

A scene of salvation evidenced by tears and joy.

peter · April 9, 2026

AI summary

April 4, São Paulo, Brazil. People had been gathering for several days at a venue jointly prepared by the local church "IGREJA MISSIONÁRIA NOVA ALIANÇA" (New Alliance Missionary Church) and a small drug rehabilitation ministry church in the city. It was not just a regular service, but a baptismal ceremony celebrating the birth of new life. The New Alliance Missionary Church is a local church pioneered by Missionary Jeong Heon-myeong. Pastors trained and educated by the church have been continu...

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The New Alliance Missionary Church is a local church pioneered by Missionary Jeong Heon-myeong. Pastors trained and educated by the church have been continuing their ministries in various regions, and this baptismal ceremony was one of the fruits of their labor.

As the service began and praise and prayer continued, the atmosphere gradually grew fervent. And finally, the baptismal ceremony commenced.

A total of eight people were baptized that day. As each person came forward, the baptismal venue was filled with a mix of joyful laughter and tears.

As the baptisms proceeded, the atmosphere quickly transformed. Tears streamed from the eyes of those being baptized, and some raised their hands and cheered. The confession of "being saved" was clearly expressed through their gestures and expressions. The congregants watching also wept and laughed with them. Though they were people with different faces and different lives, on that day, they shared the same joy. Witnessing this scene, the efforts of the pastors and families from both churches who had dedicated themselves to the preparation process naturally came to mind.

I, too, was observing the scene, camera in hand, documenting it, but at one point, I had to look away. My heart wouldn't easily settle.

It was then that I suddenly recalled my own baptism, long ago, in a small, old house in Russia.

If it had been in Korea, I might have imagined a grand and splendid baptismal venue, but at that time, the baptismal site was neither grand nor filled with many people. Inside the old house, there were only

a few Korean pastors and 17 North Korean defectors. There, I was baptized with a single confession: "I will serve Jesus as my Savior and my Lord."

"I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." It was a brief declaration, but that moment was a life-changing event. When I received my baptismal certificate, my tears wouldn't stop.

The first tears I shed that day were tears of injustice.

I recalled the time I had dedicated my youth in North Korea, striving to gain "political life." Ten years of harsh military training, efforts to gain recognition, and what ultimately returned was criticism and frustration. My efforts, even risking my life to change it with the goal of becoming a "Hero of the Republic" or a "Labor Hero," did not yield the expected results. I had lived a life thoroughly deceived. It was so unfair. A life of injustice, where I had been loyal to the point of crippling my back, yet had to live under the threat of being sent to the provinces twice and even expulsion! There was no dignity left for a man. I sobbed loudly.

The second tears were tears of gratitude.

"I will believe in Jesus." With the thought that this was all our Lord wanted from me, I decided to entrust everything to Him.

I shed tears of gratitude for being given a new identity as a child of God, despite having no merit, having lived a life of sin in this world, having lived only for my own benefit, and having held the mistaken belief that I could only survive by stepping on others.

The third were tears of resolve.

"Lord, I will not stray from your sight for a single moment. I will look straight at you and listen precisely to your words. I cannot live without sharing your love with North Korean defectors like myself. I will live a life dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus Christ with my family and friends left behind in North Korea, and with all the people of North Korea."

As I thought these thoughts, a question arose within me: Am I still living with that same heart from back then?

The baptismal ceremony ended, but that question did not easily fade. In the car on the way back, I shared the grace I had received with the missionary.

That day's baptismal ceremony left a meaning beyond just an event. It was a place marking the beginning of a new faith, and at the same time, a moment for those who already had faith to reflect on their own starting point.

A small baptismal ceremony held at a church in São Paulo! The joyful tears and cheers that flowed within it clearly demonstrated what a “moment of salvation” that changes a person's life truly is.

I am confident that those who were saved today and reborn as children of God will take the lead in proclaiming the Lord's gospel to all nations. And I believe that our Lord will surely be with them on their journey.

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