

## **Dr. Michael Balcomb evangelizes the Washington, D.C., Virginia and Maryland church district**

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Dr. Michael Balcomb recently returned from Korea and wasted no time picking up where he left off on his cross country speaking tour, dropping in to preach to the six congregations of the Washington, D.C., Virginia and Maryland church district.

These visits allowed him to test his considerable powers of public speaking as he took on the role of “Great Communicator” of True Mother’s vision for the Unification Movement after the Foundation Day events of February 22, 2013.

Accompanied by his wife, Fumiko Balcomb, he spent the whole weekend with church leaders and congregants. He preached to the Virginia congregation on Saturday morning, March 9, 2013, then toured the Columbia Road Church building and heard from the Washington, D.C. congregants there, and finally attended a dinner with 16 Unificationists ministers and their spouses at the historic Upshur House center in Washington, D.C.

“Dr. Balcomb honored Northern Virginia by presenting his ‘Discovering the Divine Principle’ teaching tool. Approximately 100 people attended our Learning Center and the enthusiasm was catching,” according to Northern Virginia Assistant Pastor Judith Lejeune.

She added: “Dr. Balcomb shared some insight into True Mother’s direction for this era of our movement, but the major portion of time was spent allowing first and second generations to actually present a part of this new teaching tool. About eight people presented, and each one felt it was much easier than they thought it would be. They each spoke between three to five minutes each.”

However, Pastor Lejeune reported constructive criticism from some participants: “After the meeting however, every person I spoke with thought the script for the PowerPoint presentation was simple enough to give (as was shown in the demonstrations), but the graphics left a lot to be desired. Several felt they were actually a little distracting because you would ask yourself “what does this mean, why is this graphic there”. Also there were comments that the graphics were heavy and not uplifting. They were dark and did not really convey what the script was talking about.”

Pastor Lejeune also reported: “The people who were actually giving the presentations for the first time were focusing on the script rather than the graphics so the ones I spoke with did not have an opinion about the graphics. They all felt empowered just to be asked to do the presentation. This certainly testifies to the fact that if we just get up and start reading the script we can each begin to take ownership of sharing the Divine Principle through this tool.”

### **Preaching to the District One Congregation**

On Sunday morning Dr. Balcomb preached to 350 congregants from the metro area at the Bladensburg High School auditorium in Bladensburg, Maryland and later joined the majority of the Maryland church for a Divine Principle teaching demonstration and a signature town-hall meeting at the New Hope Academy in Landover Hills, Maryland. At every gathering he gave his personal testimony about being at

the end of his spiritual rope and ready to leave the Unification Church only to be suddenly summoned to Korea to be “called by God” to serve as a Vice-President of the church.

At every venue in District One he reassured his listeners that after Foundation Day, God, under the name of “Heavenly Parent,” was closer than ever. “What does it mean that God is entering into a marriage relationship with human beings?” he asked. “If you think about it, if we’re really going to enter into that new relationship with God, it’s going to be very different. It’s going to be very intimate. It’s going to be all the time. And therefore, it’s not going to be easy all the time. But it’s worth it because the prize is a relationship of eternal and deepest intimacy,” he explained. He admitted that he himself struggles sometimes when he hears some of the pronouncements of True Mother. For example, he said, “she tells us to repent, but the result of repentance, if it’s done well is gratitude.” Dr. Balcomb reminded listeners that our True Mother has said that the opportunity has been given to us for the first and last time to create a new heaven and a new earth.

Through his sermon, taken from Revelations 21:5, titled “Behold I Make All Thing New,” he reassured the audiences in Northern Virginia, the District of Columbia and Maryland that “We need to believe that what we have been given in the Divine Principle, in True Parents is more valuable than anything else.” He said that we are unique because God has revealed to us the unfolding of God’s providence and that it is our job to be the channel of God’s Word.

He explained that the people of God are people who felt called by Heaven, and reminded the audience that True Father had taught that “Our whole life should be a preparation for the time when God calls you.” “The message of Foundation Day is that we should expect that kind of call from God,” adding that Foundation Day is not the end of our lives of faith but a beginning of a new way of life. It’s the day of the marriage of God. A whole new life awaits us.” He added: “The point is that we live in a new time. I honestly believe we are in a time of a new Heaven and a new Earth.”



### **Hands-on Instruction in Teaching**

After the service the congregation received hands-on training with the new Divine Principle Power Point lecture series. He reported that True Mother had told him in Korea, “I want you, Dr. Balcomb, to help America get back to the basics of teaching the Divine Principle. I want to see a church where everybody is teaching the Divine Principle, every day, every week.” He recruited six “volunteers,” including his wife to lecture from a prepared script. Each novice read the script accompanied by simple, elegant color slides for about six minutes each. He told the members that the 12 lecture series may be purchased for \$120, or an earlier version of five lectures, but which cannot be edited, can be obtained for free.

Several provocative questions were raised at the town hall meeting at the New Hope venue. In response to a question about what programs would be oriented toward young people in the manner of the Lovin’ Life ministry, he responded: “I agree that In Jin Nim was on the right track when she was empowering youth. One of the second generation leaders told me yesterday, ‘Dr. Balcomb I hope that you will be the last first-generation leader of our church.’ (Laughter followed.) I agree we should have a youthful president as soon as possible. I am 100 percent committed to transitioning into second-generation leadership.”

He was asked what more we could do to re-engage so-called resting members. Dr. Balcomb pointed out that on Foundation Day approximately 1,500 families not on the church rosters for more than a decade did register. He urged the church to labor for the goal of creating in his words, “a culture of inclusion.” He explained that “in addition to the big schism we have many small factions in our movement. Arguably, the largest group of resting members is our second generation.”

In response to a question about whether the new church governing structures set up under President Hyung Jin Moon would be preserved, he said: “My fundamental goal is that we grow the church in America. I remain committed to follow the structures we set up, the District Councils and the National Councils. I want a national church that is democratic but which has a vertical connection.

In conclusion he said, "I'm counting on you to help me make the church successful. I remain committed to local initiatives. Headquarters will not be telling you at the local level what to do."



### **Responses to Dr. Balcomb's visit were understandably full of praise:**

"We felt Dr. Balcomb's approach was refreshing, down to earth and positive. He hit issues members care about head on and is not afraid to touch sensitive subjects. He met with 70 percent of the church-attending members. He was universally accepted and appreciated as an inspiring leader who engenders hope and vision," wrote Pastors Henri Schaufler and Loretta Schaufler in a joint statement.

"Everyone was delighted to hear from our new President of FFWPU and really felt his genuine heart to empower our members in all ways possible to succeed between now and 2020," commented Pastor LeJeune.

"He was very open, very honest. He wants to make everyone comfortable and does not set himself above us. He is one of us, down to earth -- a very natural down-to-earth person, and we got a great deal of hope from him," Pastor Zagery Oliver said in an interview.



### **Excerpts of Testimonies**

Ayano Adrien, commenting on the new lecture format, "This makes it very easy to lecture - now anyone can give a lecture".

Olga Kenedy: "With True Father in the spirit world and True Mother on earth with us, what great power we can harness! Let's wake up and realize what new ground we stand on and run with it. Testify, testify, testify! There are so many in the heavenly spirit world that want to run with us!"

Katherine Cromwell: "I personally was moved by Dr. Balcomb's call to each and every one of us to join him in creating a team to bring life to this nation through revitalizing the truth and bringing it to the grass roots. His call to make the USA a nation of 5,000 churches instead of the less than 300 that exist at this time. We have until 2020 to show that America is indeed the elder son nation and that we can surely take the Principle to the whole world by first implanting it in the soil of the US and allowing it to grow here."

### **Dr. Balcomb's Sermon in Maryland "Behold, I Make All Things New"**

Good morning, everybody. It's a real privilege to be here in District 1 this morning, in Maryland, Virginia, Washington, D.C., such an important part of this country and important to God and the providence around the world. And it's the second Sunday after Foundation Day, which is exciting for me.

I was really moved by what was said about the challenge of feeling close to God, especially after a big event. Not easy to kind of really understand what God is looking for and expecting from us and I would like to share with you about that today under the topic of, "Behold, I Make All Things New." And that is of course a quote from the Bible.

You may not have realized that the Bible talks about Foundation Day. It talks about the time when God comes to settle upon the earth and to live with us all of the time. I forgot my Bible, but luckily I have my iPhone so I will read it from here. This is Revelation 21, reading through verse 3.

*And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men." He will dwell with them and they shall be his people and God himself will be with them. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away. And he who sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true."*

That last part is very important, "These words are trustworthy and true," and God stands ready to make all things new with us and through us.

I have just returned to the United States after two weeks in Korea for Foundation Day and after that in a number of leaders meetings together with True Mother. In that time we heard a lot about her vision for the next seven years, a project that she calls the "2020 Vision," 2020 being the centenary of our True Father's birth, and I'll speak about that later on.

But before that I want to think about Mother's immediate direction to us following Foundation Day, which was to spend a time of reflection and redetermination and above all, gratitude as we plan for this next phase in building God's Kingdom. I'll just read with you a couple of the things that she said to us there in Korea.

And I quote, "We are now in the period when we are creating a heaven and an earth attending the True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind, aiming at our goal, which is the establishment of Cheon Il Guk. We are in the period of creating a new heaven and a new earth. What kind of existence do you want to become? Do you want to be the sun or the moon? The creation of a new heaven and earth, which is amazing and beyond our imagination, depends on our determination, effort and action, and now that is substantially happening through us. When you think about it, we are not in a position where we can simply sit still and contemplate."

I remember Father used very similar language when he opened the Peace Palace, the Cheon Jeong Gung in 2006. In fact, he said, "If you understood how significant this thing was, you wouldn't be able to keep still. You would be dancing all the way home and dancing throughout the world."

So, brothers and sisters, my task this morning is to persuade you to put on your dancing shoes because if we don't, we may find ourselves getting off to a very slow start after Foundation Day, and that would be a great shame. So are you ready to dance? (Yes!) Okay, some are a little more ready than others.

So, God promises us to make a new heaven and a new earth. You know, we used that word "new" a lot in several of the songs we sang this morning, and sometimes we get a little bit tired of hearing new, new, new all the time because you wonder how exactly does God plan to make all things new? After all, the day after Foundation Day externally you can't tell the difference between the day before and the day after and now we're a couple of weeks after. There are no big signs flashing along the highway saying we're in the age after Foundation Day. Maybe in your own heart most of you don't necessarily feel, "wow, this is all so new and so exciting."

Well, the Divine Principle tells us that God effects re-creation or making of all things new exactly the same way that he made creation in the first place, and that is of course through the Word. If God created the entire universe, the entire cosmos through the unfolding of his Word, surely he can and he will use that to re-create us.

And all things – because God says he makes all things new – all things are the Word in symbol, but the real key is us, God's children. We are the Word in image. It's we ourselves that have to be most made anew through the Word, don't you think so? After all, if the world is new but we're not new then something is missing. So, we already understand that God's plan is to re-make us and give us rebirth through his word.

Adam and Eve were made in the image of God. They were supposed to become the substance of God's Word when they received the Holy Blessing in marriage. We know they fell and they could not accomplish that. Later on Jesus came as the living Word. But as Father taught us, Jesus alone could not become the substance of the Word of God. He needed to marry, he needed to have his spouse and he could never do that.

And I think it's very significant that the last words, the last message that our True Father gave to us on earth, that folder that he carried around with him for three or four years, the speech that he delivered maybe 100 or 200 times, was the proclamation of God's substantial Word. Father was giving us a key in that speech about the significance and importance of the Word made flesh, the Word made flesh in our True Parents and now made flesh in us. Because if we don't become the Word made flesh, God's substantial Word, we will feel something missing. The good news is, that time and that opportunity is at hand right now. The bad news is, it may hurt.



You may ask, well, wait a minute. That doesn't sound right. Why would it hurt to become the living substantial Word? Well, let's take a look at some historical examples. When New Testament scholars look at the Gospels and try to determine which of all the things in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are authentically from Jesus and which of them might be things that other people said or the disciples wrote later, one of the ways to do that is to look at the so-called difficult sayings, the things that Jesus said that were profoundly challenging, the sort of things you would not say if you wanted to win friends and influence people.

We know, for example, that Jesus said to the religious leaders, "You are a brood of vipers. You are of your father the devil." Another time he said that prostitutes and tax collectors and sinners would go into heaven before the chosen people. Imagine how that felt. Very difficult. Jesus said that we should love him more than we love our own father and mother, more than we love our own spouses. Actually not easy to do, especially if you go home and tell your wife, honey, I've decided there's someone else I have to love more than you.

So the Word of God actually is very challenging. It's not just in Christianity. Consider, for example, when Zechariah received a revelation that his wife Elizabeth would give birth to John the Baptist. The scripture says what? That he was struck dumb. I guess in modern terms it would mean that he had a stroke; he wasn't able to speak for several months. It was extremely difficult and painful.

Think about Isaiah. In Isaiah 6 the prophet has a vision and he's brought into the holy courts of God, into the presence of God, and what he says is not, thank God I'm in your presence. He says, woe to me, I am destroyed. I am going to die because I am a man of unclean lips and I come from an unclean people. That's the reality of coming into the holy presence of God. You feel unworthy. You feel that you may die. In Isaiah's case his mouth had to be purified with a burning coal.

Think about in the Koran, when the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, met with the angel Gabriel and was told that he should recite the Koran. Today a billion Muslims celebrate that moment. Every year there's a pilgrimage to Mecca to celebrate it. But Muhammad himself said, "I will die." He believed that that was his last moment on earth, to be in the blinding presence of God.

Or consider the Hindu tradition, in the tenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. The human hero, Arjuna, asks God in the form of Krishna, "Show me your immortal self; show me who you really are." And God begins to unveil who he really is. He says that he reveals his face like a thousand shining suns, and all the smells and colors and sounds of creation start to flood into Arjuna's mind until he has to beg God, "Stop! I can't bear any more. I can't bear to be in your presence."

Well, these are just a few examples of the idea that moving into a new relationship with God and his living Word may not be comfortable. So it's okay to struggle. It's okay to find a challenge.

And recently I was thinking about what does it mean that God in a sense is entering into a marriage relationship with human beings? We heard Mother talk about that, that Foundation Day is in a sense the marriage ceremony of God. Well, if God is our father and we are his children and that's it, you know, when you think about it, eventually that relationship becomes quite distant. We have five children, as you heard, and we love them very dearly but two of them live far away, one in Hawaii, one in California. We

don't see them all that often. Even the three boys who live at home, our schedules are different so we may only share a few words every day.

So actually the parent-child relationship can become occasional. Some of you have adult children. If you think about that, how often do you really have close connection with your children? It's not that you don't love them but distance and reality makes it different. But then think about your relationship with your spouse. Your relationship with your spouse is every day and all the time. And in the course of those relationships, isn't it likely that sometimes you're going to fight, you're going to struggle, you're going to disagree? You see your spouse as they are, good and bad. And they see you with complete reality.

If you think about it, if we're really going to enter into that new relationship with God, it's going to be very different. It's going to be very intimate. It's going to be all the time. And therefore, it's not going to be easy all the time. But it's worth it because the prize is a relationship of eternal and deepest intimacy. As somebody said, when two become one, it doesn't just mean husband and wife. That means myself and God, our Heavenly Parent, becoming one all the time. But it isn't easy.

One of my favorite stories about True Father comes from the time when he was a young man, probably about his late teens. He was of course living in Korea and there was a very wealthy family in his neighborhood that wanted to celebrate the marriage of their son, so they planned a big white wedding, Western-style. I guess they were so rich they wanted to show off, so they wanted it to be the wedding that everybody remembered and was excited about.

But they knew that most of the guests could not afford the clothing that goes with a Western white wedding. So they decided that at least for the bridesmaids and the groomsmen they would provide the clothing. So, for the ladies that was not too bad because by nature Korean dresses are a little bit loose-fitting, so although they only bought one size of dress for the bridesmaids, everybody was just fine.

But it was a different story when it came to the men because they decided to buy only one size of suit and shirt. And their son who was getting married was a slight kind of guy. Maybe an academic, didn't get out much. And Father in his late teens was a wrestler, he was a laborer, he was pretty built. So when it came time for Father to try on his wedding clothes, there was a problem.

Many of the men in the audience know how this happens. You go to get your suit out of the closet and it's shrunk or something. So anyway, Father managed to squeeze into this shirt and jacket. It was very, very tight. But he couldn't not go to the wedding because it was so important, so he went along and went to the wedding. Everyone welcomed him there. But later he recounted, "It was the worst day of my life." The suit which was already tight became tighter and tighter. There was gorgeous food, a huge banquet; he couldn't eat a single bite. There was dancing but he couldn't dance because if he did, the legs of his pants might rip from top to bottom. So all he could do was suffer and pray that it would be over. He said after a while there was nothing I wanted to do more than to run away.

But because Father's Father, he didn't leave it there. Later on he reflected that, gosh, that must be what it's like if you come into the presence of God and his Kingdom and you're not ready internally. It's as if you were in the presence of God and your clothing is too tight, your spiritual clothes. St. Peter will still let you in; he's not going to pull the rope across and say sorry, you're not ready. You're allowed into the Kingdom, you're there and everyone is seeing you, but because your clothes don't fit, you're in agony.

Eventually what you want to do, you actually want to leave the presence of God, leave heaven so that you can change into more comfortable clothes. And that's a great irony, right? You reach that closeness with God but then you can't keep it. You have to remove yourself because you're not ready to live there all of the time. So we don't want that, right? We don't want that after Foundation Day we suddenly find that our clothes don't fit and we're not comfortable any more in God's presence.

Actually funny enough, on the night of Foundation Day, I was in Korea at the hotel with Fumiko and I had a dreadful nightmare. I woke up and somehow in this dream the hotel room had changed and my Foundation Day clothes were not in the room any more. So I started looking through other rooms in this hotel, and then when I couldn't find my clothes, in other hotels nearby. I was in my underwear, it was getting close to Foundation Day and I had no clothes. And every now and then someone was driving by in a taxi saying, "Mike, it's time to go; get it together! Jump in the car!" But I wouldn't get in because I didn't have my clothes. Eventually I woke up, and man, I was relieved. There was my suit hanging in the corner.

So I thought about it. I suppose this means that internally I'm not really ready to stand in the presence of God. I feel my clothes aren't prepared. But of course the great thing about having a physical body, about being alive on this earth is, even if you're not ready, it doesn't matter. You put on your suit, you put on your clothes and then you go and you stand in the right place at the right time. But we know that ultimately, internally we have to become completely united with our mind and body so that we are ready in our hearts to live in the presence of God.

I think this is why I struggle with a lot of what Mother has to say to us these days. I don't know about you but I find it a big struggle when Mother says, as she said before Foundation Day, "What you need to do, you need to repent." I don't like being told to repent. My wife will tell you I'm not very good at repenting. I don't like to admit that I have fallen short. It's not that I can't repent; I just need to find it out for myself. It doesn't work if somebody else is telling me, repent, you sinner! You need to come to that surrender, as our song went this morning, that you feel it for yourself.



Now some people are lucky. Think about Jesus with his disciples who one day went to the synagogue and they saw a sinful person, a publican, in the back of the synagogue beating on his breast and repenting before God that he was an unworthy sinner. Jesus said that that man, rather than the religious leaders, went to his home justified with God. Sometimes I really envy that publican, the person who just as soon as he goes into church feels God's presence and naturally repents. That is not me. I feel I'm more like the Pharaoh, whose heart is hardened ten times. No matter what is going on, I'm still resisting God, resisting the inclination to repent as long as I can. I'm sorry, but that's really my reality. I struggle very much to repent. I hope that you are not like me, but probably you are somewhere in the middle.

Repentance is not easy, but when it really comes, what's the result? The result, True Mother says, is gratitude, that if you really feel repentant and forgiven, the natural response is to be grateful to God, to be grateful to each other, to be grateful for the people who bring blessing into our lives. That of course is True Mother's expectation and her direction to us today.

I'll read you a second portion from her speech. This is what she told us last Thursday just as we were leaving Korea. "When I think of our status," she said, "it should be that we cannot help but start dancing with excitement and joy. It should be that we cannot help but take action, even without sleeping. We should make our utmost efforts to share the grace and blessing with others. Do you know it or not? Have you been determined to do so? This is the opportunity that has come to us for the first and last time. We have the tremendous blessing of being able to create a new heaven and a new earth together with our Heavenly Parent. What kind of creator do you want to become? You need to become a creator who will be praised for generations and you are given such an opportunity by Heaven."

That's a very powerful and encouraging message but it's also quite a challenge. Mother is asking us to be creators of the Kingdom of God again. Actually, in her speech she said you could just settle for creating a bacteria, or maybe you could create an animal. But actually what God wants you to create is the human family of saved people living in the presence of God. That's what really will bring joy to God and to you.

I said saved. That's not a word that we have been used to using all that often in our church. But I think it's a very important thing to reflect on. Think about what the Divine Principle is really saying about the purpose and goal of human history. According to the Principle, the entire span of human history from the very beginning, from the Garden of Eden all through the Stone Age, the Egyptian empires, the Greek civilization, later the Roman empire; think about the time of Jesus, the Crusades, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Industrial Revolution, even the great wars of the last century, the great advance of science – what is it all for? It's all for one thing and one moment, the coming of the Lord of the Second Advent to put right the problem that began at the beginning of human history. It's such a staggering claim that it's easy to put it to one side and think, well, I kind of believe that but I'm not going to live that way because I still have to go to school, I have to go to work, I have to live my life; I have to take care of all the daily things.

But brothers and sisters, I honestly believe we need to change that way of thinking. We need to believe that what we have been given in the Divine Principle, in True Parents is more valuable than anything else. After all, if you think about it, we are not the biggest church. We have a nice crowd here this morning but I know there are other churches in Washington with 10 times or even 20 times the number of people. There are mega churches with 20,000 or 30,000 people at a Sunday service.

So we're not the biggest church. We don't have the best preachers, we don't have a big TV ministry. We don't have any of those things. But we have one thing that they don't have. God has chosen to reveal to us the secret of his providence, the coming of the True Parents, the meaning of the Blessing, the possibility of building God's Kingdom right now. It's so exciting.

You might think that this is kind of arrogant and uncompromising and in a way a difficult truth and in a sense it is. I'm calling for us to recognize who we really are – not from our perspective, not from America's perspective but from how God sees us, how our Heavenly Father looks at us when he sees us this morning. A few people, yes, but entrusted with a very precious secret.

And it's not just Christianity of course. You think of all the great religions of the world, a billion Muslims, a billion Hindus, a billion Catholics waiting now today for the announcement of a new pope. God is counting on us to channel and bring his message of salvation to all of these people that I'm sure God has prepared within those communities: great saints, great orators, people who can be the John the Baptists who can change tens or even hundreds of thousands of people at a time.

But I don't think God is planning to reveal to them a new Divine Principle, do you? Is he planning to once again have someone suffer to understand his truth and his providence? No. God has already entrusted that to us. It's our job to be the channels of the Word of God.

In 1982 Father spoke about this matter in a sermon entitled, "Standing in the Presence of God." Father said that our whole life should be a preparation for the moment when God calls me – not even our whole community, but when God calls you. I hope that that morning is this morning. Actually Father's sermon was not a comforting sermon and those were not comforting times. It was right before Father was going to imprisonment in Danbury and Father was asking the congregation, will you go with me to prison? Will you go and live in Africa? Will you risk death in China or Moscow? Are you really ready to make a life-or-death commitment? And I quote, "Suppose someone was walking down the aisle to be married. The wedding march was playing. And in that moment God called him or her and told them to go somewhere else. God would not expect that he or she would go ahead and finish the marriage ceremony, but instead would want to see them drop everything and obey his direction."

Think about that. You're at the marriage ceremony. The wedding march is playing and in that moment God tells you to do something else. Father had that experience several times in his life. One time he was on his way to buy medicine and God told him, forget the medicine, forget your family. Go to North Korea right now to preach the word of God.

What if God said to you this morning as you walk out of this church here in Bladensburg, forget your plans? Forget what you think you were going to do. I have a new mission and a new responsibility that I want you to fulfill right now. Are we ready to make that kind of life-changing commitment? It may not happen today but I think that one of the messages of Foundation Day is that we should expect that kind of commission from God.

Maybe you've been in the church 10, 20, 30, even 40 years. Maybe you were born into this church. But you never really heard for a long time the specific word of God calling you to action and to accomplishment. That time is really upon us. Foundation Day is not the end.

If we think about Foundation Day as that image of the marriage of God, the marriage is not the end of a relationship with your spouse, right? It's the very beginning, and after the wedding day a whole lifetime of intimacy and communion begins. So it would be natural that if Foundation Day marks in a sense the wedding, the marriage of God with human beings through True Parents and with us then that's the beginning of a whole new dimension of experience with God.

And it's okay if you haven't felt it yet. I can't say I've fully felt it myself. But I wanted to warn you in a sense, but also to encourage you that when God comes calling, it may not be immediately exciting and light, bright and new. It may actually be a profound challenge. But don't be afraid. Don't think, my goodness. Foundation Day is over and I'm still struggling. I'm still fighting to understand the Word of God. That may be part of God's plan as well because he wants to take us from where we were to where we can be in an eternal and blessed relationship with him.

Let's reflect again finally on True Mother's guidance, and I quote. "When I think of our status, it should be that we cannot help but start dancing with excitement and joy. It should be that we cannot help but take action, even without sleeping. We should make our utmost efforts to share the grace and blessing with others. Do you know it or not? Have you been determined to do so?"

I want to share with you a little testimony. I'm a bit embarrassed when I hear Loretta saying that I have the heart to witness and to teach because really I don't. I wish I did, but actually it's my wife who has the heart to testify and witness and she pokes me and makes me go out and do it, and I hate it but it's good for me. So in the street where I live there's a couple of young men. Their names are Dave and Paul. They're



an interesting pair. They live in a group home because Paul is paraplegic and his whole life is in a wheelchair and there's a number of people who help maintain the home.

But they're very, very fundamentalist Christians and in the past on a few occasions we invited them to our house, we went there, and it always devolved into a Bible argument. Maybe you've had one of those, and we're kind of arguing over the smallest pieces of the Bible, and I really got fed up. I thought, I don't want to witness to these people any more.

But Fumiko told me, we have to make one more effort. So what happened was, we went to visit them and we gave them Father's autobiography, and secretly I hoped I never hear from them again. I hoped this book makes them negative. I mean, I didn't really feel that but I thought, this is a bother. Besides, I'm busy. I'm the vice president. I don't have time for this kind of thing. So kind of, here's the book.

Anyway, about a week later I got this urgent voice mail on my phone from one of them, Dave. He said something like this. Mike, you have to come and visit us right away. We have serious problems with Moon's book. I thought, oh, no, more arguing. This is going to be horrible. So anyway, we went to their house and they brought out six pages of typed notes and questions about Father's book.

They said, okay, let's begin. On page 78, paragraph three, Rev. Moon says he has a new revelation about the Fall of Man. How could that be true? It already says in the Bible that Adam and Eve ate a fruit. I'm thinking, hey, that's the kind of question I'd like to answer. I know the answer to that one.

So we had a very fruitful hour talking about the Fall of Man. And I thought, okay, thank goodness that's over. We went away and then a few days later they texted me again, hey, Mike, we read a bit more of Rev. Moon's book. We have another problem. It's getting so irritating. They're kind of calling me every week, asking to study the Principle. It's really horrible. No – wait a minute.

Anyway, the point is, I think we live in a new time, that actually God has prepared people. Even if we tried to witness to them in the past, that might even include our own children or our own relatives, or maybe complete strangers, but I honestly believe we are in a time of a new heaven and a new earth. And if we do testify, even if you're like me, the most unwilling instrument of God, it doesn't matter. God is able to work. Even if you resist him, God will still work if you get your butt out of the house and start spreading the word that God's kingdom is coming? Can you do that?

Thank you very much.