

COVID-19 and Sunday Service Culture of the Cheon Il Guk Settlement Era

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To prevent the spreading of COVID-19, the Korean church made a choice and decision. However, it also detected confusion and division because of the difference between theology and faith. A conflict arose between two opinions -- one, that it cannot be called a church service if people do not gather, and the other, that church service should be done online to fulfill social responsibility and be considerate.

Acts of the Apostles 8:1 "And Saul was consenting to his death. And on that day a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the region of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles." The church in Jerusalem scattered due to persecution, and because of this scattering, they were able to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. A crisis became an opportunity. Today, we have the same opportunity. Humanity is now scattered throughout a wider world, and the opportunity has come to convey the grace and love of True Parents through the Internet. Online ministry, which links on-site church services to one another, has become a top priority, and the development of preaching and video content, small group service activities, online registration, online pastoral visits, and online home church services is being carried out.

COVID-19 made people realize the importance of family, and the focus of ministry has been on the family ever since. We must know that it is an era where we should work hard to establish a healthy church and a happy family community, and coherent ministry plans should be managed in a balanced manner.

In a pastoral environment in which online and off-line church service cultures are compatible, the Family Federation has been conducting in-depth research and making changes in the church service culture after

the announcement of the Heavenly Parent's Holy Community on May 8, 2020. One could say that Heavenly Parent's Holy Community is a big umbrella for all religions and sects to come under.

Church service in the era of Heavenly Parent's Holy Community is divided into two. One is the church services held on Sundays, a tradition of the New Testament Age, and the other is the Cheonbo Family Church services held on An Shi Il, a tradition of the Cheon Il Guk era.

True Mother said she would advance the providence so that at least one-third of the world's eight billion will know our Heavenly Parent. To achieve that, the Family Federation must convert the church services held on Sundays, a tradition of the New Testament age, to open church services. An open church service integrates with the concept of peace that all mankind desires. It has the character of a "peace church service," and teaches people about Heavenly Parent. A Cheonbo family church service has the character of attendance, and it is centered on An Shi Il, which was established by True Parents and comes every eight days. As a church service that encourages responsibility, mission, and determination as owners of Cheon Il Guk, it should educate people about the ultimate truth, such as the Heavenly Parent, the ideal of creation, True Parents' ideal, and the three great blessings.

In order to more actively respond to the social distancing situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Family Federation is promoting the online two-way hope-filled church service using Peacelink, which is produced by the International Headquarters Global Media Center, and which opened the era of online broadcasting through Boda.zone, YouTube, etc. We are also trying to make changes throughout the church service, including the program order, sermons, praise time and weekly reports.

Church growth is essential to fulfill the provincial plan of one family under Heavenly Parent; church service is at the center of that. Until now, it might have been a duty-oriented church service that required people to attend, but now it is time to actively change the constitution of Sunday service so that it can be converted to a church service that people want to go to.

The structure of the heavenly Gyeongsang nation's hope-filled, forward looking church service held on January 17 included video (HJ Global News), hyojeong meditation, an opening declaration, respectful bows, the Cheon Il- Guk national anthem, the Family Pledge, a report prayer, Hyojeong Sharing, a sermon and a benediction, a reading from True Parents' teachings, fellowship, three cheers of eok mansei, a bow and a closing declaration.

The heavenly Korea Family Federation conducted a hope-filled church service in five districts. Since the essence of church service is to meet Heavenly Parent and True Parents in our daily lives, the five districts should build a strong church with True Parents' teachings and the Holy Spirit, so that the Sunday and An Shi Il church services are able to restore the essence of church services.