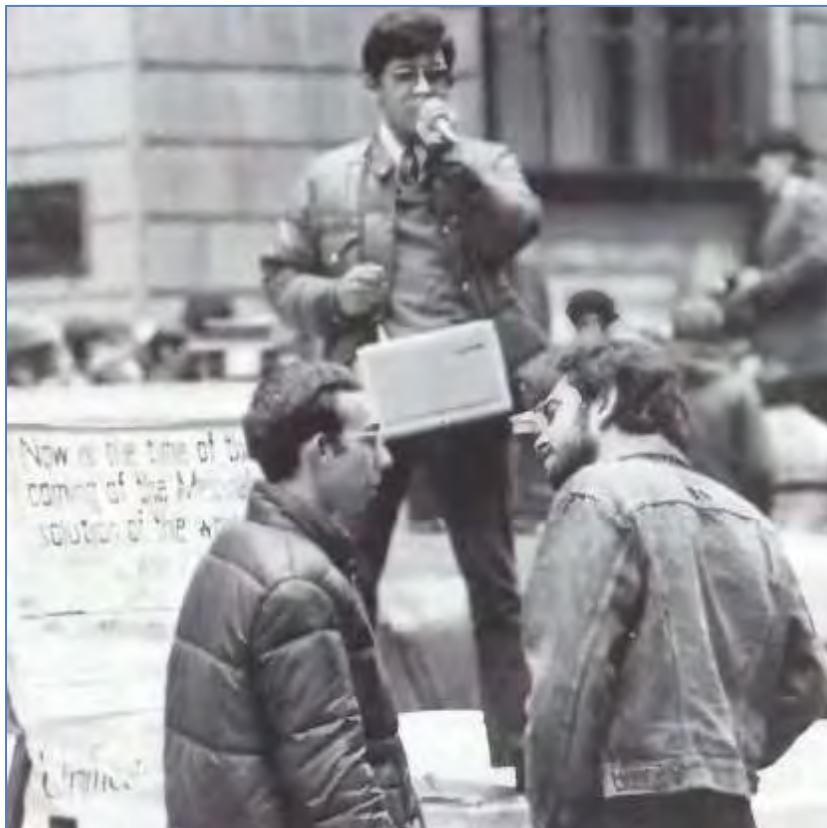


A New Generation of Pioneers Save Americans

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March 1976



It's 8 o'clock. A Unification Church pioneer opens the door of her newly-found apartment and steps outside. On the busy street in front of her, people are scurrying off to work or to school -- some on foot, others in cars or buses. But their faces are drab, expressionless.

With a feeling of love kindling in her heart, coupled with sincerity and determination, the pioneer also hurries off. But her destination is to proclaim the words of God, to inspire and spark the spirit of unity, hope and love that is part of America's founding theme. For some people in this city, today is going to be a beautiful day -- a day marking their spiritual rebirth! The restoration of America begins anew.

Pioneering. The word rings with the excitement of the old west -- opening up new vistas, exploring the unknown. But the pioneers of the past are 100 years long gone. Today, bustling metropolises thrive in the once-placid forests and plains of America. Where, then, are the areas for the new pioneers? What territories can they open up? What can they settle? And for what purpose?

In the Unification Church, the pioneer is a lay missionary. He or she "opens up" new territory by establishing a Unification Church center in a city or town in any of the SO states. This is the physical part of it. More importantly, the spiritual aspect of pioneering is to witness to and teach the Divine Principle to local citizens of the community in order to help them become more loving and more God-centered people.

In this sense, the pioneer is the catalyst for a renewal of basic values and ideals: love of God, love of mankind, and love for all creation. Of course, the pioneer, in the true Christian spirit, also serves the community with numerous projects and programs -- from counselling young people to helping in schools or nursing homes.

Because the Divine Principle is so universal in scope, people of all ages are attracted to the practical and ideological solutions it offers. It usually isn't long before the "pioneer" Unification Church center becomes a focal point in the community. In one community, when our pioneer introduced himself at the local bicentennial committee offices, he was warmly welcomed.

The clergymen on the committee had been unable to write a bicentennial prayer for their program, so our pioneer was asked to write one. The chairman was really impressed and very grateful. Another pioneer, in another city, was invited to speak at The Creative Center, a community service group. She talked in depth about America, the threat of Communism, and Rev. Moon. The director of the center wants her to teach the board of directors next, and to give lectures every week at the center.



God-Centered Self-Reliance

But to be successful, the pioneer has to grow -- by relying on himself and deepening his relationship with God. "God-centered self-reliance" pretty well sums up the attitude of the Unification Church pioneer.

"Pioneering is a relatively new activity in the Unification Church," explains Jonathan Slevin, acting director for the American Pioneer Program at the Barrytown, N. Y., International Training Center. "From our headquarters here, we keep in touch with about 300 pioneers in the 'field.' There are currently about six pioneers in each state, working independently during the week. Every weekend they come, with their invited guests, to special workshops held in centrally-located cities around the country."

Pioneering is the crowning achievement of a long and rigorous educational preparatory course. It begins with advanced training, called the 120-Day Training Session, at Barrytown. The first part of this -- "Phase I" -- is a two month classroom lecture period in which members learn the more profound aspects of the Divine Principle, important details of living a Principled life, deeper insights about prayer, and how to lecture and teach workshops.

Phase II of the 120-Day program is field experience in fundraising. Through this experience, graduates of Phase I develop self-confidence and the ability to relate to all types of people. "It's a valuable experience," says Ashley Noble, head of Barrytown's fundraising department. "Its importance lies in deepening and broadening the person's character and faith." Donations received during this time are used to maintain and expand the Church's Training Center.

Finally comes the time the trainees have been looking forward to -- Phase III. Now they are ready to leave for their city or town to pioneer. Mr. Ken Sudo, director of Barrytown, calls it "re-pioneering America" because it's a matter of bringing back the original God centered ideals and values that made this nation great.

Patriotic Origins

"The pilgrim founders came here from England for the purpose of building a nation free from religious persecution and able to respond to God's will," says Jonathan Slevin. "This spirit is evident even in the mottos of the United States: 'One Nation Undivided' and 'In God We Trust.' What other nation boldly proclaims its belief and faith in God?"

"But how much are these ideals present in the hearts and minds of today's Americans? Unfortunately, very sparsely. So the pioneers' task is to reawaken the original values by offering new hope from the Divine Principle." What does a pioneer actually do? What kinds of experiences do they have? Let's listen to some actual reports and find out.

Rebecca is in her early twenties. She's pioneering in a southern town and lives in an old hotel. One hundred years ago, it was the only hotel in that area of the south, but it had degenerated. Recently a man bought it who is concerned with recapturing its original spirit. One morning Rebecca walked into the coffee shop for breakfast and there was the hotel guard. She sat down and they started talking and soon the owner came in and they were all sitting together, talking.

She told the owner she had many ideas about how to help run the hotel. She had been praying about it and received many ideas. One idea, she said, was to initiate programs for the old people that live in the hotel. The owner said he had similar ideas and even wanted to turn one whole floor into a halfway house for young men getting out of prison. They both felt inspired as they continued to talk.

The next day she again came down to breakfast and again the guard was there. She told him she was involved in a religious program and needed a room where she could teach. So they looked at the various rooms.

Finally, they came to the suite where the owner and guard had been staying. It was the best place in the whole hotel and had two bedrooms, a living room, and a kitchen. Rebecca said, "Oh, this is so beautiful, but I'm sure that with my budget it would be impossible to rent a place like this."

That evening when she came back from witnessing, the owner greeted her and said, "Come on. Let's look at that place." He took her up and said, "I'll give you this room for the same amount of money that you're paying for your own room." Complete with beautiful furniture, it generally rents for \$360 a month, but he's giving it to her for \$150 a month, and \$100 of that he makes up for with a \$100 donation.

Unusual? Consider then this testimony from Linda, a pioneer in Pennsylvania. While fundraising one evening, Linda felt that she hadn't thoroughly covered the block and decided to do it again.

As she passed by a Lutheran church, she felt drawn to go in, as she had the first time she passed it. But because it was getting dark, she walked by. As she went on, however, she felt herself more and more pulled back to it, and finally she could resist no longer.

The custodian let her in, and after she had prayed, she began to read the Bible. After a few minutes, a woman came up to her and asked, "Are you Linda?" Linda nodded. "You're much younger than I thought you'd be," the woman said. She then told Linda how the night before she had been praying and in her prayer she was told to go to this church where she would meet a girl named Linda who would be reading a Bible, and that she should listen to everything Linda told her.

The woman was a fundamentalist Christian who felt that Christianity was at the end of an era and that something new must be coming. Linda taught her almost all of the Divine Principle in one day. This woman is so excited she is now attending a workshop! God's heart encompasses love for all His children, and the pioneers too, learn to relate to all types of people. After all, every person is a sister or brother, and originally one of God's children.

So listen to this experience from a pioneer in Wyoming: Kelly met an ex-policeman who is attempting to start a church. His name is Dan and he asked Kelly to give a sermon at one of his evening services, at which the congregation consisted of a few transients, some old drunks, and a very strong Christian man. "No one had any money or any good clothing," Kelly says, "but they were so grateful to Dan for the food and for his love. These people knew suffering, so they knew God's heart more than any people I've met. Most of them work baling hay, and don't have any connection with God except through Dan, who himself was an alcoholic and has great compassion for his brothers. Yet he knows that he has a greater mission. He said to me, 'I don't know why I came to Wyoming two weeks ago. Something guided me here and we met because God guided me to you. I have searched so many religions. Please teach me the truth!' Or consider this sister's experience. It's really startling!

A short while ago, Heather was street speaking and a young man came up to her and listened to her for a while. He was very impressed and told her that she should go visit a Christian household that he knew about. He said they had had a prophesy that she would be interested in.

The next day she went there. Before knocking on the door, she prayed to Heavenly Father. A young girl answered the door, and Heather said, "Laurie, hi. I'm Heather." The girl was so amazed she broke into tears.

It seems a month earlier, one of her brothers was praying and started speaking in tongues. Another person translated and said that it was a revelation that a girl named Heather would come, singing a new song. So when Heather came to the door, Laurie was surprised and happy that the revelation had been fulfilled! In fact, the day before, Laurie had prayed and prayed, "Lord, where is Heather?"

Where is Heather?" The very next day Heather walked up to the door and said hello. Mike had been witnessing at a college in Maryland. One day, before entering the school he prayed for one hour on the steps of the campus. As he went in, the third person he talked to decided to attend the weekend workshop.

As he continued walking around campus, he realized that he must uplift the spiritual atmosphere there. Heavenly Father told him: "You must speak out this day!" Mike thought that maybe he would go home,

write a speech, and come back the next day to give it. But as he walked, he kept praying and knew that he had to speak right then. He sat down, Heavenly Father really inspired him, and he began to write.

Mike wandered into the cafeteria. It was noisy, for there were about 300 people there. He realized that right at that moment he must speak for God. He stepped up on a chair and began speaking right in the school cafeteria! At first it was so noisy that no one listened to him at all. But after a while people began to turn their chairs and listen to him. He kept speaking until almost everyone was listening to him. Even the women cooking in the kitchen came out.

When he had finished, Heavenly Father had inspired him so much that people got up and started applauding. One person in the audience stood up and said, "Hey! Let's hear it for God!" And everyone cheered and applauded. Finally, listen to this report from Ann, a sister pioneering in California: "I was street preaching in front of the post office on my second day, when this elderly woman came up and listened to everything I was saying. She asked me my name and what I was doing. I told her I was a pioneer with the Unification Church. As she heard this, she started crying, and she became really excited. She gave her name and address and told me to come to see her that afternoon. So I went.

"When I got there I discovered that she had invited a leader from the Baha'i faith and also a Chinese girl. The elderly lady explained to them, 'I went to the post office this morning, not knowing why; usually I don't go there at all. But for some reason I was led there. I saw this young girl standing on the street corner, doing what I've always wanted to do all my life. She was talking about the United States and how it was going to be saved.

"As I was walking home, I saw in a vision the United States opening up completely and rising in the air, and a whole new generation of young people teaching a new truth and reviving the morals and the standards of all the people. They were spreading peace in the United States and after that, all over the world."

"The woman said that then she felt the spirit of God completely overtake her; she was shaking and couldn't believe that it had happened." She was really excited. "At her house, the woman asked me to talk to her two friends.

So I told them about our Church and our work, and that America has a great mission, but if America fails its mission, God will leave America and the world will be destroyed. They accepted that, but the leader of the Baha'i faith wasn't sure. She wanted to know how we're going to bring unification of races. I explained that if we can love each other and see God as our Parent, then we can recognize that all of us are brothers and sisters. She liked that idea."

These are examples of some of the experiences the pioneers have been having. There are many more. What is happening today has been likened to the spirit of Pentecost that came 2,000 years ago. There is the same feeling of excitement, of the imminence of a new spiritual awakening! And there is every indication that the pioneers are paving the way, bringing this new spirit and hope to all of America.