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Exploring and Restoring the Wounds of Immigrants in the Korean Church in America
Through Moses

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Abstract

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Korean immigrants in the Americas have endured significant hardships, resulting in profound multifaceted wounds. These wounds are rooted in their experiences within American society and the churches they attend, characterized by feelings of separation, unstable identities, and a decline in self-esteem and confidence. These experiences have not only disrupted their personal lives but have also contributed to division and other issues within the church community.

It can be the figure of Moses serves as a potential archetype for Korean American immigrants that have had painful experiences due to the American society and the immigrant church.

Examining Moses' life reveals his own wounds from separation and division, leading to an unstable life due to a confusing identity and diminishing self-esteem and confidence. However, forming his new family from Midian and his encounter with God led to the healing of his wounds; he received soul care during those encounters. From the warm stability felt in a family without the worries of division, the establishment of identity through encounters with God and His calling, and the confidence and self-esteem found in God's unwavering and eternal promises of support, Moses found restoration.

It is believed that if churches today can provide the same level of soul care to their wounded Korean immigrant members as Moses received, not only will the healing of individual congregants' wounds be facilitated, but also the restoration of the communities to which they belong, particularly within the church, with its conflicts, both major and minor.

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Through Moses

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I. Introduction

(Context of the Korean Methodist Church and Institute)

The history of Korean immigration to the United States begins in the early 1900s.¹ Beginning as laborers working on sugar cane plantations in Hawaii, Korean Americans have been a steady stream of immigrants to the United States ever since.² From 1910 to 1945, there were those who came to the United States for a specific reason. Displaced by the Japanese invasion of Korea, Korean Americans were scattered to fight for independence not only in Korea but also abroad, and they chose American soil.³ The migration for the independence movement is a very special occasion for the Korean Methodist Church and Institute in New York (KMC&I) because it was the gathering for the independence movement that led to the establishment of the KMC&I. Many independence activists met in our church to discuss independence, and in New York, we worked hard to publicize their efforts overseas. In fact, many independence activists, including the first President Syngman Rhee, passed through our church, and there are records of their activities here.

¹ Korean American history Museum, *100 Years of Immigration History in America*[website], <https://kahistorymuseum.org/%eb%af%b8%ec%a3%bc%ec%9d%b4%eb%af%bc100%eb%85%84%ec%97%ad%ec%82%ac/>, (accessed 4 April 2024).

² Washington Area Korean American History Compilation Committee. *Korean American History in Washington*. (Korean American Association of the District of Columbia. 2006), p.163.

³ National archives of Korea, *Korean Americans in the US (Late Joseon Period to Japanese Occupation)* [website], <https://theme.archives.go.kr/next/immigration/endoftheJoseonDynasty.do>, (accessed 4 April 2024).

The demographic landscape of Korean immigration to the United States underwent a significant transformation in the 1960s. Post-1965, legislative reforms, notably the Immigration and Nationality Act, dismantled the quota system, engendering a substantial uptick in immigration flow.⁴ This era, juxtaposed against the backdrop of post-Korean War reconstruction, saw a surge of individuals seeking academic advancement and broader horizons in the United States. Nevertheless, the immigrant odyssey was fraught with trials. Navigating the complexities of cultural dissonance and linguistic alienation, numerous Korean immigrants contended with formidable adversities. For some, these tribulations culminated in a retreat to their motherland, carrying the indelible imprints of their experiences. Others persevered on American soil, continuing to bear the emotional and psychological vestiges of their journey. Many of them were treated unfairly because they were Asian, discriminated against because they did not speak the language freely, and were not given the same opportunities as other Americans.

In the United States, Korean churches have emerged as pivotal hubs for community life among Korean diaspora. Consequently, Korean Americans frequently seek comfort and support from these churches, which offer a sense of community and solidarity, especially for immigrants navigating the complexities of acculturation in a new country.⁵ However, it may be that the place that really hurt Korean Americans was the church, not American society. Rather than a place of comfort, the church functioned as a place of stress for Korean immigrants.

⁴ PyongGap Min, *Caught in the Middle: Korean Communities in New York And Los Angeles* (University of California Press; 1st edition, 1996), p. 355.

⁵ During the mid-1990s, there were more than 2,000 Korean churches exist nationwide. About 71% of Korean American are affiliated with churches. (JungYoung Lee. *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology*, (Fortress Press, 1995), p. 25).

If we look at immigrants, there are immigrants who have achieved high social status and economic wealth in the United States. There are also immigrants who are recognized for their expertise and who, despite being immigrants, enjoy the same wealth and prestige in American society as they did in their home countries. But the church is where those who are and those who are not come together. Within these sanctified walls, a palpable dichotomy unfolds between the affluent and the struggling. Those facing hardships in American society invariably juxtapose their own narratives against those of their more prosperous compatriots, precipitating a crisis of self-perception. Those who were struggling in the United States began to compare themselves to successful immigrants in the United States, and the comparison led them to feel deprived, to underestimate themselves even more, and to lose their self-esteem. As a result, rather than being a place of comfort, the church became a place of comparison and evaluation, where people weighed each other's lives and created an invisible hierarchy.

Moreover, Asians, including Koreans, create their identities through relationships with others. The church could unknowingly set up an antagonistic relationship with Korean immigrants as they form their identity in the United States. This means that they grade their own success by comparing themselves with the other party. Rather than considering it a success when they achieve the goals they have set for themselves, they measure their position by comparing what others have achieved with what they have achieved, and through this, they gain or lose confidence. As a result, it is all too common to find that people come to immigrant churches gathered with Koreans to grow their faith, but before gaining faith, they often end up acquiring vanity and a sense of despair.

Indeed, immigrant churches are places that provide assistance to immigrants, offer them rest, and nurture their faith. However, for some people, immigrant churches have become places that lower the self-esteem of immigrants, inflict wounds upon them, and many believers with unhealed wounds still harbor complaints or antipathy towards the church. They may attend church diligently, but sometimes the wounds they carry become triggers for discord or conflict within the church, and they continue to live with the diseased hearts that still need healing.

I am arguing that the figure of Moses serves as a potential archetype for Korean American immigrants that have had painful experiences due to the immigrant church. From an early age, Moses endured separation from his family, perpetually living as an immigrant or a foreigner. Reflecting on his life, Moses lacked a stable place of residence, a circumstance that likely contributed to difficulties in establishing his identity. This instability in life and uncertain identity could have led to a lack of confidence and low self-esteem, resulting in numerous restrictions and limitations in various aspects of his life. Such experiences inflicted deep inner wounds. Fortunately, the narrative does not end with his wounds unhealed. While it is impossible to assert whether his inner wounds were completely healed or if some trauma remained, Moses overcame the difficulties and wounds he faced and eventually realized the vision he was destined to achieve. Observing Moses' journey, we remember him not as a victim of a wounded life but as the great leader who fulfilled God's will by leading the Israelites out of Egypt.

This paper aims to analyze the causes of Moses' wounds in comparison with the causes of wounds among congregants of Korean Methodist churches and Institute. It also seeks to explore how Moses was able to overcome and heal from his wounds and to investigate ways in which these methods can be applied to the members of Korean churches.

II. Problem in the Church

I do not wish to imply that Korean Americans living in the United States have suffered wounds simply because they are immigrants, nor do I want to point out the difficulties of the immigrant society. Life, in its myriad forms, presents obstacles and tribulations to all, irrespective of one's background or nationality. Yet, it is an incontrovertible truth that the immigrant journey is punctuated by unique hardships that are inexorably tied to the experience of navigating life in an unfamiliar cultural and linguistic landscape. For many Korean Americans, the Korean church often becomes a place where they seek solace, guidance, and community support in a setting where their native language bridges the gap between the familiar and the foreign.

However, the expectation of finding unqualified support and understanding within these communal havens does not always align with reality. Conflicts and challenges, paradoxically, can manifest within the very institutions that are sought out for refuge, leading to the emergence of new wounds and a profound sense of disillusionment. This dichotomy between the anticipated role of the church as a source of healing and its occasional contribution to the pain of its congregation has been a poignant aspect of our narrative at the KMC&I. It underscores a complex, yet distressing facet of our collective history, marking a call to action for introspection and transformation within our community. This acknowledgement of the real experiences and wounds borne by our congregation is not an indictment but a candid recognition of the nuanced realities faced by individuals seeking to navigate the complexities of immigrant life through the lens of faith and community solidarity.

II-1. Division and Separation within the Church Community

An assertion commonly made among the Korean diaspora is that one should avoid Korean immigrant churches while living abroad. This sentiment stems from the considerable challenges such churches face, particularly in terms of internal disputes. According to a study conducted over five months involving 476 participants, including pastors from the United Methodist Church in the Western region and members from eight churches in the Los Angeles area, it was found that 80% of congregants at Korean immigrant churches in North America have experienced conflict and division within their respective churches.⁶ The KMC&I was not immune to internal conflicts either. Initially, there were no significant difficulties, but about 60 years after its establishment, divisions and conflicts began to emerge in the mid-1980s.⁷ Over the years, the evolving landscape of the KMC&I has been marked by the stratification of its congregation into distinct groups. On one hand, there are the long-standing members, steeped in the traditions and practices of their faith, and on the other, the newcomers, who bring with them fresh perspectives and expectations. A further dichotomy has emerged between those who have embraced American cultural norms and those who adhere more closely to their Korean heritage. These divisions have given rise to a series of disputes that, on the surface, appear to revolve around issues such as the construction of new sanctuary facilities, the process for selecting pastoral leadership, and the extent of the church's engagement in political matters. Yet, these contentious points belie a deeper, more personal dynamic at play, rooted in individual egos and a competitive desire for dominance and influence

⁶ Surak Son, '80% of Immigrant Church Members Experience Conflict and Division', *Korea Times*, 16 November 2017, <http://www.koreatimes.com/article/20171115/1087801> (accessed 18 April 2024).

⁷ Byeonghyeon Choi. *70 Years of the Korean Methodist Church and Institute*, Korean Methodist Church and Institute (Historical Compilation Commission, 1991), p. 360.

within the church's social hierarchy. The true crux of the conflict within the KMC&I transcends the ostensible matters of debate, touching instead on the fundamental question of who will assert leadership and command influence within the community.⁸ These individuals, already burdened by the struggle to assimilate and the discrimination they faced in broader society,⁹ sought refuge within the church's walls, hoping to find a bastion of support, healing, and community. The church, emblematic of a shared cultural and spiritual heritage, was envisioned as a sanctuary where the weariness of daily battles could be laid to rest, and where fellowship could mitigate the harshness of their external realities.

Regrettably, the reality within the church did not always align with these expectations. Far from offering an unmitigated source of solace, the church itself was marred by internal divisions and strife, mirroring the very societal challenges from which its members sought escape. Instead of providing an unequivocal welcome, the church replicated patterns of segregation and exclusion, with established cliques and entrenched divides exacerbating feelings of alienation among its members. Those who were most vulnerable, having turned to the church for refuge, found themselves confronting an additional layer of hardship, as the very community they hoped would embody understanding and acceptance instead reflected the broader societal tendencies of separation and discrimination. This dissonance between the anticipated sanctuary of the church and the reality of its internal dynamics served to deepen the wounds of those already struggling with the complexities of immigrant identity and integration. The church, rather than acting as a unified body of support and love, manifested as another arena in which the painful realities of

⁸ Choi, *70 Years of the Korean Methodist Church and Institute*, p. 346.

⁹ Through interviews with church members, I heard many stories of discrimination and injustice faced by church members (Sep.7~Nov.3).

exclusion and division were played out, underscoring the multifaceted challenges facing immigrants in their pursuit of belonging and community in a foreign land.

II-2. Living on the Margins in American Society

Prior to their affiliation with the KMC&I, its members had navigated a considerable period of contemplation and turmoil within the immigrant community. In Korea, they were individuals who had attained high levels of education, graduating from elite high schools and universities, and were integral to the societal core—a sector perennially perceived as both alluring and superior within the human world. The influx of immigrants post-1960s saw many harboring aspirations to occupy a central role within American society, a pursuit especially pronounced among those who had held central positions in Korea. They embarked on the immigration journey with expectations of maintaining their pivotal status in the United States as well. However, upon actual immersion into the American immigrant society, the envisioned trajectory was far from straightforward. While there were certainly individuals who adapted with relative ease, the majority faced prolonged periods of adjustment, encountering significant discrimination and hardship along the way. These challenges introduced the immigrants to a marginal existence that was previously unencountered in Korea. Despite their aspirations to be at the societal core, the immigrant often found itself at odds with a society reluctant to fully embrace those of divergent roots. More disconcertingly, as the duration of their stay in the foreign land extended, the possibility of reintegration into their homeland diminished, complicating their identity and belonging even further. This predicament signifies that immigrants find themselves in a liminal space, unwelcomed fully by both worlds, yet

living within them, belonging partially to both yet wholly to neither.¹⁰ This nuanced existence underscores the complex dynamics of immigration, where individuals navigate between the desire for inclusion and the reality of perpetual marginalization. This phenomenon precipitates a profound sense of dislocation among immigrants, leading to dilemmas of belonging that transcend mere geographical dislocation. Neither fully integrated into American society nor able to re-assimilate into Korean culture, immigrants face a pervasive crisis of belonging that invariably escalates into issues of identity.

This crisis is not exclusive to first-generation immigrants but extends to Korean American children born in the United States, representing a significant challenge. For second-generation immigrants, white Americans often perceive them merely as "Asians," a categorization rooted in stereotypes and biases, then, these Korean American second-generation immigrants frequently encounter racial discrimination.¹¹ Also, the memory of how their ancestors suffered from racism in this country provides the basis for their ethnic identity.¹² Experiencing discriminatory treatment in American society firsthand, along with the memories of their ancestors, significantly impacts psychological well-being. This leads to profound questions regarding one's sense of belonging and identity. The persistent ambiguity regarding their place within society engenders a profound sense of insecurity, alongside a compulsive need to infiltrate the societal core, thereby inducing considerable stress. The resultant identity instability ensures that their existence in the land they

¹⁰ JungYoung Lee. *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology*, (Fortress Press 1995), p. 44.

¹¹ Lee discusses not only the challenges faced by Korean Americans, but also those encountered by Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans in the United States. He addresses the difficulties Asians experience as immigrants in America. (Lee, *Marginality*, p. 14-27).

¹² PyongGap Min. *Struggle for Ethnic Identity: Narratives by Asian American Professionals*, Critical Perspectives on Asian Pacific Americans Book 4 (AltaMira Press), p. 25. Kindle.

reside is far from peaceful or stable. A constant internal deliberation plagues them, filled with questions of self-identity, purpose, and the direction of their lives. This lack of a coherent sense of self engenders significant inner turmoil and burden, exacerbating the existential quandary faced by individuals caught between two worlds. The absence of a clear identity not only undermines their sense of belonging but also amplifies the internal conflicts and challenges associated with navigating a life split across divergent cultural landscapes.

II-3. The Decline in Self-Esteem

Korean American immigrants particularly struggle with issues of self-esteem. Self-esteem serves a crucial role in the process of living. Nathaniel Branden, a prominent psychologist known for his work on self-esteem, defines self-esteem as follows: “Self-esteem is: 1. confidence in our ability to think, confidence in our ability to cope with the basic challenges of life; and 2. confidence in our right to be successful and happy, the feeling of being worthy, deserving, entitled to assert our needs and wants, achieve our values, and enjoy the fruits of our efforts.”¹³ Self-esteem, intricately linked to confidence, can be described as the richness of life one can enjoy and the realm of possibilities regarding one's capabilities. The level of self-esteem significantly influences our potential to accomplish even minor tasks and the anticipated happiness derived from these achievements. Consequently, possessing high self-esteem is a vital component in navigating life effectively.

¹³ Nathaniel Branden, *The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem*, p. 4. Kindle Edition.

However, for immigrants, the reality of migration introduces numerous factors that can diminish self-esteem. While failure is a universal experience, immigrants may be prone to interpreting these setbacks as personal flaws or overly generalizing them due to their circumstances. The tendency to compare oneself unfavorably with those in better situations can further erode self-esteem, leading to feelings of inferiority. Additionally, the lack of a social support network or intimate relationships due to the recency of their immigration can foster loneliness and isolation, adversely affecting self-esteem. Low self-esteem can make individuals feel ill-suited to their lives, rendering them particularly vulnerable to being deeply wounded by even minor setbacks. Furthermore, immigrant stress and low self-esteem are significant factors that profoundly affect immigrants' susceptibility to depression.¹⁴ Within the KMC&I, there are some members whose diminished self-esteem leads to their tendency to become easily depressed over minor issues, to react excessively, and to quickly become enraged, thereby causing disturbances.¹⁵ Given that self-esteem can decisively influence the quality of life for immigrants, addressing issues related to self-esteem is crucial for their recovery and well-being. Many members of the KMC&I have experienced these challenges soon after immigrating, seeking to restore their lost self-esteem within the church. However, attempts to address these issues have not always been directed appropriately, leading to power struggles and divisions within the church. This has had the

¹⁴ Jeongyee Bae and Hyunjoo Park, 'Depression and the Influencing Factors in Korean American Immigrants', *Journal of Korean Academy of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 2010, vol 19(1): 67-75.

¹⁵ Instances of conflict arising within the KMC&I due to low self-esteem: Prolonged and intense arguments during church council meetings simply because opinions differed, parishioners being unable to contain their anger when their spouses did not agree with them, and members feeling depressed because they perceived a lack of respect from younger members. All these incidents stem from individuals feeling disregarded and disrespected by others.

unfortunate side effect of spreading serious distress among many church members, exacerbating the situation rather than ameliorating it.

In the context of these circumstances within immigrant churches, it is deemed urgent that the church develops measures to heal the inner wounds of its members. Given that the church has, albeit unintentionally, inflicted these wounds, it undoubtedly bears the responsibility to mend them. What, then, can the church do to facilitate this healing? There are likely many resources that the church can offer for their recovery. Counseling programs could be instituted, or retreats with guest speakers could be organized. However, considering that the church is a community founded on the Bible and the Holy Spirit, it would be preferable to provide healing that is more biblical and spiritual in nature. Moreover, there is a dire need for spiritual guidance to heal not just physical wounds, but the internal scars and the wounds left on their spirits.

As a pastor currently shepherding the congregation, I place the utmost priority on church unity and the growth of faith. However, it has occurred to me that essential to fostering unity and faith growth is the healing of the congregation's inner wounds. Most Korean congregational development tends to focus on outward signs of growth such as size of congregation, annual giving, and the construction of buildings. But I argue that a biblical foundation to church growth will begin with healing. The primary reason for the lack of harmony in the church today is the manifestation of these internal wounds as negative side effects, resulting in a greater focus on conflict and division within the church rather than on worship and religious life. Furthermore, since many conflicts are deemed to stem from feelings of inferiority and inadequacy, I believe that addressing the wounds sustained by individuals as immigrants within the church and restoring their self-

esteem is crucial for healing. The church needs spiritual guidance capable of caring for their souls, and I aim to research what the appropriate methods of healing might be for them.

III. Solution

For the faithful who carry many wounds and pains, counseling or practical therapy is important, but there is also a need for the inner healing provided by Christianity. They require resolution and healing from emotional wounds, traumas, and psychological distress stemming from past experiences. However, this process should not be focused solely on treatment; it must aim for comprehensive healing that involves not just physical and mental health but ultimately extends to the salvation of the soul, which can be considered the ultimate goal of inner healing.¹⁶ For these reasons, soul care can hold a particularly special significance for Christians. For them, the soul does not merely represent an exclusive spiritual dimension of humanity but signifies something holistic, especially understood within the context of a relationship with God.¹⁷ So, Flynn insists that inner healing is a set of dynamics and procedures by which to invite the Lord Jesus to address the emotional damage in our lives.¹⁸ I argue that soul care is a pivotal step in

¹⁶ Hyeongryeol Park, *Holistic Healing Pastoral Care* (Seoul: Book Publishing Healing, 1994), p.315.

¹⁷ Harold L. Senkbeil, *The Care of Souls: Cultivating a Pastor's Heart* (Lexham Press), p. 65. Kindle.

¹⁸ Mike T. Flynn and Douglas H. Gregg, *Inner Healing: A Handbook for Helping Yourself and Others* (InterVarsity Press), p. 20. Kindle.

repairing the Korean American from negative experiences of the church and being in the margins of Korean society.

III-1. Soul Care

The concept of soul care embodies a comprehensive paradigm of recuperation that extends beyond the conventional scope of inner healing, venturing into the profound territories of spiritual and emotional restoration. This distinctive approach surpasses mere psychological therapies by prioritizing the cultivation of the inner self through a faith-centered lens. It underscores the importance of engaging individuals within a spiritual context, aiming to foster a profound reconciliation between their innermost essence and their spiritual convictions. Soul care, therefore, represents a methodological shift towards addressing the holistic well-being of individuals, incorporating a multifaceted strategy that interweaves the principles of faith with the nuances of human psychology. This integrative method emphasizes the significance of spiritual guidance and biblical wisdom as vital components in the healing journey, facilitating a deeper connection between the individual's personal experiences and their religious beliefs. In doing so, soul care offers a pathway towards achieving a more harmonious alignment between the spiritual, emotional, and psychological dimensions of one's being, thereby engendering a state of comprehensive well-being that transcends traditional therapeutic practices.

The English phrase, “care of souls,” has its origins in the Latin *cura animarum*. While *cura* is most commonly translated as care, it actually contains the idea of both care and cure.¹⁹

¹⁹ David G. Benner, *Care of Souls: Revisioning Christian Nurture and Counsel* (Baker Publishing Group), p. 21, Kindle.

Then, a definition of what constitutes the soul, referred to in Latin as "*animarum*," is necessary. The term "soul" is derived from the translation of the Hebrew word "*nepesh*" and the Greek word "*psyche*." The Hebrew word "*nepesh*" carries a range of meanings including soul, living being, life, self, person, desire, appetite, emotion, and passion. The Greek word "*psyche*" fundamentally means breath, the soul, or the totality of a person. Many biblical scholars suggest that the best single translation for both *nepesh* and *psyche* might be "person" or "self." A significant advantage of this understanding is that both words encompass the concept of wholeness.²⁰

In translating the term "Soul" into Korean, it is predominantly rendered as "영혼". However, the Korean term "영혼 (young-hon)" combines "영" (spirit) and "혼" (soul), which suggests that it does not fully encapsulate the entirety of what "Soul" conveys. A more complete translation of "Soul" into Korean could be "혼(hon)" or "뉘(neok)". The latter term, "뉘", refers to a spiritual essence believed to reside within the physical body of a living person, sustaining life. It is a religious term indicating that this essence possesses a transcendental quality, maintaining its own existence independently of the physical body's demise, and thus can be seen as embodying the individual's essence itself.²¹ Therefore, this interpretation aligns closely with the English concept of wholeness.

²⁰ David G. Benner, *Care of Souls*, p. 22.

²¹ The Academy of Korean Studies, Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, [영혼](https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Article/E0012608), [website], <https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Article/E0012608>, (accessed 17 April 2024). and National Folk Museum of Korea, Encyclopedia of Korean Folk Culture, [영혼](https://folkency.nfm.go.kr/KR/topic/detail/1879), <https://folkency.nfm.go.kr/KR/topic/detail/1879>, (accessed 17 April 2024).

When discussing inner healing, or care for the soul, Park emphasizes the concept of holistic health.²² Holistic health refers to the maintenance of mature relationships across various dimensions: spiritual, mental, physical, interpersonal, societal, and environmental. In this context, illness is seen as a result of the disruption in the harmonious interplay among a person's spiritual, mental, and physical dimensions. It can also be viewed as a phenomenon that occurs when the process of growth towards holistic health encounters resistance.

Benner asserts that we do not have a soul; rather, we are souls, and similarly, we do not have a spirit; we are spirits. Additionally, it is not that we have bodies; we are our bodies.²³ This perspective eschews any notion of separation within the human being, emphasizing the unity of all aspects as the self. Consequently, the practice of soul care is about holistically tending to a person, recognizing them as beings of personhood, and engaging with the deepest and most profound human aspects of their lives. While it certainly places a greater emphasis on the spiritual and psychological facets of the inner world, soul care does not focus narrowly on parts or problems. Instead, it concerns itself with the complete and holistic healing and restoration of the individual's entire persona. Thus, the struggles of a Korean immigrant community must be addressed at the community level in addition to the individual level.

This holistic approach to healing and recovery is rooted in the Christian tradition, particularly present within the Old Testament.²⁴ The most complete state of human beings across various dimensions—spiritual, mental, and physical—might well be at the moment when God

²² Hyeongryeol Park, *Holistic Healing Pastoral Care*, p. 120.

²³ David G. Benner, *Care of Souls*, p. 22.

²⁴ Hyeongryeol Park, *Holistic Healing Pastoral Care*, p. 121.

breathed life into the clay-formed entity, creating beings in the image of God. It is in this state, where the soul and body are perfectly united in a manner resembling God, that humans are seen to possess their most complete and holistic form. Therefore, it can be argued that holistic healing for humans necessitates soul care from a Christian perspective aimed at restoring the image of God within them.

In the context of spiritual care, what can be anticipated is the continuity of care. Korean immigration is not a single event, but a permanent lifestyle that extends through generations. Thus, solutions must be long term and not quick fixes. Inner issues are difficult to fully resolve through a single treatment session, and it is challenging to definitively conclude that the same symptoms will not recur. Furthermore, the likelihood that the places where individuals have experienced inner wounds or pain coincide with their daily environments is significant, placing individuals in a situation where they cannot escape these spaces, and thus, the potential for the resurgence of inner pain is ever-present. Consequently, for those living with inner wounds, a continuous caregiving approach, rather than a one-time treatment, is necessary. Reimer discusses soul care as a series of processes and, from a faith-based perspective, describes it as a journey walking in the light.²⁵ Senkbeil also addresses the continuity of soul care, drawing a comparison between cure and care. He articulates that care represents ongoing treatment for chronic conditions, whereas a cure is sought in urgent need.²⁶ Moore contrasts Cure and Care, pinpointing the most significant

²⁵ Rob Reimer, *Soul Care: 7 Transformational Principles for a Healthy Soul* (Carpenter's Son Publishing), p. 3287, Kindle.

²⁶ Harold L. Senkbeil, *The Care of Souls*, p. 65.

difference as the continuity of care for the afflicted.²⁷ Korean immigrants, unable to escape the societal challenges and pain inflicted by American society and, by extension, the church—a source of other pain—find themselves in a predicament where a one-time cure is insufficient. For those wounded by American society and the immigrant church, continuous care and management offer the most appropriate method of healing.

III-2. Soul Care from the Bible (The Wounds and Cared of Moses)

The development of Korean soul care may be based on the biblical narrative of Moses and his own immigrant journey. The biblical record provides no account of Moses' childhood or adolescence. It documents only the events following his birth, his time in the royal palace upon reaching adulthood, and subsequent events. Additionally, the Bible does not explicitly detail any wounds or traumas that Moses might have experienced. However, through a limited narrative within the Scriptures, considering his background and the circumstances he faced, it is plausible to infer that Moses carried certain wounds throughout his life. This analysis will explore the potential wounds Moses could not have avoided and investigate the process by which he received healing. \

III-2-a. The Wound of Community Separation

From an early age, Moses' life was fraught with challenges. Born into a situation where death was almost certain, his survival was made possible only through the intervention of several

²⁷ Thomas Moore, *Care of the Soul Twenty-fifth Anniversary Edition: A Guide for Cultivating Depth and Sacredness in Everyday Life* (HarperCollins), p. 19, Kindle.

individuals around him.²⁸ However, this does not mean that Moses' life was marked by happiness. A closer examination of his life reveals a profound sense of disconnection from any single community. This lack of deep affiliation with a community is a significant aspect of the adversities he faced. Moses experienced his first significant separation at the age of three months, a forced disconnection from his primary and most crucial relationship with his mother. This separation was necessitated by the Pharaoh's decree, compelling his mother to place Moses in a basket and send him adrift on the river to save his life. Fortunately, Moses' brush with death on the river was averted through the compassion of Pharaoh's daughter, who rescued him from the waters. Her kindness and care allowed the infant to be returned to his birth home for nurturing. This situation set Moses' life better and apart from the lives of other Hebrew slave children. However, the time Moses spent at home was brief, and upon growing up, he was required to return to Pharaoh's daughter, marking another pivotal transition in his life.²⁹ While Moses grew up in his family's home, it is conceivable that he was enveloped in profound love from his parents, brother, and sister. Despite his infancy, this period likely sufficed for him to learn, both physically and emotionally, what it means to be loved by a family. During his time in his birthplace, Moses would have subconsciously absorbed the essence of life as a Hebrew and the atmosphere of a slave's existence. At this nascent stage, Moses was just beginning to understand what community meant and was shaping his identity as a

²⁸ Due to the decree of the Pharaoh, all Hebrew male infants were destined for death (Exodus 1:22). However, Moses was able to overcome this dire fate through the assistance of three pivotal women in his life: his mother's care and decision to place him in a basket of reeds (Exodus 2:2-3), his sister Miriam's vigilant escort (Exodus 2:4), and Pharaoh's daughter's act of rescue and compassion (Exodus 2:5-9). Following the discovery by Pharaoh's daughter, Miriam introduced their mother as a wet nurse to care for Moses (Exodus 2:7-10), thereby ensuring his survival and care through their combined efforts.

²⁹ According to tradition, as noted by Kirsch, Moses was raised in his birthplace for two years before being returned to Pharaoh's daughter. (Kirsch, Jonathan. *Moses: A Life*, (Random House Publishing Group), p. 58, Kindle).

member of his family. However, this phase of familial bonding and identity formation was abruptly disrupted. Once he had grown little, Moses was forcibly separated from this household, experiencing yet another profound disconnection. From his birth, Moses' life was punctuated with experiences of parting, detachment, or separation, continually bearing the wounds of such disruptions throughout his existence.

III-2-a'. Cared for in the Midian family

Moses' life as an immigrant impacted his well-being, and the fundamental source of sorrow for Moses, stemming from his experiences of separation since infancy, lies in the radical nature of his isolation. He existed as an infant surrounded by parents and siblings at birth. Upon his birth, he had four family members - his parents and one sibling each. However, after about three months, he returned to being alone. He found himself without anyone around him, becoming an outcast. This pattern persisted even after Moses committed murder. Growing up as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, he had many individuals around him while in the palace. Although few genuinely loved him, at least there was an adoptive mother who called him her son. However, after committing murder, he once again returned to being alone. As he fled alone, Moses lived a life of isolation, unable to form relationships with anyone. The continual process of individuals around Moses being separated and dwindling would undoubtedly have caused him great emotional distress. However, Moses's situation changed after he emerged into the wilderness of Midian. He was no longer alone. Now, he had a family he could trust, rely on, and be with. He went on to create a family community to which he belonged, with numbers exceedingly just one, two, or three, and in that place, Moses found restoration for his body, mind, and soul. For the inaugural occasion

in his existence, Moses found himself integrated into a familial structure, thereby transcending his previous status as an outsider.³⁰

Benner contends that the most fundamental and crucial form of soul care for Christians is provided by family and friends.³¹ Korean immigrant families have particular dynamics that impact the strategy of soul care. Their family relationships are often regarded as inherently intimate and personal, which may lead one to overlook the fact that within the family dynamic, individuals unknowingly provide care for each other's souls. However, they often care for their loved ones in ways they themselves may not recognize. The nurturing they extend to one another undoubtedly encompasses a form of spiritual care unique to familial bonds. Additionally, within the family unit, cooperation, sacrifice, empathy, and understanding prevail over competition, rendering instances of inflicted wounds uncommon. While it may be challenging to expect healing within a family environment characterized by strong patriarchal structures or violent authoritarianism, such negative dynamics are not evident in the family that Moses encountered and became part of in Midian.

In Midian, Moses received care within the context of a household. Through his loving wife, he likely found emotional and mental stability, while experiencing the warmth of familial nurturing alongside his sisters-in-law and father-in-law. It was comfortable for Moses, even if he was unfamiliar with Midian and the Midianite way of life.³² In this process, Moses likely found solace to alleviate the traumas of loneliness, alienation, and detachment he had endured thus far,

³⁰ John I Durham, *Exodus, Volume 3*. trans. Seoktae Son and Chunseok Chae (Zondervan Academic, 2018), p. 78.

³¹ David G Benner, *Care of Souls*, p. 187.

³² John I Durham, *Exodus*, p.81.

and the wounds inflicted by the formidable powers surrounding his family in Egypt likely began to heal.

Furthermore, Moses experiences another form of care through the household he establishes in Midian. One of the expectations commonly associated with family is that the marginalized individual finds a place within the family where they are no longer relegated to the margins. While hierarchies may emerge within families, the dynamics of centrality and marginality within the household differ significantly from those experienced in broader society. The establishment of centrality and marginality within the family is not dictated by a logic of power or dominance. At times, parents may occupy the central position, while in other instances, it may be the children who hold sway over the family dynamics. Decision-making processes regarding significant matters may see fathers at the helm, but if the subject pertains to a specialized domain, mothers may take precedence, relegating fathers to the periphery. Within the household, there is no absolute power or dominance dictating the division between centrality and marginality through coercion or violence. Moreover, while roles within the family may shift over time, such changes do not occur under oppressive circumstances.

Moreover, within the family context, even individuals situated at the periphery are not excluded from consideration. Being outside the central circle does not entail complete exclusion from involvement in family matters; attempts are made to integrate them into the central sphere whenever possible. The primary goal and value within a family are fostering harmony among all its members, and thus, the foremost task is to prevent any form of exclusion, ensuring constant efforts are made to include everyone. It is within this framework that Moses found healing for the wounds resulting from his experiences of marginalization and neglect. In a household where

everyone occupies both central and peripheral positions, yet coexists within the same confines, Moses would have encountered a genuinely warm familial environment, a rarity in his life. Now, Moses no longer harbors feelings of exclusion, anxiety about further separation, or concerns about reverting to being a lonely outcast.

III-2-b. The Wound of Uncertain Identity

Moses, having been born into slavery and raised in a slave's household, transitions into a new life as the adoptive son of Pharaoh's daughter. From his humble origins, he is thrust into the highest echelons of society, living in the royal palace as the son of a princess. This new setting, devoid of the threats of death he once faced by the river, seemingly offers a stable and secure environment free from the fears of further separation. However, Moses encounters a different set of challenges in this environment. His appearance likely differed significantly from those within the palace. More akin to the slaves outside the palace walls, Moses' Hebrew heritage marked a distinct contrast to the Egyptian royal family among whom he now lived. In the palace, Moses' status—whether akin to a resident alien or a full citizen—remained ambiguous, and he was constantly compared to the legitimate royal offspring. Far from being celebrated for any exceptional qualities he might have exhibited, these could have been downplayed or met with criticism, especially if they surpassed those of the true-blooded princes. Conversely, any deficiency on his part would have been attributed to his slave lineage, inviting further disdain and marginalization.

This precarious position would have fostered a complex wound of uncertain identity within Moses, navigating the dichotomy between his birth as a Hebrew slave and his upbringing

in the Egyptian royal household. This split identity likely compounded the internal and external conflicts he faced, exacerbating the challenges of reconciling his past with his present. While the Egyptian palace was ostensibly Moses' home, life there may have been even more arduous and challenging than in a slave's household. This is because Moses likely faced severe discrimination and injustice within what was supposed to be his home.³³ Moreover, considering the succession of the throne, Moses, being the adopted son of a princess rather than a direct prince, would not have been the focus of significant attention or wielded substantial power. It can be inferred that, aside from his adoptive mother, Moses had few allies within the palace. As Moses grew, he undoubtedly encountered profound confusion regarding his identity. Despite being part of the royal family, his distinct appearance would have set him apart, and there were none within the royal household who acknowledged him as one of their own. Nor could he easily integrate into the community of slaves, whose physical resemblance he shared, due to his unique position. This predicament would have plunged Moses into deep contemplation and turmoil over his status, place, and identity within the societal structure. Though seemingly positioned at the highest echelons of society, Moses was, in reality, on the periphery—occupying the most marginal and outskirts position within the palace's social hierarchy.

³³ In Exodus 2:11-15, had Moses received equal and favorable treatment akin to his siblings, it is unlikely that he would have fled to escape Pharaoh's wrath after killing an Egyptian. The Scripture records that upon learning of the homicide, Pharaoh sought to kill Moses. However, if Moses had been accorded a privileged status within the palace and wielded significant influence, Pharaoh might not have pursued Moses' death. Consequently, Moses would not have contemplated fleeing. This scenario suggests that Moses' precarious position within the royal household, devoid of substantial power or esteem, directly influenced his decision to escape, highlighting the inherent vulnerabilities of his adopted status.

After committing murder (Exodus 2:11-15a)³⁴ and subsequently fleeing to the wilderness (Exodus 2:15b-22), Moses continued to live on the margins of life. Residing in the Midian wilderness, he existed in a state of liminality, belonging neither to the wilderness folk, the Hebrews, nor the Egyptians. From the moment he left his birth home, Moses never found himself at the center of any community; instead, he perpetually lived on the fringes. This perennial state of marginalization led Moses to constantly grapple with a lack of belonging, positioned on the outskirts and experiencing diminishing self-confidence and a sense of contraction in his social identity.

III-2-b'. Cared through an encounter with God (Identity, Spiritual Recovery)

For Korean immigrants in America, interacting with others is crucial in exploring and affirming their identity. Such interactions are anticipated to lead to spiritual healing and recovery. The existence of individuals, or selves, implies relationality within their interactions. However, Moses experienced periods of severed relationships. Until meeting his wife in the wilderness of Midian, he had been isolated from all relations, likely harboring doubts about his own identity. This is because one's identity can be shaped by their background. As an infant, Moses's identity was that of the youngest son in a Hebrew slave household, necessitating much care and affection as the beloved youngest child. What was his identity while in the Egyptian palace? He was the

³⁴ Fretheim argues that within the narrative of Exodus 2:11-15a, Moses refers to the Israelites as "his own people," thereby identifying himself with Israel. However, Moses did not receive a warm welcome from the Israelites, and he feared that his misdeeds would be exposed by them. In the midst of these circumstances, it is likely that Moses's confidence in his identity as an Israelite diminished. (Fretheim, Terence E. *Exodus Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, Trans. Sungyeol Kang (Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 2010), p. 82).

adopted son of a princess, not inheriting the bloodline of the royal family but still part of the king's household. He likely commanded many servants, with more bowing to him than he to others. He occupied a position within the upper echelons of Egyptian society at the time.

Backgrounds of Hebrew slavehood and the Egyptian royal court, along with interactions with those around him in both contexts, informed Moses's understanding of his identity. However, during his time alone in the wilderness, nursing his wounds, he was unable to relate to anyone and likely grappled with his identity. If one of his two identities had firmly anchored him, his journey of confusion might have come to an end. Yet, awaiting him at the end of his wilderness sojourn was not a reaffirmation of his Hebrew or Egyptian identities but the emergence of a new identity as a man in a household in the Midian wilderness. While becoming part of the household of the Midianite priest Jethro may have facilitated the healing of the wounds he had endured, his internal conflicts, particularly regarding identity, may have intensified.

In this moment, God seeks out Moses and calls to him, "Moses, Moses!" (Exodus 3:4), marking the first instance in the Bible where someone addresses Moses by name. The calling through which Moses could become who he was meant to be occurs in this initial encounter with God. While others had referred to him as the Hebrew child (Exodus 2:6), the slayer of the Egyptian (Exodus 2:14), or simply an Egyptian (Exodus 3:19), it is now that Moses encounters God, who calls him by his name. Until this point, no one Moses had encountered had provided a clear understanding of who he was or what he was meant to do. However, God explicitly reveals to Moses his identity and his purpose. Moses is designated by God as the one to be sent to Pharaoh, tasked with leading the Israelites out of Egypt (Exodus 3:10). Despite investing considerable time and effort in seeking his own identity, the diverse backgrounds Moses had experienced only

exacerbated his confusion without providing clear answers. Yet, encountering God enables him to definitively understand who he is and the mission he has been given. He now possesses a firm sense of identity and embarks on the task set before him.

The quest for identity is closely intertwined with spirituality, inseparable from various aspects of our lives. Identity serves as a crucial guide in soul care, forming the foundation of a healthy soul, and is a vital aspect of life that determines even one's behavior.³⁵ Benner asserts that our work, play, sexuality, prayer, humor, passions, and aggressions all constitute elements of our spiritual lives, framing spirituality as our relationship with God that enables us to discover our true identity, meaning, and purpose.³⁶ In essence, when Moses found his identity through his relationship with God, his spirituality was restored. The internal conflicts he had endured until then might indicate a state of spiritual fragility or even collapse. However, when God called him "Moses," awakened his mission, revealed his identity, and restored his sense of self, it marked the beginning of his spiritual restoration. Like Moses, who found an unwavering identity through interactions with God, leading to the commencement of his spiritual recovery, members of KMC&I are also expected to begin their spiritual healing by establishing their identities through interactions with God.

³⁵ Rob Reimer, *Soul Care*, p. 570.

³⁶ David G Benner, *Care of Souls*, p. 87.

III-2-c. The Wound of a limited Life

Korean immigrant families in the United States face many challenges, including immigration stress and low self-esteem, due to a new, restrictive, and discriminatory environment. Although Moses did not receive favorable treatment within the palace, his fundamental status likely enabled him to partake in activities that would have been impossible for someone of Hebrew lineage. For instance, he could have had the liberty to eat whatever he desired and pursue his interests, provided there were no exceptional circumstances preventing him from doing so. By virtue of his lineage, being associated with the royal family, Moses occupied a higher social standing than other slaves or subjects within the palace. However, it is speculated that, despite not being explicitly mentioned in the Bible, Moses faced numerous restrictions compared to other princes due to his Hebrew slave origins and not being of pure Pharaonic blood. He would have been ranked below the Egyptian princes and presumably faced limitations specifically because of his Hebrew heritage.

This life of limitation continued even after Moses departed for Midian. After leaving Egypt, Moses lived as a wanderer until he met and married his wife, settling into an ordinary life. However, he found himself living in dependence on his father-in-law, necessitated by his status as a foreign sojourner with no possessions or achievements of his own. This dependency created a situation where Moses had no choice but to rely on his father-in-law, reflecting the ongoing constraints that defined his existence.

In Acts 7:23, Moses is described as committing murder at the age of forty. It can be inferred that this coincided with his encounter with his father-in-law and the commencement of his married life. The age of forty represents a period in a man's life when his abilities are typically

at their peak. However, during this prime phase, Moses found himself incapable of acting independently and was compelled to rely solely on others. His circumstances gradually wore him down and eroded his self-esteem. Had he been in a palace, he might have wielded a sword or adorned himself with jewelry, commanding servants. Yet, in the wilderness of Midian, he lived the life of a shepherd, wielding a staff he likely had never handled before and herding flocks he had never experienced. As he observed his own diminishing stature over time, Moses would have undoubtedly lost both his self-esteem and confidence. Throughout much of his life, Moses endured numerous hardships, experiencing wounds amid significant difficulties, gradually losing his confidence and self-esteem. Despite bearing the title of Israel's great leader, a closer examination of his life reveals a myriad of struggles such as alienation from the community, an unformed identity, and constraints in various aspects of life. Primarily, he lived the life of a solitary wanderer, never belonging anywhere, living on the margins, alienated. Reflecting on Moses's wounds, we can comprehend his initial reluctance to obey when called by God.

From Exodus 3:1 to 4:17, within the extensive narrative, we encounter scenes where God calls upon Moses to serve as the leader of Israel, yet Moses hesitates to accept this call willingly. God, seeking to deliver the Israelites who cry out in distress, calls upon and persuades Moses to be the instrument of their salvation. However, Moses refuses the proposition for a considerable duration. Moses's refusal does not stem from humility, nor is it a rejection due to reluctance to follow God's command. Rather, his response of rejecting God's call is laden with despair stemming from wounds that have oppressed his life thus far. In his response, "Who am I?" (Exodus 3:11), we witness a shattered self-esteem, and in his concern that the Israelites will not believe him (Exodus 4:1), we discern an anxiety rooted in disbelief in the world. Furthermore, his admission

of lacking eloquence (Exodus 4:10) unveils a deficiency in confidence, portraying his impoverished self-image.

III-2-c'. Cared by experiencing God's work (Restoring Confidence and Self-Esteem)

For the enhancement of self-esteem among members of Korean immigrant churches, it is essential to encounter God within a profound spiritual relationship and to experience His assistance and workings. In the encounter between God and Moses, dialogue played the most significant role in Moses's healing process. It strengthened his relationship with God and gradually solidified his sense of existence and identity within that relationship. Dialogue holds immense importance within relationships, and Benner even regards it as the essence of soul care.³⁷ In the dialogue between Moses and God, Moses appears profoundly depleted. His past wounds have led him to perceive himself as a fragile being, lacking in confidence and with significantly diminished self-esteem. Throughout the ongoing conversation with God (Exodus 3:1~4:17), Moses consistently undervalues himself and demonstrates great concern about the potential challenges arising from his perceived limited abilities.³⁸

Recognizing Moses's concerns and anxieties, God provides him with an opportunity to demonstrate his capabilities. This opportunity is not about confirming Moses's inherent abilities; rather, it is an attempt to restore his confidence by showing him that he can accomplish anything with the assistance of his helper (God). Consequently, Moses seizes the opportunity to elevate his

³⁷ David G Benner, *Care of Souls*, p. 152.

³⁸ Exodus 3:11; 13, 4:1; 10; 13

self-esteem by realizing that he is capable in his own life and that his future tasks with his helper are of utmost importance. Therefore, God instructs him to throw his staff on the ground.³⁹ The staff transformed into a snake, and as instructed by God, Moses grasped its tail, witnessing the miraculous event of the snake reverting back into a staff. This time, God instructed Moses to put his hand into his cloak.⁴⁰ Upon withdrawing his hand, Moses found it afflicted with a malignant skin disease, yet, in accordance with God's command, upon returning it to his cloak, he witnessed its restoration to cleanliness as a sign. Finally, God assigned a human assistant, Aaron, to Moses instead of a divine entity, alleviating Moses' concerns about his speech impediment by providing him with his brother Aaron as a helper. Realizing that he now had two reliable assistants, Moses discarded his hesitation and worries as a disobedient and insecure individual, gaining confidence to return to Egypt. His journey back to Egypt likely became a time for Moses to reclaim the self-esteem he had lost.

IV. Application to Korean Communities

The difficulties Moses encountered throughout his life bear a striking resemblance to the ongoing struggles faced by the members of the KMC&I within the immigrant community. Issues such as experiences of division, unclear identity, and constrained living conditions are not new to

³⁹ Exodus 4:3

⁴⁰ Exodus 4:6

the KMC&I community. Moses was able to overcome his wounds and suffering through the soul care he received from his Midianite family and God. Similarly, it is argued that if members of the KMC&I could receive the same type of soul care, it would lead to the restoration of the congregants' soul and lives, and the church could expect a reduction in disputes and conflicts. This perspective emphasizes the transformative power of soul care in healing and reconciling communities. I'm arguing that soul care should not be mistaken for mere treatment of mental disorders; rather, it should be understood as a holistic approach to healing that integrates emotional, spiritual, and physical aspects of life through consistent and ongoing care. By adopting this comprehensive form of spiritual care, I believe that immigrants within the Korean immigrant church can be healed from the wounds inflicted by their experiences from the society and church, and their identity and self-esteem can be restored. Such healing is pivotal not only for individual members but also for transforming the church into a healed community where conflicts and divisions are eradicated. This approach facilitates a path towards a church that embodies unity and peace, supporting its members in both their personal growth and collective harmony.

IV-1. Soul Care Plan 1. Preaching and Teaching

Congregants often lack a comprehensive understanding of spiritual care, which might lead them to mistakenly associate it with mental illness upon hearing the term. However, soul care is aimed at fostering holistic health, encompassing not only spiritual, mental, and physical well-being, but also interpersonal, social, and environmental dimensions. To address this, it is crucial that pastors provide sermons or teachings specifically on the topic of soul care, which can be facilitated through both preaching and educational programs. Additionally, inviting specialists in spiritual

care for lectures and workshops can be beneficial. Regular lectures and sermons on spiritual care are necessary to ensure church members gain a thorough understanding of its scope and benefits. Providing therapy in conjunction with these educational efforts could significantly enhance the overall impact.

IV-2. Soul Care Plan 2. Soul Care Retreat

A 3-night, 4-day retreat organized into small groups provides an intimate setting where church members can share their personal issues and concerns. It is advisable to carefully select participants and limit the number of attendees to maintain privacy and focus. The KMC&I already has well-organized Class Meeting and mission societies categorized by similar ages and regions, which can be utilized to facilitate easier and more cohesive gatherings. Choosing a specific theme for the retreat, such as the restoration of community, identity, or self-esteem, can enhance its focus and effectiveness. This not only helps in addressing individual concerns but also strengthens the communal bonds within the church. Moreover, such retreats offer pastors an excellent opportunity to better understand each congregant's personal and faith-related challenges, especially those stemming from the immigrant experience. However, these retreats should not be one-time events; continuity is key. Ongoing sessions are essential to ensure sustained development and long-term resolution of the issues faced by the congregants. Regular retreats can thus serve as a vital part of the spiritual care and support system within the church, promoting holistic healing and unity among its members.

IV-3. Soul Care Plan 3. 9 Fruits of the Holy Spirit

For holistic and biblical spiritual care, the "Fruits of the Spirit" program is implemented, targeting comprehensive healing rather than merely addressing mental or physical illnesses. This program, based on the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit, is designed to guide and assist church members towards total personal restoration. These fruits—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control—are essential for the recovery of a Christian's true identity, which may have been marred or damaged. Each of these attributes serves as a checkpoint for healing and restoring the wounded self, and when nurtured, they facilitate healing not only of the soul but also in spiritual, mental, physical, interpersonal, social, and environmental aspects of life. The "Fruits of the Spirit" program spans one year and includes sermons, small group discussions, and meditation projects every 5-6 weeks, with each session focusing on one of the nine fruits. This structured approach not only ensures that each aspect of the fruits is thoroughly explored and internalized but also expects the congregation to practice what they have learned at the end of each period. Such a program fosters a true Christian character and encourages continual growth and application of spiritual lessons, integrating them into daily life for sustained spiritual well-being.

V. Conclusion

Upon my appointment as the lead pastor at KMC&I, the first glaring issue I noticed within the church was the presence of conflict and division. Members frequently engaged in blame, cursing, and disputing each other's points. Initially, I believed that what the church urgently needed was unity and harmony. However, attempts to forcibly create a harmonious environment only resulted in counterproductive outcomes, with conflicts and disputes showing no sign of resolution. After much deliberation, I concluded that the root cause lay in unhealed and unresolved pain deep within individuals, leading to distrust, dissatisfaction, blame, and fights as side effects of these internal wounds. What was truly needed was not superficial unity for the church's stability but healing and care for the long-accumulated wounds and pains. Soul care for the congregation has been ongoing, with the result that members, hurt by the immigrant society and the church, are gradually showing signs of recovery and transformation.

While it is impossible to generalize the problems and solutions of all immigrant churches and societies through KMC&I, I argue that soul care is indeed a significant aid and solution for many wounded Korean immigrants, offering profound recovery in their lives. Often, invisible pains pose greater challenges than visible problems, which can begin to be unraveled through holistic healing addressing both their soul and life.

The world continuously inflicts wounds and pains, yet adequate methods for healing and recovery are not readily provided. Even when temporary solutions are offered, the likelihood of relapse is high. In such a time, soul care, which persistently nurtures and accompanies the whole

person, emerges as the best approach the church can offer to those in pain, enabling people to experience the love of Jesus and the heart of God, embodying the supreme practice of Christians.

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