

Catching Carp with Father and Mother's tearful testimony in April 1977

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At that time I was the state leader of Mississippi. Almost every month we were called to New York for a state leader's meeting with True Father. It was a great and terrible thing. Great because we were trained directly by True Father. This contact with Father was an invaluable experience for a twenty-three year old. Father was intently focused on saving America by witnessing to 30,000 members in the midst of intense persecution. Depending on how far our mission field was from New York, we had to spend a great deal of time fundraising for the money, in addition to daily expenses, to travel to New York. True Father always reported to us his activities and accomplishments. In turn we had to report our own accomplishments. This was very painful because we often had little to report.

In April 1977 we got the call and gathered at Belvedere to meet Father. We were informed that True Parents were at Barrytown and we were invited to join them. We quickly boarded buses for the two hour trip to the Barrytown Unification Theological Seminary. When we arrived Father was out on the front lawn with many seminarians gathered around him. He was working on a fishing net. We soon learned that he was making a box net for catching fish. The fish were carp swimming in the Hudson river. As far up as Barrytown the Hudson is tidal and as the tide rose the waters rushed into a lagoon created by a railroad berm that ran along the river. When the tide fell, the water ran out. Father's plan was to plant the box net in the lagoon and the carp would enter the box, become trapped, and when the water ran out, the fish would be stuck in the box. It was a trap and a good idea.

We took the box net down to the lagoon with four long poles attached to each of the corners. We were dressed for success in the church in business suits and leather shoe. Some of the seminary staff saw our problem and opened an old barn that was filled with discarded clothes and shoes. We were given the run of it and acquired clothes appropriate for the river mud.

Father supervised from a rowboat with Gerhard Peemoeller in the water up to his neck holding the boat. The four tallest brothers each took a pole and entered the water. All the rest of us were watching from the berm close by. They had some trouble orienting the trap and lots of time was wasted. After about thirty minutes the tide began to rush into the lagoon and the water was quickly over the head of all except Gerhard. The net was tangled and almost lost. The four guys holding the four corners were also in danger of being swept away and drowned. We had to go into the water and rescue two of the lads.

The plan was in shambles. Father remained in the boat and sent us up to the seminary for lunch. After a nutritious lunch and a couple of hours rest we went back down to the lagoon and found Father there still in the boat. It was now flood tide and Father had strung a net 150 yards across the lagoon. Now when the tide ran out, the carp would be stranded. We waited a couple of hours and sure enough hundreds of fish were left flopping in the mud. It was only a matter of going into the mud, picking up the carp and

throwing them up on the berm. And enthusiastically we did enter the mud, at first up to our knees and then on our bellies.



We learned that the best technique was to slither up to the fish, shove one finger down the throat and then grab the tail. Using this method we could wrestle the heavy, wriggling, beast up onto the beach. From the beach they were pitched into the back of a two ton dump truck. By dark we had harvested around three hundred carp this way. We were exhausted and jubilant in victory. We understood clearly that the victory was due to True Father not giving up in defeat and coming up with a new idea and then making it work while we rested.

Mother's Testimony

The next day Father invited us to East Garden to celebrate. We gathered in the living room of the original mansion. True Parents entered, we greeted them, and settled down to listen to Father's message. We were informed that Today was True Parents' wedding anniversary. Father asked us if we wanted to hear Mother's testimony.

Of course we said yes, and Mother shyly stood up to speak. She was very young at that time and very soft spoken. After a moment she began to speak softly. Col. Bo Hi Pak was translating into English for her. She started out by saying that most people think she has a very easy life married to an important man. But her life was not very happy when she came to live with True Father. It was very difficult and she was surrounded by petty struggles, intrigue, and political struggles. But that was the time that God was with her on a daily basis, she told us, guiding and leading her. "When God wasn't with her directly, he was there through others around her," she said.

These were people she remembers fondly as protectors and guides. Through them, "God taught me to preserve and have patience," she said. As she recounted these times she began bitterly weeping. Her crying was heartbreaking. Father told us the story of Mother's early days as his bride. Other church women thought they should have been chosen to be the True Mother and were very jealous and cruel. He could not interfere. I'm sure that this could be the cause of the tremendous ordeal and hardship. But was it the only reason for such bitter tears seventeen years later?

Truth Mother closed by wiping away her tears. She asked us not to ask about the past again, "let's talk about the victorious future only."

It was a very impactful testimony and I was greatly affected. I was sure that she had as yet overcome the heartache. It gave me my primary understanding, until today, of True Mother. When I see True Mother today I remember that she has passed through that kind of experience and she was very unhappy.