

***Keiko Burton,
Nagoya, Japan, 1969***



When I was a little girl in Aomori, Japan, I dreamed of meeting a perfect man and woman in my lifetime. In school, I was good student, but I couldn't help notice constant conflicts of all kinds around me. It seemed that every person in the world was suffering from ignorance and flawed character. This partly explains why I was attracted to the teaching of the Unification Church, which I met in Nagoya in 1969.

I met a church member at the train station in May 1969 – there was pouring rain that day. My spiritual mother was on the last day of a 40-day street-preaching condition, and she gave me a leaflet. I didn't meet her again until after I had joined the church some months later. When I moved into the church center in Nagoya, there were about 100 members there. We slept in the church office. I slept on top of a desk. Another sister slept on the floor underneath. Every bit of space in the office was covered by a sleeping bag.

I asked the members to show me pictures of True Father, but no one had any. In early December, I was recruited to attend a special workshop in Korea at the training center near Cheong Pyeong Lake. There I met True Father for the very first time in early December, 1969.

I really wanted to find out what True Father looked like. So, when we arrived at the training center, I went that very night to the little house where Father was sleeping. I started praying outside the building where he was sleeping around 3:30 a.m. It was dark and very cold, and maybe I was praying loudly. About 4:30 a.m. he appeared and opened the door so I could see his face. But I was shocked! I knew this man already. I had seen his face many times in dreams since I was

13 years old. In those mysterious dreams I saw an Oriental couple standing in white robes. They told me they were my “True Parents.” However, I already had two very good Japanese parents. The couple in those dreams was not Japanese, but I didn’t know which country they came from or if they were people living on the earth or spirits from a distant past. After seven years, I had found the person I had been looking for.

True Father didn’t ask me my name but said only, “Why did you take so long?” Then, as he walked out of the hut toward the worship center, he gestured to me saying, “OK, follow me!” At morning service, True Father asked me to introduce myself and tell about my upbringing and my family to all the members. And he asked me to sing a song, which I struggled to do. But I didn’t feel embarrassment. I had a strong feeling that he had been waiting for me. In my heart, I felt like I had met the greatest person in history. I felt so much hope for humanity.

On that cold, clear morning in the mountains east of Seoul, I closed a chapter on those mysterious dreams of my youth. But a new amazing chapter was just beginning.

I was among about 100 Japanese members who were asked to come to the United States in October of 1973. After fundraising with peanuts for a year, I was assigned in 1974 to help Mrs. Bo Hi Pak take care of the True Family during conferences for leaders. During this period I was often befriended by True Mother’s mother, who always attended True Parents. I remember her smiling frequently but saying very little to me and the other Japanese sister who was helping cook and prepare rooms for the True Family. However, I can never forget the many times that she would slip up behind me and drop a little gift in my pocket. Sometimes it was costume jewelry, a scarf, or some wrapped candy. We really loved her.

1977 was the year I spent on the run, almost living underground in Washington, D.C. I lived in the townhouse of my dear friend, the

late Dr. Lucinda Malone, who gave me refuge when I was running from the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Every three months I would get a deportation letter delivered to the Upshur Street Center, but I felt strongly that God wanted me to stay in the United States and get the international Blessing. My home-church contacts were my guardian angels: they gathered petitions for me to the immigration authorities, and a friendly physician diagnosed me with several diseases that would prevent me from being forced to travel by air out of the United States. In 1979 I got matched to Douglas Burton, and we were legally married soon thereafter. I breathed a sigh of relief. In 1982 we were blessed at Madison Square Garden in New York. Our first son, Daniel, spent most of his first two years at nurseries in Colorado and Ohio while my husband and I were doing front-line work in different states.



Douglas Burton and Keiko Burton
at Unification Theological Seminary in November 1979.

While True Father was in prison in Danbury, Connecticut, God blessed our outreach to the ministers in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Every day my goal was to visit 10 churches and 10 ministers to invite them

to conferences and to meetings in Korea. Brother Greg Karlson, Rev. Jack Corley, and I visited dozens of ministers at local restaurants. We would plug in a TV monitor and a VCR and show them promotional videos on the spot. As a result, a great many joined the Common Suffering Fellowship conferences in Washington, D.C., in 1985. Six of our minister friends joined the Marriage Blessing at the United Nations in 2002 and are loyal members of the American Clergy Leadership Conference today.



Keiko Burton marches in Washington with Wisconsin ministers in 1984.

Much of my church mission during the last 20 years has been connected to event planning and handling logistics for some 300 hotel conferences. For many of these, we had to book hotels and arrange transportation on short notice. Sometimes I was so stressed out, I wanted to give up. But one night I dreamed that True Father met me and thanked me, saying that “you are representing me.”

The fact is, every step of my course, Heavenly Father was bringing the solution and bringing helpers who arrived just in time. I have learned that no one can bring success all by himself or herself. Only by working harmoniously with others can great things be achieved.

Looking back, I can say that my dream of finding a true man and a true woman was fulfilled. There is still some conflict in the world, but I see signs for hope. Through the conferences I attended I could witness that True Father has been resolving world conflicts in a profound way for decades. I still am doing my best to follow the example of True Parents, and my husband and children are taking every step with me. I am full of gratitude for my family, and yes, to True Parents.