

# My Journey in Australia

*by Barnabas Bonggun Kim*

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My name is Barnabas Bonggun Kim. I came from South Korea in 1999 and I began studying English in one of the language colleges in Sydney in 2000. Then I took the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and had a good result so that I could enter this college, the Uniting Theological College (UTC). Since 2001 I have been studying theology, I have done BTh and I am doing my MTh, so the Camden Library has been my second home for the last four and a half years.

When I entered Pukyung University in Korea in 1979 (that is a 20 year gap) to study the Bachelor of Environmental Engineering, there was no computer and no net-work system at all. I had never seen a computer in my university life until I graduated in 1983. And also I had never borrowed a book from the library; this was because the Korean education system was influenced by Japan and the USA. There were no essays, no worksheets, no case-studies, no learning-cells at all, but always 100% exams, 40% half-semester exam and 60% final semester exam. That's all.

The problem was that if I did not follow the professor's teachings, the mark was always zero, it meant fail. I had to buy many expensive books, which they forcefully recommended every year, and had to follow their teachings throughout the classes, whatever they said. So I did not need to borrow any book from the library, but it was a place for studying in silence in order to prepare for exams.

However, at UTC my experiences in this Camden Library are totally different, as an ethnic student. Firstly, English is not my first

tongue. So when I came here, I really needed someone's help. This was because everything was unfamiliar to me at the beginning. Without help, I could not survive.

Maira and the staff, with kindness from their warm heart in this library, helped not only me but also many ethnic students in a lot of ways. For example, how to use computers, how to get access to search information, how to find the location, how to keep the regulations, and how to use the copy machine. I really appreciate it. Now I am so familiar with this place it is my second home.

Secondly, as I mentioned I never experienced borrowing books before I came here, but a new experience began. When I borrowed some books from here for the very first time, "Wow, I can I borrow books? It was great." But after that it made me crazy. When I opened the book, I did not know much about the language. There were too many unknown theological words..

So I had to look up the dictionary, around 200 words a day for thirty weeks. I had to write down on the notebook the page, the line, the paragraph in order to understand what it meant. But I found it was not going to work. For example, if I borrowed a reserve one, I had to get it back three days later. So it was a serious problem for me as a second language

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student. I changed my strategy, not to borrow the book all the time, but to make copies often within legal permission. As a result, I have been exploring and building up my theological and biblical knowledge and insights from resources in the Camden Library.

Finally, there is an important and thoughtful consideration for the ethnic students at UTC. This library began to put out some Korean theological books and biblical commentaries, so that the new and old Korean students who have not enough understanding of theological terms can journey with those resources. This is wonderful cross-cultural movement here, I really appreciate it.

To conclude, Moira and the library staff sometimes want me to help with some library works, especially translation for example. If Moira finds some new Korean student, then she wants me to help how to use the system. I am so pleased to help others because I was helped in many ways here. How can I ever thank you enough? Thank you.

I leave you with some questions. What brings you together to live in Australia? Where did you come from? Now where/how/with whom are you going? What makes you go forward to the future? I come empty-handed, I go empty-handed. That is human? And how?

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