

Week 14 The Korean Church and Historical Theology

1. Overview

- 1) This lecture examines the formation and development of the Korean Church from a historical–theological perspective.
 - 2) It analyzes the influence of Western theology and reinterprets the Korean Church through the lens of Paul’s Gospel.
-

2. Objectives

- 1) Understand the historical development of the Korean Church
 - 2) Analyze the influence of Western theology
 - 3) Evaluate theological strengths and weaknesses
 - 4) Reinterpret the Korean Church through Paul’s Gospel
-

3. Lecture Content

- 1) Origins and Growth of the Korean Church
 - (1) Introduction of Christianity in the late 19th century
 - (2) Early revival movements (1907 Pyongyang Revival)
 - (3) Bible–centered faith and prayer culture
 - (4) Faith under Japanese occupation

Characteristics

- (1) Lay–centered faith
 - (2) Strong prayer and revival focus
 - (3) Emphasis on biblical authority
-

2) Reception of Western Theology

- (1) Formation of Presbyterian and Methodist traditions
- (2) Influence of Reformed and Evangelical theology
- (3) Liberal vs. Fundamentalist controversies

Major Streams

- (1) Reformed Orthodoxy
- (2) Evangelicalism
- (3) Pentecostal/Charismatic movements

3) Rapid Growth (1960–1990)

- (1) Unprecedented church growth
- (2) Emergence of megachurch structures
- (3) Unique practices (early morning prayer, all-night prayer)

Strengths

- (1) Passion and commitment
- (2) Strong missionary vision

Weaknesses

- (1) Quantitative growth focus
- (2) Lack of theological depth
- (3) Authoritarian leadership

4) Contemporary Crisis

- (1) Decline in public trust
- (2) Secularization and materialism
- (3) Denominational divisions

Key Issues

- (1) Distortion of the Gospel
- (2) Formalized faith
- (3) Leader-centered structures

5) Historical–Theological Evaluation

- (1) The Korean Church can be characterized as:
 - ① A receiver of Western theology
 - ② A revival-centered church
 - ③ An organization-centered church

Limitations

- ① Doctrine-centered over biblical theology
- ② Tradition-centered over Paul's Gospel

6) Reinterpretation through Paul's Gospel

- (1) From law-centered to grace-centered faith

- (2) From works-based to faith-based salvation
- (3) From church-centered to Christ-centered faith

Key Directions

- (1) Restoration of the Gospel
 - (2) Spirit-centered faith
 - (3) Christ-centered community
-

4. Discussion Questions

- 1) What were the key factors in the growth of the Korean Church?
 - 2) What is its most critical theological issue?
 - 3) How should it change in light of Paul's Gospel?
-

5. Conclusion

- 1) Although the Korean Church has experienced remarkable growth, it has also been heavily shaped by Western theology.

- 2) A theological reformation is needed—returning to the essence of the Gospel proclaimed by Paul.