

May 19, 1955  
North of the 38th Parallel, Korea

Dear Praying Friends:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ". Greetings from the area of "Pork Chop Hill", "Heart Break Ridge" and "White Horse Mountain".

Several weeks have passed since I shared with you some of the things God has done in this land of opportunity. He has answered your prayers in marvelous ways, praise His Holy Name.

Two area-wide Evangelistic Campaigns in Andong in Central Korea and Yosu in the South-West coast, were blessed of the Lord in unusual ways. The large tent was always too small. Even the 10:30 and 2:30 services overflowed into the large area about the tent. The last morning people sat well out beyond the tent at the 5:30 prayer meeting. There were times when I was really concerned about the physical safety of many as the waves of people pushed toward the tent trying to get a view and to hear. The many who crowded around the platform tent and onto the platform itself from all sides, made me fear it would collapse, though it was constructed of strong poles.

At Andong, it was a thrill to preach at the Easter Sunrise Service at the former Japanese Shrine area on a small mountain to a large gathering. I was amazed as I watched very old men and women climb up the final 153 steps to the level area. It was a beautiful sight to see scores of Christian Young People marching up at 4:30 A.M. with lighted candles and to hear them sing "Christ the Lord is Risen Today". Earlier they had been "caroling" all over the city for 2 hours!

Here my interpreter became violently ill with food poisoning. We almost despaired for his life, but "prayer was made without ceasing" and God raised him up again, and now he is fine again.

The chairman of the Yosu meetings reported a total of 544 signed conversion slips in 5 days of meetings. I was speaking to Christians on soul winning one morning, so I did not give an invitation for unbelievers. However, the deacons, deaconesses, and elders were doing personal work while we were singing the closing song. Imagine my feeling of shame, when they reported to me at the close of the meeting that 42 people had professed to receive Christ and had signed and handed them decision slips!

Some of you may wonder why the services are not longer in duration. With 4 services a day, a week of meetings almost equals a month at home. People coming long distances cannot stay longer for financial reasons and duties at home. Our longest series has been 10 days.

While in the Yosu area, it was my privilege to visit a large leprosarium. It was a thrill to hear 5-600 lepers sing and pray. An elder with disfigured face gave a moving address of welcome. There are over 700 members of this one church, all lepers. On a nearby island there is one church with 4,200 members, all lepers! The pastor of this first leper church, had 2 grown sons killed by a communist in 1948. Later he won that man to Christ and adopted him as his own son and took him into his own home!! That man later went off to Bible Institute. In 1950 other communists took this pastor and shot him. The lepers built a nice house for his widow, but she refuses to live in it. She is not worthy! What a story of Christlike forgiveness, love, martyrdom and humility!! These people put me to shame on every hand.

Another phase of my ministry here has been to the students. During these days I preached the gospel to a total of nearly 10,000 middle school, high school, and college young people. Several hundred professed to accept Christ.

For the past 3 weeks I have been on a continuous evangelistic tour of the Korean Army. In some ways this has been the most wonderful privilege of all. I have marveled over and over again. I have traveled hundreds of miles in my own Ford and Austin trucks which I sent funds for last year. Traveling in Korea is hard to describe. Mountains, mountains, mountains! Such roads, twisting, turning, narrow, high, dangerous! Words fail to picture them.

What a helpless feeling to be stuck in a rising river with the whole truck down in just as far as it could sink. Or to have flat tires in those mountains where service stations as such have never been heard of. (I've had 3 on this last trip) But God! In every village you fear running over the swarming children who are so unpredictable. Hundreds of miles have been traveled in army jeeps, airplane and helicopter.

In these services with the Army, as many services as possible were arranged for each day. Up here on the front lines I had 7 services yesterday. Six were all my strength would allow today, although the Chaplain asked me to take a seventh at 9 P.M.

The attendances have varied from about 30 men to over 2,000, perhaps averaging close to 1,000. Usually about 5-10% are Christians, about 2% have a New Testament. The response up here in the front line divisions of this the 4th largest army in the world is almost unbelievable. Only eternity will reveal how many thousands first heard the gospel and were saved during these weeks.

I have been surprised to find so many Generals and other high ranking officers who are real believers in Christ. Today I asked a 2 star General if he were a Christian. "Yes" he replied, "I surely am and my wife is a deaconess and my father and mother are earnest Christians".

Last Sunday a Christian General and I were sitting outside an army chapel chatting before the service about the Lord and the churches. He said to me, "I was taught from childhood that a true Christian should not drink liquor, smoke or curse. But your American officers came here, some go to church, but they drink, smoke, curse and commit adultery. Are we to believe that these things are alright for Christians to do?" God help America!

What a sight it is to see everywhere up here on the front lines in these rugged mountains the bell tower and cross on the army churches. After I preached to several hundred men 2 days ago, the commanding officer (a full Col.) spoke to his men saying he had sinned against God and his men in failing to build a chapel for them to worship in. He would do it soon. Another Col. came to me in another area and said, "I have not been a believer in Christ, but today I have decided to believe and be a Christian."

Oh, my friends, there are so many wonderful things that happen everyday, I can hardly believe they are true. How I praise Him for this marvelous privilege He has given me.

Here on the front, I have gone right to the D.M.Z. (demilitarized zone) and looked across at the Reds. I have gone to the highest observation post, to the individual men at their gun positions, thru the mine fields, trenches, bunkers, etc., handing out Christian booklets and tracts and saying a word for Jesus. How I thank God for those who have made possible this literature. I feel my work would be only half as effective without it. Life Messengers in Seattle if furnishing me a million copies of Here's How and I have many others too.

It has been such a joy to visit the 3 orphanages and about 188 children that you have helped me to care for. However, it is so inadequate. They are so crowded you won't believe it. In Yosu 17 children sleep in a room  $8\frac{1}{2}$  by  $8\frac{1}{2}$  feet! In Samchok 40 boys sleep in a room 18 by 15 feet! 21 girls sleep in a room 12 by 12 feet! These rooms also serve as living room, dining room and school room!!

They are not getting enough good food. Their clothing is pitifully poor and few. But they are not dying on the streets or kicked about in the gutters. They sing Christian songs, quote Bible verses and move me to tears. Thank God for your help, but how much more we need to do the job right. I should tell you that not one worker gets any salary for his work. Just their daily needs.

I have been able to visit many of the 24 evangelists some of you have been supporting. About 17 new churches have been organized in less than a year by these men.

Some are already self-supporting, having built their own church building. Others are meeting in army tents we have bought, or in homes. These men, living so sacrificially, clasp my hands with theirs, thank me and you over and over, for your support, and when we part we are both in tears. Some of them have their wives and children in North Korea (where they are starving), others have had family members killed.

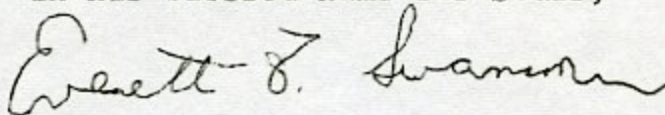
You have told me of praying for my health and protection. Although without a doubt this has been the most strenuous task I have ever undertaken, thank God, apart from a cold when I first came, I have felt fine. I have had three narrow escapes. One when the military plane landed on a rough field on Chedue Island and bounced 30 feet in the air and another when my Korean driver fell fast asleep while driving up in the mountains on a dangerous road with no rails or protection. Had I grabbed the wheel 2 seconds later I probably wouldn't be writing to you now! Another time recently, the Lord helped me to discover that the arm on the steering apparatus had loosened and could have fallen off at any time. So, thanks again for your prayers.

In another month my work will be completed and I will be back in Chicago, God willing. Already there are signs of the rainy season beginning which will make travel and outdoor meetings impossible.

Please continue to pray for my evangelistic ministry at home, the orphans, evangelists and literature ministry here. As God enables and leads you, please help us in this work in Korea. Is there any place where a missionary dollar will go farther and reach and win more to Christ? Yet, the gospel must be preached in all the world.

Paul said, "For what is our hope, or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" So your rejoicing and mine is in the thousands won to Christ in Korea.

In His blessed Name for Souls,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Everett F. Swanson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Everett F. Swanson