

Stories from your Missionary Brother



Description: Our wedding day (above)
One of our wedding pictures (left)

Support Me



I am a Free Methodist affiliate missionary serving persecuted Christians with the non-denominational NGO Voice of the Martyrs Korea (VOMK) in South Korea.

Did you know that you have persecuted brothers and sisters in North Korea and other countries around the world?

It is my privilege and my great joy to be able to spend each day serving and doing life together with persecuted Christians and North Korean defectors.

More importantly, it is my privilege to introduce these family members to you through the stories in these newsletters!

They tell us that they are praying for those of us in the free world. I hope you will pray for them, too.

your Missionary Brother,

Trevor Foley

Persecuted Christians Taught Me to Get Married in a Different Way

“The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.” (Psalm 29:4)

There is something that I have been keeping a little bit “underground” lately. Not many people know, but I have recently gotten married to a woman who is also involved in the same ministry that I do.

It all came about a bit suddenly. We only met seven months before marrying, only started considering each other for marriage three months before marrying, and were only engaged two months before our wedding day. During the time before marriage, we agreed not to engage in physical intimacy—the first time we ever held hands was during the wedding service rehearsal!

Sounds strange, right? This is not the way people usually meet, relate, and get married in the world around us. But, as I have been involved in the work of serving and learning from persecuted Christians for the past eight years, a lot of the things that are not normal in the world around us began to become normal for me as I spent more time trying to figure out what it means to “Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body” (Hebrews 13:3).

Persecuted Christians do not rely on themselves. They live life like Psalm 37:5, “Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act.” They lack worldly resources, finances, and freedoms. Therefore they have no choice but to trust God to act with regard to the things that they need. For Christians in the free world, getting married is often viewed as a process that involves human thinking, finances, and maybe even technology. But, for persecuted Christians, a spouse (and everything else in life) is given by God in God’s timing, God’s way, for God’s purposes, according to God’s will, and for God’s glory.

What I also learned from persecuted Christians is that God’s word is absolute truth and absolutely trustworthy. Reality is not defined by how we interpret what we see and experience, but reality is determined by what God says reality is.

So, when my wife and I met to figure out whether we would marry or not, we did not focus on discussing our thoughts and feelings, hopes and dreams.



A Missed Opportunity?

I went to the market to buy some groceries.

While standing in the check-out line, a bunch of kids got in line behind me. They were about to buy ice cream.

One of the kids told the others that he couldn't buy anything because he didn't have any money—but none of the other kids responded.

I remembered many times when I was in the same situation when I was young, and the Lord provided money for me to buy something.

I finished checking out and pulled out a bill and gave it to one of the kids, saying, "Give this to the friend who needed the money".

The kid thanked me, and I just left without saying anything.

Because we generally think of "evangelism" as "giving God credit when we do nice things for people", it may seem like I missed a great opportunity to evangelize here.

But evangelism is when we preach the good news of Christ's death, resurrection, and return.

So I left without saying anything on purpose because this wasn't evangelism, it was just buying ice cream for a kid who had no money.

Instead, we sat down together and, each time, read scripture after scripture about marriage in order to put ourselves in a position to be led by His word.

My now-wife and I met while doing this Hebrews 13:3 ministry and we are called to continue doing this ministry as a married couple. So we decided to plan the wedding in such a way that it would be an opportunity to be one body with persecuted Christians and remember them. Persecuted Christians may not be able to have a large wedding service due to financial limitations or even due to the persecution that may arise from holding a public Christian worship service. So we, too, decided to do a small, private wedding service limited to a small number of family and ministry constituents. We also resolved not to receive any wedding or newlywed gifts, but encouraged all well-wishers to make a donation to Voice of the Martyrs Korea in order to support persecuted Christians. Even the wedding clothes we wore had also been worn by persecuted Christians!

As we have started married life together, Hebrews 13:3 has colored our daily life. For us, our home is the main center for worship in our Christian lives; we read the scriptures together in the morning and do household worship together at night. We learned this from persecuted Christians who have no choice but to worship in their households because church buildings are often either not allowed or not affordable.

At no point in the process so far has the Lord allowed us to tell Him, "Thank you for being our matchmaker, Lord, but we will take it from here!" Instead, through each step, He has shown us, through the example of persecuted Christians, how to be led by the word of God alone in each circumstance of our lives.

2 Timothy 3:12 reads, "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted". Persecuted Christians face extreme opposition, imprisonment, and even death as the price to pay for revering the word of God above all things. While nobody tried to kill us for trying to be led by God's word in our courtship, many people did not understand what we were doing or why we were doing it. While they had no intention of opposing us, we faced a number of situations where we were challenged to stick to our convictions and to not give up on the ways that we had decided to put into practice the principles that we had learned from persecuted Christians.

For example, when we decided to do Bible study instead of dating, some people thought that was not realistic. When we set a wedding date, some people asked us if we really loved each other enough to get married as soon as we did. When we took pictures together, some people tried to make us hold hands even though we had agreed not to. When we tried to have an inexpensive wedding, some people wanted us to have a larger and more extravagant wedding because they didn't understand. When we told people that we wanted them to donate instead of giving us a wedding gift, some tried to force us to take personal gifts of (albeit out of a good desire to bless us).

And we understand why people don't understand! My wife and I have found that many Christians do not know that there are any other ways to get married than the worldly ways that are generally available to us. That is why I have drafted a book about getting married by the word of God. We used the book in our process of discerning marriage and we hope that many other couples can use it too.

But please send me an e-mail to let me know if you are interested in reviewing the book for me, and I will send you a review copy.

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If you would like to support me, please click the link to the left and make a donation. Even a small donation is helpful in supporting my work as a missionary to persecuted Christians in Korea.

If you do decide to make a donation online, please make sure to include my name in the comment section of the donation. However, if you choose to donate by check, please write "VOM Korea" in the note. Thank you!



