

Recollections of Rev. Swanson

Rev. Kim Dae Hae of K-18 Bethany Christian Children's Home in Kimchun speaking recollections of early days of Compassion in Korea when he met Rev. Swanson and worked together with him.

I am Kim Dae Hae, superintendent of K-18 Bethany Christian Children's Home in Kimchun. I met Rev. Swanson in July, 1953 at Sangju town, Kyungsangbuk-do. He visited with our home June the next year for the first time. I lived with my children carrying A-frame on my shoulders for firewoods and fed ourselves with sweet-potatoes. 135 children lived without others' help under the tent. Once we had downfall of rain at night and the rain washed away shoes and tents and left us bare. In October, Rev. Swanson helped us to have 100 pyung house where my children could shelter. Sometimes there was no food to eat. He helped us to buy rice, and even we could keep some in store room. We could survive. He acted like a father in a family, a real servant of the Lord. He is in heaven now, but I feel as if he always walks very close to me.

A certain pastor with Evangelist Kang reported Rev. Swanson that I misused the money and bought a pear orchard for myself neglecting children. One night suddenly Rev. Swanson came to Kimchun and called me at an hotel. I found the pastor and Evangelist Kang were also there as witnesses. Rev. Swanson asked me "Where did you use money?" I answered "I spent to feed my children." Then asked them "Can you tell where the orchard is?" They answered "We don't know exactly, we just guessed it." Rev. Swanson realized that their report was not true and asked them again "Are you Christians? Repent, and apologize to Kim Dae Hae." Afterwards he supported me in full.

I belonged to Kyungsuh Presbytery and had 5 separate terms of chairmanship in the Presbytery. There were some criticisms against me saying how can a pastor operate a children's home and that's not a proper occupation for a pastor. I brought this matter to Rev. Swanson and he consoled me with good words and said the Lord will judge who served more for Him in the earth.

Now here is Elder Lim Sung Un, superintendent of K-12 Hillside Christian Children's Home in Pusan.

I am the superintendent of K-12 Hillside Christian Children's Home. I am an elder at my church. My home country is in North Korea and I came South alone during the Korean war time. The war was at its high time and the port city of Pusan was full of refugee people, particularly war orphans. I was much moved to see these children in the plight of war. I made up my mind to work at wandering children's home which later became a Compassion home K-25. I took 25 children of them who were in middle of high school age but could not be in school. I provided shacks for them in June 1954, and this is the start of my home at Moonhyun Dong which is located in the east part of Pusan.

Many orphans, wandering children and orphanages for them in Pusan. Children in the home just survived without any help but there were some CARE boxes. One lady who was a CARE sponsor knew our home situation and wrote to Rev. Swanson who in turn sent me a letter in January, 1957 asking to tell him my home situation and whether I know any missionary people stationed in Pusan. I shared this with Rev. Bruce Hunt who was a missionary once lived in North Korea when I was there. He gladly agreed to help on behalf of me to write to Rev. Swanson.

In May, 1957 he started sending support to us and the lives of the children changed much better. I could send some to middle school. He told me he will visit Korea in April, 1958. He visited with us May the 1st and found 25 children under 26-pyung shack with 3 staff. He asked me whether I had any plan for the home. I said "yes, but I have no way of accomplishing any plans." After he visited our home for the first time on the 1st of May, 1958, he held revival meeting in Yongnak Church in Pusan. The church was full of refugee people. Wherever he went he had devotion first and then started business. This shows his Christian attitude. On June the 6th he called me again up to Seoul and told me "Your home looked like a hell to me while your children looked like angels. Here is \$4000 check for your new children's home. The fund was from one of my friends."

With the fund we could have this beautiful home on April 16th, 1960. We had the dedication ceremony of our new home. Rev. Swanson attended that ceremony with his wife and gave us encouraging messages. Since then this home has been the nest of 100 children and the staff. He visited with us seven times. The last one was on the 19th of April, 1965. He returned to the States saying he will visit again with four people in November same year.

In November the tour group came as planned to Pusan but without Rev. Swanson. Instead, all of sudden Pusan superintendents were told about his passing away when we were at Dongnae Tourist Hotel to meet the tour group. To this sudden news, all the superintendents cried in loud voices and did not know how to meet the situation. The tour people who did not have much personal understandings about Rev. Swanson were so amazed and impressed about reactions of Koreans to the news, they made a donation on the spot. And later with the fund Compassion could build the memorial building for him which is still used by Compassion Korea Office until now.

Many years have passed since his passing away. Children, superintendents and other Koreans remember his great dedication for the people of Korea. I personally respect his wonderful personality. He had such a frugal personal life. When President Yoon was about to confer a medal to him at the presidential residence, there was a required formality to wear dark suit. He had to have one made for him right away. That was his first experience ever had a suit made. He said "I never had my suit custom made but bought from ready-made ones." Many people can have their suits made at tailors in Korea but he never had one.

He was humble to anyone. He said "my contribution to Korean children is very small one compared to the great services of superintendents and of Korean government."

Finally I believe the principles Rev. Swanson had set up for Compassion will last long. He was a real conservative Christian and he was humble before anyone, had frugal life, a man of great love for the Korean children and people. This will be long remembered by many Koreans. God bless the future ministry of Compassion.

Now this is Elder Yoon Byung Jin, the Chairman of K-60 Chunnam Children's Home in Junju.

The circumstances of first contact with Rev. Swanson was made by Rev. Brown, a southern Presbyterian missionary stationed in Kwangju who wrote to him on behalf of my home.

In February, 1960, Rev. Swanson visited our home for the first time. I met him again in March at Taegu. I could get the first support in the amount of \$100. Then sponsorship grew up to for 500 children and he also allowed me a loan in the amount of \$ 50,000 with which we could build dining room, worship room, kitchen, children's rooms and a store room tearing down the old quarters. I could send all children up to high school. Once I planned to build his bronze statue on my yard in appreciation of him which was not realized though. I think that my home changed from hell to heaven since support from Compassion.

He appeared to me like a saint. Wherever he went he emphasized that to eat, clothe and study are important, but above all to believe in Jesus Christ as one's personal savior should come first. He impressed me very much. He was a real good shephard who can even sacrifice himself for his sheep. He had a favorite hymn titled "I was Wandering Sheep" which became my favorite hymn too. Thank you.

Now Elder Park Hun Chul of K-10 Love and Hope Children's Home in Taegu speaking his recollections of early days of Compassion.

I am elder Park Hun Chul of K-10 Love and Hope Children's Home in Taegu. My home started in January 1952 by the help of the 50th United States Air Force stationed in Korea during the war time. There were 92 children and hard life with them until 1954. I knelt my knee before the Lord and I prayed to him for His guidance. In December 1956 one of my seminary friends told me to write to Rev. Swanson. I wrote to him telling him my home situation with my Christian testimony which was acknowledged by him after 12 days on December 17th. The content of letter was full of encouragements to me, and his decision to help my home. I was rejoiced with tears in my eyes and thanked God. I prepared 78 case histories and sent them to him. I wrote him letters almost every week and he replied to my letters. He first sent \$1.50 per child for December through Rev. George Wilson, the accountant at the Presbyterian Mission in Taegu.

My letter translator was a Buddhist. While he was handling correspondence between Rev. Swanson and myself, he was so moved by the contents of the correspondences. He became a Christian. Now he serves as a deacon at Bongchun Dong Church in Seoul, and his whole family members became Christians too.

The second support arrived in the early part of January. \$3.00 per child. Early summer of 1958 he came to Taegu and stayed at Rev. Rice's residence. He visited our home and had devotion. I still remember the verses he quoted from Luke 10 verses 25 to 37 A Good Samaritan. He sang a solo "There Were Ninety and Nine" and he patted the head of each child showing his warm love to them. He used a 2 1/2 ton truck driven by Rev. Kim Sa Kwan of Evangelistic Association for a trip to Jin Hae, Soonchun, Kangwon Do and Seoul. He visited our home again and asked me to draw a plan for bathroom and home repair. The fund was sent to me immediately. He also had a good memory. Once he saw or heard he never forgot after many years. Sometimes he reminded me. I had special favor from him. Once I suggested I need more study for the better service to the children and the Lord. He paid me my tuition and I could enroll to the Social Work Department of Central Seminary in Seoul and could finish the course.

Compassion opened Taegu office and many homes became affiliated with Compassion. Then the office moved to Seoul. Many troubles followed. And I realized that the reality is so far apart from my ideals and finally told Rev. Swanson "I'd better refrain getting support from Compassion, sir." His answer was "I decided Compassion support for your home no one else." And then he gave me kind consolation and good words. His kind look and voice still linger around me.

Now you are listening the voice of Rev. Swanson singing "The Old Fashioned Home."

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