



SUMMARY OF CONCERNS

OCK SOO PARK • GOOD NEWS MISSION • IYF • MIND EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

During the past decade, controversial Korean pastor Ock Soo Park and his “Good News Mission” have been working aggressively to expand their operations and influence across sub-Saharan Africa. Park’s movement, which operates via multiple affiliates and identities, is highly controversial in Korea and elsewhere due to its unorthodox teachings, proselytizing methods, and questionable business dealings. Thus we view its efforts to implant itself in government agencies, institutions of higher learning, and Christian denominations with extreme concern.

Our concerns are based on an extensive review Park’s own literature and web sites; press reports in English, Korean, and Spanish; correspondence with scholars in South Korea and North America; critical web sites; and in-person interviews with former members and key individuals.

Based on the foregoing, we have concluded that:

- 1) Park’s main message is both biblically unsound and divisive
- 2) Park’s “mind education” is actually a sectarian religious program having no scientific basis, no research validation, and no accreditation
- 3) There is a persistent pattern of religious and legal conflict, together with allegations of manipulation and deception, that should cause persons in positions of authority to regard any proposed ventures or partnerships with extreme caution

BASIC DOCTRINE

Park’s Good News Mission is one of a small cluster of Korean groups known collectively as the “Salvation Sect” or *guwonpa*. Why have at least seven major Korean denominations—including Baptists and Presbyterians—issued formal condemnations of Park’s movement as a heretical cult? The central reason is that he aggressively preaches a *different gospel* (Gal. 1:6–9, 2 Cor. 11:4), a divisive body of teaching which plays itself out in the following manner:

- Park distorts what the Bible says about repentance and forgiveness
- Park distorts what the Bible says about justification and sanctification
- this confuses people about their standing in Christ, their daily relationship with Christ, the reality of their daily sins
- this produces a kind of antinomianism (Greek *anti* = against, *nomos* = law), leading people to ignore their daily sins or call them by another name (such as “crimes”) in order to avoid repenting and seeking God’s forgiveness daily
- over time this cognitive dissonance (i.e., denial of reality) weakens and numbs the conscience
- further, Park strongly warns people that if they repent of any sin after the moment they receive Christ, it is evidence that *they are not truly saved*
- thus *Park actually divides Christians*—emphasizing that everyone else’s preaching is defective and that his strange “gospel” is the only correct one—thereby creating doubt and confusion in people who have already trusted in Christ as Savior according to true, biblical preaching
- this is why Park travels the world gathering large groups of *Christian believers* from many denominations *to hear him personally preach his “gospel” so they can be “saved.”* These errors are central to Park’s teaching—and to his efforts to convert people who already profess to be Christians to the beliefs of his Good News Mission.

Park mostly conveys his error through frequent use of storytelling and the twisting or misapplication of Scripture. For example, in *Repentance and Faith* (p. 21) he claims that the prodigal son in Jesus’ parable left with his father’s money so he could run his own business and prove himself successful. In *The Secret of Forgiveness of Sin and Being Born Again* (p. 12) he misquotes John 8 when he asserts

that Jesus told the woman caught in adultery “I do not condemn you. You have no sin.” (emphasis added)

“MIND EDUCATION”

Park’s web sites exalt him as a “mind education expert” and “the best mind educator of the age,” yet he possesses no formal training in the field of education. In fact, Park’s “mind education” is not scientific, but subjective and sectarian. It is a fundamentally religious program derived from Park’s own peculiar theories, which he says came about by discovering “the world of the heart” through reading the Bible “hundreds of times.” The “mind lectures” on which “mind education” is based are essentially variations on Park’s sermons, strongly related to his peculiar views on salvation, and loaded with anecdotes and allegorized passages from the Bible. Park especially emphasizes allowing one’s heart to “flow” and suppressing one’s negative thoughts.

Park’s “International Mind Education Institute,” founded in 2013, lacks formal authentication by any credible Christian denomination, government agency, or academic institution. A detailed search of his “mind education” web sites and promotional materials reveals no scholarship, no quantitative or qualitative studies in Europe, North America, or Asia demonstrating its performance and outcomes.

Under normal circumstances, before implementing such a program in church-affiliated schools it should undergo a thorough background check; be verified according to objective studies conducted by recognized international institutions; piloted on a limited, trial basis; and properly scrutinized to examine potential conflicts with accepted Catholic and Anglican doctrines owing to its sectarian orientation.

Of further concern, on Good News Mission web sites the aggressive spread of “mind education” across Africa is consistently portrayed to the sect’s members *as a vehicle for proselytizing*. And what more fertile field could there be for such work than among Uganda’s children?

OTHER ISSUES

Scandal—Park has been the subject of repeated press exposés in Korea for claims made on behalf of “Ddobyul,” a health product he named and that is manufactured by Unhwa, a company run by the head of IYF. In Korea and Ghana there have been charges that Park and other Good News officials have promoted Ddobyul as a remedy for cancer and HIV/AIDS, with lives lost when patients stopped conventional treatment. He has also been the object of various lawsuits and other serious legal actions over the past decade.

Misrepresentation—In Uganda and Ethiopia, Park and his lieutenants have sought to mislead audiences into thinking that “mind education” was a cause of South Korea’s famous economic miracle. Shockingly, even Park’s claim to have been ordained by American missionary Dick York is false—having been repeatedly denied (as recently as last year) by York, who unhesitatingly classifies Good News Mission as a cult.

Credibility—To judge by his web sites, virtually all of the renowned Christian leaders who stand with Park are dead ones. He cites Martin Luther, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, D.L. Moody, and Charles Spurgeon as people who agree with him, when in reality their theological views do not align with his. What 21st century Christian statesman—a Billy Graham, a Charles Swindoll, a John Stott—has endorsed Park’s ministry or theology? None so far.

CONCLUSION

Given the pattern of inflated and misleading claims made for Park and his programs, and the record of scandal and condemnation that accompany his public career, we advise extreme caution in regard to any endorsement or implementation of his projects. Much is at stake, and too many questions remain to be answered to proceed without due scrutiny and accountability.

Supporting documentation available on request.

“I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them....
By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naïve people.”

Romans 16:17–18 (NIV)