

## Sang Ik Choi, the First Unification Church Missionary - Part 8

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*Students witnessing at Shibuya station, in June, 1965*

December 30 - The last workday of 1958 since imprisonment has come. We wrapped up the work in the morning and did some deep cleaning in the afternoon. We had more or less completed all of the tasks for the year. Physically, it wasn't too bad, but spiritually it had been difficult. By having to serve a prison term due to my own lack of wisdom, the mission from Heaven was being delayed. I couldn't just say that it couldn't be helped. The more I thought about it, the more anguished I was. Unwillingly, I'd come this far. The year was at an end and so I felt like I'd taken one load off my back.

At 6:30pm, the bedtime gong rang. I reminisced from the time I met the Lord; especially about this year, full of ups and downs. The happiest thing for me was to think freely at night and be transported in my thoughts after going to bed. Just one day left. Tomorrow, this year of the cross will pass.

December 31 - Last day of the year

The final day of the year was here. The director gave us a talk in the morning and we took a bath from noon. We ran naked from the cells to the bath in the cold. We looked strange. As today was the last day, the radio was on till late. We got our New Year's eve noodles. It was almost midnight. Ah, the suffering year 1958 will also end. I had long awaited this last day. I rose, put on clothes, looked toward the northwest and prayed together with the 108 bells ringing out the old year. The sound of the bells came through quietly over the radio. Saying just the words, Father, Lord, brought tears. I was filled with hatred toward Satan. From this year, we will strike back against Satan. It was a new start with the new year. I burned with new resolve.

January 1, 1959 - The new year dawned. With prayer and the year-end bells I had hoped for a dream, but none came, so I braced for another year of hardship on the cross. We were served white rice and rice cakes and a rare box of food. With the extra goodies I was almost too full for rice, but I wanted to devour everything. My stomach was full. All spent the day as they pleased, but I felt I shouldn't waste time to prepare for the next, and studied English and history. With a fresh heart from New Year's Day, I studied, telling myself the child of God makes effort while the "satans" are playing around. Thinking this was the year for a counterattack, I was impatient. I wrote a letter, which I hadn't done in two months - the first one of the year.

January 12 - I returned to the cell late afternoon to a letter from the homeland. It was from Brother Jeon, our trinity. Happy, happy! I finished cleaning, and read it over and over. Every word, every line touches the heart. The Lord's words of the new year were there. This year is a time to sow seeds freely; until now, for 6000 years, humankind worked to indemnify their sins, for the forgiveness of their sins, but starting this year, we can work for the sake of Father. How wonderful that is. I thought I had to pay more indemnity than others as I was sinful. But I'm truly grateful to be able to indemnify all and work for the Father. Even someone like me was motivated more. I closed my eyes and vowed to work for our Father. Thinking of the trinity brothers praying for me with tears, and gratitude for the 100,000 yen they said

they'd send to me brought tears. I was proud as a child of God. I talked about the brotherly love of those who love God. It had been a descending life until now, but from now, it will only ascend. Father, I will carry out the mission by whatever means. I felt impatient as the end of my term approached.

January 14 - About 3:00pm, I was called by the security section for an immigration check. I was examined briefly by an official. After the check, I was waiting when I was asked by the detention office side, 'Are you Mr Choi?' I said yes, and they said a wire for 30,000 yen had arrived so I gave them the thumbprint requested. There was a letter which they would hold because it was in Korean. The check went smoothly and the money came as well, all is going well. I was so overwhelmed with gratitude, I cried out, Oh Father! At the same time I blamed myself that I should not only be grateful to Father when I was happy, but also in difficulty.

At night, I kept thinking about the various things in the future, and couldn't study. I was imagining my battle with Satan in Tokyo, after departure, and stayed up till midnight.

January 15 - Coming of age day was a holiday. A talk was given in the hall on world affairs; humanity was at a time where all could be destroyed within 30 minutes by scientific weapons, by ICBMs, proving that an era based on DP has come. Repent, or you shall be destroyed. Confidence was filling me. USSR had sent up an artificial satellite, amazing the world, and the time for enabling the dream of humankind has come.

January 16 - About 10:00 am, my name was suddenly called, and it turned out that I was promoted to level 3. When you wear a level 3 badge, it feels like you've become an old boy with some authority. It's amusing that the child of God can throw about a bit more weight. I could write two letters a month now, and could own a pencil. I learned that this was one of the good things about having served for a period of time.

January 23 - The former secretary of the ship was interviewed for a discharge, and I heard that if my papers came, we would be discharged soon, in about two weeks. My heart danced as I hoped to leave asap. But nothing came the following day or the next, so I was concerned. Yet, all is within the will of God, and I found peace by just being grateful and following him.

1.6 (by the lunar calendar) - It was the holy birthday of the Lord. I knew that in Korea, they fasted to commemorate the day, so although in confinement I wanted to fast with the same heart. In prison, random acts are not allowed, but I resolved to fast whatever the circumstances, said I had stomach pains and did without breakfast. The staff was suspicious because prisoners fast or pretend they're sick to skip work at times. I stuck through with it at lunch. The staff said just have soup if your stomach hurts, but I didn't. In the afternoon, a medical staff member came to check, said, "Hmph, something wrong with your stomach," and gave me some medicine. I threw it out quietly. Dinner came, and - too bad - it was tempura, a special dish. It was Satan's temptation. Those around me wanted mine. I safely finished the day's fast together with the Korean family, and although I was in prison, I made a pledge to Heavenly Father and the Lord in my heart through the fast. The child of God fasts to settle scores with Satan. I hated Satan even more.

As the day of my discharge was approaching I had requested permission to grow my hair. It was getting longer, and I felt hope. The memory of this day was the best in the world. To be able to celebrate the holy birth of the Lord in prison, with a mission to restore the cosmos.