

## Love Is Just a Memory

Michael Downey  
February 4, 2013



I first saw Father in Washington D.C. in October of 1973. He spoke at Lisner Auditorium as a part of the Day of Hope Tour. I bought a ticket from a young lady that knocked on my door in Alexandria Virginia. I told her at first that I wasn't interested in buying tickets to a lecture. She knocked on the door again fifteen minutes later and asked to use the bathroom. I said sure, I was interested in young ladies. We talked for a long time and I coughed up the last of my money and bought a ticket.

On the night of the speech I hitchhiked into D.C. since my Triumph TR-4 wouldn't start, very temperamental. I considered it an odd experience. I remember thinking how strange it was for a Korean guy in a suit and tie to jump around and shout about God's hope for America. The fellow doing the interpreting seemed a lot more reasonable. I was taken by the bright young people that I met. I was very attracted to the vibe that surrounded them. I suppose they were love bombing me but I liked it. After the event I was out of there and back to duty at the Marine Barracks. No one ever re-contacted me.

About two months later I encountered these young people again. The Marine Band was scheduled to play at the national Christmas tree lighting ceremony on the Ellipse behind the White House. I pulled security detail and was posted to the right of the band shell in front of the band. President Nixon was in attendance and may have thrown the switch. What I saw amazed and puzzled me. As I stood at parade rest I continually scanned the arriving crowd. In marched what I thought at that time as a vision of heaven. A whole troop of nine or ten year old Korean girls in matching red coats filed in smiling and waving little blue and white pennants. They looked like angels. The crowd was mostly young people and they were all waving the same triangle shaped flags. When I looked closer I saw that the writing on the flags said forgive, love and unite. Some said God loves Nixon. How strange! This was the height of the Watergate crises and nobody loved Nixon including probably God. Next, I recognized these young people. By their bright smiles and I guess their vibe I knew these were the same people that I meet and liked so much at Lisner Auditorium. I wondered to myself "What's going on here and what's the connection". It gets more amazing.

At the end of the ceremony the President left the stage and with his entourage left the band shell, turned right and rushed along the narrow pathway between the band shell and where the Marine Band was set up. Although surprised, I was no slouch. I had had some training and I popped to attention, saluted and in my best parade deck voice sounded off "Good afternoon Mr. President". The President stopped, turned to me with a big smile, saluted and said "Thank you Marine. Where you from son"? By this time the whole entourage had stopped and bunched up. The secret service was pushing and shoving trying to get them going again. Of course I told him I was from Ohio. He replied "Ohio? Good. Enjoy your time in D.C.". He smiled again, turned and they all hurried off. Next those smiling, flag waving young people, in a wave, over ran us. They never got to the President. Years later when I recalled this incident I realized that on that day, yes I lifted up the President.

The next time I saw Father was in the spring of 1975 at the training center in Barrytown. By that time I had already heard the Principle, accepted Father as the Messiah and debated with the other brothers important topics like "how could a perfect person need to wear glasses" and could he levitate like other

spiritual masters. At that time Father had selected 120 missionaries from America, Japan and Europe to go out to 120 nations in the world. The Americans were at Barrytown for 120 days of training before going out. We who were in the 40 day cycle trained alongside of them. During that spring Father visited almost every day to talk to the missionaries. It was a time when I formed my first real impressions of the man.

One day Father and Mother arrived, Mother took her seat and Father stood up and began. He started by looking down at us with what can only be described as an impish grin and fingered his necktie. He said "Do you like my tie"? He was wearing light brown polyester slacks, a sports coat, a flowered Hawaiian style shirt and a brown and gold striped necktie. He went on to explain that when he got up that morning Mother had complained "Father, you never wear a tie anymore". So he put on the tie for Mother. He thought it was so funny, me too. I think that this is when I really began to like him. Another time He drew a straight line on the board and said the fastest way to get from A to B is a straight line. Then he drew a zigzagging line starting at A and finally arriving at B. He explained that a person that has many different experiences in life can be a good leader. Now I really liked him for his simple wisdom. One day he talked at length about the role of the media in society. Of course at that very time Rev. Moon was under intense attack by the major media outlets in America. He advised the missionaries to work with the media in their mission countries and even start a newspaper. He planned to start a major newspaper in America and link it to papers in Korea, Japan and others around the world. The true role of the media is to speak out against injustice and give a voice to the disadvantaged. I understood from this his deep identification with the downtrodden and his sense of righteousness. I loved him for this.

After five months at Barrytown I was sent out as a pioneer. After the Yankee Stadium rally I was sent to Mississippi as state leader. There were only three members in all of Mississippi so essentially it was pioneering again. The great and terrible thing was Father wanted to personally train us and so every month we were all called to a state leaders' meeting with Father. He spent hour after hour pouring out his heart, wisdom and experience to us in the hopes that we would be able to stand up and take responsibility for saving America. He also reported to us all the things he was doing. Most of us on the other hand had little to report. One day after Sunday Service at Tarrytown Father invited us to meet him at Barrytown. When we arrived Father was out front with a few seminary brothers working on a fishing net. He told us that it was a box trap for catching carp in the Hudson River. We all went down to the river to set it up. There was a lagoon created by a narrow inlet in the railroad berm that ran along the riverside. The lagoon flooded and drained daily as the tide rose and fell. The plan was to set up the trap in the lagoon at low tide and when the tide came in the fish would swim into the trap and would be caught.

Father worked from a skiff and four of the tallest brothers stood in the water and attempted to secure the four corners to four poles. I don't know what happened but apparently some mistakes were made and before the trap could be anchored the tide flooded in and it got pretty dicey. One brother had to be pulled out before he drowned. Time and tide wait for no man and the plan was lost. We were all sent up to the seminary for lunch and Father remained behind. As we ate lunch and rested Father worked on plan B. With Gerhard standing in the water holding the skiff, Father strung an improvised net all the way across the lagoon. We were called back as the water ebbed out and as the mud flat emerged hundreds of flopping wiggling carp appeared. All we had to do was crawl on our bellies in the mud and devil's heads and wrestle each fish up onto the bank. Of course we had all arrived for the day's fishing in suits and ties.

We were given access to the barn where there was a big accumulation of used clothes. My only problem was footgear. I found a pair of sneakers that fit but they had no laces. What I did was put the sneakers on and a pair of socks over the sneakers to keep them on. Later in the day In Jin Moon saw me and laughed. "What are you wearing? It looks so funny." Hey it worked. I don't remember how many carp were caught that day, maybe around three hundred. I saw them completely fill the bed of a dump truck. We all felt victorious that day. Father took responsibility and made it happen. The next day we all went to East Garden and celebrated True Parents wedding anniversary. At that time Father asked Mother to give her testimony. She talked about her painful course and she cried and cried as she talked. At the end she said no more tears.