

How I Joined the Unification Church in Adelaide, Australia

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I was fifteen years old when I first heard the Divine Principle. It was 1979. I was visiting my older sister who was already a full time Unification Church center member in a city that was not our hometown. I arrived at the airport, was driven to the center in Adelaide, South Australia, and within half an hour, I was being taught the Fall of Man. I thought it was a ridiculous talk -- all the mention of angels, as if they were real beings (my family was quite agnostic, but not quite atheistic) - - as well as recounting the story of Adam and Eve, which I was sure was fictitious. I remember thinking how ridiculous the whole scene was, these serious, conservative, lovely people, actually believing in something so fanciful and ludicrous. Still, I was a guest in the center and did not want to be rude, though I did laugh during the Fall of Man presentation. What I remember vividly, as if it were yesterday, was the wonderful, clear, clean and peaceful atmosphere in the center. There were very few furnishings, and whatever there was was clean and white. I loved that house, that wonderful atmosphere and it filled me with a sense of happiness I had not felt for a very long time.

They invited me to the next weekend workshop and I thought it would be a nice experience, out in the country. I was the youngest of the group; the average age was around twenty-four. I felt comfortable around them all as they treated me like their favorite kid sister. The workshop was great fun and the content of the Divine Principle hit me like a hurricane -- from the giggles that the Fall of Man had initially produced, I suddenly realized the Messiah had been born on earth and I was here to join him. It was as if a thunderbolt hit me. The impact of Jesus' story and the Parallels of History was undeniable. I felt privileged beyond measure, even though I was a bit underwhelmed by the idea of Rev. Moon being the Messiah. Still, the message, the "breaking news" as In Jin nim put it, could not be ignored, even if there were flaws in the ideology. I could work through such flaws, because I intuitively knew what I had heard and had understood was a revelation from God.

I did not understand what I was supposed to do with such an understanding and so when the center leaders suggested I should stay and live with the group, I went along with it. As I had already run away from school and home, and my parents were at the stage of despair over what to do with me, they readily accepted my decision. From there, the Unification Church sent me back to finish high school and even supported me while I continued piano and singing lessons. I felt so lucky to be within such a loving, supporting, kind group of people.



From that initial workshop and conversion moment, I never doubted my understanding of where I stood in the face of providential history -- that I was born to be a disciple of "Jesus," in his Second Coming. However, my specific role in that history and what God might want of me within the providence, has often been blurred and has been a source of great anxiety and dismay.



A skit during the workshop; I'm in back

It is only now -- after thirty-seven years -- that I have been able to make moves towards reconciling these two issues: what are God's responsibility and my responsibility, and how we are to work together. I must be a slow learner!

I would like to share the joy of my experience, as well to encourage others in witnessing efforts, by adding that no matter what potential spiritual children may espouse to believe, when the conditions are there, God can totally change the hearts and minds of anyone he wishes. But

those conditions are many -- True Parents' work, the work of people's ancestors, the highest standard of personal integrity of the people initiating the witnessing activity as well as their spiritual efforts or conditions. However, the icing on the cake is the final ingredient -- love. Those responsible for the work and many associated people must truly love everyone around them with genuine, unselfish love. This creates a warm, receptive atmosphere, within which God's spirit can move and Divine Principle can be understood in the heart and the mind.