

## Interview of Bishop Jesse Edwards

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*Bishop Jesse Edwards:* Every time with True Father is cherished. I remember when I first met Father. We had breakfast together and I had heard his speech. He asked me what I thought of his speech. I said, Well, Father, they introduced you as the Messiah. As a Christian that kind of shocked me. I thought, Oh... How could he be called the Messiah?

Father answered my question. He said, Rev. Edwards, listen: Are you called to come to Philadelphia? I said, Father Moon, if you are not called to come to Philadelphia, it's a very big job. He said, Are you anointed by the Holy Spirit to minister in Philadelphia? I said, If you are anointed of God, there is no way you'll last very long in this city of Philadelphia. He asked, Do you believe God has called you to the people of Philadelphia?

Absolutely!

He said, You are the Messiah to Philadelphia.

All of a sudden, I took a whole new perspective on the word "Messiah." I know it takes an anointing. The word "Messiah" means "the anointed one." I think we think that only one person, like Jesus, could use that anointing, but so many men in the Word of the Lord were anointed. I learned that. That will stick with me forever, because I learned that I should be the Messiah of the calling that God has put on my life.

*Question: What is your sense of True Mother's transformation in leading the movement?*

There couldn't be a better combination than Father working with us in the spirit realm and Mother working here, down on earth. Like in the atom, you have the proton and the neutron and they work together. I think we need that connection. Father did a great work while he was here on earth, but I think he was limited in a physical body. But now, there are no limits in the spirit realm. I think that with the oneness that Father and Mother have together as True Parents, now we can get the full dimension of the real anointing from Heaven. There are no limits to Father's powers and to what he can do now working with True Mother. I believe they are in unison. I believe they are one. That unity is so powerful and so strong, I believe we get revelation and I think we get understanding and empowerment by the spirit even more than when Father was alive.

*Question: ACLC has changed over the years. In the beginning, Unificationists were teaching the Divine Principle to minister, now ministers are teaching and preaching the Principle.*

The Principle has not changed. The word is the same, yesterday, today and forever. The foundation of truth never changes; our understanding of truth may change. I like how father opened up the Principle: I bring you a new truth. The truth hasn't changed. It is how we see it [that makes it new]. I can see you clearly but if I want to read the pages of a book, I have to put reading glasses on, because that focuses in on the word. The word never changes; what changes is how I see it. Every minister that knows the word of God would fall in love with the Principle, because Father got the Principle from the word of God. And if you understand the word of God, it opens up things in the Principle like the Fall, the life of Jesus, the crucifixion -- things that we took for granted. We really didn't have a deep understanding of a lot of these issues. The Principle opens up between the lines and explodes the understanding of what happened or what could have happened if man had been obedient.

*Question: For Unificationists who tried to approach those in traditional Christian denominations, Pentecostals have a tough reputation.*

They always have! Still today, some do -- but this has nothing to do with the word "Pentecost." Pentecost is not a denomination. It's not a religion. Pentecost is a movement of God. In Acts 2:2 it says, "There came a sound from heaven like the rushing of a mighty wind."

Pentecost was the movement of God. Father said many times in his word that the Unification Church would have a Pentecost. I think some of them thought it would change our religion and become a new church. No, no, no... It means the spirit of God is going to move like it never had before. My personal self, as far as Principle, True Parents... I learned as a very young child to seek God. What I don't know, what is unfamiliar for me, instead of rejecting and pushing it aside, I want to find out what it is. Do you know how I learned that from True Father? He would always say two things -- study and pray.

When you study the word of God and then you pray, study gives you the knowledge of the word and prayer gives the revelation from God, who reveals truth to you. So, I had no problem with True Parents. My natural self would have trouble with the definition of words, vocabulary that was used, it was not that I didn't like it. I was unfamiliar with what I heard. I would go home, study and pray and God would show me, right there.

The first thing I had trouble with was "True Parents." Who does Father think he is calling himself a true father and Mother a true mother? I went home and prayed. Do you know what I felt God tell me? "Jesse, I have been trying to tell you that you need to be a true parent and a true father and mother." When you study and talk to God -- Principle, True Parents, their word -- become right in line with God's word.