

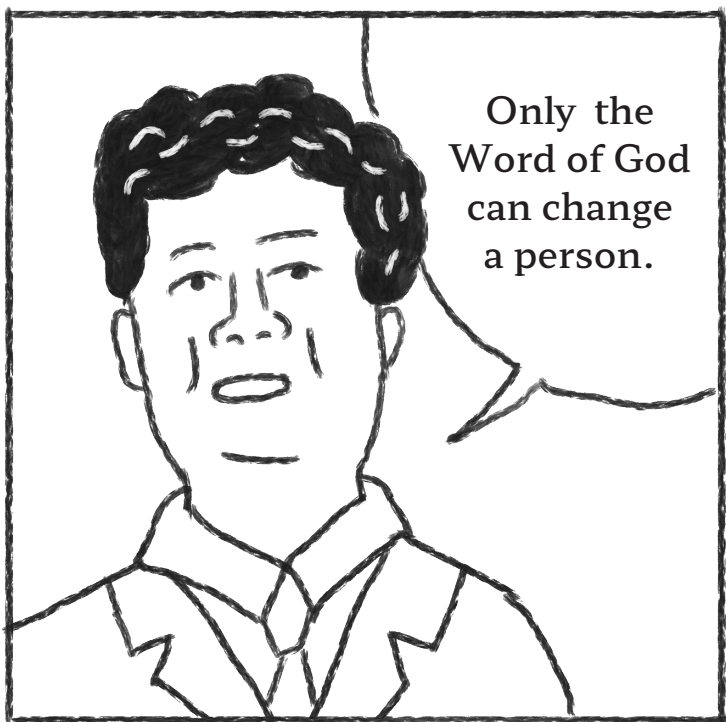
North Korean Martyrs
Cartoon Series



Those Who Returned to North Korea

Joo Gwang-ho

주광호 선생님

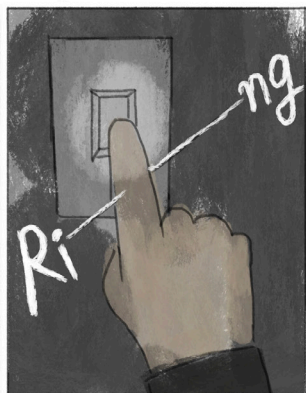


August 8th, 1998 in Jilin, China

It was my first time to meet North Korean defectors

It's my first time meeting North Koreans..
What would they be like?



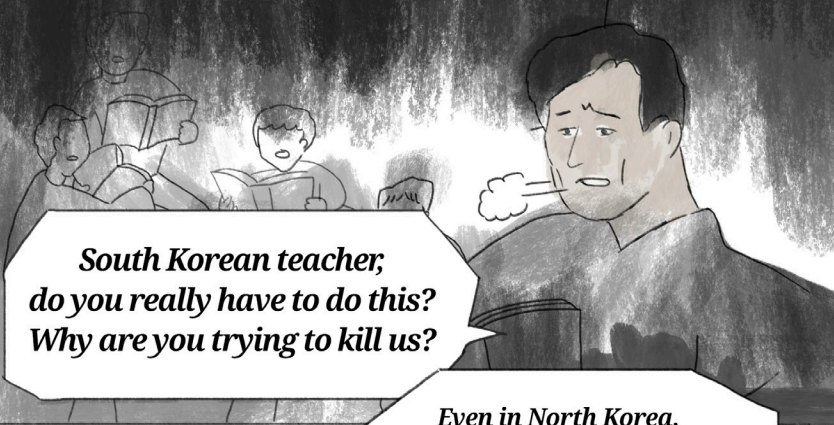


*Welcome, Teacher Choi,
we were waiting for you.*

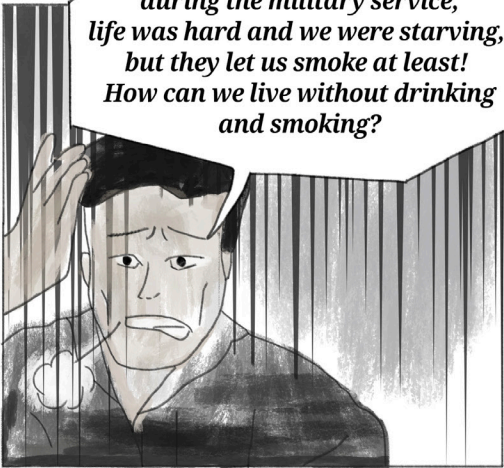
Teacher Joo Gwang-ho

*I'm Missionary
Choi Kwang from Korea.
Nice to meet you all.*


As I started living with North Korean brothers,
we started the Bible Reading classes.
Our daily task would be to get up at 6AM everyday
and read the Bible 8 hours, pray for 2 hours,
and memorize Bible verses.
We also took turns preparing for meals.



*South Korean teacher,
do you really have to do this?
Why are you trying to kill us?*



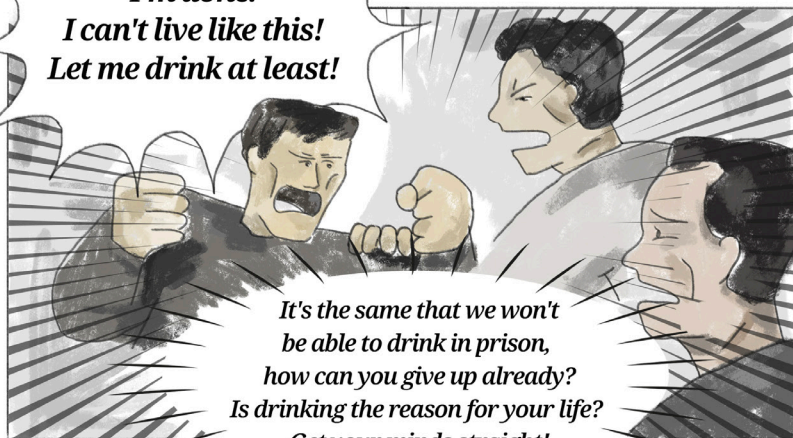
*Even in North Korea,
during the military service,
life was hard and we were starving,
but they let us smoke at least!
How can we live without drinking
and smoking?*



I made them
quit smoking
and drinking as well.

Teacher Gwang-ho helped me lead
the North Korean defectors who were struggling.

***I'm done.
I can't live like this!
Let me drink at least!***



***It's the same that we won't
be able to drink in prison,
how can you give up already?
Is drinking the reason for your life?
Get your minds straight!***

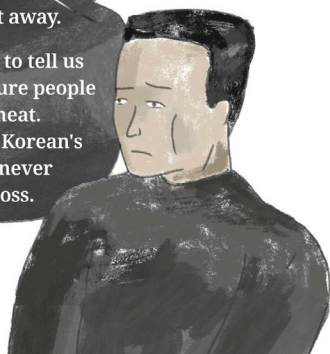
***Teacher, do you know
what it means to be hungry?***

***Old and young,
we're all dying of starvation,
frozen and beaten to death...
Even if we risk our lives to defect,
we're sold around for cheap...***

...

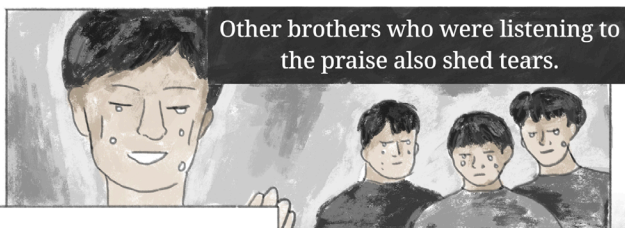
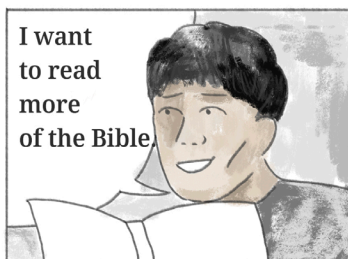
***And if we're
caught and
repatriated,
we're killed right away.***

***North Korea used to tell us
that churches capture people
to sell their meat.
That's why North Korean's
run away whenever
they see a cross.***



For a few months, the brothers read the Bible dozens of times and prayed continuously, and I started to see a clear change in the North Korean brothers.

At one point, they were deeply indulged in the Word of God. As the Word of God went into them, the Juche ideology that had brainwashed them for decades started being washed out. I believe that "the word of God is living and active". (Hebrews 4:12)

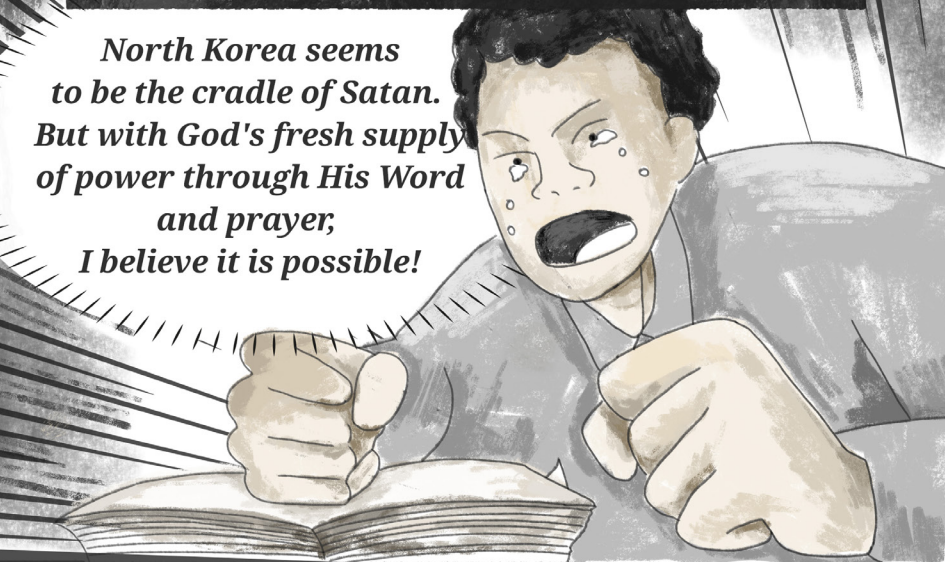


Teacher Joo was excited and told me,

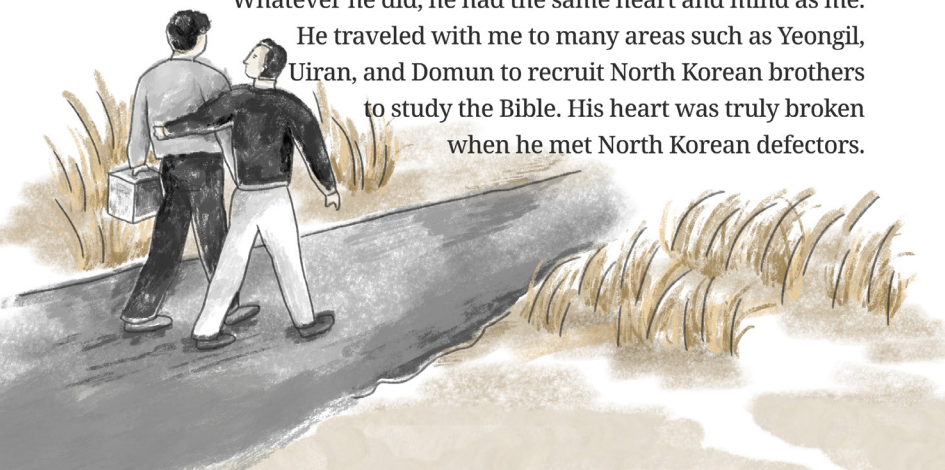


Teacher Joo loved North Korea and the North Korean defectors with the heart of the Lord. Whenever he preached, he often cried and called for the salvation of North Korea.

*North Korea seems
to be the cradle of Satan.
But with God's fresh supply
of power through His Word
and prayer,
I believe it is possible!*



Teacher Joo was a valuable partner in the North Korean defector missions. Whatever he did, he had the same heart and mind as me. He traveled with me to many areas such as Yeongil, Uiran, and Domun to recruit North Korean brothers to study the Bible. His heart was truly broken when he met North Korean defectors.



Then one day, we moved to Jinan City to find a new mission home for the North Korean defector brothers.

*Missionary, there's something I would like to tell you.
I have a fiancé, and I think it's time for me to get married now.
She is someone who studied the Old and New Testament thoroughly
for three months after she defected in Mt. Jangbaek.
I believe God gave me a perfect partner in Christ to work
for the North Korean ministry together.*



So then, Teacher Joo left our mission home to get married to Sister Yoon Young-ok.

In Shanghai, they established another mission home and with his wife, he started North Korean missions again. When he invited me once, there were five sisters gathered to study at the mission home. He went around areas such as Shandong Province, Yanji, and others to bear the works of ministry towards North Korean missions.



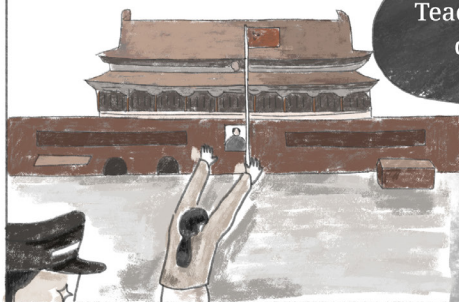
Sister Young-ok, Teacher Joo's wife,
started a fasting prayer 40 days after she gave birth to her daughter, Esther.
Rain or shine, she went out to the shore to pray all night, barely sleeping.

Then one day, she heard a voice from the Lord.

*You are the stepping stone
in North Korean evangelism.
You are the one to prepare
the way of the Lord
like John the Baptist
in that land.*



Not long after that, Sister Young-ok was arrested
in Tiananmen Square by the Chinese public security
while praying all night and was repatriated to North Korea.



Teacher Joo tried in various ways,
desperately to save his wife,
but was not able to do so.



Shortly after Sister Young-ok was arrested, Teacher Joo was also arrested by the Chinese public security. When the Chinese public security arrested him, there was an unprecedented convoy from the North Korean special military that came to China to take him.



I have not heard of them since then.
I heard that their daughter is
living in a far relative's home in China.



I assume Teacher Joo and his wife
would have been martyred.
I have not heard that anyone witnessed
their martyrdom,
but the North Korean government
would not have let them alive.
I missed Teacher Joo very much.

As I was continuing my North Korean ministry,
I was surprised when I heard the stories
of sisters who had defected.
They came to believe in Jesus through
Sister Young-ok who they had met
in the North Korean secret police prison.
Sister Choi told me about Sister Young-ok.



Sister Young-ok was repatriated and taken
to the North Korean secret police prison,
but she did not sleep a single hour and
always kneeled and prayed.
She constantly shared the gospel with
the officers at the prison.

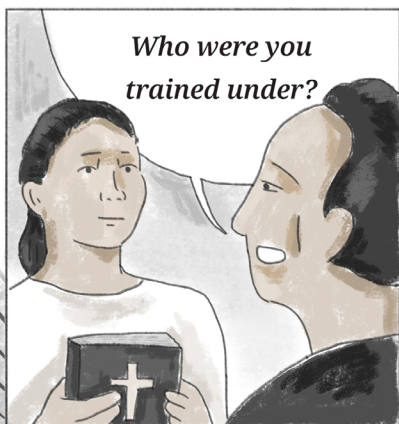


***Jesus never once
denied me.
I cannot deny Jesus either.
You should also try
believing in Jesus.***



Even right before her execution, her attitude did not change at all.
Sister Song, Sister Choi, and many North Korean sisters
who were with her in prison were shocked when they saw this.

After that, I traveled around China to meet with defectors and I came to meet Sister Yun in Harbin. To my surprise, she believed in Jesus and was very knowledgeable about the Bible. I realized that she was not an ordinary person, so I talked to her more. She had come to China to find food after her husband and children starved to death. She told me that she joined a Bible study ministry in China and read the Bible.



At that moment, I doubted what I had just heard. I had met one of the fruits of Teacher Joo whom he had ministered to 10 years ago!



I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat
falls to the ground and dies,
it remains only a single seed. But if it dies,
it produces many seeds. (John 12:24)

As a grain of wheat, Teacher Joo Gwang-ho died
in the soil of North Korea and bore another fruit.
Although he was gone, the faith of martyrdom,
the essence of the gospel of the cross of Jesus,
is still alive in the disciples he left behind.

I thanked the Lord.

Like the voice God gave to Sister Young-ok,
the stepping stones of the evangelization of
North Korea are being built
on the blood of the martyrs.

Teacher Joo Gwang-ho, he is a beautiful soul
that has perished as a kernel of wheat
like Jesus and will be remembered eternally
in heaven.







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