

Los Angeles Family Church: Susan Lee's Seonghwa was Held Beautifully

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Last Saturday, April 9, the Seonghwa Ceremony was held in honoring and celebrating the life of Mrs. Susan Lee. The Han Kook Mortuary chapel was overflowed with so many people participating.

Rev. Chang Woon Jeong, KEA Pastor, sent us a message expressing his deepest gratitude to L.A. Family Church members who showed sincere support and love. Here is Rev. Jeong's Seonghwa message for Mrs. Lee. Please share it with others.

[Rev. Jeong's Seonghwa Message for Mrs. Susan Lee](#)

Thank you.

Seong Hwa sermons for Mrs. Susan Lee's Seong Hwa

Rev. Jeong, Korean Family Church of Los Angeles

"...That, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit." (Ephesians 4:22)

When Mrs. Susan Lee experienced her stroke, it seems she visited the spiritual world. She said she met God and Jesus there. Before ascending, she was granted a two to three month period to tidy up things she had left on the earth. What did she come back to organize? Was it to work on balances of her bank accounts? Or clean up her house? While staying in the rehabilitation facility, she communicated through writings with her family as she could not speak. One day, she wrote down a list of names on a piece of paper. She wrote many "thank you" notes stating how grateful she felt. Hearing about such stories, I understood her return and what she had to tidy up in her life. I presumed that she came back to pass her last farewell to people in her heart.

I believe people who are present here today had a strong tie with Mrs. Susan Lee during her lifetime. So, I think Mrs. Susan Lee would like to take this opportunity to greet you all. She would be saying, "Thank you, I am grateful, I was truly happy to have a beautiful relationship with you all". On her behalf, I greet you.

Each person has unique DNA. That DNA reveals the characteristics of a person in her lifetime. What was Mrs. Susan Lee's DNA? Her parents fought for Korean independence during the Japanese invasion. To what extent did her parents fight for the Korean independence? I once visited her house and hanging on the wall, there was an old black and white photo of a group of people. When I looked closely, I saw the face of Mr. Kim Goo (representative of the Provisional Government of Korea during the Japanese colonial period) in it. When I asked what kind of photo it was, she said that it was taken at her aunt's wedding. Mr. Kim and other members of the Provisional Government came to visit and celebrate her aunt's wedding. A young Susan Lee was also present in that photo. Because she is a daughter of such parents, her DNA carried the essence of patriotism, justice, dedication and service. She was smart with good grades and attended Yonsei University.

The 4.19 Revolution (the Korean democratization movement) took place in the 1960s. She participated in protest marches. Apparently, she not only participated but seemed to have played a role as a very central figure in that protest. Because of that, she was eventually expelled from the university. In today's language, she was a Student Activist. One can also say, she is the first generation of Student Activists in South Korea. This DNA of patriotism, justice, devotion and service was always reflected in her life. She has lived through this reflection of her DNA even after immigrating to the United States. The previous photo slide show and her biography show how powerfully she has lived in the Los Angeles Korean-American community.

She has been an active member of the American Independence Movement Bereaved Association, Peace Ambassador, National Freedom Movement Headquarters, and Peaceful Unification Advisory Council. The hallmarks of these groups are patriotism, peace and unity. Her idea of homeland was not just a country of Korea, but a homeland that embraces people of the world and shares the Korean ideal of peace-loving with the world. It was not a narrow-minded nationalism, but of a heart that embraces the

world. She worked while dreaming of such a country. So she was not only surrounded by Koreans but also by people of different nationalities. Americans, Native Americans, Japanese, Chinese, French and Africans. It wasn't just a "hi, Susan" passerby greeting level of relationship. People would meet her as if they had met someone they were very happy with and longed for. She would buy them a meal. If she has even a small thing, she gave it to them. She was also an interreligious person. She got along with the Buddha's disciples, and lived without borders with people of Catholicism, Christianity, and Islam. She had no barriers to her religion because she had the consciousness that all of them were children of God, and therefore her brothers and sisters. She treated people transcending religion and believed that to be patriotic one must be inter-religious, inter-national, inter-racial, and inter-partisan.

She loved Korea very much. It was her patriotism to let the American people know the spirit, mind, and culture of Korea. So she opened the Sunhwa Korean Language School. Studying at Korean language school, one might think students are only 1.5, 2 or 3rd generation Korean immigrants. However, more than 90% of the students at the Korean language school she founded are non-Koreans: Americans, Japanese, Middle Easterners, Europeans, Chinese and other Asians. Earlier, we heard a retrospective from one of her Korean school students. Ten years ago, "condolence performances" thanking Korean War veterans were held by the Little Angels Dance Troupe in Los Angeles and San Diego. At that time, she became a preparatory committee member and did a great job in inviting U.S. veterans and Korean veterans who had served in the Korean War. She hosted more than 300 veterans, and as a result, more than 3,000 Korean War veterans and their families gathered at the Santa Ana Grand Theatre. She invited the veterans who shed blood to protect her country with a grateful heart. She took the lead in disseminating the spirit and culture of Korea that contains compassion and filial piety.

Wasn't Mrs. Susan Lee's life wonderful? She was always well-groomed. She carried herself with elegance and a well-organized appearance in Korean society. She wasn't just gorgeous on the outside. She lived fully-filled with inner values. She owned her DNA expressed in patriotism, justice, devotion and service. To sum up patriotism, justice, devotion, and service in one word, it is "love". When she regained her consciousness once after she fell, she told to her family that the best life is love. Live in love. She lived a life of love and left a wonderful message to we who remain here. I believe all of you remembered her life as such and attended today missing her. There is a Korean proverb that says, "When a prime minister's dog dies, mourners flock to reach his threshold, but when a prime minister dies, not even an ant walks away". But seeing how many of you attended today for Mrs. Susan Lee, she seems to have lived a good life.

Let's recall this verse from a letter that Paul sent to the saints while he was in prison: "Put off your old self, which is corrupt according to the lusts of temptation" (Ephesians 4:22). What do people risk their lives to pursue? When giving a retrospective, one does not mention about a life in a large mansion, ownership of a luxury car, love for luxury goods, or how many people bowed their heads in front of that person. If one says such things, the person will be cursed - why did the person live like that? Cursed because such a life is not something one will take to the spirit world. As Paul said, they are all things to be thrown away, namely, garbage. Most people desperately tie themselves to such garbage that will be thrown away when going to the spirit world. By the way, what was the content of the biographies or retrospectives that Mr. Min or Mr. Choi talked about today? They said what she lived for: a life of service, a life of sincerity, and a life of love. Why? Because these are the assets you will take with you to the spirit world. What is the legacy of bank accounts that Jesus left behind? What are the number of houses that he left behind? Did the Buddha leave the legacy of his authority? He threw away the wealth

and authority that he would inherit and lived with one piece of clothing. What did these people carry to the spiritual world? Love, mercy, care, devotion, and sincerity. They took those to the spiritual world. That is why they are called the great people, Saints.

Mrs. Susan Lee lived her youth to create a Republic of Korea where justice and democracy are achieved. She continued her revolutionary life from Korea to the United States and lived her patriotic life where she devoted herself to serving the Korean-American community in Los Angeles. She lived her life of love. She is the one who has the right things to take to the spirit world rather than garbage. Jesus is the Messiah who lived for the whole of mankind, but she can be called the Little Messiah for our town here. She lived her life with holiness. We can express this life as Seong Hwa(聖和). It means holy ['Seong'(聖)], reconciled harmony ['hwa'(和)] in Chinese character, and the meaning is “a harmonious life for holy devotion”. This means that she resembled God's holiness and lived a holy life of love, which is God's nature. I want to express that the meaning of her Seong Hwa is that she lived a life of true love on earth that blossomed and bore such fruits.

She is the one in control of her life. As I said at the beginning, she said that she fell down and went to heaven and saw God and Jesus. She's got something to clean up on the ground and she's been granted two or three months, she said. She came back, cleaned up and determined that she had no reason to be on this earth any longer. Then she asked twice to stop her medication a week before her death. That is, she welcomed the day of her departure by herself. She knew that there was not only this world, but that there are days with God in the next world, and she did not consider her death as the end. She thought it as a new birth into another world. So, while she was at the rehabilitation hospital, one day she wrote “Reborn” and expressed that she will be reborn.

Does life end when you die? Life has three eras. Ten months in our mother's womb, one hundred years on earth, and then one goes to the other world. On earth, death is an eternal parting, but in the other world, it is birth. According to the other world, death is not the end. It is a new beginning. “Reborn”, as she wrote herself. It's like getting married in another world. It is a place to return to God's arms and enjoy eternal life with God. So, death does not mean the end of life, funeral or eternal farewell. You will become an adult and live a new life. With that in mind, her family dressed her in her white wedding dress.

It may be sad, regretful, and tearful for us to send her to the other world, because we cannot see the other world with our blinded spiritual eyes. But if we know the principles of life and that there is another world, it is a moment to rejoice and a place to applaud. It is a moment when we should shed tears of joy, not sorrow. I would appreciate if you could send her away with such feelings.

Thank you.