

***Justin Fleischman,
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We often talk about our presence in this movement as our “life of faith.” Funny thing – it’s exactly that. It takes a lifetime to develop faith. It’s a lifetime of discovery. Our Heavenly Father made himself invisible so we could continually pursue him. Even though we have breakthroughs in realizing and solidifying our faith, we can always travel the path of discovery and never reach our destination.

Now, 40+ years after being led to True Parents, I am still discovering how little I really know my Heavenly Father. I am grateful for every little experience which helps me to know him better. I’d like to share two experiences in the summer of 1969 where God had to grab me to get me to follow His path.

I was a third-year college student struggling to find meaning in academics. I had just transferred into the University of California at Berkeley for the summer, and that would have permitted me to continue into the fall semester. But the emptiness of studying led me to drop my only class, in essence burning a bridge which might have led to a supposedly useful piece of paper, a diploma.

I started looking around for things to do and found the “Free University of Berkeley.” This was basically an informal catalog/directory of people and groups in the community who sponsored activities at their homes, businesses, etc. I had chosen an activity for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights, and I had limited my choices for Thursday to (1) a discussion on Marxism or (2) a program called “Dawn of a New Age.. It didn’t seem so ominous to me at that moment, but since then I have looked back and realized that this seemingly insignificant fork in the road was a choice between God and the devil. Yes, by my presence

here, you all know which choice I made. I was standing on the edge of a cliff, and God had pushed me back to safety. But I was totally ignorant of the dramatic situation.

My other experience was during the subsequent weekly lecture program I attended (Dawn of a New Age) on this topic called “Divine Principle.” I attended faithfully [as in “unquestioningly”] every week, but I couldn’t understand why the number of attendees diminished week after week. By the sixth lecture or so, I was the only one remaining from my “class.” The lecture on the Parallels of History became my conversion experience. I had been raised Jewish with very little exposure to Christianity. It wouldn’t have meant very much to tell me that “the Messiah is alive.” But when I saw all of history from the beginning of time through to the present day captured in summary and systematically on a single piece of paper, I knew that this truth encapsulates all other truths. I knew in my heart that no other truth could ever explain all of this better than what I had just heard.

God had hooked me. I couldn’t get enough of the truth. It was just a matter of time for Him to reel me in. Later, some of the members told me that they had thought I wasn’t grounded enough and that I wouldn’t stay. Well, I guess this proves that man’s opinion doesn’t necessarily count on the heavenly scales – God plus one (me) is a majority, and that’s what counts.

Heavenly Father, I still feel like a babe in the woods, especially when I see how devoted your True Son is. But I truly thank you for not giving up on me and continuing to reveal yourself to me, little by little, every day of my life. It’s been 40 years and we’re still counting. Well, actually You worked with me long before that, but it’s just that You’ve come out into the open a bit more since 40 years ago.