

## My Lucky Encounter with True Parents in Berchtesgaden, Germany

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December 7, 2016



*Robert Spiegl (6,000 couples) wearing the jacket that True Parents bought him as a gift in a mountain village 35 years ago*

In 1981, I was working with Peter Koch Candles in Germany as a sales representative. True Parents were then in Europe and were travelling around Germany. At that time, we sometimes heard nice stories about members meeting True Parents. In my heart I imagined what it would be like to meet True Parents, because I travelled extensively in the same area. It appears that some dreams do come true in ways that cannot easily be believed.

While I was going about my work in southern Bavaria on September 27, I visited a customer in the beautiful city of Berchtesgaden. Normally such a visit takes around half an hour but on that day the owner of the shop was alone and we were frequently interrupted by customers wanting to buy some of his nice cakes. After about forty minutes of this, the owner suggested I visit some of my other customers and return to his shop later. In fact, I had no other customers

in the area, so I took a stroll through a pedestrian area looking for small photographs or posters depicting that wonderful mountainous part of Germany.



*The village of Berchtesgaden in southern Germany, where a dream came true*

I found some incredibly beautiful pictures in a gallery and was staring at them, calculating whether I could afford to buy them, when I noticed a man walk into the shop that resembled someone I had seen in New York's Manhattan Center when Father was matching couples. Though it seemed unlikely, in my heart I was sure it was him. I entered the shop and soon discovered he was the Mr. Han I had met. He was quite surprised by my asking.

We stepped outside to speak about what I was doing there. Soon, other Korean men appeared including (to my surprise) Byung-ho Kim, former president of the church in Europe. He, too, was surprised to see me. We spoke for a few moments about the work I was doing and

then we parted with heartfelt farewells.

I did wonder what they were doing in such a small town but had neglected to ask. I also regretted our not taking a picture together after this chance meeting. I got a camera from my car and set off looking for

them. Some minutes later, I found them and we posed for a few photos together. It was nearing lunchtime, so I thought of asking them to lunch. Instead, President Kim asked about my afternoon plans and then asked me to wait in my car for a while until he returned. On his return, he told me that Father was inviting me to lunch. Of course, it had occurred to me that they were not alone in the town and that True Parents might be nearby, but what he said caused me to stop breathing for a few seconds. After hearing this, I walked respectfully behind him to the Golden Bear restaurant.

I soon found myself at a table where True Parents sat surrounded by their entourage. I was looking down at the floor as I took my seat and when I looked up I discovered I was face-to-face across the table with True Mother. After looking at me for some seconds she asked me how old I was and if I were matched. I told her I would turn twenty-seven in two days and that I had been matched in New York. I handed her our matching photograph, which she looked at and then passed to True Father. He glanced at it and said, "Very good," causing the whole group to erupt in laughter. The laughter eased my tension and we proceeded to enjoy the meal. Afterward, Father said he wanted to buy me a new sports jacket. On the way, we went into a fruit shop. With no shop assistant in sight, Father found the biggest apples I had ever seen, put one in my hand and said, "Taste it." In Germany, no one tastes fruit before buying it, so I looked around before finally taking a big bite. Father asked, "How is it? Is it delicious?" I replied that it was very delicious. True Mother bought a great many apples and other fruit there. The "payment ceremony" in front of the cashier was slightly awkward, because I was holding an apple that was clearly missing some parts!

Afterward, we went to a nearby luxury clothing store, where True Parents bought me a sports jacket and trousers. When we were done, the cars were waiting outside. Before departing, Father rolled down his window and told me to convey his greetings to all the brothers and sisters. A few seconds later, they all drove off, leaving me wondering (only for a moment) if it had all been a sweet dream.