

1960: The Spirit Moving in the Unification Church - Part 1

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Street preaching during the 1960 summer witnessing campaign

It was in 1954, not a year after the end of the carnage of the Korean War, that True Father moved the headquarters of his still small church to Seoul and officially named it. Notable people joined then in those formative years, but it was 1957 when Father launched the first summer witnessing drive. For a period of 40 days, members went out to many of the towns and cities of South Korea. They found ways to help local farmers, to teach English and mathematics to school children. Hence they considered their work "Enlightenment witnessing." And they shared their inspiration of the Divine Principle and the reality of God's love. Many of those who went out were not much more than school children themselves.

By 1960, our movement was already growing in faith and numbers in its homeland. Here is a story of spiritual experience and love as, despite the poverty and the summer heat, the power of God's Word dramatically changes lives and His spirit fills many hearts.

On July 3, 1960, after an afternoon Sunday service, True Father announced that the second round of the forty-day summer witnessing would be carried out in more than three hundred and sixty Korean regions from July 20. The campaign was originally termed the "second summer witnessing period." In the end, however, the 1957 witnessing was viewed as having been preparatory and experimental, and the 1960 summer witnessing campaign was considered the actual proclamation of the Divine Principle. It is now officially referred to as the first forty-day enlightenment-witnessing period.

At the time, the campaign itself seemed an impossible one. There just wasn't enough manpower, church funds or energy. The new members were hard put just to overcome persecution and hardships and to adapt the Divine Principle to their everyday lives. True Father's decision to launch the campaign thus came as a thunderbolt to all the members.

On the morning of July 17, 450,000 leaflets printed in tabloid form on both sides and 18,000 large posters with the title "Declaration of the Principle," were distributed among sixty pioneer churches nationwide.

Three days later, on July 20, no fewer than 659 witnessing members were dispatched to 413 locations throughout Korea, individually, in pairs, or in trinities. They resolved not to fail but to emerge as victors. Members were curious about the new places they would see, and set out with a sense of adventure.

Fortunately, all schools were having their summer break and the weather was warm. It was the best

opportunity for the members to spread the new Word and share their hearts, which were overflowing with the Holy Spirit.

Everyone, including True Parents, whether they had gone out witnessing or had chosen to stay at home and witness from there, ate boiled barley for forty days. The witnessing members, armed with nothing more than the Divine Principle, were dispatched throughout Korea. Needless to say, they had to overcome all kinds of hardships and endure persecution. Unification Church signboards appeared all over the country, and the witnessing campaign proved what True Father had said, "Those who triumph over a thousand hardships are enthroned as kings of glory."

The witnessing campaign was a two-sided educational program that brought together the enlightenment movement to awaken people's intellectual wisdom, while the Divine Principle developed their internal wisdom.

True Father encouraged members to "step forward with the iron rod of life to lead the Korean people, who were in constant struggle because they did not know which way to go." He added that the work begun during his lifetime would be remembered by innumerable people and that they would make barefoot pilgrimages to see its fruits.



Witnessing in Pagoda Park, central Seoul, in 1960

Witnessing Testimonies from 1960

Mr. Kim Byeong-shik, who was assigned to a village in Gyeong-gi Province, visited every one of the three hundred some houses in the village to distribute the first Unification Principle leaflet, "The Way of Unification." He gave a simple explanation and asked people to come to listen to a talk on the Divine Principle at the Rail Workers' Union Hall. The leaflet read in part, "Listen! Just come and hear the word! Our brethren, we ask you all to come and listen! The 2.8 billion people of the world are growing weary of being fenced in by historical suffering and are succumbing under the weight of the dismal reality, but the new word of God that can save you from the brink of death has been prepared for you..." These leaflets overflowing with the energy of life were delivered to each household in the region without exception.

Mr. Yim Gyu-mun, who witnessed in the mining district of Hambaek, said of his experience that all that God gave him were prayers offered in tears. He stayed up all night alone just saying "Father!" His tearful prayers gave him solace and hope. Gyu-mun could sympathize with Jesus, who had lamented, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have

nests, but..." Thinking about True Father's heart at the time of the mud hut in Beomnaetgol, he realized how lonesome was the path toward God. He could not stop tears falling from his eyes, and his body heated up until he felt that he could not endure the intense, feverish heat. At that moment, God instructed him to find his way to a particular house with a large, old tree. When Gyu-mun explained to the owner of the house the purpose of the enlightenment movement, the owner welcomed him, moved his boarder to another house and let Gyu-mun stay in the vacated room. Every morning, he woke up early, and hung up posters around the town. He had selected two locations for speaking. He walked around town night and day, stopping to give talks. In the morning he drank cold water and relied on others for his lunch and dinner.

Miss Kim Boon-jo, who set out to witness for three years in her mission place, Gampo in North Gyeongsang Province, exhausted all her food supplies. She went to the seaside, plucked wild seaweed, put it in a bowl of water and drank it as a meal. After subsisting on this for a few days, Boon-jo hardly had the strength to stand. She approached the door of a house and a girl ran out to welcome her. The girl told her that her deceased grandfather had appeared to her in a dream and told her that an important guest would come to her house the next day; he asked her to serve the guest well. She also said that she had seen Boon-jo in the dream. She served her rice and pork stew. At that, tears flowed from Boon-jo's eyes. She would later receive barley from many homes in the town. In her excitement, Boon-jo could disregard her hunger.

Miss Seo Myeong-jin, who went to Yeonsan in South Chung-cheong Province, did her very best, and resolved that her bones would be buried in her mission place. During the day she helped others with their work and also visited every house in town. As the forty days were drawing to an end, Myeong-jin rented an empty building and taught the Divine Principle to adults and young people every night. She found that though she was only eating barley, she was overflowing with energy, and realized that God was indeed with her. She achieved the extraordinary feat of bringing forty people to join the church.

Miss Kim Geum-rang, who went out to pioneer Hwang-deung in North Jeolla Province, walked along the footpaths between the rice fields carrying a blackboard and a water pitcher and gave lectures in little pavilions where farmers rested. On her way to and fro, gusts of wind would blow chalk powder into her eyes and mouth. Geum-rang also gave lectures to students under a big tree and witnessed by visiting homes. Everyone received her kindly. Her first spiritual child was a high school student. When stories about her got around, people whom Geum-rang hadn't visited actually complained that she hadn't come. When she left, everyone came aboard the train to see her off.

Rah Im-yul was dispatched to Ulreung Island, where he had to endure difficult environmental conditions and extreme persecution. At times during prayer, Im-yul did nothing other than cling to God and struggle in inner torment. Thinking about God and True Parents' mortifying and grievous histories, he felt as much pain as if his own flesh and bones were being torn apart. He wept until his handkerchief and his lap were soaked in tears. Im-yul lamented the fact that people were so ignorant and disbelieving that they refused to receive the precious new truth. Some days, Im-yul was so moved and in tears when he visited people's homes that he could only witness to them after he had calmed down a little. In the end, however, his efforts paid off -- he brought many significant members into the church. Eventually, he established a church there.

Mr. Kim Hak-shil went to North Chungcheong Province, and preached for six days until he grew hoarse, but no one joined. On the last day, Hak-shil wrote with his own blood, while shedding tears, "Young people of Korea, let's fight for the world!" He held the written resolution in his hand and wept endlessly. Hak-shil's finger continued to bleed. At that moment, three university students came up from where they had been sitting. They bound up his bleeding finger, and said, "Teacher, we hadn't realized what kind of church this is! We will build a church here!"