

PRISONERS OF faith

Choi Yong-hun

Country: China

Sentence: 5 years

Even though the United States recently accepted six North Korean refugees, marking a dramatic change in their situation, little has changed for our South Korean brother Choi Yong-hun. Married with two daughters, Choi Yong-hun was arrested by the Chinese police in January 2003 for helping North Korean refugees and was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Today, he remains confined in the Weifang Prison, Shandong Province, China after serving 46 months of his 60-month sentence. He suffers from worsening chronic diabetes, hypertension, and asthma because of the poor conditions inside the prison.

Earlier this year in April, his wife, Kim Bong Soon, was able to visit her husband and reported that he was unwell and finding things extremely difficult in prison. *'He looked ill and was much thinner. He said he has lost 20kg (44 pounds). I cannot understand why China still detains him when he is so clearly very sick. The worry is killing me. Please help us to gain release of my husband so that he can get the medical treatment he so desperately needs.'*

He never fails to read the Bible and pray every morning, believing that God will help him, she said. And he smiled when he mentioned that people call him 'Mr. Missionary' in the prison. He also repeatedly mentioned how sorry he was that he had been causing so much trouble to his family, in addition to not being able to support his parents and family members.

'The meeting with Choi Yong-hun only lasted 30 minutes, and his mother and I could not help but follow him with our tear-filled eyes until he was led out of sight.'

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EMAIL ALERT
for prayer & action

NOVEMBER 2006



Choi Yong-hun

Kim Bong Soon

Kim Bong Soon has repeatedly demonstrated alone in front of the Chinese embassy in Seoul on behalf of her husband and written to the South Korean government again and again, seeking his early release. In the six months since her visit however, she has been unable to see her husband again, and remains very concerned about his health. Although she has written to the Korean consul in Qingdao, China inquiring about her husband's current situation, she has yet to receive any detailed updates.

PLEASE PRAY

- ▶ For the early release of Choi Yong-hun and that he will be reunited with his family and friends.
- ▶ For a dramatic improvement in his health.
- ▶ For Kim Bong Soon and her two daughters that they would know much of God's presence, protection and provision

'But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him'
Acts 12:5

INTERNATIONAL
release
THE VOICE OF THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

Please write a short polite letter of protest to the following asking for the release of Choi Yong-hun.

Sample letter to Government officials

Please do not mention RI when you write.

His Excellency Ban Ki-moon
United Nations Secretary General-Designate and
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Republic of Korea
c/o The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations
335 East 45th Street
New York 10017
USA

Your Excellency,

I am gravely concerned for the human rights of the North Korean people, and have also been encouraged following the news of your selection to be the next United Nations Secretary General.

The Peoples' Republic of China, a member of the U.N. Security Council, continues to repatriate North Korean refugees found on its soil to North Korea, knowing that those refugees face severe punishment, including execution. China's policy, which is in flagrant violation of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, demands the immediate and forthright attention of the next Secretary General.

May I respectfully draw the attention of your Excellency to the case of Choi Yong-hun, who was arrested in January 2003 and sentenced to five years' imprisonment for his part in assisting North Korean refugees in China. This humanitarian and citizen of the Republic of Korea remains incarcerated in Weifang Prison, Shandong Province, China. I respectfully ask that you take up his case in an effort to secure his immediate release and in so doing uphold the values upon which the United Nations was founded.

Sincerely

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