

Solemn Covenant

By: So Young Park

Thursday, February 11, 2021

Five years ago, I came to the U.S. It was a huge challenge for me to decide to leave South Korea to come here. Everything that I did here was all outside of my comfort zone.

I had enrolled in school as a musical theatre major, and decided to relocate to the United States for one reason. I wanted to be an international musical actor. For me, Broadway looked like a place that was the largest and most influential stage that I could think of. Also, the United States was very racially diverse so it provided many different perspectives culturally.

However one year later, my father, who had supported me wholeheartedly, experienced bankruptcy. My parents suggested that I return to Korea, but I adamantly refused. There were so many things that I had yet to learn and I could not give up on my dream. I hadn't even taken enough global musical classes, and to give up on all that I had worked for because of financial reasons was just unacceptable for me. The situation continued to get worse, and all I could think of was my growing desire to achieve my goal to become a global musical actor. However, because I was receiving no financial support from home, and had to make up for it by working an impossible work schedule. I was forced to provide for my own tuition and living expenses. My day consisted of going to an English program in the morning until late afternoon and from then on, working a separate job until early the next dawn. I believed I had to take responsibility for my own life, but reality was bringing me down physically. However, I did everything I could to endure this time and grew more independent, while proving to my parents that I could achieve this on my own.

However as time passed, all the new things I was learning were beginning to take a toll on my body and mind. I slowly started to lose sight on why I was here. I knew that something

had to change so I started seeking out a church to help recover my exhausted mind. I found the church that I am a part of now coincidentally, and it all worked out amazingly because I was able to use the practice room provided at the church for free every day. I learned once again what faith was and why it was such a vital part of my life.

While attending church, I was able to fulfill my desire to sing by joining the choir. At my church, we do a service called, "The House of Prayer" every morning. Here, instead of the pastor preaching, the members of the church bring their prayer requests and read them out loud. From this, the musicians and singers will play through praying and also using various bible verses. At first, I really struggled. My lack of training in singing in harmony and chords got in the way and the improvisation was intimidating. However, I learned that it wasn't about making my voice rise above others but rather, blending. Although I was afraid of trying something new, I learned that through trying and not giving up that I could join the group and through their encouragement, learned the beauty in being together.

Then one day while praying, God touched the heart of "I will give you an army of praise." I felt that God gradually wanted me to go the way of a praise guide, not a musical actor, and I obeyed.

However, I begged God, "As much as I kneeled down and prayed, please pour oil."

Because there are many fallen praise guides in this world, I was afraid of becoming such a person. So I prayed like this.

"Be the woman who makes it through life. Be the one who loves, the one who forgives."

It was not just that I received the Holy Spirit, but that I continued to survive at that point was the winner and the Lord was pleased. Also, because I only have my body to give the Lord, I want to give my everything to him.

