

## On the Brink of War, an Open Door...

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The threats and counter-threats between North Korea's Kim Jong-un and US President Donald Trump are disquieting to say the least. We hope and pray that the insecure little man posturing in the sinecure of the Hermit Kingdom will back off and not plunge the world into WW III. Mr. Trump, for his part, has plenty of other urgent business to attend to. If it weren't for the complete unpredictability of his blustering adversary, he'd probably be content to let sleeping dogs lie. The near-daily threats from Pyongyang and the North's repeated testing of nuclear weapons delivery capability will not allow him that luxury.

Meanwhile, a singular event across the Pacific has given cause for rejoicing here in Canada and around the world. While it may not signal an end to the sabre-rattling, it has shown that occasionally—in spite of overwhelmingly stacked odds—good triumphs, the righteous are delivered from evil and a sad story has a happy ending. On August 9, 2017, Pastor Hyeon Soo Lim was released from prison in North Korea and allowed to return to Canada. Pastor Lim spent 31 months in prison, subjected to hard labour, harsh conditions and a news blackout so complete that he didn't even know that Donald Trump had become US President. On Sunday, August 13, he was welcomed home to his congregation in Mississauga where he offered a heartfelt benediction to his flock who—along with supporters around the world—have been praying for his release for 2 ½ years.

In January, 2015 on one of more than 100 trips to North Korea, bringing in food and visiting orphanages, Pastor Lim was arrested and subsequently sentenced to life in prison. He was charged with conducting subversive actions against Kim Jong-un. Of course, in the dictatorial police state that is North Korea, such charges are routinely cooked up to punish anyone with whom Kim Jong-un is displeased. It is illegal to preach the gospel in North Korea. Fair trials are not the norm in the so-called Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (DPRK). Many will recall that the boy-dictator, Kim Jong-un, had his own uncle executed a couple of years ago, adding to a string of pre-emptive executions of other senior military officials whom he considered rivals or threats to his absolute power.

So the good news is that, in spite of the usual intransigence and rhetoric of North Korea, there was a break in the clouds for Pastor Lim. He thinks, and I agree, that this small gesture is meant to be a token of goodwill to the West, even while the war of words continues. It reminds me of the stern warning given to the early apostles by the unbelieving priests and the Sadducees. They threatened Peter and John and commanded them ". . . not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." But Peter and John answered and said unto them, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." So when they had further threatened them, they let them go . . . Acts 4:18-21

Being let go from the clutches of North Korea's communist dictatorship is a notable miracle. A parallel miracle, almost as big, is that the Government of Canada, even under the leadership of our socialist PM, actually went to bat for Pastor Lim and invested in the diplomatic efforts ending in his release. Of course, the initial complaint was launched by former PM Stephen Harper while he was still in power but, to their

credit, the diplomatic corps serving under Justin Trudeau have completed the task and we can all rejoice in this successful rescue of a fellow Canadian from the clutches of tyranny.

In closing, we thank God for Pastor Lim's release. We thank the Government of Canada for intervening on his behalf. We thank all who have prayed for Pastor Lim and who are praying for other prisoners of conscience. Unjust laws, enacted to prevent the gospel from being preached and unjust laws, like those in Canada preventing people like Linda Gibbons and Mary Wagner from bringing truth to women at abortion clinics must be challenged. We value our freedom of speech in Canada, our freedom to perform acts of kindness. Let us continue to pray for the overturning of unjust laws and the release of innocent men and women around the world who are in prison, suffering torture and under threat of execution, merely for speaking the truth in love. Let us also continue to pray that the threat of nuclear war, which hangs over North Korea and all of us, may be lifted and wiser heads prevail.

The Christian Heritage Party will continue to promote freedom of speech, thought and religion, even in the face of changing political times and pressures rising in Canada to put restraints on our freedom. Join CHP Canada<sup>1</sup> and stand against tyranny both at home and around the world.

## **Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup>[www.chp.ca/get-involved](http://www.chp.ca/get-involved)