

'Spirituality of Self-emptying' Seen through Chinul's Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa and Luther's Protestant Reformation

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Abstract

Religion in Korea today faces the absence of spirituality. The positive roles of Buddhism and Christianity have been lost to the 'past,' leaving religious spirituality marginalized in Korean society. In the 21st century, Koreans have widespread awareness of the need for 'spirituality' in both Buddhism and Christianity. Not until religion is fundamentally reformed can it be re-established in political, social, cultural, and other sectors. It is, therefore, necessary to reflect on the roles Korea's two major religions, Buddhism and Christianity (especially Protestantism), can play. The present paper looks for answers from the revolutionist Korean Buddhist Chinul (知訥) and the German Protestant Reformer

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Martin Luther. These two figures believed that religious ‘Reformed Spirituality,’ e.g. ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying,’ could drive religious and social restoration of the source.

In this paper, we shall examine ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ for Chinul and Luther, as demonstrated in two reformation movements: Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa (定慧結社, association of Samādhi (定) and Prajñā (慧)) and the Protestant Reformation. We shall also explore spirituality as an existential ‘movement’ involving participation in reforming reality, not as ‘emptying’ in mere existence. First, ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ reflected in Chinul’s Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa (Encouragement to Practice: The Compact of the Samadhi and Prajna Community) shall be investigated. This includes exploring the Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa as a ‘Restoration Movement.’ Second, ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ reflected in Luther’s Protestant Reformation shall be analyzed. Luther’s ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ is examined in the four sources of the Protestant Reformation — sola scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia, and solus Christus — and the three elements of ‘Reformed Spirituality’ — oratio, meditatio, and tentatio. Third, based on these analyses, ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ for Chinul and Luther shall be compared and analyzed. Finally, Chinul’s and Luther’s ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ shall be applied to Korea’s present religious and social situations.

- Keywords

Chinul, Martin Luther, Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa (定慧結社), Protestant Reformation, Spirituality of Self-emptying, Reformed Spirituality, restoration of the source

I. Introduction: Why ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’?

TReligion today faces the absence of spirituality. Regardless of the specific religion, non-believers are quick to cast a suspicious gaze towards religion. Buddhism and Christianity, taking up the majority of religious space in Korea, are often treated as ‘objects of revulsion.’ The positive roles taken on by Buddhism during the Three Kingdoms Period and Christianity in early Korean Christian history have been disregarded as ‘past,’ leaving religious spirituality marginalized in Korean society for some time. Religion has been minimized or even viewed negatively in Korean lives. Urging the close interrelatedness of religion and culture, Karl Jaspers envisioned the 21st century as a second Axial Age for spirituality’s recovery.

Buddhism and Christianity (especially Protestantism) in Korea today share the need for recovery or reformation. Not until religion is fundamentally reformed can it be corrected in political, social, cultural, and other sectors. It is, therefore, necessary to reflect on the roles of these two major religions of Korea should embrace in a society where mammonism threatens basic human rights and justice. The present writer shall examine Korean Buddhist reformer Chinul (知訥, 1158-1210) and German Protestant reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546). These two religious reformers believed in ‘restoration to the origin’ for religion and society through ‘Reformed Spirituality’ or ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying.’

Despite over 300 years between them and a great divide between East and West, Chinul and Luther shared the notion that social reformation lies in a degenerated religion’s *ad fontes* (back to the sources), with ‘Reformed Spirituality’ as the starting point. ‘Reformed Spiritu-

ality' refers to fundamental spirituality oriented towards *ad fontes* — a non-dual (不二的, *advaya*) spirituality with no separation between *oratio* (prayer) / *meditatio* (meditation) and *scriptura* (Scripture). It is also the spirituality of no-self (無我) and the cross (kenosis), based on altruistic sacrificial actions. Therefore, 'Reformed Spirituality' is seen as 'Spirituality of Self-emptying.'

In Christianity, the word 'spirituality' first appeared in *the Epistle of Jerome*, around the 5th century.¹ From an etymological perspective, spirituality refers to spiritual properties and, to believers, it forms the essence of existence. Just as 'spirit,' 'mind,' and 'heart' are synonyms, 'spirituality,' 'mentality,' and 'human nature' hold the same meaning. Generally speaking, 'spirituality' is the term used in Christianity, while 'human nature (心性)' appears in Buddhism.² From the 20th to the 21st Century, Christian spirituality embodied faithful living and actions, as understood through the Christian biblical paradigm conceiving the situation in reality and in unity with God.³

In general, 'spirituality' is defined as the term covering all forms of doctrines and actions. In other words, 'spirituality' broadly encompasses religion, doctrine, and action, upholding the essence of spiritual life.⁴ Spirituality and spiritual life are not just about theoretically learning and knowing spirituality but also putting what is learned and

1 Korean Catholic Encyclopedia Editorial Committee, *Korean Catholic Encyclopedia* (Seoul: Korean Church History Research Institute, 1985), 625.

2 Wang Ki Kim, ed., *Human Beings, Religion and Spirituality* (Kwangju: Chonnam National University Press, 2010), 201-202.

3 Myong Hee Kim, "Spirituality of Participation and Interpretational Consideration of Peace Seen through the essence (體)-form (相)-application (用) Principles - Centering around Gandhi's Ahimsa -," *Thoughts of Won Buddhism and Religious Culture* 50 (2011): 12.

4 Kim, *Human Beings*, 202-203.

known into action. In this sense, spirituality can also be called 'Reformed Spirituality.'

Unlike the past emphasis on the spiritual realm, today's spirituality emphasizes actions. Life without action is not 'spirituality.' More specifically, spirituality may be called a type of action based on experiencing the absolute being.⁵ It is called 'Spirituality of Participation' or 'Reformed Spirituality.' Taking the mission of acting out spirituality in the field of life, 'Reformed Spirituality' is clearly distinguished from mystical spirituality founded solely upon religious experiences of mystics. For Luther, in particular, 'Reformed Spirituality' is '*Scriptura* Spirituality,' taking *scriptura* (the Bible) as its base.

Christian spirituality is described as 'the Buddh-nature (佛性)' in Buddhist scriptures, treatises, and Zen quotes. For example, it is written in *Taebojōkkyōng* (大寶積經): "Buddha observes with clear eyes, for all has spirituality (靈性) in all immeasurable Buddhist paradise (一切無量佛土諸含靈性)." According to this, 'spirituality' and 'the Buddha-nature' are synonyms in Buddhist paradise. This demonstrates the use of 'spirituality' in Buddhism appearing much earlier than in Christianity (in the 5th century). As for treatises, 'spirituality' appears in Li T'ongxuan (李通玄, 635–730)'s *Zin Huayan Jing Lun* (新華嚴經論, *Exposition of the Eighty Fascicle Versions of the Flower Ornament Scripture*): "Through discipline, you get promoted and wisdom reaches the level of spirituality." Spirituality is achieved as a result of discipline, indicating that the ultimate goal of meditative discipline is spirituality.⁶

5 Kim, *Human Beings*, 205.

6 Inkyong Sūnim, "'Spirituality' and the 'nature of Buddha' are synonyms, referring to the 'universal character traits' of human beings" accessed Jan.19, 2012, <http://www.hyunbulnews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=270940>

Chinul clarified that meditation, discipline, samadhi, and wisdom, achieved through Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation (頓悟漸修) and Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously (定慧雙修), lie in unity.

The reason that Buddhist spirituality, a universal character trait for humans, looks different in everyone is that it varies according to thoughts and places of discipline. Meditative discipline is desirable for reaching the original cleanliness of spirituality. The ‘nature of Buddha (佛性),’ which is a synonym for Christian ‘spirituality,’ is used together with dharmata (法性) and human nature (本性). The Buddha-nature is the character of Buddha; dharmata, the essence of all phenomena; svabhava (自性), one’s own character from the inner self (not from outside); and human nature (本性), the character shaped from the origin. Therefore, we can place the term ‘spirituality’ at the heart of Buddhism. This paper unifies the terms ‘nature of Buddha’ and ‘spirituality’ under ‘spirituality.’

Meanwhile, ‘emptying’ has religious meaning. In Buddhism, ‘Buddha’s heart’ is referenced as ‘emptying,’ termed ‘sunya (空).’ The Buddhist ‘emptying’ refers to emptying ‘Anātman’ or ‘selflessness.’ Chinul’s ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ refers to the spirituality of sunya (空) or Anātman. Luther’s ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ refers to the ‘spirituality of *kenosis*,’ meaning Christ’s ‘self-sacrifice’ on the cross. The difference between Chinul and Luther lies in Chinul’s ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ being devoid of any subject or object. Chinul’s spirituality is based on Anātman or selflessness. Meanwhile, Luther’s ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ has a definite subject and object: ‘I’ is the object and ‘God’ is the subject; ‘I’ am emptied by ‘God.’ Chinul and Luther brought about reform through ‘Spirituality of Self-

emptying' and aimed to remedy corruption in society and politics during their lifetimes.

The present paper examines how Chinul and Luther's 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' was revealed through two movements: Chŏnghye Kyōlsa ('association of Samādhi(定) and Prajñā(慧)') and the Protestant Reformation. Spirituality is explored as an existential 'movement' to reform reality and not as 'emptying' mere existence. First, 'Spirituality of Self-emptying,' demonstrated in Chinul's Chŏnghye Kyōlsa, is examined. For this, we explore Chŏnghye Kyōlsa's roots, along with the 'restoration movement.' Second, Luther's 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' is examined through the Protestant Reformation. The chronological background is studied and analyzed through four sources: '*sola scriptura*,' '*sola fide*,' '*sola gratia*,' and '*solus Christus*.' Luther's 'Reformed Spirituality' and 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' shall be examined based on three elements: *oratio*, *meditatio*, and *tentatio*. Third, based on the previous analyses, the characteristics of Chinul's and Luther's 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' are compared. Finally, applications are proposed for Korea's religious and social situations.

II. 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' in Chinul's Chŏnghye Kyōlsa

Chinul (知訥, 1158-1210) was born in Seoheung, Hwanghaedo Province. His original family name was Cheong (鄭氏), and his pen name was Moguja (牧牛子). His father was Chŏng Kwangu (鄭光遇), a Hakchŏng (學正) at Kukhak (國學, National School), while his mother was from Gaeheunggun with the family name Jo. Chinul left home at nine⁷ to be discipled by Chonghwi (宗暉), becoming a monk

at Sagulsan Mountain School (閻崛山派), one of the Nine Mountain Schools of the Korean Sŏn (禪宗九山門). At 25, in 1182, he passed the royal examination for monks at Pojesa Temple in Kaegyŏng. Here, Chinul fortified his determination for Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa, releasing his first writings, *Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa*, in 1190.⁸

Chinul's movement was a gesture for renewal in hope of Buddhist reformation. Through Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa, he promoted a return to Buddhism's origins, presenting the disciplines of samadhi and wisdom as methods for this purpose. Samadhi and wisdom are disciplinary paths toward the awakening of the heart through Buddha, with neither priority nor substitution between them. To Chinul, Sudden Awakening (頓悟) and Gradual Cultivation (漸修) are both non-dual (不二的, *advaya*) and mind-emptying disciplinary methods.

We shall examine the 'mind-emptying discipline' exhibited in Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa, first exploring the background of Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa's confirming samadhi and wisdom as disciplines for 'emptying the mind.'

1. Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa's Background

Chinul was active in the historical period when Ch'oi Ch'unghyŏn (崔忠獻) established his rule over power-hungry military subjects following the Mushinjŏngbyŏn (武臣政變) coup. After Mushinjŏngbyŏn, Doctrinal Buddhist (教宗) temples that enjoyed aristocratic support rose in protest against the ruling military subjects (*Musin*), the monks

7 There are various arguments on his age from 9 through 16.

8 Chinul, *Kwŏnsu Chŏnghye Kyŏlsamun* (*Encouragement to Practice: The Compact of the Samadhi and Prajna Community*, 勸修定慧結社文), Trans. Kyŏngwan (Seoul: Knowledge Making Knowledge, 2008), 18.

themselves becoming involved in civil uprisings and clashes. Amid this turmoil, Zen Buddhism (禪宗) regained its foothold and, with the support of military subjects, gave rise to Mushinjŏngbyŏn. At this time, Chinul began driving reform with Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa.

There were four major factors leading to Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa: first was social confusion across Koryŏ; second was Buddhism's corruption; third were the conflicts among Buddhist sectors (i.e. between Zen and Doctrinal Buddhism); and fourth was Chinul's insistence for reform in unifying discipline and action under an all-embracing universal Buddhism or 'Hoet'ong Buddhism.' In simultaneous pursuit of samadhi and wisdom, Chinul's Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa was a 'participating' and 'reformed' spirituality movement that took 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' as its basis. We shall look briefly at each factor behind Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa's founding.

1) Social Confusion in Koryŏ

Chinul's life of 53 years spanned from 1158 (12th year of King Eui) to 1210 (6th year of King Hwe). Coincidentally, this period was the most chaotic in Koryŏ's history. Koryŏ had suffered through the Treason of Yi Jagyŏm 32 years before Chinul's birth, and there was chaos following military coups during his lifetime.⁹ Amidst the swirling uprisings, political and social order disintegrated, and civil revolts took hold, affecting all levels of society, from literary people, military subjects, and provincial officers to farmers, slaves, and monks.¹⁰ Politically,

9 Kŏngi Kang, *The Life and Thoughts of Chinul Pojo-kuksa* (Seoul: Bulil Publishing, 2010), 15-16.

10 Inkyong Sŭnim, *A Study on Pojo Chinul's Thought of Chŏnghye* (Seoul: Myŏngsangsangdam Yŏnguwŏn, 2017), 20.

there were confrontations between central existent family-lineated officers and new officers passing the Kwagŏ exam. Economically, monopoly of land — mostly by aristocrats — nurtured grudges among provincial officers and farmers. Starting when Chinul was 38, Ch'oi Ch'unghyŏn's military government (1196-1219) drove the whole nation into unrest for a period of 23 years.¹¹

2) Corruption of Buddhism

The state of Buddhism in Koryŏ fell far from orthodox dharma. As Buddhism was swept into turmoil, the monks' discipline slackened and deteriorated. From the onset, the religion took on strong nationalist tendencies. The founder of the Koryŏ Dynasty credited the mysterious powers of Buddha for his enthronement, legislating nationwide worship of Buddhism. This 'nationalized Buddhism' or 'royal Buddhism' degraded to 'praying for fortunes and getting rid of bad fortunes,' including complicated rituals and formalizations. As such, during periods of national unrest, Buddhism itself was shaken.¹² It was inevitable that the religion would fall into collusion with national powers.

Taking advantage of preferential tax exemptions, Koryŏ Buddhists took possession of land and engaged in profitable businesses, converting temples to nests of profits. Referring to this time, Chinul lamented: "Under the pretext of the Buddha-dharma, Buddhism is struggling on the road for profit pursuit and, engrossed with worldly concerns, is wasting clothes and food."¹³ Furthermore, Buddhists partook in po-

11 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 31.

12 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 30.

13 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 31.

litical riots and clashes with military forces. Numerous lives were lost as a consequence. Falling deep into secular pursuits in the midst of prolonged political unrest, Buddhism strayed from its practices and original essence, losing its original religious integrity.

3) Conflicts between Zen and Doctrine

Along with external corruption, Buddhism had a myriad of internal issues. This highlighted the extreme confrontations between Zen (禪) and doctrine (教). Zen, introduced in the late Unified Silla period, continued growing until early Koryŏ, centering around the Kusansŏnmun (九山禪門) 'Nine Mountain Sŏn Monasteries' and giving rise to conflicts with traditional doctrinal Buddhism. In sectarianism and factionalism, divided Buddhism was rife with exclusions.¹⁴

Chinul saw these conflicts as the gravest obstacles to disciplinary practice (修行) and disciplinary mind (修心). In Chŏnghye Kyŏlsamun (*The Resolution on Samadhi and Prajna Community*), he pointed out specific maladies in the practices of Zen and doctrine,¹⁵ pinpointing two problems of doctrinal schools:

First, doctrinal schools looked to written characters, while practice to control the mind is unaccompanied.¹⁶ As he saw it, monks had become too preoccupied with worldly matters, seeking profit and fame instead of being faithful to disciplining the mind. The malady for doctrinal schools lay in sticking to lingual characters and neglecting direct cultivation of the mind.¹⁷

14 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 31.

15 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 54.

16 Chinul, *Kwŏnsu Chŏnghye Kyŏlsamun*, 116.

17 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 53-55.

Second, the chanting was erroneous. The chanting was being practiced in loud voices, as if to reach Amitabha Buddha as some being outside of the mind.¹⁸ Chinul's harsh criticism here was rooted in practice with exclusion of the mind. Practice excluding the mind leads to the objectification of Buddha and the pure land. Consequently, it ranges far from the place itself, transcending all conflicts. That kind of discipline is as reckless as "trying to nail a square peg into a round hole", criticized Chinul.¹⁹

In his Chŏnghye Kyŏlsamun, Chinul also pointed out issues in Zen Buddhism. The first was the 'Zen only (痴禪)' attitude of groups in quietude believing that Zen meant simply sitting in meditation. The second was 'crazy Zen (狂禪),' the error in behaviorism and jumping out of one's own bounds. As for 'Zen only,' Chinul said:

"Today, people disciplining the mind do not rely on what is said in the text but insist that only secret messages exchanged with others are discipline. They endeavor for nothing, remaining seated and dozing off or, in contemplation, losing their minds and falling into mental derangement."²⁰

This is the illness inflicting those with the illusion that sitting in quietude, ignoring the doctrine (教), is following Zen. This was caused by the misinterpretation of "A special transmission outside the teaching (教外別傳)" and "Not based on the written word (不立文字)."

18 Chinul, *Kwŏnsu Chŏnghye Kyŏlsamun*, 20.

19 Kŏngi Kang, *Mokwooja Chinul Research* (Seoul: Buchoenimsesang, 2001), 20-21.

20 Chinul, *Pŏppjibŏlhaengnokjŏlyobyŏngipsagi* (法集別行錄節要并私記) (Seoul: Koryŏwŏn, 1987), 103

Chinul refers to 'Zen only' practitioners as 'monks in the dark (暗中禪客).' Meanwhile, he describes 'crazy Zen' as follows:

"Recently, people studying at Sŏn School suffer from this illness, saying 'Our mind is originally clear, not belonging to the realm of existence and non-existence; why, then, is it necessary to make our body experience pain and suffer from discipline?' Therefore, they copy behaviors of their own will without hindrance, turning away from true disciplinary practice. They are untidy in body and tongue and also crooked in mind, with no enlightenment whatsoever."²¹

Practitioners of 'crazy Zen' give up their own discipline and create negative influences for others. Ignoring Sila and Vinaya, they are reckless in action and consumption, superciliously humiliating Buddha and spiritual patriarchs.

As we have seen, Zen (禪) and doctrine (教) revealed their own maladies at either extreme, driving Chinul to announce Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa's resolution to heal and open the way to a disciplinary mind (修心). Reflecting on the teachings of Buddha and spiritual patriarchs, Chinul recognized the mind as Buddha, and he urged the mutual development of samadhi and wisdom based on this enlightenment.²²

4) Reformation of Buddhism through Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa

Chinul challenged the corruption he saw, urging a return to Orthodox Buddhism through samadhi and wisdom and embracing the ori-

21 Chinul, *Pŏpjpŏlhaengnokjŏlyobyŏngipsagi*, 12.

22 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 56.

gins. At 25, he started Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa, giving rise to the reformation movement for Korean Buddhism. His life became solely devoted to Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa.²³

In the first month of the year of Imin (任寅, 1182), Chinul attended a Dharma assembly, forming a community with 10 alumni to reinstate the integrity of Orthodox Buddhism.²⁴ ‘Kyŏlsa (association)’ signified that the movement involved a group rather than a single leader driving the movement (Kang 2010, 35). With ‘Chŏnghye (samadhi and prajna)’ being another name for ‘Zen,’ and ‘Kyŏlsa’ meaning ‘to form a community,’ ‘Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa’ meant: ‘Let’s form a community to practice Zen.’ Through Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa, Chinul hoped to correct Buddhism’s deviations. He believed this could save Koryŏ.²⁵

To remedy the corruption, Chinul believed it was urgent to reform inner consciousness and let the mind rest.²⁶ He believed that reformation of inner consciousness was possible through the Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa movement. To Chinul, the first object toward inner reformation was the ‘mind.’ When our minds are free of discernment, they can be purified. As such, through purification of the mind, social ethics can be recovered. For this reason, the Zen-practicing community of Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa formed its starting point for active social reformation.²⁷ The goal was to ‘return to the original nature of Buddhism.’

2. Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa: A Restoration Movement

Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa was heavily influenced by the Sixth Patriarch of

23 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 32.

24 Inkyong, *A Study on Pojo Chinul's*, 20-21.

25 Inkyong, *A Study on Pojo Chinul's*, 27.

26 Inkyong, *A Study on Pojo Chinul's*, 24.

27 Inkyong, *A Study on Pojo Chinul's*, 26.

the Chinese Ch'an Buddhism (六祖壇經), written by Hyenŭng (慧能, 638-713), *The Great Tripitaka* (大藏經), and *Exposition of the Eighty Fascicle Version of the Flower Ornament Scripture* (新華嚴經論), written by Li T'ongxuan (李通玄, 636-673). Speaking at Kōjoam Hermitage in 1190 (20th year of King Myōng), Chinul announced the Kwōnsu Chōnghye Kyōlsamun (Encouragement to Practice: The Compact of the Samadhi and Prajna Community, 勸修定慧結社文) and launched the discipline of samadhi (One-pointedness of mind) and prajna. He moved the community headquarters in 1200 (3rd year of King Sin) to Kilsangsa Temple (吉祥寺) on Songgwangsan Mountain (松廣山), Sŭngju (昇州), later changing the names of the temple and mountain to Susōnsa Temple (修禪社) and Chogyesan Mountain (曹溪山). From there, Chinul instructed the public on his own original Zen ideology.

The essence of Chinul's thoughts in his resolution may be summarized by 'Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously,' 'Unified Zen and Doctrine,' and 'Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation.'²⁸ This meant having only faith and diligence in discipline. Chinul called for moving toward the essence of Buddhism and the world of enlightenment through discipline. Having witnessed the corruption of Buddhism, Chinul saw a return to 'Buddha's mind (佛心)' through discipline as the best way forward. In the beginning, he announced that the mind was the origin of all problems: "If you depart from the mind, there is no enlightenment of Buddha."²⁹

Chinul believed that discipline through samadhi and prajna would enable restoration to Buddha's mind and that Orthodox Buddhism should be established with the mind as its starting point. The Resolu-

28 Chinul, *Kwōnsu Chōnghye Kyōlsamun*, 14.

29 Chinul, *Kwōnsu Chōnghye Kyōlsamun*, 23.

tion was a pan-Buddhist prescription for ‘restoration of the origin.’ Chinul urged a general return to the ‘original source.’ The first step was to ‘empty the mind’ full of desire and attachment.

3. Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa’s ‘Mind-emptying’

1) Emptying the Mind

Chinul was enlightened through the *Sixth Patriarch of the Chinese Ch’an Buddhism* (六祖壇經) in ‘true-suchness of self-nature (眞如自性),’ ‘original mind,’ and ‘the Buddha’s mind.’³⁰ His enlightenment experience took on profound significance for Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa. This was because Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa aimed to cultivate the original mind. Enlightenment into reality of the mind forms the basis of mind-cultivation Buddhism. The reality of existence is defined in different terms in Buddhism: Fundamental Buddhism defines it as ‘arising from causation (緣起),’ Mahayana Buddhism as ‘sunya (空)’ and ‘the Buddha-nature (佛性),’ and Sŏn Buddhism as ‘the mind (心).’³¹

To Chinul, the mind itself was Buddha (心卽佛) (Kang 2010, 86). The mind is the background covering Heaven and Earth — a void and bright mind (空寂靈知心). This void background is where all is disconnected from discernment and where the host and guest are evacuated.³² It is the place where all confrontations disappear, where there is no conflict, hatred, division, or fighting; it is the place of ‘emptying.’ For Chinul, the void and bright mind (空寂靈智) was the source of existence and our original face (本來面目). This outlines the truth handed

30 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 41.

31 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 81-82.

32 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 91.

down by all Buddhas of the three times (the past, present, and future), all spiritual patriarchs, and all enlightened masters.³³

As the mind is inseparable from the void and yet bright in essence and action, disciplines based on the mind must be Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously, with samadhi and wisdom cultivated together. The goal was to display Buddha's mind. In doing so, samadhi (禪定) returns to the void background, while wisdom (智慧) displays the bright mind. The background is perfected as a life where wisdom becomes one with mercy, and where enlightenment becomes one with samskara (行). Perfection is originally the mind displayed perfectly. In this way, the mind is non-dual, being void and bright at the same time.³⁴ 'Emptying the mind' signifies the state of being void of dichotomous discrimination and confrontation — the state of recovering Buddha's integral mind.

According to Chinul, the enlightenment of the original mind requires self-nature (見自本性) and Sudden Awakening. He presented two paths in the *Golden Teaching on Mind Cultivation* (修心訣): Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation.³⁵

2) Emptying the Mind through Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation

Chinul introduced the 'sudden (頓)' and 'gradual (漸)' paths for all saints dating back to ancient times (Chinul 1991, 109). Quoting Patriarch Kyubong, Chinul emphasized that 'divine or miraculous trans-

33 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 96-97.

34 Kang, *The Life and Thoughts*, 97.

35 Chinul, "The Golden Teaching on Mind Cultivation (修心訣)," in 『普照法語』 (李鍾郁全集2), ed. 智庵和尚門徒會 (Seoul: 三藏苑, 1991), 109.

formation (神通變化) was not something instant but happened over gradual cultivation:

“We know a frozen pond is still water, but it has to borrow the power of sunlight to melt; we know common people are all Buddhas, but they have to build discipline and cultivate power in Buddha’s teachings. Not until the ice melts can we wash; not until delusion is finished and the mind is mysteriously conveyed can the work of wonder and light appear.”³⁶

To Chinul, ‘Sudden Awakening’ meant realizing that original nature is free from agony and is the nature of the absolute being’s wisdom (無漏智性). Therefore, being free of agony and the nature of the absolute being’s wisdom (無漏智性) makes one no different from all Buddhas. Meanwhile, ‘Gradual Cultivation’ makes us no different from Buddha’s original nature, as long-acquired habits are hard to shed and we can only become saints by gradual cultivation through enlightenment.³⁷

Chinul emphasized Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation as necessary for use at the same time, like two wheels on a wagon; just as the wagon cannot be pulled by one wheel, ‘mind emptying’ requires both Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation. In Gradual Cultivation, there are two gates — samadhi and wisdom—representing a non-dual way of discipline. Chinul criticized those practicing samadhi alone: “They are sitting firm, immobile, suppressing the body and mind to subjugate the passions as if pressing grass with stone. In

36 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 110.

37 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 111.

cultivating the mind, this is a very foolish thing.”³⁸ Instead, Chinul urged balanced cultivation of both samadhi and wisdom, saying, “Cultivating samadhi and wisdom in balance, your mind of like or hate grows thin, and mercy and wisdom are displayed brightly. Deeds of merit (功行) increase, and when agony has run out, life and death are disconnected.”³⁹ If samadhi (One-pointedness of mind, 定) is the essence of becoming and cessation (體), prajna (慧) is the application of activity (用). As the essence of becoming and cessation and application of activity are inseparable, samadhi and prajna also form a way of disciplinary practice (修行). As samadhi is prajna, “It is quiet but always awake”; and as prajna is samadhi, “It is awake but always quiet.”⁴⁰ Therefore, the practitioner of Buddha-dharma must cultivate samadhi and prajna together.⁴¹

3) Emptying the Mind with Samadhi and Wisdom

The ‘Chŏnghye’ in Chinul’s Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa means ‘samadhi’ and ‘wisdom,’ signifying two gates to discipline. Samadhi and wisdom are cultivated as the way to mind discipline. Chinul called it ‘Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously.’ If ‘samadhi’ means the state of mental unity attained by concentrating the scattered mind, ‘wisdom’ realizes original nature.

However, there is no order in disciplining samadhi and prajna. In the *Golden Teaching on Mind Cultivation* (修心訣), Chinul rebuked foolish arguments regarding the order of samadhi and prajna. He asked

38 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 124.

39 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 124.

40 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 125.

41 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 128.

that practitioners of Buddha-dharma observe equal portions of samadhi and prajna.⁴² When cultivating samadhi and wisdom equally, one can be a true 'practitioner of emptying.' Chinul described 'mind-emptying of samadhi and wisdom' as follows:

"It is like an empty boat swept up by waves and following the highs and lows. It is like water flowing around the mountain to meet the curves and straight. There is no deliberation in mind; therefore, do mindlessly today and you will do mindlessly tomorrow. Following all sorts of clinging conditions, you meet neither blockage nor trapping. There is neither cutting nor cultivating good-evil."⁴³

Chinul called samadhi a discipline required during delusions. Samadhi is the way of discipline to prevent the mind from relying on objects arousing interaction. On the other hand, the Wisdom Gate is the way of discipline when facing 'no-thought.'⁴⁴ When you realize dharma (法) and sunya (空) through wisdom, you embody the perfect fit for 'mind-emptying.' Chinul described people enlightened in the Buddha-nature (佛性), as follows:

"They control troubled thoughts, ruling over no-thought with prajna. Conception of moving and skill disappears. When the void under rule is gone, even in the face of a sphere, thoughts return to the ultimate state. Even if they meet a contributory

42 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 128-129.

43 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 129.

44 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 130.

cause (緣), the mind concurs with the Way to be cultivated as a pair, as wished. They will have no work to do."⁴⁵

People who discipline samadhi and prajna simultaneously ought to have a 'truly void mind (空的心).' In other words, they have realized the mind is Buddha.

In cultivating samadhi and wisdom, we find Chasŏng Chŏnghye (Inherent in Self-nature, 自性定慧) and Susang Chŏnghye (Adapting to Forms, 隨相定慧). Depending on practitioners' abilities, either can be selected. Susang Chŏnghye is the Chŏnghye of the Gradual Gate (漸門) reached through gradual cultivation, whereas Chasŏng Chŏnghye is the Chŏnghye of the Sudden Gate (頓門), in which the mind's essence and form (性相) are simultaneous.⁴⁶

Chasŏng Chŏnghye achieves the way to Buddhahood (佛道) through self-enlightenment without any effort. In other words, it cultivates unformulated principles (無爲) where the original mind's action appears.⁴⁷ When the fact of the mind as Buddha is definitively realized by religious 'eye-opening,' the ensuing cultivation becomes 'cultivation without cultivation (無修而修).'

Meanwhile, people who cultivate Chŏnghye following this form (相) "repeat thinking over and over before enlightenment, making efforts to control based on the inferior framework of the gradual gate."⁴⁸ Susang Chŏnghye is step-by-step cultivation of finite dimensions and is the same as Gradual Cultivation. Through gradual discipline, one reaches and performs exact 'mind-emptying.' That there are two gates

45 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 130.

46 Kang, *Mokwoja*, 37.

47 *Ibid.*

48 Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 135.

of svabhava (自性) and form (相) in the disciplinary methods of Chŏnghye is in accordance with practitioners' conditions. Chinul recommended that those ridden with heavy karmic obstacles and whose minds moved depending on others be cultivated through Susang Chŏnghye in accordance with situations. People with difficulties performing samadhi and wisdom on their own should practice self- and other-power (自他力). They must also diligently give offerings to Tri-ratna, read and recite Mahayana sutras, perform the Way, and continue worshipping, repenting, and praying.⁴⁹ Chinul encouraged practitioners, as follows:

"Never attach to texts. Get into the meaning, return to the self, and concur with the essential main doctrine. Then, wisdom without a teacher will automatically appear before you as innocent reasons become definite and not dark. It will be the body of wisdom achieved, but enlightenment will not come from others."⁵⁰

After all, to Chinul, samadhi and wisdom were the discipline of 'emptying the mind' and the way of cultivating 'the mind background.' 'Mind-emptying' finds Buddha-dharma (佛法) not outside but within.

4. 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' in Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa

As we have examined, 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' in Chinul's Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa has three characteristics:

⁴⁹ Kang, *Mokwooja*, 37-38.

⁵⁰ Chinul, *The Golden Teaching*, 137.

First is 'Reformed Spirituality.' Through Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa, Chinul tried to overcome social confusion, corruption, and conflicts. His Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously served as 'Reformed Spirituality' for society and Buddhism. Meanwhile, Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa also brought 'restoration of the source,' uncovering the essence of the mind. This meant recovering the original mind to enable correction. To Chinul, individual spirituality was social spirituality. The 'mind-emptying' of common people became a starting point for establishing Orthodox Buddhism and social peace. 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' in Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa was 'Reformed Spirituality' and 'spirituality of participation' ensuing practice.

Second is non-dual (不二的) spirituality. It was non-dual spirituality that resolved conflicts between Doctrinal and Zen Buddhism. The samadhi of Zen Buddhism and the wisdom of Doctrinal Buddhism were disciplinary gates cultivated like two wheels of a wagon. Insisting on Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously, Chinul tried to reconcile Zen and Doctrinal Buddhism, emphasizing Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation as non-dual methods. 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' of Chŏnghye enabled transcendence of conflicts and confrontations. Common people gain enlightenment in singleness of mind (一心) through Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously and Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation.

Third is the spirituality of Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously. Chinul urged that 'samadhi' concentrating on the distracted mind and 'wisdom' giving enlightenment in the essence of things were equal disciplines. Therefore, spirituality of self-emptying was impossible through silent meditation alone. Taking both meditation practice and the study of Buddha-dharma (佛法) enables a return

to the original Buddha mind. Presenting the Chasŏng Chŏnghye of Sudden Gate (頓門) and Susang Chŏnghye of Gradual Gate (漸門), Chinul explored paths to enlightenment. His Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation is the disciplinary gate for popularization and trivialization of enlightenment and discipline.

We have looked into ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ demonstrated in Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa. ‘Emptying’ means ‘there is no hindrance (無碍)’ to generate confrontation. This is possible only in the Buddha-mind (Buddhacitta, 佛心). To realize that the Buddha-mind is our mind, Chinul presented the disciplinary way of samadhi and wisdom, Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation.

Born 325 years after Chinul, the German Martin Luther presented a Christian ‘Reformed Spirituality’ based on ‘reformation’ and ‘scripture.’ Luther’s ‘Reformed Spirituality’ may also be defined as ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying.’ We shall now examine ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ in Luther’s Protestant Reformation.

III. ‘Spirituality of Self-Emptying’ in Luther’s Protestant Reformation

1. Background for the Protestant Reformation

Since long before Martin Luther (1483-1546) nailed his *Ninety-Five Theses* to the door of All Saints’ Church, signals for change were visible across politics, society, economics, and religion. During the Middle Ages, Christianity held massive influence over European society as a ‘national religion.’ By 1453, at the fall of the Eastern Roman Empire, Christianity flourished through Byzantine culture on the axis of Con-

stantinople. The massive reach of the Church was everywhere.

At the onset of the 14th century, however, tragedy gradually began to emerge. The power of the Roman Church ruled over European national authorities, whereas the clergy, including the pope, became detached from 'the original nature of Christianity,' edging towards corruption.

1) Disorder and Corruption of the Pope

As the central axis and head of the Church, popes began degenerating into secular rulers. Like secular kings, popes executed policies and inhabited luxurious palaces. Pope Bonifacio VIII, serving from 1294-1303, issued the papal bull *Unam Sanctum* with the ambition of ruling Europe. This prompted the French King Philip IV to assassinate him. Following this, European society fell into chaos, leading to the disgraceful 'Avignon Papacy' from 1309 to 1377. At that time, bishops publicly traded major positions (simonia), while monks sold indulgences and accumulated enormous wealth.⁵¹

When the Avignon Papacy collapsed, the Hundred Years War broke out. The Church was divided between Rome and Avignon, and there was confusion amongst three standing popes. Finally, in 1417, the Council of Constance elected Pope Martinus V, ending the Western Schism.

2) Corruption of the Church

The corruption and confusion surrounding the pope was directly connected to the Church itself. The Church had strayed from its 'orig-

51 Timothy Jones, *Christian History Made Easy*, trans. Ungjun Pae into Korean (Seoul: K'yujang, 2007), 135-136.

inal nature,' gradually revealing political ambitions and moving towards a secular path. Requesting to be known as 'servus servorum,' popes craved the position of Christ rather than being Christian servants. They privatized church property and built magnificent cathedrals bolstering their glory.⁵²

Popes summoned all means available in building St. Peter's Cathedral. This ambition deprived citizens of money and conscience, pushing the masses to condemn the papal system itself. As the Protestant Reformation brewed, Pope Leo X (1513-1521) was exerting all efforts to renovate St. Peter's Cathedral. He began selling indulgences, which prompted even greater corruption within the Church.⁵³

2. Protestant Reformation Movement: *Ad fontes*

Through the Protestant Reformation, Christians urged Christianity's 'return to its original nature (源泉回歸, *ad fontes*),' announcing four 'foundational principles' of '*sola scriptura*,' '*sola fide*,' '*sola gratia*,' and '*solus Christus*.' These served as the movement's four pillars.

1) *Sola Scriptura*

Recognizing the corruption, Martin Luther, a monk from St. Augustine's, nailed his handwritten poster for '*ad fontes* (back to the sources)' (*Ninety-Five Theses*) to the door of All Saints' Church on October 31, 1517. The Catholic Church's doctrine that salvation could be secured with money (indulgences) and acts (justification) was 'unrighteous' in Luther's eyes. He argued that the pope's indulgences would never forgive any sins. Finally, he displayed his 95 propositions. October 31,

52 Young Ju Kim, *Luther Finds Trails in the Forest of Chaos* (Seoul: IXΘΥΣ, 2014), 39-40.

53 Kim, *Luther Finds Trails*, 41.

1517 is recognized as the date announcing the Protestant Reformation and the Protestant Church.

The essence of Luther's Protestant Reformation was '*scriptura* (gospel).' The restoration movement of original nature, led by the Italian humanists' call for 'back to the sources (*ad fontes*, Psalm 42:1),' signified a refreshing message for Luther. It emphasized reading original Christian scriptures and following Christ's example.⁵⁴ Thus, Luther took an interest in reading scriptures and came to emphasize the Bible, recognizing no other authority than the scriptures and Christ. Luther works at translating these works into German while hidden away within Warburg Castle. He believed in everyone's right to know God through the New Testament. Translating the Latin scriptures, which had been exclusive to priests, he opened them up to all Germans.

2) *Sola Fide* and *Sola Gratia*

Luther's Protestant Reformation aimed a 'return to' God as the source of existence. Luther stressed 'faith' in returning to God. Based on Romans 1:17 ("For in the gospel righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as is written: 'The righteous will live by faith. (NIV)'," he presented '*sola fide*.' Here, 'faith (*fide*)' is a means or method. Salvation is not given by faith; salvation has already been given by 'grace.' All that is left is self-determination in acceptance or rejection. Therefore, Luther stressed faith as given 'only by grace (*sola gratia*)'.⁵⁵

54 Kim, *Luther Finds Trails*, 48.

55 Myong Hee Kim, "Luther's Mysticism Seen through Essence-Form-Application Principles in the Awakening of Mahayana Faith," *Religious Studies* 77, no. 3 (2017): 105.

3) *Solus Christus*

As God is so far from humans, he is imperceptible through human efforts. Only Christ on the cross lets humans perceive God. God stays unseen in suffering (i.e. inside the humbling humiliation of the cross). The cross (*kenosis*) let humans meet God.⁵⁶ The mystery of 'the Hidden God' is resolved as 'the Revealed God' in this suffering. The Revealed God is not experienced through human rationality but through God's blessing to reveal Himself. Luther's 'spirituality of the cross' is 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' given only by grace.

Christians can discover God in Christ's weakened state.⁵⁷ Luther argued that only with Christ as knowledge of God was this possible. To 'know' Christ is to know God as the 'man crucified on the cross'.⁵⁸ God is revealed through Jesus in his crucified state.

3. Luther's 'Reformed Spirituality'

Luther encountered mysticism in his youth, listening to Dominican monks and Johannes Tauler, a disciple of Meister Eckhart. His 'Reformed Spirituality' was especially influenced by the German book *Theologia Deutsch*, which outlined German mysticism. At the center of Luther's 'Reformed Spirituality' was '*sola scriptura*.' This came from his concern that any 'inner experience' not based on scripture was subject to objectifying the living voice of the Gospel.⁵⁹ Luther's 'Reformed Spirituality' was realized through three elements: *oratio* (prayer), *meditatio* (meditation), and *tentatio* (testing).

56 Hans-Martin Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther: A Critical Assessment*, trans. Byöngshik Jöng and Jihun Hong into Korean (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2015), 239.

57 Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 250.

58 Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 291.

59 Gerhard Wehr, ed., *Martin Luther-der Mystiker* (München: Kösel, 1999), 34-35

1) *Oratio* (Prayer)

Luther emphasized '*oratio* (prayer)' prior to experiencing God through *scriptura*. He knelt down and gave the *oratio* in seeking the Holy Spirit before reading. The aim was to seek assistance in rightly perceiving the message. The prayer (*oratio*) was 'an act of subjugation' to God's commands. Luther emphasized that all theologies should start with *oratio*, as it served as the medium in meeting God.⁶⁰

To Luther, religion was '*sola oratio*.' Religion and *oratio* were interchangeable. *Oratio* is the everyday gate to experiencing God. *Oratio* means seeking *solace* from the Holy Spirit and God's words. However, Luther explained that *oratio* itself is not the enabler in the experience.⁶¹ Experiencing God is only possible through the Holy Spirit.⁶² The Holy Spirit comes through *oratio* and, therefore, we must practice *oratio* every day.

2) *Meditatio* (Meditation)

Luther's '*meditatio*' is different from 'silent meditation,' as it refers to contemplating *scriptura* (i.e. the Bible). This was based on Psalm 1:2: "But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and, on His law, he meditates day and night." Luther's presentation of *scriptura meditatio* instead of silent meditation prevented subjective illusions experienced by fanatics. As such, he emphasized '*sola scriptura*.' *Scriptura meditatio* is different from fantastic or mystical experiences. *Meditatio* empowers victory over '*tentatio*.' Whereas general contemplation leads one to fall into *tentatio*, *scriptura*-based *meditatio* leads to deeper meetings with

60 Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 167.

61 Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 642-644.

62 Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 299.

God.⁶³ Luther's '*scriptura meditatio*' leads to deep meditation and experiencing 'oneness' with God through the words.

Luther compared God's words to 'bread.' When our spirit eats from '*scriptura* / bread,' we are nourished.⁶⁴ Humans eat to survive, and we must continuously read God's words for our spirit's survival. Luther emphasized daily accompaniment with *scriptura*, taking daily bread for the spirit. God gifted us bread in the form of *scriptura* and Christ. As humans become one with the bread consumed, we become one with Christ through 'eating.' Only through *scriptura* does God become real, and humans as sinners must listen to *scriptura*, meditate on it, and accept it.⁶⁵

The significance of Luther's *meditatio* is that experiencing God was opened up to everyone. The way to God was opened for personal connection. Luther's translation of the Bible from Latin into the language of the masses (German) made this possible. Regardless of social status, everyone could experience God. This was the 'democratization' of spirituality, brought about by *scriptura meditatio*, and it became the engine of the Protestant Reformation.

3) *Tentatio*

The Latin '*tentatio*' translates to 'temptation, test, or trial' and is central to 'spirituality of paradox.' As a characteristic of Luther's 'Reformed Spirituality,' '*tentatio*' is the experience of God met in paradox and the experience of trials endured. This resembles Christ's enduring the trials of the cross. The cross was the '*medium* (means)' allowing us

63 Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 648.

64 Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 203.

65 Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 205.

to meet 'the Hidden God.' The cross, like *tentatio*, was the 'venue' for experiencing this meeting. Luther said, "Christ's cross was an expression of God's Selbstdefinition (self-definition)."⁶⁶ Through the crucifixion of Christ, humans encountered 'God's Love.' The 'cross' served as a 'wall' dividing the Hidden God and the Revealed God. These two Gods became one with the cross (wall) between them. They broke through to reach each other. On this cross, humans experienced He who had emptied Himself to become human — the God of *kenosis*. The cross (*kenosis*) is where the 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' was embodied.

Interpreting *tentatio* as the peak of experiencing, Luther succeeded in connecting spirituality with everyday life. God reveals Himself to human beings eternally through opposites. The God revealed in Jesus is the supreme case of 'the Mystery of the Opposites' or 'the Mystery of Paradox'.⁶⁷

4) Spirituality to Act

Luther's 'Reformed Spirituality' was spirituality to act. Luther emphasized that faith and acts were inseparable. He argued to be like Christ in following *medi imitatio* Christ and looking like Christ.⁶⁸ Following Jesus (action), Christians become one with Christ, meaning the egoistic self is reformed to an altruistic no-self. This is experiencing God as a result of unifying faith and acts.

Luther's '*sola fide*' was the starting point of 'right actions.' Faith is

⁶⁶ Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 275.

⁶⁷ Peter Zimmerling, *Evangelische Mystik* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 49.

⁶⁸ Ki Ryun Kim, "German Mysticism and Protestant Reformation," *Theology and the Field* 5 (1995): 247.

always followed by action. To Luther, faith was 'God's action' to change humans and make them reborn in God. Faith makes humans consistently do God's will. What was important to Luther was that faith brought change.⁶⁹ Faith without action is impossible. Conversely, action without faith is void. Generally, Luther's '*sola fide*' is understood as giving up 'action,' but the truth is the opposite. Luther was frustrated with the Church's unjust, faithless actions. This led him to proclaim '*sola fide*' to restore justice. Without faith, no reformation is possible. Faith brings action, which formed the engine for reformation.

To Luther, 'faith' meant the work of humans coming from afar, and returning to, their existential foundation. Those returning to God cannot but perform altruistic actions. Absolute faith in God means giving up the selfish, greedy ego. The 'no-self (無我),' freed from greed, can turn its eyes to its neighbors. This is acting out God's love; this is Luther's 'Reformed Spirituality' and 'Spirituality of Self-emptying.'

4. Characteristics of 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' in the Protestant Reformation

Luther's 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' was the driving force behind the Protestant Reformation. As demonstrated, it had three characteristics:

First, it had '*ad fontes*' as its goal. Luther saw that the Church's degeneration, falling far from the origins of Christianity. This corruption led all of Europe to sink into chaos. Luther tried to heal this ailment with his 95 propositions and found answers in the Bible. To Luther, the Bible was the 'source' of reformation. He discovered the way to

69 Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 382.

salvation: salvation achieved only through 'Christ, faith, and grace,' not by the power of the Church, the pope, or indulgences. In the end, Luther's 'Reformed Spirituality' of '*ad fontes*' motivated worldwide changes.

The second characteristic was *Scriptura* Spirituality. Luther labeled blind prayer or silent prayer without *scriptura* as inappropriate. Praying with *scriptura meditatio* keeps one from falling into delusion. Praying with *scriptura meditatio* must happen every day, just as with eating bread. With this, we can empty the me-self (我) of greed and arrogance. Luther's *meditatio* was fundamentally different from the *contemplatio oratio* (*oratio* / *contemplatio*) of mystics in the Middle Ages. If *oratio* / *contemplatio* was like Zen Buddhism (禪) or samadhi, Luther's *scriptura meditatio* was like the disciplinary method of Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously.

Third was spirituality of the cross. God revealed Himself by 'emptying Himself' on the cross, the venue for revealing the Hidden God. The cross symbolized 'self-emptying.' God emptied His 'Being God' for humans to witness, representing His love. Therefore, the spirituality of *kenosis* in Luther's 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' was not 'spirituality of silence,' it was 'spirituality to act.'

IV. Characteristics of Chinul's and Luther's 'Spirituality of Self-emptying'

We have examined 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' for the Korean Buddhist Master Chinul and German Protestant Reformer Martin Luther. 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' demonstrated by these spiritual

masters are characterized by four traits: 1. Reformed Spirituality, 2. Foundational Spirituality, 3. Non-dual (不二的, advaya) Spirituality, and 4. Spirituality of Self-emptying.

1. Reformed Spirituality: Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa and the Protestant Reformation

The backgrounds for Chinul's and Luther's 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' are interesting. Chinul and Luther show great differences: they lived 300 years apart on opposite sides of the globe, and one was Buddhist while the other was Christian. Nevertheless, they shared a spirituality that contrasted the reality of 'religious corruption' and 'social corruption.'

Chinul founded 'Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa' to rehabilitate a chaotic society. After announcing Kwŏnsu Chŏnghye Kyŏlsamun (Retreat Community of Meditation and Wisdom, 勸修定慧結社文), he sought reformation through 'samadhi' and 'wisdom.' He also resolved divisions between Zen and Doctrinal Buddhism, which had been a source of corruption, and pursued 'Convergence of Meditation and Doctrine.' These reforms were his path to correcting society and rebuilding Orthodox Buddhism.

Luther, seeing the corruption of the Middle Ages, announced his *Ninety-Five Theses* (Disputations). He criticized the relationship between truthful repentance, the authority of church law, Purgatory, the limitations of indulgences, and improper use of indulgences. Unlike Chinul, Luther did not have reformation in mind when announcing his Disputations. His intention was to hold discussions with theology professors at the University of Wittenberg about perceived abuses. To his surprise, his *Ninety-Five Theses*, however, prompted a great wave and marked the start of the Protestant Reformation. After this, the

Bible sat at the center of Luther's Protestant Reformation and sparked 'Reformed Spirituality.'

As we have seen, Chinul and Luther perceived the need for reforming the reality of their corrupted religions. In protest, they respectively led the Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa and Protestant Reformation movements.

2. Foundational Spirituality: Restoration of the Source and *Ad fontes*

Chinul and Luther both emphasized 'restoration of the source' and '*ad fontes* (back to the sources).' A movement with a call to 'return to the source' is a movement toward original nature. Chinul's Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa aimed to restore the original look of the mind, i.e. 'Buddhacitta (the Buddha-mind, 佛心),' through discipline. Therefore, Chinul urged the public (大衆) to return to Buddha's mind. He believed this was possible through Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously and Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation. With the moment of realization that 'my mind is itself the Buddha (心卽佛),' I am no longer 'me' but 'Anātman.'

Luther also urged '*ad fontes*': Christianity should return to its 'source.' He found the 'source' in the Bible, announcing his justification (稱義宣言): 'the righteous are redeemed only by faith.' Faith is given by the grace of Christ, and those who perceive this grace have 'Christ in me.' For Luther, the 'restoration of the source' was 'given' by grace and faith.

3. Non-dual Spirituality: Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously and *Scriptura Meditatio*

Both Chinul and Luther insisted on non-dual discipline based on

scripture. Chinul emphasized samadhi and wisdom and Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation as ways to enlightenment being entwined. He pointed to both attachment to lingual texts (as in doctrinal schools) and quiet sitting in Zen (禪) (as in Zen schools) as undesirable. Studying scripture or ‘mere sitting in quietude’ in Zen rooms were both foolish ways of discipline. That is why, in Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa, Chinul worked to heal the maladies of Zen and doctrine and find the path to a disciplinary mind (修心). He believed that samadhi and wisdom would empty the mind.

Likewise, Luther criticized the *oratio* / *contemplatio* performed by mystics and monks. He argued that *contemplatio* prompted delusions. Having been a monk, Luther deplored that monks or clergymen did not read the Bible or meditate on scripture, instead just doing *contemplatio*. Luther insisted on the restoration of spirituality through ‘*sola scriptura*’ as the true ‘Reformed Spirituality.’ For Luther, believing that all answers to religion and life lay in the Bible alone, *meditatio* on *scriptura* became daily spirituality.

Both Chinul and Luther presented ways of ‘Reformed Spirituality’ through the non-dual discipline of samadhi and wisdom and *oratio* and *scriptura*.

4. Spirituality of Self-emptying: Emptying the Mind and Spirituality of *Kenosis*

‘*Ad fontes* Reformed Spirituality’ for Chinul and Luther can be called ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying.’ Chinul said, “The mind itself is Buddha.” To say this means ‘the original background of the mind is the venue for all discernment and confrontation to disappear.’ In other words, it is a ‘void.’ However, it is not the ‘existential void’ but the

‘void arising from causation (緣起的 空),’⁷⁰ where all confrontations have disappeared. As it is ‘void,’ it can become the bright mind of Buddha-dharma (佛法). For Chinul, ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ was ‘the mind void of greed and filled with Buddha’s wisdom.’

Luther emphasized important factors in ‘Reformed Spirituality’ as ‘spirituality of the cross (*kenosis*).’ ‘Spirituality of the cross’ is the spirituality of Christ emptying Himself on the cross. Luther emphasized God’s encountering us through trials and *tentatio*. God met humans by emptying Himself, and humans can also meet God by emptying the ‘me-self (egoistic self).’ Once the selfish ego is broken, God enters. This brings about the altruistic self, which, to Chinul, is the altruistic Anātman. Luther’s altruistic self still has the existence of ‘I,’ but it has become an ‘altruistic existence’ living a God-oriented life. Meanwhile, Chinul’s altruistic Anātman denies the existential self to reach the Buddha-nature (佛性), realizing the ideal of Bodhisattva. After all, both Luther’s altruistic self and Chinul’s altruistic Anātman pursued ‘monistic spirituality’ where the ‘selfish I’ had disappeared.

If Chinul promoted reformation in Buddhism by ‘mind-emptying,’ Luther pursued his Protestant Reformation by spirituality of *kenosis*. Both focused on ‘emptying the self.’ Chinul and Luther held identical beliefs that thoroughly breaking the selfish ego would bring restoration of the essence of religion.

70 Refers to the kind of emptiness where each of those involved is original and unique in the interrelated circulation, and yet inter-dependent. It means ‘Selfless ((無自性) Void.’ The causation encumbers all, each individual is interrelated, the extremes are not separated. For its interconnectivity and un-separability between ‘the self’ and ‘the other,’ it is ‘void arising from causation’: Sang Soek Han, *Sunya (空) and Kenosis(κένωσις) - Diamond Sutra (金剛經) and Philipians 2:5-8*-, Doctoral Dissertation (Seoul: Graduate School of Sogang University, 2018), 111.

V. Korea's 'Spirituality of Self-emptying': Present and Future

Examining Chinul's and Luther's 'Spirituality of Self-emptying,' we may return to Korean spirituality. It has long been that spirituality in Buddhism and Christianity (especially Protestantism), occupying the majority of Korea's religious population, has broken down. Religious spirituality has been devastated by materialism and mammonism. Blind or blessing-oriented discipline and prayer have produced unethical and immoral behaviors for Korea's Buddhist temples and Christian churches. Korean Buddhism and Protestant Christianity have both strayed from the 'original nature of religion.' The present versions of both religions must undergo fundamental reformation once again to recover their original identities. For religious *restoration* of the source, renewed spirituality movements through 'Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa' and 'religious reformation' are urgently needed. We shall now examine the present status of spirituality in Korean Buddhism and Christianity and explore future alternatives.

1. Buddhism: Erroneous Zen Supremacy

Representative disciplinary methods in Korean Buddhism push thousands of practitioners to visit Zen rooms and attend yearly parades at varsa (meditation retreats). The unique attraction is the fast, direct route to enlightenment, and renowned effects on peace of mind and health make Zen favorable for general usage, both for ordinary people and serious practitioners. However, Zen's erroneous supremacy has led to breaking Buddhist precepts, emerging as a serious problem. A Pŏpbo Daily article dated August 27, 2007, titled "The Un-

obstructed Action of a Sage without Self-reflection and Altruism Is Reckless,” reports on the reality of Buddhist spirituality.⁷¹

According to the article, in Pöpbö Daily, the emphasis on Zen pushes Sila and Vinaya into obscurity. With overt emphasis on ‘enlightenment supremacy’ and ‘enlightenment,’ Sila and Vinaya have been cast aside, becoming optional rather than obligatory for practitioners to observe. This has led to insensitive views on Buddhist precepts and, where living a life of integrity was previously assumed, the value of upholding these precepts is commonly disregarded. Besides this, practitioners justify senior monks’ reckless behaviors as ‘unobstructed actions of a sage (無碍行).’ These phenomena are no different from the general designation of the Dhyana Sect (禪家) during Chinul’s time. The monk Toil, the venerable preceptor of Songgwang Vinaya (Yulwŏn), said, “The fundamental cause for the prevalence of breaking Buddhist precepts in modern and contemporary Korean Buddhism is Zen supremacy or enlightenment supremacy.”⁷² This point is identical to Chinul’s view of people engrossed in Zen only and crazy Zen.

The article from the Pöpbö Daily rebukes Zen supremacy for causing negligence among monks. Here, ‘negligence of rules’ is equal to the general designation of neglecting ‘Buddha’s teachings’ during Chinul’s times. Therefore, ‘breaking the rules’ means breaking ‘Buddha’s teachings.’ It is reckless and incorrect.

The way to heal this ailment is through disciplinary methods like

71 Oyoung Kwon, “The Unobstructed Action of a Sage (無碍行) without Self-reflection and Altruism is Reckless,” accessed Aug. 27, 2007, <http://www.beopbo.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=47612>.

72 Kwon, “The Unobstructed Action.”

Chinul's 'Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously' and 'Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation.' This cultivates samadhi and wisdom simultaneously and, after enlightenment, renews cultivation of the enlightened mind and puts it into continuous practice. 'Spirituality of Self-emptying' for Chŏnghye Kyŏlsa, presented by Chinul to 'restore the source,' is needed once again for Korean Buddhism.

2. Protestant Christianity: Spirituality without *Scriptura*

That Protestant Christianity in Korea has run out of spirituality has been admitted by both outsiders and those inside the Christian Church. Non-Christians have come to refer to Protestant Christianity as 'Dog Christianity.' Spreading across the Korean Peninsula in the 1900s, Protestant Christianity achieved splendid growth around the Great Pyeongyang Revival. Movements thrived, such as 'Bible Studies for Revival' or 'Daybreak Prayer Meetings.' Starting with Changdaehyŏn Church in Pyeongyang in the early 1900s, these campaigns immediately sparked similar movements across the nation. At that time, these activities were characterized by thorough repent and prayers based on scriptures. Korea's spirituality movement consisted of hours-long learning and teaching sessions, along with shouted prayers serving as the impetus for rapid growth of Korean churches.

However, with the division of Korea and its industrialization, churches leaned toward materialism, blessing-oriented faith, and church supremacy, drifting away from 'the original nature of church.' With the slogan, 'Jesus Heaven, Distrust Hell,' and without proper Bible study, people began to propagate, while daybreak prayer ses-

sions and revival meetings became venues for spirituality devoid of *scriptura*. The article, “Are Korean Churches Okay as They Are?” from Christian Book News attacked ‘sermons without *scriptura*, poverty of spirituality, and the disappearance of theology,’ as follows: ⁷³

“In some pastors’ sermons, on display are a secular view of value and the ugly reality of the soul distorted by desire. The pastor seems unconscious of this shameful self-image, and the audience is blurred with shame. The congregation cannot discern the look of such impoverished souls, repeating ‘Amen’ to sermons that are unbiblical and frivolous. ... That is why such pitiful pastors, making use of the spiritual ignorance of the congregation, are able to raise mammoth churches.”⁷⁴

Churches in Korea are ailing. As Luther insisted, this is because they have departed from the ‘source (original nature).’ Korean churches no longer have ‘*sola scriptura*’ nor ‘*solus Christus*.’ The essence of ‘*sola fide*’ and ‘*sola gratia*’ is gone. The means for ‘*ad fontes*’ is no longer the Bible, Christ, grace, or faith, having been replaced by material supremacy, external growth, and cheapened grace. Korean Protestant Christianity has reached the point of needing renewed reformation. Only Luther’s ‘Reformed Spirituality’ and ‘Spirituality of Self-emptying’ can bring a return to the ‘source.’

73 Jeongwan Kim, “Are Korean Churches Okay as They Are?” Christian Book News, accessed Apr. 30, 2016, <http://www.cbooknews.com/?c=75/81&p=2&uid=8582>.

74 Kim, “Are Korean Churches Okay as They Are?”

VI. Conclusion: Finding Answers in Chinul and Luther

I was born into Protestant Christianity. As a child, I attended church with my grandmother, and I continue to go to church today. During primary school, I participated in Revival Meetings and Daybreak Prayer Meetings. At one meeting, the pastor warned me to hurry and pray in repentance because the Earth would soon come to an end. I was so scared that I prayed all through the night, “God, please forgive all my sins and allow me to go to Heaven!” I eagerly pleaded, awaiting the end of the world — just as I had been told to do. Thankfully, the Earth did not collapse that year or the next. When I was in sixth grade, our church’s assistant warned us not to associate with Buddhists — nor with Catholics. These were nothing more than idol-worshippers, bowing to Buddha’s statue and the Virgin Mary. After that, Buddhism and Catholicism clearly became religions to avoid.

Later on, as a college student, a ‘religious revolution’ broke out. Entering the Department of Religious Studies at Sogang University, established by the Society of Jesus, I studied religions that ‘worshipped idols.’ Buddhism suddenly revealed a wealth of mysterious knowledge, and I was often surrounded by priests and nuns. Buddhism and Catholicism were no longer ‘other’ religions to me; they were ‘neighbor’ religions to enrich spirituality. After completing my studies, I went to Germany to pursue Christian theology. I wrote my doctoral dissertation on Hwajaengnon (Treatise on the Harmonious Understanding) by Wŏnhyo, the greatest monk in Korean Buddhism. In the process, I witnessed a natural meeting of Christianity and Buddhism. My field of research has become a ‘Dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism,’ and inter-religious dialogues have gone beyond theories

to encounter reality.

As a Protestant believer, I experienced Catholic Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius and Buddhist Zen Discipline. Researching Luther's Protestant Reformation and his spirituality on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, in 2018, I took an interest in Luther's '*scriptura meditatio*.' To me, Zen Buddhism (禪) and Luther's *scriptura meditatio* (and the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius) are the same as Chinul's Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously. Prayer and spirituality based on scripture changed my life. '*Scriptura*' taught me 'reformation' of life, specifically. The time for *oratio* in *meditatio* on *scriptura* always gives me strength. The spirituality in Luther's *scriptura meditatio* and Chinul's Practicing Zen Meditation and Wisdom Simultaneously kept me intact through the 'announcement of the end of the world,' 'mammonism,' or 'blessing-oriented faith.' It provided mysterious richness beyond 'Spirituality of Self-emptying.'

How is it that Chinul and Luther remain relevant some 800 and 500 years after their respective deaths? It is thanks to their 'Spirituality of Self-emptying.' Balanced spirituality between samadhi and wisdom and *scriptura* and *oratio* enable triumph over conflicts. I hope that Korean Buddhism and Christianity 'restore the source' with Chinul's and Luther's 'Spirituality of Self-emptying.' Now is the time to seek reformation 'again.'

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