***1st Wednesday Prayer Hour – July 2018***

*MMI keeps the first Wednesday of the month as a day for corporate prayer. The hour set aside is 9.00am-10.00am, but for those who are not able to join in prayer then, please use these notes to pray for an hour at some time during the day.*

*“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord…” (Psalm 33, v12)*

The Military Evangelism Observation (MEO) Programme 2018, so wonderfully conceived and hosted by MSO on Osanri Prayer Mountain, near Seoul, has now finished; and I, like my fellow instructors and delegates am en route home. My overwhelming impression is of a nation blessed by God since the ravages of the Korean War, the 68th Anniversary of whose commencement we marked yesterday (25th June). The miracle of the Republic of Korea is mirrored in the distinctly Christian heart of its Armed Forces. Here, soldiers from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, through Commanding Generals (every CGs of 1st Korean Marine Division has been a Christian since their founding in 1949), to NCOs and Privates will express publicly a deep personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Korea, it seems to me is a crucible of faith, a nation from whom we can learn what it is to be a society that is distinctly Christian. Despite the presence of other faiths, and of evident secularism, Korea remains ‘the Lord’s’.

*We need to pray for this globally strategic nation, particularly for: peaceful Reunification; reduced tensions between North and South; for genuine nuclear disarmament in the North; and for freedom of religion and human rights for the North Korean people. And let us not forget the MSO, the KMCF and those hundreds of young men baptised this week as they enter military service.*

*And what of the state of our own nation by comparison?*

*Alongside current strategic events on the Peninsula, let us also pray for the recently established North Korean MCF, whose advent, fashioned by former soldiers of the DPRK now resident in the South, was recently announced. A portent of things to come? We pray it might be so.*

MEO’s objective is to assist in the establishment and growth of MCFs by acquainting potential MCF leaders with Korean military evangelism and with subjects related to a healthy working MCF. Subjects include how to conduct a Pray and Plan meeting or lead an Indictive Bible Study. The programme is significant for many reasons. Here are three:

**Discipleship**. MEO provides a radical review of Christian discipleship, taking us back to the basics of what being a disciple of Jesus is about; and points to the supreme importance of fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). The teaching focus is on making delegates more faithful, better equipped disciples, prepared and inspired to *preach* the Gospel, *baptise* converts and *teach* them to obey all Jesus has shown us in the Scriptures. The essential urgency of this Commission, *in its entirety*, is strongly and passionately reinforced.

*Let us pray for the delegates of MEO 18, from Russia, Ukraine, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Armenia, Albania, Liberia and UK, that they will obey afresh the Lord’s command and that the witness of their MCFs will be significantly blessed as a result. The story of the Ghanaian MCF, rejuvenated through the passion of their delegate in 2017 is testimony to this.*

*And a prayerful personal health check in this regard is no bad thing!*

**Fellowship**. The fellowship at MEO, a blending of international delegates with Korean MEO and MCF staff, is rich and sweet. For everyone, this is a taste of heaven and is also of enduring significance. Delegates, who can feel isolated and beset by local difficulties, can expand their network of Christian friends, be assured of prayer and understand that their own struggles are not unique. A shared mission, shared burdens and an expanded network of contacts is manna for many who attend.

*We need to pray afresh for the MCFs in our regions, remembering also those countries, particularly in the Middle East, where such fellowship is not humanly possible. Please pray for developing networks of prayer within and between MCFs and between MCFs and military Chaplains.*

*Pray also for the precious triangular relationship between MMI, MSO and ACCTS. At MEO 18 we agreed that ever closer collaboration, in the spirit of 1 Corinthians 3: 5-9, was vital in enabling the Lord to bring the growth that this passage anticipates. We are excited about this opportunity to work together in the Lord’s harvest field.*

**Vision**. The deep roots of Christian faith in South Korea are an inspiration to all who investigate them and an object lesson of what God can do in a nation. MEO has been a complete ‘eye-opener’ for many, from attendance at exuberant worship services involving 15,000 servicemen and women; to the passionate faith of our Korean hosts. This, coupled with the opportunity to participate actively in baptising hundreds of young Christian soldiers, kindles a vision of the possibilities to do something significant in the delegates’ own country – what the Lord might be able to accomplish at home with their collaboration. This is the dynamic effect of MEO; and the call on individual lives this past ten days has been evident. It has been a privilege to pray into the lives of MCF members and young African Chaplains who have caught a glimpse of a Spirit-breathed vision for service at home.

*Blessed indeed is the nation whose God is the Lord! This resonates deeply with MMI’s aspirational vision of seeing changed lives shape nations. What greater motivation to pray for the nations can there be?*

In January 2018, we sensed at the Staff Retreat at Ladywell that the Lord might be doing a ‘new thing’ (Isaiah 43:19). We do not yet perceive what this is and I believe that the Lord is calling us to a time of prayerful listening over this summer and autumn to the Holy Spirit; more of which soon. As we do so, MEO reminds us of the possibilities under God that await those who take Him at His Word and, having seen what God can do, are in faith to see them come to pass.

*Roddy Porter (CE/TL)*

Pray for July:

East Africa Prayer Convention, Max and Hermann attending.

Visit to Ethiopia (Max & Hermann)

MMI day of Prayer & Fasting on 10th July

Summer Adventure Retreat Preparations

ACCTS English camp in Moldova