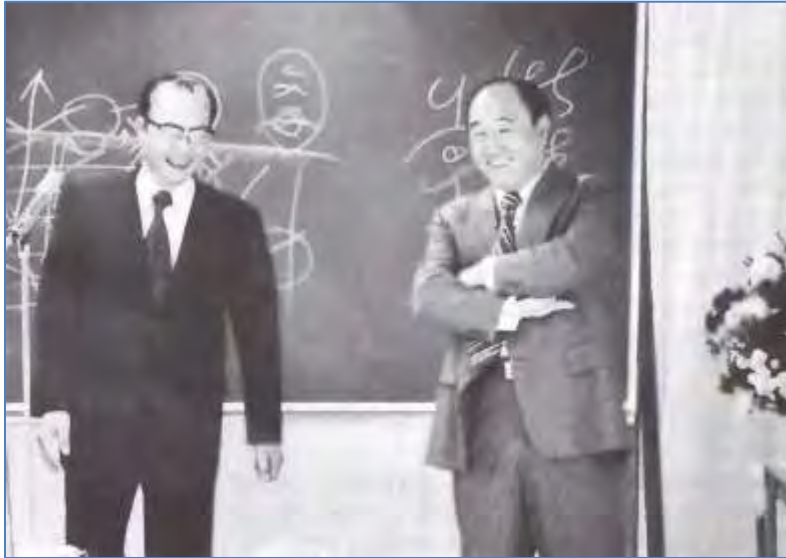


## **We aren't unhappy our son has been following the Divine Principle for 4½ years**

Anne Edwards  
December 1977  
Parent to Parent



*Photo date and location unknown*

*We are grateful that many parents of our members express their support of their son's and daughter's involvement. Here is one such letter received at the Church Headquarters.*

The 6 days I spent in New York last year, listening to parents, to members, and having time for myself and my daughter-in-law, Helen, gave me the opportunity to look around and evaluate what was happening. The occasion itself was symbolic of everyone's memory of family reunions. Our hearts were joyous, were they not? We prayed that God would show us the way -- His way -- to open the door to affirmative communication between the young members and the parents.

Now, though the "Way of the World," our parents organization and local church members, the open door policy is beginning to work. When there is nothing to fear, a strong bond will bring all together. The destiny of each of our children is the real concern of the parents. Happiness must always be tempered with hard work, disappointments, and a courageous spirit and trust in a supreme being to aid us towards what we believe our destiny to be. The majority of us never delve beyond family, a vocation and an avocation. To exert further would involve the entire mind and will towards an unselfish desire to communicate love to and with our brothers and sisters everywhere.

This to me is what the Unification Church members personify. In no way do we feel threatened or unhappy that our oldest son, George, has been following the Divine Principle for four and ½ years from New Orleans to Rhode Island to Connecticut to New York and to Singapore for nearly 2½ years; He set out alone upon his missionary work in a foreign land where he eventually met with a German and a Japanese member. He writes frequently about this new way of life, the opportunities therein, involving brotherhood and hard work and establishing something new spiritually; teaching English to the little ones, studying Mandarin and Korean, working with Chinese businessmen; keeping strong physically through sports and swimming, and learning the cultural aspects of this republic, a melting pot of eastern nationalities.

This son, is 31 years old, a remarkably inquisitive and sensitive man who studied for the priesthood for 7 years. Religion to him is working out in the world among the downtrodden, the pagans, the lost souls, the middle class self-satisfied American who is untouched by adversity -- all who will listen. He couldn't see himself as a parish priest and left to search elsewhere, entering pre-medicine to further his education. He graduated from St. Louis University with a degree in Biology. From there he gravitated to New Orleans to set up residency with the intention of entering Tulane University. There he met with members of the Unification Church.

Of course we would like to see more of him but the distance in miles is offset by our hand across the ocean, not to pull him back, but to give him courage to fight for his convictions and that God will be with him always.

We are now 54 and 55 years old, from Chicago, Illinois. George's dad is president of the layman's board in our parish, a reader and usher at Sunday mass, civic minded and concerned for the welfare of all of us. I returned to work after 23 years at home with the children. None were ever involved with drugs nor gave us any teen problems. Our family includes two other sons and three married daughters: all are Roman Catholics. Two sons-in-law are Lutherans. Our second son is an international banker and the youngest son is a junior in college preparing for a career with the FBI.

I am a firm believer that even though one must be in the right place at the right time to be tapped by a destiny other than the norm of marriage and the 9 to 5 existence, a special character is required to answer this persistent tapping. To deny another an opportunity to enrich his or her life in a godly manner actually would be sinful. When heart and soul and health are improved, why would anyone want to destroy that?

We ask God to ease the hearts of the parents who are withdrawn from their children. Parents can visit the local headquarters just as they would visit their seminary or parish and really see for themselves what is going on -- the things read in the news media are there for shock value. Get the truth instead. Awareness is not entrapment. Let us all bend a little and meet with our young people in spirit of faith, hope and charity so this God-centered movement can bring us together as one family.