

South Korean students catch missions vision

December 6, 2019

SOUTH KOREA (BP)—Im-Sara is a Christian—a preacher's kid, too. But she never had been involved in missions.

So, when Hun Sol asked her if she wanted to be part of the six-month-long student missions program he runs, she wasn't sure.

"I prayed that God would move her," said Hun, a Southern Baptist missionary.

Apparently God did. Im-Sara signed up to leave her home in South Korea and spend six months in another East Asian country. When her six months there were up, she asked if she could stay longer.

"She completed a year there," Hun said. "She has a real heart for the people from that country now."

Im-Sara brought that heart back to South Korea with her. She found a part-time job at a fast-food restaurant at a university. Someone had told her that students from the country where she had served came there for breakfast.

So, every day she worked there and built friendships with them, and then she started a group especially for them at her church and invited them to come.

"Her heart was to reach out to them," Hun said. "She committed herself to God to be a missionary, and she's doing it."

Transformational experience

For many students like Im-Sara, participating in a midterm missions experience is life altering. They are trained and then sent out to work alongside International Mission Board missionaries in different parts of Asia—a big stretch for them spiritually.

Before applying to the program, many of the students did not set aside daily time with God, and about 80 percent of them never shared the gospel before.

But they come back with eyes wide open to the importance of committing fully.

“Before they leave here, we show them how to share the gospel,” Hun said. “Then in their six months on the field, they see how powerful it is. They realize sharing it is so important.”

Their excitement is contagious. Hun gets more and more applications all the time, because the students’ friends and family want a taste of what they have experienced.

“In the beginning, it wasn’t easy to recruit people,” he said. “But after the students began to return, their lives were so changed that the people around them noticed, and they want to join the program too.”

He hopes students’ passion for the gospel and missions will revive the sleepy South Korean church to take the hope of Jesus to the world.

“In the past, the Korean church was gradually growing. Now it is stagnant or declining—there aren’t as many young people anymore,” Hun said. “We want to train up students who will start revivals. And we want to partner with the IMB to send them around the world and finish the task God gave us.”