

A Family Experience of Christ's Return - Part 4

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The Day of Hope campaigns

The most memorable of all our missions were our participation in the Day of Hope campaigns in the United States (1974 - 1975) and the Washington Monument Rally in 1976, because we could work directly with our True Parents. Our team was assigned an itinerary of certain cities, and every two weeks we traveled to another state. In each of these cities, we prepared a banquet for many dignitaries and invited people to attend Father's speech.

After Father's public speech, True Parents would usually treat our team and the New Hope Singers to a celebration dinner at McDonald's and have many of us sing. It usually ended with True Parents singing for us. We felt like one big family and could get a glimpse of the future kingdom of heaven on earth.

As Mother was always heavily pregnant during those years and tired because of the strenuous schedule, she would sometimes rest her head on my shoulder during Father's speech, and I felt so incredibly happy, but on the other side I was so sorry for what she had to endure. Those intimate experiences with True Mother are no longer possible, but they will live in my heart and mind for eternity.

When we purchased the Pasadena house, Father called it West Garden. I clearly remember one visit in 1975 when True Mother was pregnant with Kwon-jin nim and extremely tired. We picked them up at the airport, and as soon as Father entered the house, he called all the leaders present to come to True Parents' room for a conference within the next ten minutes. I felt so sorry for Mother and wished that someone could suggest to Father that we could accommodate such a large group much better in our spacious living room, but for some reason it had to be True Parents' quarters. When all the leaders had squeezed in, there was no room to spare. As Mother came out of their bathroom, she had to find a way around the leaders on the floor to reach the bed, and I was happy thinking that she would lie down to rest. To my astonishment, Mother walked around the bed onto a little floor space between the bed and the window and then slowly and carefully eased herself down to the floor without saying a word. I was searching my brain frantically for how I could help Mother to be more comfortable without disrupting the meeting. All I could do in that situation was to bring her a pillow and a blanket and whisper, "Sorry, Mother." She smiled gratefully and closed her eyes.

Sometimes Father asked his staff, "What team is working in the next city?" When he heard that it was Paul and the German team, he said, "I'm sure everything will be prepared in detail and I have nothing to worry about."

I truly wish our second generation could have these parent - child experiences with our True Parents, but

this only happens once at a certain time in all of history. Our generation was truly blessed, but we also had to pay an equal amount of indemnity to be chosen by Heaven to follow True Parents at such an early time.



Remembering my husband

Paul's outstanding quality was his deep love for Heavenly Father, True Parents and our brothers and sisters. He was like a rock, never wavering in his unconditional commitment, no matter how difficult the circumstances. Father said once in a leader's meeting, "Paul's standard is very high. Outwardly he has a tough shell, but inside he is like butter."

For members working directly with us, it wasn't easy sometimes to live up to Paul's expectations, but one thing is absolutely true: He loved every one of our brothers and sisters deeply, appreciating and never forgetting their work and commitment to True Parents during those early years. He realized later that he sometimes hurt a member's feelings by being too strong, and he was very sorry about that. He told me that if he had been given the opportunity to do things over again, he would have handled some situations differently.

As all the leaders know, Father often chastised Paul in leaders' meetings over the years, but he did recognize him during the forty-day fishing workshop in Alaska in 1998. Paul participated in

the workshop despite a heart condition, which really required a leap of faith. When he came home, he told me, "You won't believe what I experienced one morning during hoondokhae in Kodiak. I was sitting way in the back when during his speech Father suddenly called my name and said, 'Paul, I am very proud of you; you are number one.'" Paul was stunned because this had never happened before.

His last days and nights on earth I spent at his bedside, holding his hand, until his spirit ascended to the spirit world in a heavenly and peaceful atmosphere, knowing that he would now be free to continue his mission in the other world where his ailing physical body couldn't drag him down any more. When True Parents were informed about Paul's ascension, Father said, "Congratulations for a victorious life" and honored him with a national Seunghwa Ceremony.

After Paul's ascension, I received more than five hundred letters, from all over the globe, honoring Paul for his hard work and steadfast commitment to True Parents.

Now I share my daily life with Paul and pray that he can teach and help many people in the spirit world - including our ancestors - to find True Parents and to develop into glorious divine spirits. I am very proud of my husband, not so much because of his accomplishments but because of what he really is, a loyal son of God and of True Parents and a loving husband and father.

Our family had many hurdles to overcome, but we also had the privilege of a very personal relationship with our beloved True Parents here on earth and I am sorry, especially for our second generation, that this is no longer possible for all our members. When True Father told us long ago, that this time would come, it seemed impossible to us, because our being with True Parents was so normal.

I have just turned eighty recently, and I'm so grateful to our Heavenly Father for the gift of a long and fulfilled life, for His guidance and protection, for my family, for all my brothers and sisters throughout the world, and above all for His leading me to our True Parents during their lifetimes on earth.

I pray for their good health and long life as they put their lives on the line over and over again for the salvation of humankind.

Christel wrote this testimony some 13 years ago. She now resides in her native Germany. At 93 years of age, she is still an active voice and inspiring presence in our movement.