

My Unificationist Memoirs - Chapter 5

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On January 5, 1980, I had a dream of True Parents. I was sitting in a small compartment on a train in really close quarters with Father and Mother. My knees were rubbing against Father's knees as he sat across from me. I felt a deep sense of responsibility for a task I had to accomplish. I got up and went outside the train compartment. As I did, I entered a large room filled with "things" in complete disarray. I proceeded then to straighten up the mess and as I did so, I felt completely one with Father, very close to him in heart. I knew that what I was doing was True Father's work. I returned to the compartment with a pair of slippers, removed Father's muddy shoes, and placed the slippers on his feet. As I did, Mother looked at me and I was overwhelmed by her love. In my diary, I wrote at the time, "Really, Mother is our mother! Even now the expression on Mother's face in the dream is real to me. It was that clear and precise."

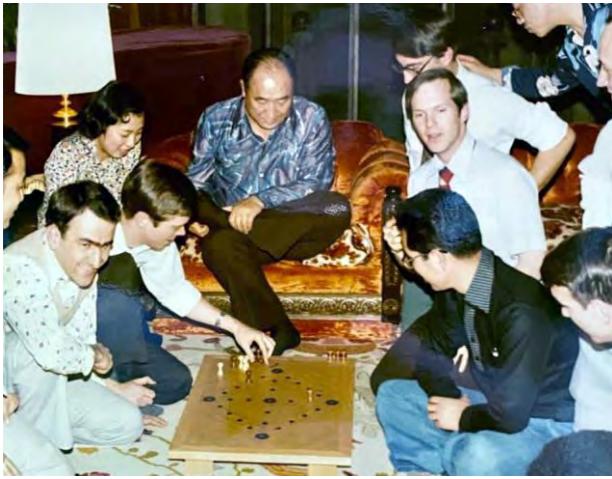
Dreams have never been a consistent experience in my spiritual life. The monastic tradition which formed my spirituality, focused on the cultivation of the heart in prayer as the most important element in our life of faith. A corollary to this spiritual principle, and one of the permanent vows Cistercian Trappists take, is that we should engage in daily "conversion of heart," as a means to expand our capacity to give and receive the love of God. However, dreams have been an occasional grace by which God has spoken to me and revealed my mission and direction. For instance, prior to meeting our movement, I had a dream in which I entered a room and saw Jesus sitting in a chair. I immediately bowed down in reverence. As I raised my head, the face of Jesus transfigured into the face of an Asian man I did not (yet) know. I felt a profound connection of heart with him. When I first walked into the Military Road Center on November 10, 1973, I had the same distinct connection of heart. As I felt it then, it was the heart of Jesus with an Asian flavor. I savored it. And I knew that God had prepared the way forward for me through my dream.

Likewise, the dream of being with True Parents in the train compartment has held lifelong meaning for me. My path of attendance is to return both my own nature and the environment around me, to the proper spiritual order, to literally clean things up. To do so is to personally attend to the needs of True Parents and God. There is nothing unique or special in this assignment - I think we all have the same obligation before Heaven, to restore the world to its proper order. When I engage in my mission, the experience of the dream becomes real to me again, refreshing my experience of the original grace. Thus, a dream is not just a passing or ephemeral spiritual phenomena. Rather, a dream is an eternal spiritual gift that comes alive as we live it. Even as my heart despaired following K's leaving, the dream remained a spiritual touchstone for me.



Upon returning from the MFT Commander's trip to Japan in June, 1981, I was transferred by Mr. Kamiyama to the MFT Witnessing Center in San Francisco. I continued to carry the dream's inspiration in my heart. I felt particularly moved because the "City" had always been Canaan for our nomadic Marine Corps family. It was the home on the Irish side of my mother's family from the 1850s, and both of my parents had grown up there. My father attended St. Ignatius High School and my mother, St. Rose. They met at their shared parish church, St. Brendan's. Even in the midst of my spiritual turmoil, I deeply felt the ancestral ties, and the corresponding need "to place things in the right order," as the course of restoration for myself and my lineage. The center on Judah Street sat directly across from an apartment one set of my great grandparents had lived in towards the end of their lives, after they had sold their home on nearby Cole Street. My parent's childhood homes were literally within walking distance. God had placed me

smack in the middle of my ancestral domain, a place that had always been an object of longing for me as our family moved from base to base, state to state, and even country to country, while I grew up.



As I moved through the City and witnessed, each day unfolded like a discovery. Childhood memory merged with new experience; the city streets and landmarks were storied and alive for me, reaffirming a profound sense that God had brought me home and entrusted me with a providential mission. But beneath the emotional high, the heaviness of spiritual indemnity weighed on me. Many nights, after members retired to sleep, I would hike up to the Holy Ground on Twin Peaks and pray. I was seeking a way forward, a resolution to my divided heart and a means to accomplish my mission. What I recall of these prayers is their difficulty, even aridity. I would leave the mountain wet from the heavy fog with a heart that felt engaged in battle. During the day, I would witness, fundraise, and lecture. To be able to teach the Divine Principle always felt like a great honor; to have guests, a blessing from God.

One such blessing was Lan Pham. I was witnessing off of Union Square on Powell Street, when I approached a young Asian woman after several hours of rejection. Her openness surprised me. She proved to be the fruit of my prayer, and my entrée to San Francisco's Vietnamese community.

