

Gathering a permanent record of testimonies of the Early Church Missionaries

Julian Gray
July 28, 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Following up my previous letter to you on this mailing list (posted a few months ago), I send my best wishes for your good health.

As you know, we are gradually working to gather a permanent record of testimonies (or autobiographies) of the early missionaries of our church who went out and pioneered the nations of the world. Some testimonies are already published or are part of the permanent record held in archives. Some of those are temporarily lost and need to be rediscovered. We are hoping that if there are those who have a copy of their testimony, they will be willing to forward it to me at my email address (jmgraykorea@gmail.com), so that we can ensure it is stored as part of the permanent record. The newly named Sunhak Institute of History will be connected with a new exhibition hall covering True Parents' life and work—including the movement they launched and inspired. This will be a purpose-built building, which Mother named the Cheonji Sunhak Won.

The official archives for the movement are thus being moved to Chung Pyung where they are closer to the Cheongshim Graduate School of Theology and easier to access for research. There are paper archives containing documents going back 60 years. Included are thousands of reports and letters from, for example, the 1975 missionaries, sent to the World Mission HQ. The process of sorting through many such documents in English, German and Japanese is gradually being carried out.

Meanwhile we are trying to re-contact as many of the early missionaries as we can. This email is one such effort. To those of you who have already responded and sent testimonies, or partial testimonies, thank you. Every page, every anecdote, is precious for the sake of the future.

If you maintain a strong interest in the idea of maintaining the historical record, and also feel it may be a crucial resource for the future – as I really believe – then please consider the following points and feel free to contact me personally:

- 1) Do you remember sending a personal testimony or report to the World Mission Department at some point during or after your time as a missionary?
- 2) Do you still have a copy on paper, or a digital file? (If so, please consider sending me a copy so that we can be sure it is included in the official archives.)
- 3) If you do not still have a copy, can you let me know where you sent it and (if possible) approximately which year?
- 4) If you never wrote your testimony, or if you feel you ought to write something in addition to whatever you had previously written, would you consider doing so now?
- 5) If so, would you like to receive some ideas about how to begin and what to write about?
- 6) Would you feel it would be easier to speak to someone about your experience, rather than write it down?

7) If you would like to write but you are not sure how to begin, may I suggest to begin with the following:

a) Write down the basic timeline of your mission work – you may not remember exact dates but put down the basic information about where you were based and your movements over the years. This is your basic framework.

b) Write down a few stories from within your story that you regard as highlights of your missionary experience. It may be about persecution, about witnessing to someone successfully, or about something that happened to you during the time. These experiences help others catch your heart and something of what you went through, good or bad.

c) You can gradually write more and explain your relationship with God, your mission country, and with the other missionaries, and add any other details you wish.

Some members were missionaries for a short time; others are no longer in the FFWPU. That is okay. All your stories are valuable and historic from our point of view and we would be so grateful if you would get in touch. It seems to me that stories of self-sacrifice for the purpose of helping peace come on this earth should never be forgotten.

Please feel free to contact me if you have a question or a suggestion.

I send this with best wishes and prayer,

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