



The Essence of Spirituality in the context of Korean Missionary work: A Missiological study

Professor Fazel Ebrihiam Freeks
Faculty of Theology, North-West University
Potchefstroom, South Africa
Email: fazel.freeks@nwu.ac.za
Orcid ID <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2474-8756>

Mr Chun Young Lee
PhD student Faculty of Theology, North-West University
Potchefstroom, South Africa
Email: abc76637176@gmail.com
Orcid ID <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9960-5561>

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Abstract

Spirituality is imperative since it embodies the core meaning of life and denotes the relationship between God and others. It causes the experience and joy of a deeper and trustworthy relationship with God and Christ as related, in the case of the present study, to Korean missionaries. This kind of relationship is personal and promotes transcendence, faith, and living in the fear of God. Spirituality is fundamental to one's whole well-being. It is therefore not merely restricted to this or that part of human life but embraces, instead, the whole of a person's inner being, heart, soul, and spirit. In practice, this means that the faith of a 15-year-old boy or girl is just as crucial as that of a 65-year-old man or woman. The spirituality of people takes form and has significance when they become followers of Christ and are prepared to bear the cross of discipleship and are transformed by him. Transformation of Korean missionaries' spirituality will renew cross-culture missionary work. In the study of missiology, a thorough literature review is done on the subject of spirituality and missionary work. The intersection of missiology and spirituality is covered in the literature search for related sciences. Actively seeking God's direction and determining what should be done in specific instances, settings, and contexts is what is meant by spiritual and practical discernment.

Keywords: spirituality, Korean missionaries, missional, spiritual formation, transformation.

Background

Korean missionaries' spirituality is in crisis (Lee, 2016:91). According to the Korea World Missions Associations (KWMA), a basic survey report was done on the overseas mission capacity of the Korean church in order to ascertain the reasons for Korean missionaries' attrition.¹ The most fundamental cause of Korean missionary attrition is the resignation of ministries from the mission, which can be ascribed to a failure to maintain a sense of deep

¹ KWMA surveyed 244 Korean missionaries from 2 to 25 October 2018. The information does not differ much from that provided in "Global Missionary for the 21st Century" (Taylor, "Listening to mission", 189).



spirituality (Ku, 2021:11; Moon, 1997:138). There are various reasons for this, and all of them focus on the problem of Korean missionary's spirituality.

There are core reasons for Korean missionaries not to sustain their spirituality. They are facing challenges around cross-culture missionary work. Firstly, competition is rising among them. A total of 53% of Korean missionaries are located in ten countries such as United States, Philippine, Japan, India, Thailand, Germany and many others, and most of them focus on church planting ministries (Choi, 2015:244). Therefore, competition is inevitable. Secondly, they are indifferent to the early history of the Korean church. They have forgotten the Nevius method that builds a self-supporting Korean church (Pierson, 2009:327). Nevius get the idea from Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson, and he devised this method. He used three principles which are self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating to build an indigenized church. These principles are core aspects of his mission method (Hong, 2016:282). They ought to analyse the history of the early church of Korea and draw up a blueprint for the future in order to sustain their spirituality. Thirdly, Korean missionaries are reluctant to understand indigenous cultures (Lim, 2019). The Korean missionaries are not inclined towards indigenous culture, language, and context because of their cultural traits and an innate sense of superiority (Han, 2004:137; Kim S., 2017:11; Lee, 2017:29). The spirituality of the incarnate Christ ought to be the reinforcing power of their spiritual transformation. Many missionaries are moreover departing from a biblical strategy for missionary work. Transforming church-centred mission to God-centred mission (Bosch, 2011:402). Facing this challenge, Korean missionaries should restructure the foundation of their spirituality, which will enable them to confront and overcome it.

Korean missionaries' spirituality, therefore, presents problems that coagulate around their missional-theological, historical, anthropological, and practical perspectives. Due to this circumstance, native churches struggle to show sustainable growth. Therefore, the essence of spirituality is a key aspect when it comes to transforming missional perspectives in the context of Korean missionary work.

Introduction

This article focuses on the essence of spirituality in the context of Korean missionary work. However, spirituality in mission is in crisis (Lee, 2016:91). There is a lack of sustainable spirituality and attrition presents a serious problem among Korean missionaries (Ku, 2021:11; Moon, 1997:138). Missionaries have less mission experience and mission information, and knowledge of mission theology is inadequate. Their ministry is diminished by their feeling of having power over the indigenous population and their conduct is rather inappropriate such as ethical problems and controversy (Lee, 2016:91; Taylor, 2000:189).

The following questions are paramount in this paper: *What are the traits of spirituality? What is missional spiritual transformation?* Answering these questions will enable a situation where spirituality can determine and renew cross-culture missions in the context of the Korean missionaries. Missionaries' spirituality is crucial in a cross-culture mission (Bosch, 1979:41; Ku, 2016:54; Ku, 2017:356; Niemandt, 2019:85; Reilly, 1978:107; Shin, 2002:121). Also, pedagogical ability and authentic spirituality are dire needs in such missions. Kramer indicates that spirituality causes effective relationships between missionaries and indigenous people (Kramer, 1947:140). This makes it easy for the gospel to transform upcoming and young churches.



Traits of spirituality

One of the pivotal traits of spirituality is having the fruit of the Holy Spirit which has nine characters for example love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, etc. (Brown, 2011:49; Galatians 5:22-23). Therefore, spirituality can mature significantly when it enjoys a solid relationship with Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. Spirituality is not formed by sinful human effort but through a relationship with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit leads believers into love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). This is Its transforming power (Fung, 1988:261). This spiritual trait transforms the believers' attitude toward one another (Buys & Janssen, 2013:240). The believers must unite, even in their different cultural contexts and in terms of their denominational priorities, according to the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Araujo, 2018:99). This makes partnership possible in the ministry of a mission. Further, Araujo emphasises that a sailor must always be attentive to the wind and, likewise, we should be constantly attentive to the wind of the Spirit as we live and work together (Araujo, 2018:99). This trait of spirituality is the foundation of transforming power (unity) when it comes to the concept of the mission.

Missional spiritual formation and transformation

Spiritual formation and transformation are grounded in Scripture (Ephesians 3:16-17), as it focuses on Jesus Christ (Barber & Barker, 2014:272). Formation means "heart work," and the human heart is the well-spring of all human action, and *heart work* is indeed *hard work* (Foster, 2011:27). Transformation implies the changing of people's choices and the aspects underlying those choices. It is a worldview (roughly akin to a mindset) and the values or traits flow from this. Romans 12:1-2 indicate that believers must present their bodies as a living sacrifice that is acceptable and holy unto God, which includes their reasonable service. Believers should be transformed, and their minds renewed to assess what is good, acceptable, and perfect by the will of God in their lives. The role of the church comes into play when transformational development reflects the concern of the church for positive change in the whole of human life, that is, socially, materially, and spiritually. The church must respond to the missional call of God (Singletary, 2011:103).

Furthermore, spiritual formation concerns the inner being and leads to the transformation of the whole person (that is, once more, body, soul/ mind, spirit). The formation focuses on personal change and renewing one's mind (Porter, 2014:250; cf. Romans 12:2). It is also the deepening of a person's faith to develop spiritually. The spirit of the human being includes the heart, which is similar to spirit, will, or mind (Porter, 2014:250). Thus, to speak of spirituality does not refer to a part of human life but, as should be stressed again, the whole of a person's life (Buys, 2014:135). However, spiritual formation is only sufficient when accompanied by the practice of faith formation because the focus must be on a person's inner being. People's spirituality must take form in the world, and this happens by becoming a follower of Christ. They must also bear the cross of discipleship (Luke 14:27) and be fully transformed by Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 12:2).

The essence of spirituality in the Old and New Testament

Old Testament

There are two factors of uneasiness when it comes to defining spirituality as found in the Old Testament. Firstly, there are no Hebrew terms for spirituality. Secondly, the theme of spirituality is not the main concern for Biblical scholars of the Old Testament (Kim, S. 2018:1).



However, to define the meaning of spirituality as found in the Old Testament, it is important to understand the meaning of the word *spirit* in Hebrew. The presupposition is that spirituality embodies a certain status shown by the character and activity of spirit (Lee H. W., 2009:7). Besides, the notion of the *spirit* is however, clearly expressed and traced within the Bible (Park J., 2007:14).

The corresponding meaning of the spirit in Hebrew terms is רוּחַ (*ruach*) (Shin, 2002: 136). In the Old Testament, רוּחַ occurs 378 times (Han S., 2002:10; Jenni & Westermann, 1999:1202; Kim S., 2018:7). The meaning varied largely in accordance with three circumstances (Han S., 2002:10; Kim S., 2018:7; Kim Y., 2010:7-9). (1) It is used in terms of natural phenomena: רוּחַ of wind. (2) It is used in anthropological terms: רוּחַ of life, and breath. (3) It is used in theological terms: רוּחַ of God. However, the spirit of man can only be transformed and influenced by God (Job 10:12). Han states that, unlike נַפְשׁ, which is mostly translated as the soul, רוּחַ encompasses not only existence but also the basic principle that causes something to be alive (Han S., 2010:10).

Kim contends with considerable clarity that, according to Genesis 2:7, רוּחַ (*spirit*) there is the godly trait that exists in the inner part of a human being which causes them to be more precious than other creatures (Kim, 2011:18). This means that spirituality can be related to the meaning of רוּחַ: it is something in the inner human being which is initiated and formed by God. Hence, the subject of spirituality and discipliner of spirituality is God (Shin, 2002:136). To illuminate whole biblical spirituality, it is necessary to go further and examine the New-Testament sense of spirituality.

New Testament

There are divisions around interpreting the term spirituality in the New Testament. Firstly, it is inferred from the Greek word πνεῦμα (*pneuma*) and πνευματικῶς (*pneumatikōs*). These words indicate spirit and spirituality respectively (Fee, 1995:30; Kim Y., 2010:9; Park J., 2007:18). According to Reform-tradition theologians, the term piety rather than spirituality is preferable (Adam, 2004:28; Lee H. S., 2017: 10; Shin, 2002:120; Song, 2011:293). Several Greek words refer to piety: εὐσεβεία (*eusebeia*), θρησκείας (*thrēskeias*), εὐλαβείας (*eulabeias*), δεῖσιδαιμονίας (*deisidaimonias*), δικαιοσύνην (*dikaioynēn*) (Song, 2011:297-310). The Greek term εὐσεβεία (*eusebeia*) is translated as *godliness* (NKJV), *piety* (DBY), or *religion* (RSV, NASB, NJB) (Hawng, 2001:7).

Superficially, both the term spirituality and piety seem to share a common sense (Adam, 2004:28), but theologians of the Reformation New Testament prefer spirituality instead of piety. According to Hawng, using spirituality rather than piety results in numerous theological meanings. This could inform the significance of spirituality of the New Testament Reformation (Hawng, 2001: 14). Kelsey also indicates that spirituality has a rich tradition which was within the Reformed churches (Kelsey, 1991:2). Also, it was ignored and overlooked by writers outside the Reformed tradition (Hawng, 2001:15). Therefore, we should understand spirituality in Reformation stream of term piety and meaning of spirituality ought to recover in Reformed sense in biblical way. Thus, Reformation should be constantly transforms by the Bible (Adam, 2004:27).

There is agreement among New Testament theologians that spirituality is Christ-centred (Hawng, 2001: 6,16; Kim Y. S., 2010:10; Lee H., 2017:19,20; Song, 2011:300). The book of 1 Timothy 3:16, which refers to “the mystery of godliness,” shows that godliness is found in Christ (Song, 2011:299). Hawng avers that the mystery of godliness refers to Christ’s missions (Hawng, 2001:16). The hymn that comprises six lines in 1 Timothy 3:16 and refers to “the



mystery of godliness” should be understood in the light of Christo-centrally (Towner, 2006:278).

Without Jesus’s death and resurrection, the Holy Spirit could not abide within and minister to believers to live a spiritual life. However, scholars have recently given more weight to the incarnation and creation than to the death and resurrection of Christ (Lee H. S., 2017:21). True spirituality is to be recovered to God’s image by the Holy Spirit after experiencing the redemption of Cross (Lee H., 2017:26). Fee succinctly states this as follows (Fee, 1995:30): “In the New Testament, therefore, spirituality is defined altogether in terms of the Spirit of God (or Christ). One is spiritual to the degree that one lives in and walks by the Holy Spirit; in Scripture, the word had no other meaning and no other measurement.” Therefore, without the Holy Spirit, spiritual life is impossible. The Holy Spirit becomes present in the life of a Christian by the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross of Calvary (John 20:22) Hawng, 2001:26; Park, 2007:20). This means that there is no Holy Spirit without the redemption work of Christ on the Cross.

New Testament spirituality moreover enjoys an eschatological meaning (Thurston, 2008:68). Spirituality does not arise from human efforts but from believing and receiving life as a gift from God through Jesus’ person and his mission (Hawng, 2001:27). Although it is already received as a gift, it will be perfectly fulfilled only at the second coming of Jesus. Hence, whoever received this life of a spiritual blessing will be found without any defects (2 Peter 3:11,14). This is the true meaning of what the New Testament indicates regarding spirituality (Hawng, 2001:28; Song, 2011:305).

Thus, spirituality in the New Testament is not formed by humans but by the image of God by the token of Jesus’ person and his missions conducted in terms of the work of the Holy Spirit (Park, 2003:7). Believers receive the gift of the eschatological stance that “already” but “not yet” yearn for spiritual life without spot or blemish (2 Peter. 3:14). The biblical trait of spirituality is therefore constantly renewing the church.

The spirituality of the Reformation

It is important to contour the spirituality of the Reformation because it influences world missionary work. If we recall the mainstream of Reformation spirituality, we can recognise how it affects the latter. Therefore, the researcher briefly sketches pictures of the Reformation and how they understand spirituality so as to show how its spirituality affects the world mission movement.

In Calvin’s final edition of “Institutes of the Christian religion” as found in *John Calvin to the reader*, he says: “I have had no other purpose than to benefit the church by maintaining the pure doctrine of godliness” (Calvin, 2006:4). Calvin’s perception of piety is manifested in this text (Adam, 2004:31; Kim Y., 2018:85).

One vital facet of Calvin’s piety as spirituality is knowledge of God. In his commentary of Jeremiah 10:25, Calvin states: “for we are by them taught that the beginning of religion is knowledge of God” (Calvin, 1999:40). His premise is that the first step towards piety is knowing God. Therefore, his final edition of “Institutes of the Christian religion” is composed in terms of three parts: knowledge of God the Creator, knowledge of the Redeemer, and knowledge of the Sovereign (Kim Y., 2018:92). By examining “Institutes of the Christian religion,” we can infer that knowledge of God is a core aspect of Christian spirituality.



Calvin emphasises the Word of God in piety (Kim S., 2018:23; Kim Y., 2008:93). Before the fall of humans, God indiscriminately revealed himself through creation. However, after the Fall, God revealed his will through the mediator Jesus Christ (Kim Y., 2018:93). Therefore, we can know God and his will only through Him. According to Calvin's theology, the whole Scripture is about Christ (Adam, 2004:133). Hence, through the whole Scripture, we can find the knowledge of God (Gamble, 1996:337). This knowledge evokes the Christian to be obedient to God in all spheres of life (Deuteronomy 28:1; 5:33; 1 Kings 2:3; Psalms 128:1; 2 Corinthians 10:5; Romans 1:5; Hebrews 9:12).

Calvin's spirituality is holistic, that is, it consists not only of knowledge but also encompasses practical life (Buys, 2013:135; Kim Y., 2008:8,21; Song, 2011:297). While the predecessor of the Reformation, Martin Luther, emphasises justification, Calvin emphasises sanctification (Kim Y., 2008:21). Spirituality thus transforms our conduct to follow Christ and in serving others. Jesus Christ not only died for our sins, but also gave an example for us to follow (Gamble 1996:338). This means that Christ died for the world so that God continually transforms lives (see John 3:16). The work of the Holy Spirit transforms believers' conduct. The Holy Spirit is not only transforming the heart of a person, but he also transforms the conduct of the Christian. This is a vital aspect of Calvin's spirituality: it entails holistic transformation. Calvinist with this spirituality have played prominent role in modern missions (Horton, 2011:152).

While scholasticism prevailed in the Reformation seminary at the end of the sixteenth century, a new movement, pietism, was ignited by the German theologian Philipp Spener (1635-1705) (Hawng, 2007:63; Raitt, 2008:131,132; Olson & Winn, 2015:13). Under the influence of scholasticism, the Reformation focuses on intellectual debating of hair-splitting doctrines which evoke the renewal of the church and individual spirituality (Bosch, 2011:258; Olson & Winn, 2015:14; Raitt, 2008:131). Spener received the baton from the Reformers to bridge Reformation to pietism. In this sense, pietism indeed amounts to a "second Reformation" (see Hawng, 2007:62; Olson & Winn, 2015:15).

As engendered by the Reformation, pietism was a "Bible-centred movement" (Lindberg, 2005:4). There was nonetheless an accusation that pietism was mystical (Brown 2004:36; Olson & Winn, 2015:10). However, Spener, the father of pietism, was biblically centred (Lee J. B., 2009:43; Olson & Winn, 2015:45). His central idea is manifested in his writing *Pia Desiderio's* published in 1675 (Olson & Winn, 2015:51-52; Stein, 2005:84). Brown defends this text from the accusations against it (2004:36): "Scripture is at the heart of Spener's reform, and therefore at the heart of German Lutheran pietism itself. The Bible is not simply an abstract handbook used for reference, but it is a driving force behind the reformation process. While the Mystics influenced Spener's view of Scripture, they did, however, do little harm to abate his Lutheran hermeneutics."

Spener focuses on the right practice centred on the fruits of life and based on the foundation of the Bible (Olson & Winn, 2015: 51). He provides six proposals for the Lutheran Church. Among these one may search for vital aspects of pietism that are not formally sacramental and related to orthodoxy and embody fruits of life (Brown, 2004:36,37; Olson & Winn, 2015:52-54). Spener focuses not only on justification, but also radically on sanctification (Olson & Winn 2015:53,54). In this context, he emphasises sanctification without damaging Luther's emphasis on justification (Olson & Winn, 2015:14). Through his work, the University of Halle, in Germany became a citadel of pietism which bear the fruit of Christian conduct (Stein, 2005:85).

Before Spener's death, he appointed August Francke (1663-1727) as his successor to Halle University (Hawng, 2007:67). Brown says that "Spener's views did survive for some time



through his student, August Hermann Francke, and his work at the University of Halle” (Brown, 2004:46). Francke implement Spener’s spiritual aspect by focusing on Scripture. Francke distinguishes between what he terms the kernel and the husk. The former is found in the meaning of the scriptural text that is only transformative and salvific within the ambit of the work of the Holy Spirit (Olson & Winn, 2015:60; Mattian (2005:109). The latter is studying the Bible in a rational way that focuses on logic, philology, and history (Olson & Winn, 2015:61). Francke places exegetical studies in kernel education to students at Halle (Olson & Winn, 2015:61, Hawng, 2007:68; Schroeder (1963:665-667). To his mind, the Holy Spirit makes a believer live a practical life based on the Holy Scripture (Matthian 2005:109). His praxis was manifested in his commitment to the orphanage, as based on the Scripture (Hawng, 2007:68; Olson & Winn, 2015:58, Shantz, 2013:131-134).

Furthermore, Francke’s spirituality promoted missionary endeavours in Halle (Hawng, 2007:65). As mentioned, for him the transformative power was Scripture. He inspired students to participate in the Great Commission according to Matthew 28:18-20 of Jesus Christ using the proclamation of the Word (Schroeder, 1963:667).

Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760) was an outstanding figure in the third generation of pietism in Halle. He was influenced by Spener and Francke (Hawng, 2007:64; Lee, J. B. 2009:45). His encounter with Moravians at Herrnhut was the vital motivation for a worldwide missionary movement (Hawng, 2007:69). Through spirituality he changed the Moravian’s into to a missionary community termed the Moravian Brethren, (Vogt, 2005:207,208).

There were some unique aspects of Moravian spirituality which were grounded in Zinzendorf’s unique expression of evangelical missionary spirituality. His spirituality was essentially Christocentric (Olson & Winn, 2015:72; Vogt, 2005:210). Jesus’ wound and suffering nurture believers’ lives not only in terms of the forgiveness of sin but also in terms of a new life as a Christian (Olson & Winn, 2015:73). Olson and Winn rightly say that “in Zinzendorf’s blood and wounds theology, Jesus’ life, and death were not only the objective ground of Christian salvation but also the subjective ground for the ongoing religion of the heart” (Olson & Winn, 2015:72). Therefore, Zinzendorf’s impelling force of spiritual life is Jesus Christ of the Cross (Vogt, 2005:209).

Zinzendorf accentuates the relationship with Jesus Christ (Vogt, 2005:213). In his thought, the theology of the Cross is an objective pole. On the other side, he stresses the subjective pole, which believers experience in their own life (Vogt, 2005:213). Based on this preposition, Zinzendorf emphasises meditation through Scripture by the work of the Holy Spirit in terms of the subjective pole (Reilly, 1978:87; Vogt, 2005:213-214).

Zinzendorf’s theology of the Scripture is also Christocentric. His viewpoint is that the Bible refers principally to Jesus Christ (Vogt, 2005:213). Thanks to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, knowledge of Jesus Christ empowers believers’ lives not only for forgiveness of sins but also towards empowering a practical spiritual life that follows Jesus Christ (Freeks, 2017:3). Zinzendorf’s spirituality is therefore not based on human effort but solely on the work of God (Vogt, 2005:2016). Pietist spirituality can be traced back to the early church (Vogt, 2005: 218). The power of the Word not only widened the early Christians’ knowledge but also forced them to become devoted. The Holy Spirit helped them understand the Scripture and empowered them to live as followers of Christ (Freeks, 2018:39). They were full of the Holy Spirit and motivated missionary movements such as the Antioch Church, which sent Paul and Barnabas on a mission under his (the Holy Spirit’s) direction (Acts13:1-3). Similarly, pietism motivated churches in Germany, England, and North America, and initiated a worldwide missionary



movement (Hawng, 2007:69). Also, the spirituality of pietism affected how ministry was offered to indigenous people (Bosch, 2011:261; Olson & Winn, 2015:59).

The spirituality of the Reformation is not the work of human effort but is performed by God the Father who sent his only Son not just for the atonement of sin but also to empower religious life in the Word through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Freeks, 2016:3; Kim Y., 2015:249). Believers are not only to receive the knowledge of God through an intellectual mind but also be to impel spiritual life as praxis (Freeks, 2021:27). Bosch's evaluation of pietism is remarkable. Bosch states, "Now ordinary men and women, most of them simple artisans, went literally to the ends of the earth, devoted themselves for life to people often living in the most degrading circumstances, identified with them, and lived the gospel in their midst" (2011:260-261). Thus, the spirituality of Spener, Francke, and Zinzendorf can be said to be relevant for the spirituality of the missionaries.

The spirituality of missionaries

If there is a lack of spirituality among missionaries. They fail to build relationships with other missionaries and indigenous people. The former has occurred in Korea (Ku, 2016:55). Lee argues that, even though Korean missionaries are experienced and have immense missionary information and knowledge of the theology of mission, their mission effort will be meaningless because of their chauvinism and rude attitude (Lee, 2016:91). This causes a barrier between them and the indigenous population, and also a defect in their ministry. This embodies a serious crisis around Korean missionary's spirituality (Lee, 2016:91).

The connection between missionaries and the local population is imperative. Receivers of the gospel not just heed to their preaching but also observe their deeds. If missionaries stumble due to credibility, receivers will resist the gospel and will have problems to connect with others. But in the contrast, missionaries' contact with a local population may give rise to many other contacts at mission fields (Kraemer, 1947:140). This is due not to the missionary's pedagogical ability but his or her spirituality (Kraemer, 1947:140). Their attitude should be conformed to Jesus' creed: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 22:39). It is this that makes the transmission of the true gospel possible, again underlining the critical importance of missionary spirituality.

Given the importance of missionary spirituality, then, what is its meaning? This question is subsequently examined. There is a difference between missionary spirituality and Christian spirituality (Ku, 2016:60; Reilly, 1978:45), even as missiologists tend to equate missionary spirituality to Christian spirituality (Shin, 2002:154,157). Reilly argues that "it is legitimate to speak of a spirituality for mission and a spirituality suited for Christians to engaged in the mission" (1978:45). Hence, mission spirituality is unique because it is found in the specific context of a missionary who engaged in a mission. Missionaries show Jesus Christ to those who do not know the Gospel by preaching, practicing, and sharing it within cross-culture missions. This, again, circumscribes the uniqueness of missionary spirituality.

Due to this uniqueness, missionary spirituality is pivotal. If the missionary's life is not credible in the eyes of the indigenous population regarding their spirituality, their efforts are meaningless (Bosch 1979:55). Therefore, the missionary should be clear in his mission and message regarding the gospel and his or her conduct (Koyama, 1974:125).

The life of a missionary should exemplify the life of Jesus Christ to the indigenous people (Bosch, 1979: 56). Bosch argues that Christ Himself remains invisible in the background but



out of the unseen His image is projected onto us missionaries and into us, taking shape in us and becoming visible until others recognise not us, but Christ in us (1979: 56).

This was what John the Baptist had proclaimed. “He must increase, but I must decrease” (Jn 3:30). Through John’s conduct and life, Jesus Christ is manifested. This is the fundamental aspect that Jesus shows us to follow (2 Corinthians 8:9; Koyama, 1974:131).

A missionary’s spirituality is not merely formed by missionary effort and once-off processes (Bosch, 1979:24). It is formed by the continuous work of the Holy Spirit. Further, it is not a metaphor for a water pipe but for a branch of the vine (John 15) (Bosch, 1979:42). A branch should constantly get nutrition from the vine to bear fruit, whereas a branch that is no longer attached to the vine cannot bear fruit. Therefore, a missionary’s spirituality should be transformed by the Holy Spirit on a daily basis so as to bear the fruit of his or her conduct (Joh. 15:1-17).

Furthermore, the mission’s aim is to convey the message of Jesus to those who do not know him. The conveyance is embedded in spirituality. Therefore, one should be constantly transformed by the Bible and within the work of the Holy Spirit (Ku, 2016:61).

The transformation process according to the Bible

Romans 12:2 gives illumination of transforming Korean missionaries’ spirituality among midst of their spirituality. Romans 12:2 does not distinguish between the terms “be conformed” and “be transformed.” However, old scholarship distinguishes between them. Being conformed refers to the external or the outer part, the body, and being transformed to internal or inner part of the mind (Cranfield, 1979:605-607; Moo, 1996:756; Schreiner, 1998:646). These words are synonyms (Cranfield, 1979:607; Schreiner, 1998:647) and their meaning is holistic: it includes body, soul (mind), and spirit (Byun, 2007:312). Consequently, a genuine transformation regarding spirituality is holistic. Transformation and conformation do not only amount to changing the mind and body separately but rather to changing the whole person (body, mind, and spirit).

Romans 12:1-2 are vital for the whole of the book (Moo, 1996:748). On one hand, these verses are connected with the argument of Chapters 1-11 and, on the other, introduce Rm. 12:1-15:13 (Cranfield, 1979:595; Moo, 1996:748; Schreiner, 1998:641). Additionally, Schreiner states that “Romans 12:1-2 serve as a paradigm for the entire exhortation section” 12:1-13:13 (1998:640).

To understand the biblical foundation of word transformation, as indicated, an exegetical approach is needed. Moo separates Romans Chapter 1:1-15:13 into two parts that progress from the “indicative to [the] imperative” (1996:744; cf. also Jang, 2007:114). Chapters 1-11 embody the Gospel that has been given to us freely by the grace of God in Jesus Christ, and chapters 12:1-15:13 that of the power of the gospel in transforming the practical basis of the life of a Christian (Moo, 1996:744).

This transformation is only brought about by “renewal of the mind” (Cranfield, 1979:608; Moo, 1996:756). Moo demonstrates that “mind” is translated from a word which Paul uses especially, to connote a person’s “practical reasoning” or “moral consciousness” (Moo, 1996:756). Transformation does not take place if one’s thought is not altered into newness by the Holy Spirit (Schreiner, 1998:647). One should understand here again that transformation is not the result of human efforts. It is expressed in a present passive imperative form as μεταμορφουῖσθε (Cranfield 1979:607). Man is therefore not the agent of spiritual transformation: the process takes place by the work of the Holy Spirit (Cranfield, 1979:607; Moo, 1996:756). Christians



should in other words let themselves be led by the work of the Holy Spirit, who transforms them. The mind should constantly be renewed by the Holy Spirit who works through the Word of God (Cranfield, 1979: 609; Schneider, 2002:136).

The form of the verb “transformation” indicates an ongoing process (Bosch, 2011:146; Cranfield, 1979:607; Moo, 1996:756). Cranfield suggests the notion of “the present imperative” which indicates that an action has already been happening to continue the work of the Holy Spirit, so that the process is of an ongoing nature (Cranfield, 1979:607). Paul, by writing in this present tense, instructs us to be continually arduous in transformation (Moo, 1996: 756). Freeks therefore rightfully says that transformational development “is a lifelong journey and does not end in this life” (Freeks, 2021:22). The outcome of “being transformed by the renewal of your mind” is the discernment of the will of God (Cranfield, 1979: 609; Moo, 1996:757; Schreiner, 1998:648). This is not only to know the will of God but also to actualise a Christian’s life. Moo states that approving “the will of God means to understand and agree with what God wants of us to put it into practice” (Moo, 1996:757).

A biblical understanding of the word “transformation” therefore gives us the foundation of its meaning. Firstly, the Gospel, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, makes renewal of mind and transformation take place. Secondly, transformation is an ongoing process. Finally, the result of the transformation is approving the will of God, which Jesus Christ fulfilled (Cranfield, 1979:611). This biblical interpretation gives us the foundation for spiritual transformation.

Jesus teaches his disciples not just in terms of the intellect but emphasises living like him and forming his image by transforming and becoming a new person (Ku S. M., 2016:61). True spirituality is followed by true praxis of Jesus like obedience and suffering. Missionary life must be cruciform in the midst of eschatological tension between ‘already’ and not ‘yet’ (Bosch, 2011:146). They must rejoice in the suffering (Romans 5:2). Transcendent God’s power enacted only through earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7). Hence, spirituality should be based on Jesus’ life and imitating the personality of Jesus and his ministry as our role model (Ku, 2016:78; Shin, 2002:127).

The Triune God helps us to achieve true spirituality. That means God the Father sent his only Son, Jesus Christ (John 6:48) to tell us about the Holy Spirit. Then, the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit to enable us to live holy and according to God’s will and purpose. Stott argues that “God’s purpose is to make us like Christ and God’s will is to fill us with his Holy Spirit” (Stott, 2010:37). Therefore, it is impossible for Christians to live out the will and purpose of God without the work of the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

In the light of the essence of spirituality as outlined here, the church has the responsibility to respond to God’s missional call. Christians are obligated to become involved and give hope to hopeless people in the world (Singletary, 2011:103). The church, in taking up this pivotal role, must learn to be faithful to God’s call, and one of its duties is outreach or evangelising through interventions, development, training, equipping, and education of missionaries in their mission. In terms of development, the focus should be on psychological, social, and spiritual facets (Going, 2011:50; Greener, 2016:161). Korean missionaries should educate the indigenous people about God’s great commission because it evolves their lives and ensures their salvation through Jesus Christ. Missional themes should include baptism, repentance, and how to be a living testimony for Jesus Christ. The vital role of missionaries is a great part of God’s renewing work (Goheen, 2011:192). Jesus Christ loves people, and the church should follow suit by sending out missionaries. This theme is prevalent in biblical testimony. A



church that declares mission as a priority should integrate evangelising (as mentioned) as well as compassion in its ministry (James 1:19-27; 2:14-26). Missioning and evangelising are God's ways of transforming the lives of broken and lost people regarding to their spiritually (Wright, 2011:328).

Finally, Korean missionaries should participate in the mission of God to transform the lives of indigenous people. Missionary work and evangelising through Jesus Christ are all about that which God does in the lives of people.

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