The Ezra community of Sungbok has the following four emphases: prayer that

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[5] Jung-Wan Ha, "It is easy to make 100 members out of 2," 3. A paper used for one day conference for communication and transcendence in 2009.

[6] Rev. Ha graduated from Trinity when Robert Coleman taught at Trinity. He participated in discipling group of Coleman and his influence is crucial to Ha's understanding of disciple training.

[7] Jung-Wan Ha, "Du Yebae: Maeryeokjeokin Yebae, Yeolrin Yebae" [Two worship services: attractive worship and seeker service], 37. A paper used for one day conference for communication and transcendence in 2009. Ha quoted Tim and Jan Wright, eds., *Contemporary Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1997), 24.

encompasses the world, small groups that change people, worship that empowers people, and outreach that transforms South Korea and overseas. In the interview with Young-Sup Oh, he claimed that evangelism and effective outreach is the fruit of the four emphases. He suggested that young adult ministry in South Korea needs to be refreshed by refocusing on evangelism. The young adults' group of Sungbok devotes a great deal of time to many evangelistic activities, and several voluntary staff members even take a year's leave of absence in order to spend more time in campus evangelism.

University 8 of Sarang Community Church has a unique story regarding its strong emphasis on evangelism. When Sung-Jun Baek was a director of University 3, another young adult group of Sarang, it grew to 450 to 500 people from an initial 200 members. When University 3 was split in order to start University 8, Baek was entrusted to be a director of the newly started University 8 in 2005. He decided to have weekly worship on Saturday, because he was assured that University 8 was supposed to grow by conversion rather than transfer, which happened at University 3. Sarang Community Church is well known, and many young adult Christians, newly arrived in Seoul, want to attend that church. Baek thought that if they have worship on Saturday, the already Christian young adults might not come. Thus, they began Saturday worship with a strong emphasis on evangelism. Baek reported that members who started University 8 with him shared a passionate spirit of outreach, although this spirit weakened when they graduated from University 8 in 2007.

In the interview with Samuel Lee of the young adult group at Kangnam Church, he claims that evangelism is not the only goal they pursue, but evangelism is a major business of his young adult group. He is convinced that faithful efforts in evangelism are

the real food for souls. Based on this belief, many evangelistic activities are practiced. Since the young adults who study in Norangjin come from many areas of South Korea, many who were converted by the ministry at Kangnam Church go back to their home with the gospel. Therefore, they call their community a "hub community."

Defining evangelism as a main goal is meaningful in the context of South Korean churches. Jik-Han Ko has been involved in young adult ministry since 1978, as a pioneer of young adult ministry in South Korea and as a student of the present condition of young adult ministry on a national level. Ko estimates that 50,000 churches exist in South Korea and only 10,000 churches have young adults group. In addition, 90 percent of 10,000 young adults group have twenty members or less and are too weak to be effective for young adult ministry itself. He estimates that only 500 young adult groups hold deep interest in young adult ministry. However, he laments that most of them put first priority on attracting young adults members of their churches who only attend adult worship, not involved in young adult groups. Rather than reaching out to secular young adults, training and renewing young adult Christians have become their main concerns.[8] He believes that the emphasis on evangelization of secular young adult groups is less wide-spread compared to 30 years ago.

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[8] This shift also happened in the campus ministry of parachurch organizations. Since the 1990s, most parachurch organizations have attempted to reach Christian students more than secular students partly because of the difficulty in evangelizing secular students. Jong-Hun Jang, "Caempeoseu Seongyoui Paereodaim Jeonhwanhagi," [Suggesting paradigm shifts of campus mission] *Mulgeunweoneul Malkke* 91 (2009): 22; Si-Jong Lee, "Bokeumjuui Haksangui Gileul Mutda," [Seeking the direction of evangelical student movements] (paper presented at the annual conference of Korean Campus Evangelization Network; Seoul, December 1, 2009).

Worship Style that Reflects the Culture of Young Adults

Two waves of new worship style have influenced traditional worship services in South Korean churches, which are the praise service and the seeker service. Since these two waves of new worship styles have been influential especially concerning young adult worship, explanation of these two trends is helpful.

Traditional worship consists of playing the organ, singing traditional hymns, church choirs and preaching. Since the 1980s, less liturgical praise worship replaced organs with bands, choirs with singing ensembles, and hymns with praise songs, all of which impacted the traditional worship style. Praise worship aims to reflect God's glory through worship, in order to spiritually renew the church. *Youth with A Mission* played an important role in spreading praise worship in South Korea by training worship leaders and introducing contemporary praise songs.

Another wave of worship renewal comes from seeker services. When the seeker service of Willow Creek Community Church was introduced to South Korean churches in the middle of the 1990s, the translation was as an "open service," which reflected the social atmosphere of democracy at that time. When the military dictatorship ended in the 1980s, people began to use the adjective "open" in many areas, including music and education. Many church leaders in South Korea believe that one important way to attract a secular young generation is to provide informal worship that reflects their culture.[9] Under the influence of Willow Creek's seeker service, many churches began to use drama,

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[9] It reminds the recommendation of Robin Gill who believed that "To attract the religiously unsocialized at a point when they are searching for meaning in their lives, they may need to provide less formal worship." Robin Gill, "The Future of Religious Participation," 291.

video clips, and contemporary praise songs in worship services.[10]

As mentioned before, many young adult groups have their own services on Sunday, and young adult services usually adopt one of the two formats or use a mix. Praise services are featured more widely than the seeker services. This section introduces the worship practices of Dream and Nadulmok as examples of seeker services for young adults, and Samil as an example of praise worship.

Strictly speaking, the seeker service of Dream maybe categorized as a high performance seeker service somewhat like Willow Creek's; Nadulmok approaches more of a high participation seeker service somewhat like Saddleback Church.[11] Dream provides two kinds of services on Sunday: a traditional service, featuring expository preaching for Christians; and a seeker service, named Eyes, featuring topical-biblical preaching which utilizes movie clips in the reaching of secular people. Nadulmok provides two identical services with seekers on Sunday, both of which target Christians and secular people.

The typical worship order of Dream's "Eyes" service is as follows: a happy invitation (welcome words by Ha); singing two or three contemporary praise songs with band accompaniment; a prayer on behalf of congregation using poetry; watching a video

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[10] Adopting seeker service from America was controversial. Several short articles that introduce seeker service of American churches were published in *Mokhoewa Sinhak* [Ministry and theology] in April, 1997.

[11] A similarity between a high performance seeker service and a high participation seeker service exists. Both feature a band (or an orchestra), singing ensembles, and contemporary music. Two main dissimilarities exist between the two service styles. First, the high performance seeker service is more focused on non-Christians than Christians and provides a different worship service for Christians. Second, the high performance seeker service expects less participation from the congregation like a concert or performance. George Hunter, *Church for the Unchurched*, 69-73.

clip; a sermon connecting the video clip to the gospel message; The Lord's Supper[12] (once a month); announcement (sometimes as a format of the video clip, both funny and interesting); offering; and the benediction.

Ha features movies, although not exclusively, to communicate the gospel with young adults because film is now a pervasive feature in South Korea's young adult culture. According to research formulated by the Korean Culture Promotion Institute, among the cultural expenses of the twenties and thirties age group, the most money they spent was on watching movies, which was their favorite spare-time activity.[13] Ha selects short clips of popular movies and shows them prior to his preaching. As a result of using these movie clips, young adults are more connected to the biblical message and also more interested. When some people show their doubts about using a secular movie for a sermon, Ha claims that although some secular cultures are evil, they can be used by God; as Amadeus Mozart was used who became one of the world's classical musicians, regardless of his morality. Since Ha is a well-known speaker, especially to young adults, he is invited to many places to preach the gospel. When he was invited to preach in a university chapel for secular young adults who were indifferent or even hostile to Christianity and decided not to listen to sermons, he used a movie to communicate the gospel message with them.

Ha finds that the first three minutes are very important in securing the attention of

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[12] Dream Church encourages secular people to take part in the Lord's Supper without requiring baptism as a pre-requisite. They believe that if secular people want to receive the Lord's Supper, they can be considered as people who want to follow Jesus Christ.

[13] Jin-Young Kim, "Movie, an Avoidable Culture of Young Adults," *Christian Today*, May 5, 2005, http://www.dreamchurch.com/bbs/zboard.php?id=dreamnews&page=4&sn1=&divpage=1&sn=off&ss=on &sc=on&select_arrange=headnum&desc=asc&no=67 (accessed August 20, 2010).

young adult audiences and features the following four factors for making those three minutes effective: using the preacher's own experience to create empathy with the audience, adapting to their culture through the use of movie clips and music, touching on the emotion of the audience, and maintaining a logical consistency.[14]

Ha suggests three essential principles of an effective seeker service.[15] First, seeker services should be understood in the context of the Great Commission, not as a means for attracting believers. Thus, he claims that seeker services should not be a program of many church activities, but the *essential* activity, involving the whole congregation with great attention. The worst seeker service is the one at which believers compose the majority of the congregation. He laments that over 90 percent of seeker service attendants in South Korean churches were believers, as representative practitioners of seeker service admitted. Seeker services should not be a program to attract already-believers.

Second, ingredients of a seeker service such as skits, video clips, dances, and music should revolve around the sermon. Seeker services may be practiced as a show merely to entertain the audience, having nothing to do with that day's message, if not carefully planned in advance. The cultural approach of seeker services should aim at maximizing the impact of the message and the message should be clear in sharing Jesus Christ and his gospel. The seeker service should have a theme for cohesiveness that is dedicated to a sermon.[16] However, the labeling of certain parts of seeker services that have nothing to

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[14] Jung-Wan Ha, "3Bunui Him" [The power of three minutes], 28. A short paper presented to a forum on evangelism sermons for young adults, Seoul, October 7, 2004.

[15] Jung-Wan Ha, "Du Yebae" [Two worship services], 36-41.

[16] Timothy Wright, *A Community of Joy: How To Create Contemporary Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 74.

do with the sermon but are more like mere entertainment is unjust, because that stance argues that "entertaining congregation" is evil, and not a faithful way of communicating the gospel message.[17]

Third, since a seeker service seeks to win secular people to Christ, courses that nurture them should be provided after the service. For nurturing courses, Ha suggests small groups, disciple training, and a worship service that deeply explains the Word of God. Ha believes that as people grow in faith, they would like to attend expository preaching worship, because they want to learn more about the Word of God. However, nurturing courses should not be limited to following a seeker service. Rather people will hopefully attend a small group regularly before they attend a seeker service. The interviews with some people of Dream Church even mentioned that they were motivated to attend a seeker service through a small group.

Nadulmok describes seekers as people who ask sincere questions about self, the world, and God while seeking answers.[18] Nadulmok targets people in the 20 to 40 age bracket, who are educated, and live in Seoul. Nadulmok means "crossroad," and Nadulmok Church hopes that worship with seekers on Sundays works as a "crossroad" of people's turning to God by providing a comfortable and or authentic atmosphere. Staff members report that, through their seeker service, they attempt to remove misunderstanding and ignorance regarding Christianity, to create curiosity about the church, and to help seekers focus on the word of God. They expect their service with

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[17] Walt Kallenstad, *Entertainment Evangelism: Taking the Church Public* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 20. Hunter summarizes and reflects the debate on entertainment evangelism. See Hunter, *Church for the Unchurched,* 74-77.

[18] http://www.nadulmok.org/seeker/seek_is.jsp (accessed August 20, 2010).

seekers to work as a "bridge" to the next level, further Bible study, and baptism.

A typical order of the seeker service at Nadulmok is as follows: opening recital; singing an opening song together (congregation standing); reflecting on the last worship (projecting people's reflections and responses to the last week's worship on the screen with heart-touching music); singing praise songs together (traditional hymn or contemporary songs); prayer (several members of a house church offer short prayers in turn); announcements; performance (drama, video clip, or special songs); sermon; heart-giving worship (congregation write their resolutions and reflections of the message and submit them; then some of these writings will be presented the next week in the time of reflecting on the previous worship); singing a praise song together; benediction; and fellowship and prayer.

Nadulmok's seeker service highlights two features: empathy and authenticity. When a worship team designs a performance prior to a sermon, they keep in mind that a skit or a video clip should bring forth empathy for the struggles or the situations of seekers. They are convinced that this empathy forms an effective foothold for the communication of the gospel. The other feature is authenticity. A staff member who is involved in designing and preparing seeker services revealed that the authenticity of our story and confession in seeker service is more significant than a professional and perfect performance itself. Therefore, the time of reflecting on the last worship is very powerful, because members of the congregation share their stories and confessions.[19]

Hyung-Kook Kim reports that one difficulty in providing seeker services on

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[19] It means that people who cannot write their reflections and resolutions in such a short time during seeker service could be isolated. It does not seem to me easy for less educated people to follow Nadulmok's seeker service.

Sunday, holding Christians and seekers together at the same time, is derived from the

limited opportunity to preach challenging messages toward the congregation. As Senior

Pastor, challenging church members with a strong message of commitment is necessary,

but sensing and considering seekers who might be attending a church for the first time

limits that opportunity. He offers Wednesday services, but due to the crowded schedules

of young people in South Korea, it is not very effective. Some people asked him to

provide two kinds of service, one for Christians and the other for seekers. He hesitates to

accept the proposal, because he knows that the difficulty in focusing equally on two

different services every Sunday.

The worship style of the Samil Church looks like a more traditional young adult

service in South Korea. They do not provide a seeker service; their service with choir and

sermons is fairly traditional. Nonetheless, the service engages many young adults. First,

the tempo of worship is fast and dynamic without a presider. Second, the worship music

is lilting with a contemporary style, and even accompanied by dramatic hand motions.

Third, Jun uses terms or words adopted from popular TV dramas or comedy programs.

Fourth, his speaking is frank, direct, and even acrimonious, which makes his sermon

fresh and attractive to young adults who pursue newness and challenge. Fifth, his sermon

is relevant to the issues of young adults. When this researcher visited Samil, he preached

about young adults who have feelings of wonder and wisdom in their lives. The sermon

challenged young adults who suffer from tedious competitions, hard work, and study, not

knowing what the future holds.

In the seeker services of the Dream and Nadulmok Churches, contemporary songs

attract secular young adults. Although Samil does not provide a seeker service, the

worship style reflects a young adult culture in other ways. Some church leaders believe that reflecting the culture of young adults means using dramas or video clips in worship service, but that type of understanding of culture needs to be expanded. For many church leaders, culturally relevant worship is analogous to using media or drama, but other ways are available in order to reflect young adults' culture in sermon, music, a welcoming atmosphere, and the touching of felt needs. Certainly a worship style relevant to the culture of young adults combines with continuous efforts to communicate with them by adopting their culture make a significant impact on winning them to faith.[20]

Young adult worship at Kangnam and Sungbok Churches resemble the worship style of Samil. The worship reflects the culture of young adults in music and in language. Along with cultural relevancy, interesting to observe were people in intercessory prayer before the service began. A number of pews were designated to each person of the intercessory prayer team who then moved from pew to pew, prayer-walking. In addition, the teams who led the singing of contemporary praise songs were passionate and seemed to enjoy a relationship with God, which was quite contagious and moving. This experience reminds us of Sally Morgenthaler, who highlights both relevance and transcendence in worship evangelism. She argues that worship evangelism happens when

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[20] Sung-Don Cho criticizes seeker services in South Korea by pointing out that seeker services actually prevent seekers from coming to the church, because the seeker service degenerates into a show. Based on Dan Kimball's approach, he suggests the use of emerging worship that highlights participation, liturgy, religious symbols, art, and experiencing spirituality. http://www.chtoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=208300 (accessed June 17, 2010). Since I did not see the full script of his presentation, my response to his presentation is limited. However, his approach seems to be exaggerated. Dan Kimball suggests a post-seeker-sensitive worship that "promotes, rather than hides, full displays of spirituality (extended worship, religious symbols, liturgy, extensive prayer times, extensive use of Scripture and readings, etc.) in order that people can experience and be transformed by the message of Jesus." Dan Kimball, *The Emerging Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 26. Regardless of the evaluation of Kimball's approach, I wonder whether the approach of Kimball to post-Christian seeker is applicable to the Korean context. Cho did not provide any empirical data to support his analysis.

unbelievers "observe the real relationship between worshipers and God."[21] She suggests

five rudders for effective worship evangelism. One of them is "never sacrifice

authenticity for relevance."[22]

Emphasis on Prayer

Leaders of the six participating churches are aware of the growing interest in

spiritual experience of secular young adults and the growing hostility toward

Protestantism. The distinction of Robert Fuller, "spiritual but not religious," may be

applied to many young adults in South Korea.[23] Reflecting growing interests in

spirituality, the six participating churches provide the means to meet spiritual needs by

highlighting prayers and the Holy Spirit as ways of experiencing the presence and power

of God. Prayer and the presence of the Holy Spirit have been highlighted by the church

growth movement. McGavran claims that "Prayer for spiritual infilling has again and

again played an important part in the growth of the Church."[24] Eddie Gibbs also asserts

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[21] Sally Morgenthaler, *Worship Evangelism: Inviting Unbelievers into the Presence of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 88.

[22] Morgenthaler, *Worship Evangelism*, 284.

[23] Fuller estimates that about 20 percent of American adults are spiritual, but not religious. He acknowledges that "spiritual" and "religious" are synonymous because they reflect beliefs in a Higher Power and desire to connect and to enter into closer relationship with the Higher Power. However, the term "spiritual" refers to "private realm of thoughts and experiences" related to "mysticism and experimentation with unorthodox beliefs and practices," but religious refers to "public realm of membership in religious institutions, participation in formal rituals, and adherence to official denominational doctrine." Robert C. Fuller, *Spiritual, but not Religious: Understanding Unchurched America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 5-6. He also describes that "Those who see themselves as 'spiritual, but not religious' reject traditional organized religion as the sole—or even the most valuable—means of furthering their spiritual growth. Many have had negative experiences with churches or church leaders." Robert C. Fuller, *Spiritual, but not Religious*, 6. Robert Wuthnow acknowledges the distinction between religion and spirituality and people's growing interest in spirituality. Robert Wuthnow, "Spirituality and Spiritual Practice," in *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology of Religion*, ed. Richard K. Fenn (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 306-308.

[24] McGavran, *How Churches Grow*, 57.

the importance of the role of the Holy Spirit in church growth, when he writes that "the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit is integral to church growth at every phase. The principles are no substitute for the power, and experience of the power does not make the principles superfluous."[25] This section highlights the prayer ministries of Samil, Dream Church, and young adult groups of Kangnam and Sungbok.

Traditionally many Korean churches practice daily daybreak prayer services and an all-night prayer service on Friday. When Jun applied the two prayer services to the ministry of young adults, many people doubted that the bold experiments would succeed. One reason comes from an assumption that this experiment does not fit the culture of the young adult. They think that young adults only like to enjoy nights with their friends and would not participate in these prayer services. The result was quite opposite to these expectations. Jun was deeply convinced that young adults were more hungry for spirituality than for cultural entertainment such as movies, dramas, hip-hop, or cafes like Starbucks.[26] Jun believes that focusing on daybreak prayer services, and on all-night prayer services, which are traditionally practiced in Korean churches, can touch the deep spiritual needs of young adults. They can experience God's love and power through prayer. In addition, his deep conviction comes from the fact that all church activities will return nothing without spiritual revival through the power of the Holy Spirit. He claims that the power of the Holy Spirit is more important than methodology.[27]

When this researcher visited the all-night prayer service at Samil, which lasted for

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[25] Eddie Gibbs, "The Power behind the Principles," in *Church Growth: The State of Art*, ed. C. Peter Wagner, Win Arn, and Elmer Towns (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1986), 190.

[26] Sung-Hoon Myung, *Buheung Bangkeu* [Revival bank] (Seoul: Kyujang, 1999), 28.

[27] Byung-Wook Jun, *Gijeoki Sansiki* [A church that miracle], 88.

two or three hours, about 2,000 young adults were in attendance. Typically, two all-night prayer services meet from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m.. Daybreak prayer services gather twice a day at 5 a.m. and 6:15 a.m.. When I visited a daybreak prayer service, I was surprised to see the church building packed with young adults, because the majority of people in South Korea who attend daybreak prayer service are usually adults, seniors, and a limited number of young people. All-night and daybreak prayer services use similar formats of singing contemporary praise songs, preaching, and praying aloud together. Informal fellowship with sharing prayer requests and then praying together follows daybreak prayer services.

Eun-Woo Hwang, a faithful follower of Jun from the beginning of Jun's ministry at Samil, confirms the young adults' deep spiritual needs. He said that even unchurched young adults attend all-night prayer services. When young adults suffer from financial or job crises, they are looking for some place to pray, even though they have little knowledge about God.

The young adult group of Kangnam Church is also an interesting case for emphasizing prayers. Samuel Lee, a director of the young adult group at Kangnam, shared an interesting story. When Kangnam's attendance reached 1,300, Senior Pastor Tae-Keun Song decided to install a full-time minister for young adults and selected Sunghoon Lee for that position. Song asked Lee to spend a month to observe, visit, and interview people, discerning how to start his ministry. The attendance of the young adult group at that time was 100. The result of a month's research revealed the two urgent needs of daybreak prayer service combined with the sharing of breakfast. Daybreak prayer service represents spiritual needs and breakfast represents physical need. Lee

suggests daybreak prayer service followed by a free breakfast regardless if people attended the service or not. Since young adults around Kangnam Church usually leave home to study and live in small rooms without kitchens, they need a place to have breakfast. In addition, providing a warm breakfast reflects mother's love in the culture of South Korea; this, they miss since leaving home.

Church leadership objected to the two ideas because they assumed that since young adults in Norangjin were busy preparing for their examinations until late at night, they would not get up in the early morning. In addition, since they had built a new church building, they were grappling with significant financial burden. They felt unable to afford to offer free breakfasts. However, the church leadership decided to offer free breakfasts with courage and belief, and several senior women volunteered to cook Monday through Saturday.

Lee believes that revival and the growth of the young adult group at Kangnam Church begins with the daybreak prayer service. There they learn the Word of God and are empowered by the Holy Spirit. Some of the interviews with Kangnam Church new converts reveal that they experienced God's love and power through daybreak meetings, clearly a way of touching the deep spiritual needs of young adults. After the prayer service, they eat breakfast, which is a good motivation to attend daybreak prayer service and they volunteer to do the dishes. After breakfast, young adults share the Word of God in small groups. The physical, spiritual, and relational needs of young adults are fed by the daybreak prayer service. Lee reports that 300 people eat breakfast every day, and 150-160 people attend the prayer service. Some unchurched young adults who benefited by the free breakfast even sent their first paycheck or a portion of it to Kangnam Church as a

sign of deep thankfulness, demonstrating that a free breakfast leaves a meaningful impression on secular people.

The Ezra Community of Sungbok Church also highlights the importance of prayer in their young adult ministry. As mentioned before, one of four goals of the Ezra Community is prayer encompassing the whole world. Several programs encourage prayers, such as individual prayers practiced at the church; fasting prayers, which continue by individual volunteers like a relay race or a prayer chain; and mountain prayers. Every Wednesday, Young-Sup Oh and young adults go to Acha Mountain to pray together. The mountain prayer began with five members and grew to fifty in attendance. Oh believes that evangelism of young adults comes from being filled with the Holy Spirit and prayer meetings provide a good opportunity for this.

Jung-Wan Ha observes the growing spiritual interest by pointing out numerous fortune-teller and astrology cafés in university areas. He laments, however, that most churches have not responded to growing needs. He comments that the reason for difficulty in reaching out to secular young adults comes from the cultural and spiritual inadequacy of the church. The church does not compete with the world in terms of cultural entertainment such as movies and music, which keeps ahead of the church. In addition, Korean churches' spiritual depth is too shallow to compete with the world. Dream Church publishes daily devotional books every month and offers one-night retreat programs called Disciple School, which combines the basic gospel message, spiritual training through the Word of God and prayer, and a foot-washing ceremony.

Baek, of University 8, claims that one of the important factors for secular young adults to remain at the church is spiritual impact. Along with the cultural approach and

developing relationships, experiencing the transcendental power of the Holy Spirit during worship becomes one of the factors that make secular young adults remain at the church. He believes that this spiritual impact is the product of consistent, sincere prayer.

Small Groups Where Life and the Word of God Are Shared

Chapter five demonstrates the significance of small groups in leading secular young adults to faith. All six participating churches feature such groups as an environment for life-sharing, caring for people, and creating bonds between people. Except the house churches of Nadulmok that gather on weekends, small group gathering follows Sunday worship services. A typical small group gathering follows with this procedure: sharing (or studying) the word of God, sharing prayer requests, and then praying together.

One of the core values of Nadulmok is to become an authentic community. Nadulmok is an assembly of house churches. Nadulmok calls house churches "church," not "small groups" because the house churches are not only part of a local church, but churches in themselves. Kim explained three reasons for starting house churches. First, while studying the New Testament, he was convinced that the churches of the New Testament were house churches. Second, he was interested in creating community in cities, and believed that the best form of authentic community for modern cities is the house church. Many city people are isolated from each other without a supportive community, and through house churches, people in a city are healed and transformed to the point where they begin to help others. Third, he saw the necessity for house churches beyond small group gatherings when he worked for Intervarsity Fellowship, before he

planted Nadulmok. Nadulmok allows the leaders of house churches to administer the sacraments. According to the statistics of 2008, 83 percent of the congregation participated in house churches.

House church gathering occurs in various locations including homes, church buildings, and other convenient places. Young adult house churches usually get together in church buildings. Their gathering begins with a meal, which is a meaningful way to develop relationships. After the meal, members of the house church share how they have applied the Sunday sermon to their everyday lives instead of studying the Bible. After that sharing, they speak about their deep prayer requests. Generally, the house church gathering lasts for three hours.

As the first step of evangelism, house church members bring their seekers to seeker service on Sunday. The second step is enrolling them in a class of the "stepping stone to abundant life," instead of inviting seekers to house church directly. Kim explains two reasons for these two steps. First, many heretical groups actively work in Seoul and seekers might be suspicious of a house church gathering if they are invited to it first. Second, inviting acquaintances to a home is not a general custom, especially in a big city like Seoul. However, his predecessors of house churches in Seoul encourage church members to invite secular people to their house churches and it still works. In addition, Kim's approach does not seem to utilize the strengths of house churches.

The name of small group gathering of Dream Church is the house of Bab (Bab means a meal in Korea). It consists of five to seven members after lunch (Many Korean churches provide lunch after worship services). Since the seeker service begins at 2:30 p.m., people who attend the second expository preaching worship participate in the house

of Bab. Among 200 attendees of the worship, 130 to 140 people take part in the house of Bab (about 70 percent participation rate in small group gathering). If we calculate participation rate in the house of Bab in terms of the whole worship attendance, the rate is about 40 percent.

This researcher visited a house of Bab after lunch, and worship began with sharing Scripture that touched their lives in the most meaningful way during their daily devotion time (they do not have a group Bible study time). Ha highly emphasizes the significance of daily devotion time, by positioning it as the essence of Christian life. Some leaders of the house of *Bab* send text messages to their members to encourage their daily devotion time. Ha is convinced that Scripture should relate to their everyday lives. After that sharing, they exchange their prayer requests and pray together. The house of Bab lasts one and a half hours.

Since Samil provides seven worship service on Sunday, the same teams and small group members attempt to sit together. After worship, the same team with 40 to 50 members get together to give announcements, to play games that develop relationships, and to sing together. After that time, each small group within the team has Bible study time, sharing their lives over the past week. After Bible study, they give prayer requests and pray together. The leaders of each team reports how many people attended that gathering, and the numbers appear in the weekly bulletin. In the week I visited Samil church, 54 percent of young adults worship attendees participated in team and small group gatherings.

Hwang claimed that the small group gatherings are the basic unit of meeting at

Samil, where every believer is cared for and the whole ministry is bolstered.[28] Team gatherings precede small group gatherings because the middle-sized group gathering (team gathering) can support the ministry by preventing it from being ghettoized.

After worship service, the young adult group of Sungbok, Kangnam, and Sarang have similar forms of small group gatherings: group Bible study, sharing life, and prayer requests. In the Kangnam Church, about 58 percent of worship attendees also participate in small group gatherings. In addition, 90 percent of worship attendees of University 8 take part in a small group gathering.

All six churches consider small groups as the essential unit for young adults and most pastors prepare leaders of small groups in advance. Pastors or small group leaders all highlight the importance of small groups in reaching secular young adults. When they share prayer requests, their life stories and struggles are also shared. Bonding and empathy through this sharing cultivates their hearts toward Christ. One common ingredient of small group gathering is sharing Scripture. All participating churches attempt to apply the word of God to daily living regardless of the form of it, either group Bible study or sharing daily devotions; this ensures that small groups are more than just social clubs.

In addition to small groups after worship, small groups for hobbies, ministries, or training also play important roles in expanding relationships, as supplements of regular small groups. GAS (God's Artists Service) of Dream Church is an example of a small group for ministry. GAS is a gathering of actors and actresses eating together, sharing their lives, and preparing plays for seeker services or in theaters to share the gospel

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[28] Eun-Woo Hwang, *Samilgyohoe Cheongnyeonbuheungbogoseo* [A report on the revival of young adult at Samil church] (Seoul: Kyujang, 2002), 183.

message. When secular actors and actresses are invited in this gathering, they are welcomed and accepted by the members. They can ask questions regarding Christianity and the meaning of life, and answers are given in a conversational way, not by preaching. This tolerant atmosphere attracts and encourages them to move to the next level of their seeking.

Emphasis on Developing Young Adult leaders

The six participating churches place strong emphasis on developing lay leaders who are key players in evangelizing and nurturing secular young adults. Developing leaders is the key to successful small groups because they are responsible for running small groups and providing adequate pastoral care for their small group members. Hunter claims the importance of pastoral care in evangelism, as follows: "Most Christians who share their faith and invite others to Christ and the Church are themselves in regular spiritual conversation and prayer with a significant other who serves as their pastor."[29] In addition, the evangelistic fervor of the church becomes operative and is maintained through vivid examples and dedications of lay leaders. Moreover, they cooperate with pastors to fulfill evangelistic ministries by sharing the gospel message with not only their members but also with people outside of the churches, by designing and implementing evangelistic activities. Therefore, to say that the entire evangelistic ministries of the six churches hinges on dedicated young adult leaders is not an exaggeration. McGavran affirms the importance of developing lay leadership in evangelism and church growth, when he writes the following: "The creation... of a great body of Christian youth and

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[29] Hunter, *Church for the Unchurched*, 120.

adults who know why they are Christians, and who can convince others that the Christian faith should be accepted, is essential to church-growth."[30]

Under the influence of the Sarang Community Church, which paved the way to apply disciple trainings of para-churches to the context of local churches, many pastors consider the development of lay leaders as one of the most important goals of disciple training in South Korea. The following two methods of disciple training in South Korea are used, though they are not mutually exclusive: course-oriented discipling and field-oriented discipling. Course-oriented discipling consists of completing several courses by first completing one course, then moving to next advanced-level course. Field-oriented training highlights that disciple training can be accomplished not by hearing alone, but by seeing and experiencing. Rather than taking several courses, followers grow by participating in field ministry. They learn how to pray by praying together, how to reach out to people by seeing their leaders witness, and how to do ministry by observing their leaders minister, rather than course by course training only.

Regardless of the ways of discipling, the six churches spend a great amount of time in developing young adult leaders. Samil Church chose field-oriented discipling, but the other five churches chose course-oriented disciple training. To say that one way is more effective than the other is difficult, partly because the process depends on the gifts and strengths present in the church leadership. Another characteristic of the six participating churches is that the steps and procedures that lead to young adult leadership are very clearly presented. Thom Rainer's and Eric Geiger's field research concludes that the vibrant and growing churches are simpler than the non-growing churches in terms of the

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[30] McGavran, *How Churches Grow*, 140.

following concepts: they clarify and fully commit to the disciple-making process, they provide a logical flow of movement, they align the churches' energies in order to completely implement the process, and they abandon all obstacles in order to stay focused.[31]

The Samil Church has an effective structure of organizing more than 15,000 people, which is maintained and multiplied by lay young adult leaders. They divide them into groups of sixteen Jins and pastors are in charge of running the Jins. A Jin has several subgroups called teams that are led by unpaid staff members. Each team has several small groups, which are led by young adult leaders. People who began as small group members can become staff members who lead teams by learning and training with their predecessors.

The need for Bible study can be met by participating in Samil Bible College, which provides intensive Bible studies for two months, which start at the beginning of every six months. The leaders of the Samil Church gather every Saturday at 5 p.m. in order to prepare the small group Bible study for Sunday, to share important announcements, and to pray together. The Saturday meeting is led by Senior Pastor Jun and he shares his spirit and fervor with his church leaders. Outside people are not allowed to attend this meeting, which is considered one of the most important meetings at the Samil Church. Meetings of the leaders of the same team follow the whole gathering of leaders.

In the interview with Hwang, he explained the three attractions of the Samil Church. First, the preaching of Jun is relevant to young adults, and effective. Second, the Samil Church provides opportunities for young adults to do ministries, to display their

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[31] Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger, *Simple Church* (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2006), 67-68.

creative energy, and to exercise their leadership. Third, the Samil Church continuously makes efforts to develop lay leaders using the field oriented discipling who become leading characters of many evangelistic activities. Jun highlights that the most important element needed to make churches healthy is to develop lay leaders who are armed with the power of the gospel and prayer.[32] He believes that the responsibility of the church toward society is not to participate in social issues directly, but to develop Christian leaders who work as light and salt in society.[33]

Ha suggests a clear procedure used to grow as disciples of Jesus. Visitors are introduced to four-week introductory classes that consist of a meeting with Ha, daily devotional methods, the MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator), and an introduction of the philosophy and direction of Dream Church. After the four-week classes, the visitor is introduced to general small groups. This encourages them to join Basic Disciple Training School (BDTS) that last for one night and two days, which helps them have assurance of salvation and to experience community. Then they are invited to one-to-one Bible study for eight weeks. If they seem ready to serve as small group leaders, they are invited to Revival Disciple Training School (RDTS), which fortifies daily devotion time and develops skills for sharing and fellowship in small groups. After finishing that course, they can begin to train other people in one-to-one Bible study. The final course is called the Advanced Disciple Training School (ADTS), and the goal of this course is to produce leaders of small groups. This course consists of three clusters of courses, each of which takes four to six weeks. The ADTS emphasizes multiplying small groups, leadership, and

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[32] Byung-Wook Jun, *Gijeoki Sansiki* [A church where miracles], 125.

[33] Byung-Wook Jun, *Gijeoki Sansiki* [A church where miracles], 107.

mentoring.

Ha clarifies that the goal of his ministry is not providing seeker services, although his church is famous for that. His final goal is to make disciples and the goal of his discipleship training lies in reproduction. He chose seeker services as a way to attract secular young adults to Dream Church. After that, disciple training schools follow to equip them with lay leaders who can teach other people. He is convinced that the power to sustain seeker services comes from discipleship training.[34] Lay leaders who are equipped as partners of his ministry are the key.

In the Nadulmok Church, lay leaders play a decisive role in evangelism by playing the role of pastor at their house church. They also design seeker services in cooperation with Hyung-Kook Kim. Since the Nadulmok Church is an assembly of house churches, each house church is run and managed by an autonomy of responsible lay leaders. Even though a problem occurs in a house church, Hyung-Kook Kim and other pastors do not engage in the problem, unless the house church asks them to do so. Therefore, producing healthy and vibrant lay leaders through training courses is very crucial to all the ministries of the Nadulmok Church.

The disciple training course of Nadulmok Church consists of five stepping stones. The use of the word stepping stone in the disciple training course signifies that people who benefit from the stepping stones must serve as a stepping stone for others. The five stepping stones as worded by the Nadulmok Church are abundant life, heavenly family, house church, covenant family, and dedicated family.

As a first step of discipling training course, the stepping stone of abundant life

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[34] Jung-Wan Ha, "Du Yebae" [Two Worship Services], 42.

deals with basic Christianity for four weeks, helping seekers receive Jesus Christ as their savior. Second, the stepping stone of heavenly family focuses on core values and the calling of Nadulmok for four weeks, which includes moving ones focus from Christian-centered to seeker-centered, from individualistic beliefs to authentic community, from dualistic spirituality to holistic growth, and from *gibokism* (seeking blessing exclusively) to transforming inside and outside church.

Third, the house church stepping stone introduces the importance of house church in a four week study. Through the house church, Nadulmok people learn how community can reflect the Kingdom of God, as they live the new life together. Fourth, the stepping stone of covenant family provides six weeks of lessons to prepare people for dedicating their lives to South Korean churches and societies through deep fellowship with church leadership in the area of individual spiritual life and church life. Fifth, the stepping stone of dedicated family is a course to train house church leaders in providing practical methods of running house churches. Nadulmok Church provides a picture to summarize the five stepping stones and their relationship with seven steps of spiritual growth. Figure 23 illustrates it.[35]

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[35] The figure is taken from a brochure which is given to visitors at Nadulmok.

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Seeker — Life that seeks the meaning of life and God

The stepping stone of abundant life

New Convert — Life that is newly born as people of the Kingdom

The stepping stone of the heavenly family

Spiritual Child

Growing New Believer — Life that is growing as people of the Kingdom

The stepping stone of the house church

Self-Supporting Believers — Life that enjoys the gospel of the Kingdom

Spiritual Young Adult

The stepping stone of the covenant family

Apprentice Minister — Life that shares the gospel of the Kingdom

The stepping stone of the dedicated family

Minister — Life that builds the community of the Kingdom

Spiritual Parents

Leader — Life that leads the community of the Kingdom

Figure 23. The spiritual development path of Nadulmok.

The history of the young adult group of Sungbok demonstrates the significance of developing lay young adult leaders. When Young-Sup Oh began to rebuild his young adult group from a depressed situation without any hope or expectations in 2003, he began by training young adult leaders. He began with three young adults, and the number of trainees grew to twelve after a year. The lay leader became the foundation for all the ministry of his young adult group. When visiting this group, this researcher was deeply impressed by the commitment of voluntary staff members who lead the young adult group of Sungbok.

The main disciple training course of the young adult group at Sungbok is called Leadership Training Course (LTC), which highlights the process of being small group leaders and is offered each year. One interesting feature of LTC at Sungbok is no graduation, in the typical sense. After the completion of a certain course for a year, the trainees of that year meet with Oh one or two times per month to maintain their fervor. Jesus Disciple Training School (JDTS) is offered on every Saturday to prepare leaders for group Bible study on Sunday. All the people who participated in LTC get together in the integrated Disciple Training School that is offered every Saturday LTC in order to share the vision of Sungbok and pray together. These three-fold structures demonstrate the significance of developing young adult leadership at Sungbok.

The thrust of University 8 also comes from lay leaders. All small groups are run by lay leaders and many lay staff members who are deeply involved in a range of young adult ministries including evangelistic activities. Therefore, the disciple training course is the heart of University 8 and provides the main drive.

The core program of developing the lay leadership of University 8 at Sarang Community Church is a disciple training course for a year. Before the training course, a six month disciple school is offered to teach basic knowledge regarding the Bible and its doctrine. After completion of the course, a small group is entrusted to the trainees; and, the leaders get together to prepare group Bible study, to share important announcements, to pray together, and to develop leadership every Sunday. The disciple training course of Sarang is popular, and many church pastors adopt it.

Kangnam Church's group also offers a disciple training course that consists of discipleship and ministry courses, similar to those of University 8 of Sarang. Kangnam's

disciple training course produces many lay leaders who lead small groups and are involved in the ministries of the young adult groups of the Kangnam Church, including the many evangelistic activities. On Saturday, lay staff members who supervise small group leaders gather together to discuss and pray. After that, the small group leaders gather to prepare for Bible study groups on Sunday.

Reflecting the characteristics of effective young adult groups reveals they possess some characteristics of the P generation. This observation explains why the ministries of these young adult groups attract secular young adults and accomplish conversion growth. Their approaches and emphases address the characteristics of South Korea's young adults.

The P generation tends to reject established authority and likes to actively participate in important issues, which explains why developing young adult leaders is important in order for them to lead the ministries and influence their fellows. The P generation appreciates human networks used for sharing information, values, and hobbies; they like to express their feelings and thoughts frankly. They respect individuality. The most effective environment to reflect these characteristics is a small group gathering, which is why small groups are so important to them. Since the P generation values their own experiences and feelings over other people's opinion, their experience of transcendence through prayer meetings and worship services significantly impact their decisions concerning whether or not they turn to God. Since the P generation pursues fun and prefers media with sound and picture over print, the most relevant worship services to them do not hesitate to use media and adopt it as a means of connecting with their needs and concerns.

Ministries of Evangelism

Three types of evangelism ministry exist in young adult groups in South Korea: the evangelistic meeting (EM), street evangelism, and short-term mission trips to overseas and to farming and fishing areas in South Korea. This section introduces these evangelism opportunities and reflects them in the context of secularization of Protestantism in South Korea.

First of all, four of the six participating groups provide the EM as a major way of reaching out to secular young adults.[36] Because the EMs of young adults have been influenced by local churches (especially those of the Sarang Community Church and Onnuri Community Church), a short account of the EM of local churches is provided before further coverage of the EM.

In the past, the most widely spread ministry of evangelism in a local church was to the attempt to mobilize the whole congregation with the goal of bringing pre-Christians to the church on a specific Sunday. For the renewal of the faith of congregation, revival meetings[37] have been offered as another important ministry of the church. Since 1983, Sarang Community Church has replaced the general revival meeting with an evangelism-oriented revival meeting they call the great awakening evangelistic meeting (AEM).

The AEM aims to renew the faith of the congregation by allowing them to participate in evangelism, by giving them opportunities to listen to the gospel message, and by teaching them to reach out to pre-Christians through several worship services. To

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[36] Nadulmok and Dream do not provide evangelistic meeting, because they already provide seeker services, a kind of evangelistic meeting every Sunday.

[37] In America, a revival meeting refers to a series of worship service, targeting both to inspire congregation members and to gain new believers. A revival meeting in South Korea overall means a series of service held to renew the belief of Christians. Gaining new converts are secondary concern.

enhance the effectiveness of the AEM, Sarang Church incorporates skits, video clips, and/or testimonies of lay people. In addition, planning the AEM and deciding whom they will bring begins eight to ten months ahead of the actual meeting. They suggest several steps in how to make contacts, build relationships, and bring new people to the church. Since the 1990s, the AEM of Sarang has influenced Korean churches and as a result, many adopt these methods as a major ministry of evangelism.

The Onnuri Community Church, a very influential mega-church in South Korea, creates a customized evangelistic meeting (CEM), which offers an evangelistic meeting for a couple of days targeting a more narrowly focused population.[38] In contrast with an AEM to which people can bring anyone, the CEM refines the targeted population; some examples are men in their thirties and forties, women nurses, school teachers, or women in their thirties and forties.

The three principles of the CEM are a targeted-people orientation, a cultural approach, and team ministry. First, the planners of the CEM need to understand the worldview and practical needs of the targeted people in order to find the proper way of communicating the gospel message. Second, the most important chore in cultural approach is developing empathy with the targeted people because this empathy engages the emotional state of the targeted people. Third, since people receive different gifts of the Holy Spirit, they need to work together in leading people to Christ. Team ministry is crucial for effective evangelism.

The CEM requires five steps for preparation. The first step is target segmentation. The targeted population can be selected based on the context of the local church in terms

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[38] The account of the CEM is based on the manual from Onnuri Community Church.

of age, job, or the economics. The second step is an analysis of needs and a contact point with the gospel message discovered through social research. Third, communication with the congregation and the targeted people is important and an intercessory prayer meeting must be held. Fourth, events must be fun, meaningful, and contain an evangelistic message that encourages decision to accept and follow Christ. The CEM consists of dinner, performances, preaching, and a moderated altar call that reflects the culture of the targeted people. The fifth step deals with follow-through for those who accepted the altar call, focusing on developing relationships with them and sharing the gospel message in a deeper way that continues for five weeks.

Mixing the AEM with the CEM, the EMs of the participating churches prepare several months ahead of the time. For example, performances are constructed reflecting the culture of young adults by using tools such as skits, musicals, hip-hop dances, evangelistic messages, and several methods of altar calls as the main program of the evangelistic meeting. For example, Samil Church started their evangelistic meeting in 1994 and Hwang claims that their evangelistic meeting became a turning point for their numerical growth by reviving evangelistic fervor and developing the hidden talents of people.[39] Since Christians bring their friends and co-workers to the evangelistic meeting, it is predicated on friendship evangelism. Indeed, the friendship connection often contributes as much to conversion as the meeting does. In addition, its culturally relevant approach interests secular young adults. Combining these two factors, these evangelistic meeting were effective for many years.

However, the EM results somewhat declined compared to the past, according to a

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[39] Eun-Woo Hwang, *Samilgyohoe Cheongnyeonbuheungbogoseo* [A report on the revival], 138-146.

director of a young adult group. These efforts were less fruitful in terms of gaining new converts who remained with the group. In the case of a church, the number of attendants of the EM dropped one-third in spite of membership growth.

An interesting observation has been made by directors of young adult groups regarding ways to increase the effectiveness of the EM. They identify that the small group gathering which followed the EM as having played an important role in retaining new visitors. Baek of Sarang added small group meetings to the EM in order to learn people's impression of the EM, to encourage their questions about Christianity, and to develop a relationship with the invited people. He claims that the most important part is small group gathering after the EM.

Lee of Kangnam did a comparative study on the EM of his church. His group offers two EMs per year. In 2009, he invited a famous Christian singer and a well-known Christian actress to share their testimonies in the EM. In 2008, no testimonies of well-known people were shared. However, the result of the EM was almost the same. Although more people attended the EM in 2009, in order to see and hear testimonies of well-known performers, compared to 2008, people who participated in small group meetings after the EM were the same. He was convinced that the result of the EM depends on how many people are involved in small group meetings. His church developed a small group meeting after the EM, named "happy housewarming," which consists of cooking and eating a meal together, plus activities that build relationships. People who joined the happy housewarming stayed in the group, which focuses on nurturing.

The young adult group (Ezra Community) of Sungbok adopted the CEM of Onnuri,

and found that not many people remained after the CEM. Thus, they developed a gathering after the CEM, called Identification of Divinity (ID), which is a gathering for people interested in a small group gathering. Young-Sup Oh revealed to this researcher that he believes ID is the most effective evangelistic program, because it highlights building relationship by sharing food or special activities combined with a brief introduction of the gospel message.

Based on several experiences of the directors of young adult groups, the significance of small groups is growing and the large EM needs to be bolstered by small gatherings. In this sense, the small group needs to be involved in the ministry of evangelism more deeply, especially for young adults. Rather than using a small group gathering as a nurturing and re-socialization process after the EM, the small group gathering needs to be embedded in the EM even prior to it. The Sarang and Onnuri Community Churches require congregations to invite their chosen people to their small group gathering once before the EM, because they know the importance of the small group in adult evangelism. For young adult evangelism, the frequency of invitation usually needs to be more than once.

In relation to the importance of small groups in evangelism, where the CEM has normally been used in a larger church context, now it is used for small groups (10-20 people) or middle-sized groups (100-200 people), and is organized and facilitated by the group members. Similar to that approach, Rick Richardson recommends "corporate witness" in which the whole small group, not just an individual, leads the process and takes responsibility for evangelism. He is convinced that corporate witness is a more Biblical concept than individualistic evangelism.

One reason we feel guilty about our lack of evangelism, and tired when we think about doing evangelism, is that we tend to have a very individualistic concept of our responsibility. Most of us assume that if we got serious about sharing our faith, we would need to build friendships, talk to strangers, have people in our homes for meals and social events, study the Bible with unchurched people, explain the gospel, call them to Christ and then follow them up. We think we have to do it all. This pervasively individualistic viewpoint colors our thoughts about every Christian responsibility, not just witness. The biblical viewpoint is fundamentally different. The writers of Scripture thought more in terms of corporate witness. Each of us, filled with the Holy Spirit, does our part to live like Jesus and minister in Jesus' name. Together, we contribute according to the gifts the Spirit gives us....In the New Testament, the call to become witnessing communities is much more central and important than the call to become witnessing individuals.[40]

David Barrett made an interesting observation of the usage of the term evangelize

(*euangelizo*) in the New Testament. Although the term does not occur in the Bible in the

imperative form, he found 56 occurrences of the verb *euangelizo*.[41] Of the 56

occurrences, 17 occurrences refer to divine activity, and 39 occurrences (70 percent) refer

to ecclesiastical activity (human activity on the part of believers). Of the 39 occurrences,

11 occurrences refer to teams of Apostles, and 20 occurrences refer to individual

believers in the church; only 6 occurrences refer to the post-Pentecost church activity.

When we analyze the issue of "who evangelizes" in terms of the usage of

euangelizo in the New Testament, the stance is difficult for Richardson to argue that

witnessing responsibility is primarily given to communities rather than individuals.

However, where 20 occurrences refer to the activities of individual believers, 15

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[40] Richardson, *Reimagining Evangelism*, 55-56. An example of sharing responsibility in evangelism comes from Seoul Baptist Church of Houston. Rev Young G. Chai developed a house church system and his church grew by conversion growth. In 2001, 90 percent of his congregation was new converts. He highlights evangelism through a division of labor and house church members to take responsibility in evangelism. When a new member is invited to a house church, the members take care of him/her and the leader encourages him/her to take the Bible study course led by Rev. Chai. Young G. Chai and Daniel Chai, *A New Testament Church in the 21st Century: The House Church* (Houston: GLPI, 2010), 122-128.

[41] Barrett, *Evangelize*, 12. We need to consider other synonyms exist for the term of "evangelize" such as preach, bring, tell, proclaim, announce, declare, disciple, and more.

occurrences refer to the work of Paul. Since Paul usually worked within a team structure in developing deep relationships with other church communities, clearly teams and church communities have been deeply involved in the work of evangelism.

Although the AEM and CEM refer to steps for contacting pre-Christian people, evangelism through the EMs revolve around encounter evangelism that considers conversion as an event rather than a process. The EMs have a similar approach to evangelism. When a small group takes part in the process of evangelism by incorporating secular young adults into the group before the EM, the group can guide and help in the whole process of conversion. Along with the EM-centered evangelism, a small group-based and a process-centered evangelism needs to be developed.

As for the second type of evangelistic ministry, some participating churches do street evangelism regularly at nearby subway stations, university campuses, or on streets where young adults gather. Each week, one of the small groups of Kangnam is required to do street evangelism as a mandatory responsibility instead of having their regular gathering. People on the Leadership Training track in the young adult group at Sungbok are required to do street evangelism for an hour every Saturday. Samil focuses on campus evangelism, especially in March, to reach out to new students.

All the directors of young adult groups I interviewed agreed that street evangelism had become notably less effective because of people's increased hostility toward Protestantism. They like, however, to do street evangelism as a way of maintaining evangelistic fervor and training believers for bold evangelism. Two directors believe that if they do evangelism with all means possible, regardless of its fruitlessness, God will bless their efforts by bringing lost people to their church in a different way.

In contrast to this approach, Hyung-Kook Kim disagrees with street evangelism. He argues that we cannot sacrifice pre-Christians for the sake of training believers. He asked if people found street evangelism unpleasant and would not listen to the gospel again, then who will be responsible for them? He believes that street evangelism backfires on Protestantism in the long term. He believes in doing personal evangelism based on relationship, rather than "impersonal" evangelism. From this belief, Nadulmok does not offer any evangelistic program except worship with seekers on Sunday.

Pros and cons exist in the several ways of evangelism. Friendship evangelism is fruitful, but often leads to practicing no evangelism at all. Focusing on the EM is a good way to motivate congregations to do evangelism, but may lead to considering evangelism as a church event and therefore become less effective. Street evangelism offers a good opportunity for Christians to practice bold evangelism and to maintain their evangelistic fervor, but it might be too confrontational and ineffective. Herein lies the struggle of the ministry of evangelism in South Korea.

Followings are two suggestions for the evangelistic ministry of young adult within a context of secularization. First, acknowledging people's hostility and indifference toward Protestantism; the offering of the EM as a church event and a way of mobilizing the congregation has become less effective compared to twenty years ago. Small group-oriented evangelism that helps secular people belong to a community prior to their conversion, and that cultivates and guides the process of conversion has become more significant. Instead of pushing individual believers to do evangelism, sharing the labor and responsibility in a small group or community seems to be better and a more effective approach to evangelism.

Second, maintaining evangelistic fervor seems to be difficult without implementation of evangelistic programs. In that sense, street evangelism is a good way of training believers and finding receptive people. Therefore, traditional street evangelism focusing on delivering the gospel requires a more creative and polite way by which to approach people. The Dream Community Church started street evangelism by combining it with a street play a couple of times in a year. When several actors and actresses do a skit that relates to the gospel message, people gather to watch. Trained lay people talk with those who stop, asking questions related to their religious life. They share the gospel with receptive people, which is a more creative way of doing street evangelism.

The third ministry of evangelism by young adult groups is short-term outreach abroad, or to farming and fishing areas in South Korea, where churches are weak and the percentage of Christians among its population is low. Since the 1990s, local churches in South Korea have sent short-term mission teams that usually consist of young adults, to many countries all over the world. Four of the six participating churches send short-term mission teams.

Samil Church boldly replaces their young adult retreat, which is considered one of the most important ministries of the group and usually held in summer and winter to strengthen beliefs of members, with short-term mission trips. In 2009, Samil Church sent out 1,500 people to Jeju island, South Korea; 800 to the east coast area in South Korea; 500 people to Taiwan; and 300 people to Japan. All of these mission trips are led by young adults. Samil Church spends 60 percent of its income for mission and evangelism. Based on Matthew 6:21, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (NIV)," Pastor Jun claims that the vision of a church should be reflected in their budget. He has a

vision of 60/60, spending 60 percent of the annual budget on mission and evangelism and sending out 60 percent of the congregation as missionaries.[42] One qualification for elders at the Samil Church is to actively participate in short-term outreach. "Worn-out for God" is the most repeated motto at Samil Church.

Along with short-term mission trips abroad, the young adult group of Kangnam visits foreign workers who live in Ansan, one and a half hours away from Seoul, in order to serve and reach out to them once a month. They also send out short-term mission teams to Japan, China, Mongolia, and Cambodia. The Ezra Community of Sungbok sends out mission teams to Russia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines. An outreach team of Ezra Community goes once a year to Hajo island as a way of home mission.

Short-term outreach in summer or winter combined with the EM in spring or fall are general evangelistic ministries of four of the churches. Nadulmok and Dream Community Church do not provide specific evangelistic program, but their weekly worship service is a time of doing evangelism, combined with effective small groups. Either way, they all endeavor to keep evangelistic fervor and evangelism deeply embedded in their ministry and practices. This is the reason why they attract secular young adults and accomplish significant conversion growth.

Conclusion

The ways of doing ministry and the perspectives of evangelism of the six effective congregations are in some ways similar but not identical. In spite of their diversities, the five characteristics of these effective young adult groups emerge. They know that lost

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[42] Byung-Wook Jun, *Gijeoki Sansiki* [A church where miracles], 247.

people matter to God and have the primary goal of reaching out to secular young adults. They know the importance of offering relevant worship services. They appreciate the power of God and are open to it by highlighting prayer. They acknowledge the small group gathering as an essential ingredient for their ministry and evangelism. They are devoted to developing young adult leaders and deploying their laity in all kinds of ministries. Their passion toward lost young adults have left clear footsteps to follow and their ministries are an invitation to secular young adults to mission.

In addition, the described three kinds of evangelism ministry are reflected within the context of secularization in South Korea. As secularization proceeds in South Korea, certain methods of evangelism became less fruitful and effective than before. The time has arrived for Christians in South Korea to rethink ways of doing evangelism and to revise their current approaches to evangelism.

Chapter 7

Concluding Thoughts

Reflecting the process of secularization in South Korea, and its implications for the

evangelization of secular young adults offers several insights for evangelizing secular

people in the 21st century. This chapter highlights these insights, beginning with two

different phenomena of world Christianity.

Two contrasting phenomena describe the rapidly changing landscape of world

Christianity: the rise of Christianity in the global south and the secularization of Western

countries. Mission scholars increasingly recognize that "the center of gravity" of the

world Christian movement has been moving toward the global south.[1] Regions once

considered to be mission fields by Western Christians have experienced the rapid growth

of Christianity.

In contrast, many Western countries have seen a significant decline in Christianity.

Dana Robert observes the following in this area of study:

> At the beginning of the twentieth century, Europeans dominated the world church,
> with approximately 70.6 percent of the world's Christian population....Yet by the
> end of the twentieth century, the European percentage of World Christianity had
> shrunk to 28 percent of the total; Latin America and Africa combined provided 43
> percent of the world's Christians."[2]

The secularization of Western countries has substantially impacted their culture and

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[1] Timothy Tennent introduces seven megatrends that are shaping twenty-first century missions, and four of these megatrends are related to this shift. Timothy Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 18-51. His reflections upon this shift are very insightful.

[2] Dana L. Robert, "Shifting Southward: Global Christianity since 1945," in *The Study of Evangelism: Exploring a Missional Practice of the Church*, ed. Paul W. Chilcote and Laceye C. Warner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 118.

Christianity has lost much of the "home field advantage" and the pervasive influence that it once enjoyed.

Versions of the same forces, like secularization, urbanization, and modernization, are more recently impacting non-Western countries, presenting the Church with new challenges in those lands as well. Chapter three discussed the characteristics of secularization in South Korea. Reflections on the social and religious context of South Korea reveal that "the existential security theory" of Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart and Martin Marty's "controlled secularity" explain characteristics of Korean secularity. The existential secularity theory explains why many Korean people, especially young adults, perceive that the influence of religion on society and individual life has decreased, as Korean society becomes a postindustrial society. Marty's controlled secularity clarifies why Protestant churches lose their credibility and create a negative perception in society.

Since South Korea resides at the cultural intersection of the West and the global south, having experienced both the rapid growth of Christianity and subsequent secularization, the country offers an interesting opportunity to examine this shift and its connection to evangelism.

The first concluding thought results from reflection on the process of secularization in South Korea. Secularization in South Korea reminds us that the process of contextualization requires critical evaluation of its biblical foundation for the long-term influence on a society.

As Marty's controlled secularity describes, engaging the shamanistic value systems during the remarkable church growth that happened from the 1960s through the 1980s, and being subservient to people's personal agendas in the face of people's needs at that

time, can be regarded as one way of contextualization of the gospel message. The pioneer of connecting Christianity to shamanistic focus on material blessings is Rev. Paul Yong-gi Cho, who founded the largest Pentecostal Church in the world. In 1958, Rev. Cho started his church with five members. The church building was a large military tent. Within twenty-five years, his church had grown into the largest church in the world, with 250,000 members. The great success of Rev. Cho has influenced many Korean churches and many pastors of other denominations attempted to imitate his ministry. His theology of blessing teaches people that if they pray persistently with positive beliefs and dedicate themselves to church affairs including church attendance, tithing, and evangelism, they could expect material blessings from God.

Supporting Cho's version of Pentecostalism, Allan Anderson maintains that Rev. Cho's ministry and preaching is a kind of contextualization conceived in the Korean people's suffering after the Korean War and his Pentecostalism should be evaluated in the light of that specific context. He maintains that "it is more appropriate to consider Cho's Pentecostalism as a contextual form of Korean Christianity interacting with shamanism."[3] Boo-Woong Yoo also agrees with Anderson in terms of considering the specific social context of Korea. Yoo suggests that Rev. Cho's preaching philosophy is "find need, and meet need," and his sermons focused on material blessing met that time's needs exactly. Yoo explains further, "Why do the Korean working class and particularly women go to the shaman? Because they need health, wealth, fertility and success in their life ventures. Rev. Cho's preaching meets those needs exactly."[4]

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[3] Allan Anderson, "The Contribution of David Yonggi Cho to a Contextual Theology in Korea," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 12, no. 1 (2003): 97.

[4] Boo-Young Yoo, "Response to Korean Shamanism by the Pentecostal Church," *International*

In contrast to this approach, some people argue that little-or-no difference exists between the theology of blessing of Cho and shamanistic beliefs. For example, recognizing the impact of shamanism on the Korean Christianity, Bong-Ho Son laments that the majority of the Korean Church has been tempted without careful discernment to use the shamanistic concept of earthly blessing to attract the shamanistically attuned Korean population.[5] Harvey Cox, a strong critic of his church, says, "what troubles Pentecostals elsewhere about the Korean case is that the degree of importation is so extensive that some wonder out loud what has absorbed what."[6] However, these critical reflections were not taken seriously by church leaders.

Dana Robert analyzes that one of reasons for the rapid growth of Christianity in the global south is "indigenization within a postcolonial political framework."[7] Indigenized Christianity embedded in indigenous leadership and local culture is effective in reaching local people. The remarkable growth of Korean Protestantism can be a product of indigenized Christianity. When Korean Protestantism imitated the shamanistic religiosity deeply rooted in Korean society, Protestant churches achieved rapid numerical growth. However, the process of secularization of Protestantism in South Korea demonstrates that unexamined indigenization can eventually increase societal secularization by producing a diluted and truncated gospel.

As a second concluding thought, the local congregation is not only an instrument of

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Review of Mission 75(1986):73.

[5] Bong-Ho Son, "Some Dangers of Rapid Growth," in *Korean Church Growth Explosion* ed. Bong-Rin Ro and Marlin L. Nelson (Seoul: Word of Life, 1983), 339.

[6] Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven* (Reading, MA: Perseus, 1995), 222.

[7] Robert, "Shifting Southward: Global Christianity Since 1945," 129.

God's redemptive work in this world, but also a "demonstration" of His Kingdom. Many Korean churches have determined the role of the Church as an instrument of God's redemptive work and have achieved remarkable church growth. In addition to this instrumental understanding of the church, the church needs to be understood as the embodiment of the Kingdom.

This suggestion may not mean that all churches are required to launch social projects or social development programs as a part of their church activities in order to add new people and create positive images in the minds of secular people. Sincere efforts to live out one's faith by welcoming and loving secular people in churches and showing real concern are required as a reflection of the love received from God. People in a secularized society want to see how the church embodies its message. The remarkable recent growth of Catholicism in Korea demonstrates this importance. Telling the gospel message and its genuine embodiment in the life of the church are both crucial to the evangelization of secular people.

As a third concluding thought, the ethos theory also challenges us to recover authentic Christian life. Many people understand evangelism as a collection of methods or an annual church program. Evangelism is not a method or program. True evangelism flows from a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ. Lesslie Newbigin insightfully advises to prepare for evangelizing secular people by building a genuine worship community. He strongly believes that "our evangelism will be an overflow of that joyful faith."[8] The heart of the problem in evangelism does not lie in the lack of methods or

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[8] Lesslie Newbigin, "Evangelism in the Context of Secularization," in *The Study of Evangelism: Exploring a Missional Practice of the Church*, ed. Paul W. Chilcote and Laceye C. Warner. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 54.

programs for evangelism, but in Christian lives that are not deeply embedded in the biblical message. Secular people desire witnesses that have lives transformed by the gospel and seek something (including religion) that makes a meaningful difference in their own lives. The credibility of the witnesses seems to become more important than the contents of the gospel message in Korean society.

A fourth concluding thought is concerned with the realization that evangelization of secular young adults is now a different and more formidable challenge than it was several decades ago in South Korea. Several decades ago, when Korean people flooded into Protestant churches, the model of encounter evangelism, such as street evangelism and nationwide mass evangelistic campaigns, worked well.

As secularization proceeds in South Korea, this model of encounter evangelism is less effective in evangelizing secular young adults, whose perception of Protestantism has become increasingly negative, and on whom traditional religious influence has been continually decreasing. Most young adults have only a superficial knowledge about Christianity and need time to be informed about it. Rather than encounter evangelism, process evangelism seems to have gained more importance in South Korea. According to research conducted in 2004 by Hanmijun and Korea Gallop, 83.9 percent of Koreans who were evangelized by Protestants reports that that the experience left a negative impression of Protestant churches.[9] This data is more meaningful when we compare it with a research conducted by a Christian magazine, *Mokhoewa Sinhak* (ministry and theology), in 1992.[10] Only 30.8 percent of young adults showed negative impressions of Protestants'

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[9] Hanmijun and Korea Gallup, *Hangukgyohoe Miraeripoteu* [A report on the future], 244.

[10] Gi-Tae Song, "Bigidokgyoin Daehaksaengui Gidokgyoe daehan Insikdo Bunseok," [An analysis of unchurched university students' attitude toward Protestantism] *Mokhoewa Sinhak* 36 (1992): 105.

evangelism when they were evangelized by them. More than 83 percent of the people were contacted by street, campus, street, and house-to-house evangelism and only 35.6 percent of people were evangelized by friends and family members in 1992. The research in 2004, showed that more than 60 percent of people were evangelized by neighbors, friends, and family members. Negative feelings increased in spite of the fact that more people were contacted by friends, family members, and acquaintances.

This result demonstrates that encounter evangelism became less effective than in the past. The model of encounter evangelism, which brings people to evangelistic meetings and asks them to make a decision for Christ on the spot, is less meaningful than before because Koreans are less receptive to this kind of approach. This data confirms the analysis in chapter six regarding evangelistic meetings in South Korea .

The changing context from secularization requires reconsidering the current approach to the evangelization of secular young adults, which needs to consider three directions in the 21st century. First, instead of the model of encounter evangelism, the model of process evangelism needs to be featured and more fully developed; the model of encounter evangelism still dominates in South Korea. Considering secular young adults' indifference or hostility toward Protestantism and their ignorance about Christianity, more time and opportunities to learn about it are prerequisite for their conversion as part of the process.

Second, the Church needs to be involved in the lives of secular young adults, attempting to understand their context and to make points of contact that can touch their needs. Transmitting the salvation message is not usually effective enough, especially as evangelism in a secular society. A good example is the Kangnam Church that offers a

daybreak prayer service and free breakfast. Providing culturally relevant ministry does not necessarily mean adding Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) dances and skits to worship services. Churches should understand their unique context and the wants of young adults, and provide ministries that begin where they are, according to their gifts.[11] Pastor Yun-Bok Lee, the leader of JOY mission, laments that leaders of mission organizations for campuses such as CCC, JOY, and IVF did not understand the deep needs of university students. Approaching the 21st century, the main strategy for reaching new generations was making them fun, not recognizing the young adult's struggles and exhausting lives due to economic crises and nationwide layoffs that have occurred since 1997.[12]

Third, a community or small groups need to be involved in the entire process of people's conversions, instead of asking new converts to join a community only after their conversion. According to my interviews of 45 converts, more than 70 percent were deeply involved in small groups prior to their conversion. Small groups are a very important environment for young adult visitors to experience if they are to attend churches faithfully and become life-long followers of Christ. Recent house church movements that target younger generations confirm this point. Larry Kreider and Floyd McClung describe that house churches that are small, simple, authentic-relationship-oriented (not building-oriented), led by non-professionals, and family-based communities, are effective in reaching young adults because they "are very open to small groups that

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[11] Chan-Ju Park, "2010 Daehanminguk Teurendeureul tonghae Baraboneun Cheongnyeonsayeokjeonryak," [Strategies for young adult ministry through the lens of the trend of Korea in 2010] *Evangelical Generation* (2005): 151.

[12] Yun-Bok Lee, "Focus on Campus Issue 2009," 7.

are based on friendship and socializing."[13]

One of the important characteristics of Korean young adults is their resistance to one-way and authoritarian communication. These ways of communication are not effective in reaching those who have grown up in a relatively advanced and democratic country. Therefore, dialogue, conversation, and sharing God's word and Christian life in a small group setting is an effective way of reaching secular young adults. Increasing both the creativity and diversity of small groups is required in evangelizing secular young adults.

In relation to the importance of the small group and communicational ways of young adults, developing young adult leaders is crucial to both evangelism and discipleship. To say that the effectiveness of young adult ministry depends on what kinds of young leaders the church produces is not an exaggeration.

As a final concluding thought, the urgent necessity of reaching out to secular people should recapture our attention. One common misunderstanding is that secularization eventually eradicates the religious consciousness of people. Although the influence of traditional, organized, and institutional religion has decreased in secular societies, secular people are not "irreligious." The resurgence of spirituality in Europe and North America has been observed in various forms. As N.T. Wright describes, the resurgence of interest in spirituality can be understood as the eruption of the hidden spring that modernism has stifled for so many years. Since people have been thirsty for water for a long time, they will drink any water even if it is polluted. After secularization undermined the influence of institutionalized religion, people began to exist in a realm

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[13] Larry Kreider and Floyd McClung, *Starting A House Church: A New Model for Living Out Your Faith* (Ventura: Regal, 2006), 11.

where various spiritual options are available. Secular people are looking for a satisfying worldview to explain the meaning of their lives. Acknowledging the new choices open to people, Lesslie Newbigin claims that "the proper Christian response to the process of secularization must include commitment to the world missionary task."[14] But many churches fail to see the ripe harvest field and remain entrenched in a maintenance orientation, with few churches focusing their attention on secular people outside the walls of the church.

One of the five characteristics of the six churches that effectively reaches secular young adults is their strong emphasis on evangelism. Many young adult ministries in South Korea seem to lose their evangelistic focus for secular people, instead emphasizing the mobilization of inactive young adult church members. This emphasis is meaningful in Korean Protestant churches,[15] but reaching secular people needs to remain the main business of the church.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following three possible areas for further research arise from this study: reasons for remarkable growth of Catholic churches, deeper sociological study of young adults, and developing a more thorough model of process evangelism.

First, the remarkable growth of Catholic churches captures our attention, especially in the context of secularization and growing hostility toward Protestantism. Some studies conclude that the reason for significant recent growth comes from Catholic credibility in

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[14] Lesslie Newbigin, *Honest Religion for Secular Man* (Philadelphia: The Westminster, 1966), 136.

[15] Young-Gi Hong, "Nominalism in Korean Protestantism," *Transformation* 16 (1999): 135-141.

Korean society. Along with the issue of Catholic credibility in society, necessary to explain are more reasons for the growth of Catholic churches through research that focuses on recent young adult converts to Catholic churches. This research will illuminate for what converts from secular backgrounds or other religions are looking. Additional issues may arise concerning how Protestant churches evaluate the remarkable growth of Catholic churches and its implication to their evangelism.

Second, although surveys and research can be found regarding young adults, our understanding of them needs to go deeper. More in-depth social research on their spirituality, psychology, attitudes toward religion, and their variety of need helps us understand the struggles and hopes of young adults. The cases of the Samil Church and the Kangnam Church demonstrate that superficial assumptions about young adults can go wrong and may not reflect the reality young adults face in their everyday lives.

Third, a perception that understands Christian conversion as a process is not well known to Korean church leaders. More creative models of process evangelism that meet the needs of young adults and can bolster the evangelistic meetings need to be produced and introduced to South Korea.

Appendix A

Interview for Young Adults who are New Converts of the Case Study Churches

Date of Interview:
Place of Interview:

1. General Information of Interviewee:

1.1 Name of the church

1.2 Name of interviewee :

1.3 Telephone/E-mail:

1.4 Gender

1.5 Age

2. Questions for the New Converts[438]

2.1 What level of activity did you have, if any, in churches before coming to this church.

2.2 What factors were involved in choosing this church? What was the single greatest attraction?

2.3 After your first and second visits, what factors caused you to return to the church?

2.4 Tell me the story of how you became involved with Christ and this church.

2.5 What was happening in your life that made you more receptive to Christianity and this church?

2.6 Did someone from the church share with you how to become Christian? Explain how this situation developed.

2.7 How would you describe the worship style of your church? How did the style affect your decision to come to the church and return to the church?

2.8 Discuss the role of your pastor in your conversion? How did he affect your conversion?

Did he/she care for you?

2.9 Discuss the role of preaching and teaching played in your coming to this church

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[438] Most of these questions are designed from Thom Rainer's book, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched and Proven Ways to Reach Them*. 235-236.

and conversion.

2.10 What relationships did you develop with church members prior to coming to he church? After coming to the church? What role did these relationships play in your decision to come to this church or stay?

2.11 What convinced you this church really believe the gospel and live by it?

2.12 Are you presently involved in any small groups in the church or in Sunday school? What roles did small groups play in your decision to following Christ? Please describe.

2.13 Are you presently involved in any ministries in the church? Please describe.

2.14 What keeps you active in the church today?

2.15 What almost kept you from becoming Christian?

Appendix B
Interview for Pastors of the Case Study Churches[439]

Date of Interview:
Place of Interview:

1. General Information of Interviewee:

1.1 Name of the church

1.2 Name of interviewee (Youth Group Pastor)

1.3 Telephone/E-mail:

1.4 Gender:

1.5 Age:

2. Questions

2.1 What are the main characteristics of unchurched young adults you are
ministering to and targeting to reach?

2.2 What is the main business of your church?

2.3 Discuss the types of attempts you make to adapt to the culture of secular young
adults?

2.4 What role did these relationships (pre-existent or developed in small groups)
play in their decision to come to or stay at your church?

2.5 What is the role of small groups in reaching unchurched young adults?

2.6 When you prepare to preach, what is the most important consideration?

2.7 Which themes of the gospel do you think are relevant to reaching secular young
adults?

2.8 What do you think unchurched young adults consider the most important thing
in choosing a church or returning to a church?

2.9 Why do you think your church attracts unchurched young adults?

2.10 What do you think is the most effective ministry in reaching unchurched
young adults?

2.11 What are the strengths and weakness of your young adult group in reaching

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[439] These questions are designed by the researcher based on theoretical framework.

unchurched young adults?

2.12 What are the main reasons for unchurched young adults dropping out of church?

2.13 What would other churches have to do, how would they have to change, to reach more unchurched young adults?

Appendix C

Interview for Leaders of the Case Study Churches[440]

Date of Interview:
Place of Interview:

1. General Information of Interviewee:

1.1 Name of the church:

1.2 Name of interviewee (Young Adults leaders):

1.3 Telephone/E-mail:

1.4 Gender:

1.5 Age:

2. Questions

2.1 Discuss are the main characteristics of unchurched young adults you are ministering to and targeting to reach.

2.2 What is the main business of your church?

2.3 Discuss the types of attempts you make to adapt to the culture of secular young adults?

2.4 What role did these relationships (pre-existent or developed in small groups) play in their decision to come to or stay at your church?

2.5 What is the role of small groups in reaching secular young adults?

2.6 Which themes of the gospel do you think are relevant to reaching secular young adults?

2.7 What do you think unchurched young adults consider the most important thing in choosing a church or returning to a church?

2.8 Why do you think your church attracts unchurched young adults?

2.9 What do you think is the most effective ministry in reaching unchurched young adults?

2.10 What are the strengths and weakness of your youth group in reaching unchurched young adults?

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[440] These questions are designed by researcher based on theoretical framework.

2.11 What are the main reasons for people, especially unchurched young adults, dropping out of church?

2.12 What keeps you active in the church today? Why do you commit yourselves to this church?

2.13 What would other churches have to do, how would they have to change, to reach more unchurched young adults?

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