

## KOREAN MEMBER CARE

Retirement

In small groups...

- How many workers have retired from your agencies?
- Is retirement expected at a certain age, or are people allowed to work as long as they are healthy?

### Three Kinds of Retirement

- 1. Premature ending of field service through no fault of the worker. These folk have served well for a long time, and are now called home to care for aging parents, or for children's education, or perhaps for illness that is untreatable on the field.

- 2. Premature ending of field service through misbehavior of the worker; he or she (or they) is under discipline and has been asked to leave the field.
- They made a good contribution for much of their field time, however.

- 3. Those who have served long and well, and have ended their field service in good standing, and come home to finish life.

For the first two kinds...

- I believe it would be helpful if leaders of agencies and pastors of sending churches could discuss together how to handle those who come home prematurely for excellent reasons, as well as how they handle those who are returned to the sending country under some form of discipline.

## Focus on a good retirement

- Think of those who have spent 20 or 30 or 40 years of missionary service and are now ending that service, returning to Korea.
- Let's think about their immediate needs,
- Their long-term needs.

## Who is responsible to help?

- What should the agency do?
- What should the sending church do?
- Who will fund this worker's retirement?

## The first response should be understanding

- What are the stressors and challenges facing this couple, this worker?
  1. Loss of field involvement; it's over
  2. Loss of friends, both colleagues and national workers, national friends
  3. Re-entry to a home culture that is drastically different from when they left

- 4. Financial pressures; cost of resettlement
- 5. Geographical location; where shall we settle? Why there?
- 6. Can I have a ministry now that I am old and back home?
- 7. Adequacy of retirement funds; will this be enough?

- 8. Having to make friends again
- 9. Re-entry into family of origin and extended family—and we don't know them very well.
- 10. Loss of extended family and old friends through moves and death
- 11. Health and aging issues.

## Discuss in small groups

- Do we really understand what this is like for a retiring couple or worker?
- What are we doing now for these folk, and is that enough?
- What should we do, what would we like to do for our retiring workers?

## Some immediate things...

- 1. A thorough and compassionate debrief
- 2. Help with practical needs, such as transportation, medical care, housing, financial advice and help
- 3. Arrange time for spiritual and physical renewal and refreshment
- 4. Honor and acknowledge their service, celebrate with them

## And then...

- Mission leaders and pastors must help this couple face their future.
- Where will they live?
- What will they do?
- Is there any service for them in the days ahead?
- Do they have enough money to live decently?

- I hope mission agency leaders will consider using these folk as mentors to younger staff or new candidates. They could help as advisors to recruits, and to the orientation and preparation staff and to leaders.
- And pastors could consider using them as visitors and praying staff in the church.

## What does the Bible say?

- What is our Biblical responsibility toward our elders?
- What was Jesus' example toward older people?
- What is commanded in Scripture?
- Share together...

## What must the worker be encouraged to do for himself?

- 1. Plan early. Someone from the agency (the member care worker) should sit down with each adult worker when they reach age 50, and talk about retirement—timing, finances, location, health. What are the agency's expectations for older workers?
- 2. The church also should dialogue with their worker about future plans and end of life matters.

## A look at "Our Older Workers"

- When Dick and I were thinking of these things (and we still are), we felt the responsibility was a shared one. So we wrote a paper with two parts. Part I refers to the agency responsibilities, and Part II to our own personal responsibility. Those papers might be helpful to you as an example.

## How do you view them?

- I hope you can view your older members as a resource, as examples of godliness, of committed service, and honor them. And not view them as a burden, or a puzzle to be worked on. But as a God-given part of your agency's history, and an example of God's provision for His servants.