

Nobuko Peemoeller, Japan, 1967



When I think back on my 40 years of life in the church, thoughts of deep appreciation to True Father are welling up inside of me. I was 18 years old when I heard the Divine Principle for the first time in the spring of 1967. At that time, I had just received a letter from a university informing me that I had failed my entrance examination.

So, I went to the book store to check out some books to study. That's where I met my spiritual mother, Mieko Ikeno.

I kind of knew I would fail my examination, because I had not focused on studying in those days. I was struggling with all kinds of questions about life. "Who am I?" "What is the purpose of my life?" "Where am I going after this earthly life?" "Why do men and women exist on earth?" I was like a floating piece of wood going wherever the current took me. I didn't want to accept any traditional thinking, but there were no answers for these questions. Those were my dark days of struggle. I will never forget the emptiness I felt in my heart. I couldn't think of spending my life in marriage and having a family just like everyone else. I was a very rebellious young girl. When I heard the Divine Principle for the first time, I was shocked and excited. When I finished listening to all of it, I was not able logically to deny God's existence any longer. So, I decided to join to find out if God really exists or not. This is the reason why I joined the church.

Amazingly, God has guided someone like me up to the present day. After all the experiences I had with God, I finally have understood the sweetest love of God and His suffering heart. I went through the struggles and challenges in our church, yet God showed me such a deep love. This is why I deeply appreciate True Father. If I had not met

True Father, how would I have ended up? When I think about that, I really understand that I owed my life to Father.

After my workshop in Nagoya, the church leaders sent me to Nagasaki with Mrs. Inoue, who had joined the church at a very early time under Rev. Sang Ik Choi [the first Korean missionary to Japan in 1958]. We called him Nishikawa Sensei [teacher]. Every day after dinner, she told me all kinds of interesting stories about the early days. It was so much fun to listen to her. We witnessed on the street every day and sometimes preached in the open, and whenever we ran out money, we went fundraising. We collected old newspapers, bottles, and clothes from door to door. Most of my clothes were coming from there at the time. In the beginning, we didn't eat rice except on Sundays. After every Sunday service, we had curry rice.

We did many crazy things. One time, we were sent out for a witnessing condition and were not able to come back to the center for three days. I thought God would help me, but He didn't, and I had no place to go. I finally saw an open garage at one house, so I decided to spread my sleeping bag there and went to sleep. Early in the morning, I woke up to an incredible light; a car was almost running me over. I never forgot how angry the driver was, and I was kicked out from the garage. It was still dark, and I decided to go to a park, but there I was swarmed by mosquitoes.

After one year, I went to another city with an elder sister, and we pioneered that city. We used to go to bars to sell flowers every weekend, and one day we missed the last train to go home. We hitchhiked at midnight and got a ride from a car with several not nice guys inside. We were so tired, we didn't care. They took us to the top of a mountain and almost killed us. But we escaped when the car stopped, and we got out and hid under a bridge. It was pitch black, so they couldn't find us in their car even with their headlights on. They searched for us for a long time, but God protected us. I remember feeling calm despite

the situation. When sunrise came, they gave up and left. We walked all the way home. It was a sleepless night.

At my high-school graduation party I had declared to my classmates that I would never marry. But today, I am married to my big husband, and we have seven beautiful children. My life really has been changed by Father!