

# Family Suicide Averted

By Lee Jong Ho

"You must not commit suicide," pled the bridge tender as he pulled to safety a despondent man who was about to throw himself into the Willamette River."

At the time I read those words in a little Bible tract, I was planning to commit suicide and kill my wife and son, too. My hopes were blasted, and I had nothing left to live for.

## Knew nothing about God

During my childhood, I never heard my parents pray or saw them read the Bible. Although they were faithful to their boy, they were not faithful to God. They had a large home and many worldly things, but they did not have the love of God in their hearts. They insisted on our going to school every day, but they never urged us to go to Sunday school or church. I received a good education in the best high school and college in Korea, but I knew nothing about God. I was taught to respect and admire great men, but not to honor God. I knew nothing about the judgment of God for evildoing.

I thought churchgoers were weaklings who were looking for a way of escape from their situation in life, and I would have nothing to do with them. Never did I dream of kneeling at an altar of prayer!

In time, I transformed myself from employee to employer. I had learned the value of money, and I enjoyed my business. I had a pleasant home and anticipated making it through life without a bit of trouble. I became very worldly and spent more and more time away from my family. Gambling, drinking, and dancing consumed almost every night. When I did go home, once or twice a week, it seemed more like I was going to a hotel.

## Ruined and alone

As long as my business went well, I had many friends, but one by one they left me when they saw my business going down. Soon I found myself in deep sin and trouble. I was ruined and lost everything. When I had to face financial depression and spiritual loneliness, I was not able to stand. I needed someone to lean upon, but no one could help me.

I tried to bolster myself with drugs and wine, but I could not afford them. I had a wife and a little son, and killing ourselves together seemed the only thing to do. My wife agreed, so we left Seoul and went to Daegu to carry out our plan where we knew no one.

We took a room in a poor, small inn. My little son did not know what was going on, and he wanted to go back to Seoul. Since I was waiting until it was dark to commit suicide, I decided to take him to a nearby children's park during the day—one more time to make him happy.

## A tract with a message for me

However, God was watching out for me. On our way back to the inn, someone handed me an Apostolic Faith tract. I had no interest in it and just put it into my pocket. When we reached the inn, I wanted to write a will for my father before we died. I had paper and an envelope but had trouble finding my pen. In searching my pockets, I found the tract I had been given. It was entitled, "For Another's Crime." I opened it, and I saw those words: "You must not commit suicide." What a surprise! Thank God, He could talk to me through that tract. I read it carefully, from beginning to end. It was the victorious testimony of an ex-convict who had spent many years in prison.

He told of being released from prison, and having no one to help him. For four days he wandered around Portland, Oregon, looking for work. He had nothing to eat and no place to sleep except on some lumber piles at a mill. When he lost hope, he went to the Burnside Bridge to throw himself into the water. After the bridge tender stopped him, he looked up and saw the sign on the Apostolic Faith Church. An unseen Power impelled

him to go to church, and there he prayed and his sins were forgiven. The Blood of Jesus washed his soul as white as snow.

## **I gave up my plan of suicide**

As I read that tract, many words were strange to me. I had never heard about the power of God, but I could see that this man had been given a new start in life. Right there I gave up my plan to commit suicide and, instead, wrote a letter to the Apostolic Faith missionary in Pusan, Korea, whose address was stamped on the tract. A few days later I got an answer, a copy of the Light of Hope paper, and some victorious testimonies of Korean Christians living in Pusan. They thanked God for sweet peace and happiness in their hearts from the moment they had become new creatures in Christ Jesus.

## **Would God forgive me?**

Could such a thing be possible for me? I went to Pusan so I could see those born-again people with my own eyes. I met the missionaries and was invited to their home. They told me of God's power to save and deliver from sin. Conviction began to weigh heavily upon my conscience. I realized I was a condemned sinner, but when I thought of how I had ridiculed God and Christians for thirty-five years, I wondered if He would forgive me.

The brothers and sisters of the church prayed for me. When I saw the tears flowing down the missionary's cheeks as he prayed, I knew he loved me. I began to name my sins to God and surrendered all to Him. As tears flowed, I tried mightily to repent and believe, and our Heavenly Father made the change in my heart! What wonderful peace flowed into me! The smoking, drinking, and drugs that had attached themselves to my life were gone, along with the thought of committing suicide. God gave me power to go and sin no more.

## **The most glorious night**

When I heard I could be sanctified, my heart became hungry again. I consecrated all I had—my wife, my son, my life. God answered my prayer and sanctified me. I started to leave the altar, but there in front of me was my son, and I could hear he was praying for me. I could not leave, so I knelt again. The Holy Spirit filled the church that night. How the blessings rained down! Twelve men and women, including me, received the wonderful baptism of the Holy Ghost. That was the most glorious night of my life.

I had felt so weak and helpless before the Lord. I told Him, "I don't have any knowledge of Your Word, but I want it in my heart. I don't have the wisdom and understanding of Your will, but I want to devote the rest of my life to glorifying You and doing anything You want me to do for the souls of those who are lost and wandering in sin."

The Lord has given me the privilege to work in the Apostolic Faith Church office in Korea. I visit the penitentiaries and hospitals to tell the Good News of salvation from sin. Every Monday I have the privilege of preaching to young people in a children's prison. I am happiest when I can witness to the power of God and glorify Him.

## **Brands from the burning**

I do not have any worldly treasures or valuable things in my house, but the first letter I received from that missionary is framed and posted on my wall, so my family and I will never forget that we were snatched as brands from the burning, and now have the hope of eternal life.

The rest of my life belongs to Jesus. We have been transformed from death to a victorious life, and our rejoicing is in the Lord. What God hath wrought!

*Lee Jong Ho became a minister of the Apostolic Faith work, and served as pastor of the church in Daegu, Korea, until his death.*