

FFWPU Korea: New Korean Church President's Testimony and First Sermon

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Heaven and Earth CheonBo Training Center



Beloved brothers and sisters. How are you today?

Last night I prayed so loud at the prayer vigil that my voice is almost gone. Please forgive me if I can't speak well today.

Let me introduce myself once more. I am Song Gwang-seok, recently appointed by the True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind as the President of the Family Federation for Heavenly Korea.

Today the pastors and their wives as well as church staff from all across the country of Korea are gathered here together for a special service to offer our determination to restore the nation and bring the unification of South and North Korea. And I would also like to welcome all the brothers and sisters who are joining us from their churches all across the country which are connected by video relay.

Today is a very burdensome day for me. I was kind of wishing I could find a way to escape from having to give this sermon in front of so many of you who have been serving as pastors for a long time including our new FFWPU International President Song Yong-cheon, and International UPF Chairman Yang Chang-sik.

Standing here today to give this sermon is such a different thing from standing at a podium to give a lecture where my main responsibility would be to pass on knowledge and information. Here today I am have the mission to convey the voice of Heavenly Parent and the heart of True Parents, bringing grace to all the brothers and sisters who have come here today for spiritual nourishment.

When I consider this responsibility, I cannot say with confidence that I will be able to accomplish it. But I will do my best to bring God's message to all the pastors and members who are here today.

I would like to start today with a Bible passage from Samuel 26:25

"Then Saul said to David, 'Bless you, David, my son! You will accomplish much and will certainly succeed.'"

Despite the fact that Saul had been persecuting David and trying to kill him, David did not kill Saul when he had the chance because Saul had been anointed by God. Saul was deeply moved by this. Saul told David he had been wrong to try to kill, and instead blessed him, saying he would do great things and would gain certain victory.

I believe that no matter what difficulties we may encounter, if we do our best to awaken the leaders and citizens of this nation and love our brothers in North Korea with all our hearts, we will surely be able to move the hearts of the leaders of North Korea so that they will understand and follow the Will of Heaven.

I ran across this scripture passage while I was leading a revival team in the Incheon district, while we were conducting Blessing ceremonies, and I feel that it is a message from God, telling us that we will be able to accomplish great things.

I joined the Unification Church at the Cheongpa-dong Church when I was at third year middle school student.

Not so long before I joined the church when I was a 6th grade elementary school student, my mother was killed in a car accident, and as my father's health began to decline, he connected to some members of the Unification Church, and he heard some Divine Principle lectures.

I started to attend the Unification Church with my father. After attending services for a little while, I joined the church and my two elder sisters began working at the headquarters.

After I finished my stint on the revival pioneer team and started working in a fulltime public mission, our family received many blessings from heaven. Unfortunately my eldest sister died from cancer when she was very young, when she was 29. While my sister was battling with her cancer, she invested in learning sign language. Even though she did not live very long, she spent her time using sign language to teach the Principle to people who could not hear.

After my sister died, my father's health worsened, and he also died fairly young. I was in the army when my father got sick and as soon as I heard about it I went straight to the hospital. It seemed as if he was waiting for me to arrive not long after I arrived at the hospital he died.

Three days after we held his funeral my father appeared to me in a dream. I was surprised to see him.

I said "Father, you are dead. How can you be here with me?" He said "There are some things I have to say to you, so I came to find you." The first thing he told me was "You have to have absolute faith." Secondly, "You and your brothers and sisters must love each other absolutely." Thirdly, "You must complete your education, because there is big work you have to do in the future." After telling me these three things he left. I took this message very seriously and I printed it out and posted it on my computer so I would always remember it.

I kept this in mind and every time I had to make a difficult decision, I faced it with absolute faith. By doing this I have been able to continue on path of the public missions I was assigned by True Parents. This year is 40 years since I joined the church, and for 33 years I have been in public missions. I began working as a pastor in my 4th year of university, but after that most of my public missions have been in our providential organizations. I only served as a pastor for about three years as the head of a CARP center. That is why is such a huge burden for me to give this sermon in front of so many people who have spent their whole lives as pastors, and I feel very apologetic to be standing here in front of you.

True Mother knows my shortcomings very well. True Mother told me that she appointed me to this position in spite of that, because now it is the time when we have to unite South and North Korea. So I have accepted this call from Heaven, and I will do my very best. During the past years, True Mother has assigned me to the missions of President of the Citizens Federation for the Unification of South and North Korea, UPF chairman, and PWPA chairman.

With the qualifications of a PhD in North Korean studies and my appointments to positions in the Unification Education federation of the Ministry of Unification I have worked within Korean society to elevate the status of the Family Federation and testify to True Parents. I became an expert on the issues regarding unification while conducting the five seminars we held for South and North Korean students beginning in 1994. The elite North Korean students I met at that time are now in important positions in the North Korean government. I believe they all remember me.

What I realized while serving in public missions for the past 33 years is that even if there are difficulties, if you proceed with faith and determination, Heaven will absolutely help you in amazing ways. In that sense, I like the Bible verse that says, "You will do great things and surely gain victory," and I have walked this path holding to the belief that this was a message sent to me by Heaven.

I would appreciate it if you would consider the message I am giving you today more of a testimony than a sermon. Among the contents of my testimony today is a story of some experiences I had while working as the head of the revival team under Lim Musang, when he was the District Pastor for Incheon.

My primary work during that time was conducting Blessings for newly matched couples and already married couples. I had a dream that I accompanied True Mother for a big Blessing conducted in the Neungrado Stadium in Pyongyang.

After that, as I thought and thought about ways to conduct Blessings in North Korea, I thought that, even though it was not quite North Korea, I should conduct a blessing on Baengnyeongdo Island, the island off the west coast of the Korean Peninsula that is closest to North Korea. Then one day I picked up the Segye Times, and there was a photo of Baengnyeongdo Island on the front page. That day was actually my wife's birthday. I had promised to take my wife out to dinner that day, but the moment I saw that newspaper, I had a strong feeling that I if I didn't go to Baengnyeongdo Island that day I would never have a chance to go there.

So I picked up a travel bag that I kept at the church office, and filled it with holy wine, borrowed 200,000 won and boarded a boat headed to Baengnyeongdo Island. I asked around to find out whether there were any members living on the island, but I heard there were no members living there. I worried about how I would manage with no members to help, but I got on the boat anyway. After a four-hour trip on a speedboat, I arrived at Baengnyeongdo Island.

There was a truck parked at the pier, and I asked the driver to drive me to the center of town. I thought the 200,000 won I had brought would cover my expenses for a week, but I found out that since it was the peak summer season, a rental car would be 100,000 a day, and the lodging prices were also not very cheap. I took a room at the cheapest inn, and met one of the village mayors, but he was an elderly man, and did not understand what I was talking about.

It was a truly difficult situation.

I walked and walked and found myself back at the pier where the boat had arrived. As I sat on the breakwater and looked out at the sea, I could feel the hearts of the elder members and church leaders when they arrived at their pioneer witnessing sites. After I cried for quite a while, I realized I was hungry.

Looking back at the pier I saw a sign for a newly opened naengmyeon noodle restaurant. It was only about three or four o'clock, but I thought maybe they would serve me an early dinner, so I opened the door and stepped inside. There was a young lady working in the kitchen, and I asked her, "Are your arrowroot noodles good?" The young lady replied, "Yes, they are very good." And as she spoke, I had an odd feeling. Her voice had the same accent I usually hear at home.

So, I asked her where she was from. But she did not answer. So I asked her again, "Where is your hometown?" and the suddenly the older woman who was working in the kitchen with her turned to me with an angry look on her face and said, "Who do you think you are, asking the daughter-in-law of a family you don't even know where her hometown is?"

I apologized right away, and said, "Actually I am a member of the Unification Church. I said I had met my Japanese wife in the Unification Church, and that we had been married in one of their Marriage Blessings. And I said I was just so surprised, because the voice of the young lady sounded so much like my wife. I apologized again and said I had made a big mistake.

I had bowed my head as I apologized, and when I looked up, the lady who had been glaring at me asked "Oh, which Blessing Group are you in?"

"Are you a member?" I asked her.

"Yes, that's right."

I explained to her that I had checked to see if there were any members on the island, and had been told that there had been one family living there, but they had moved away, so I was very curious how they had come to be there. She replied that about two weeks ago somebody had told her that since it was the peak season, if she opened a restaurant on Baengnyeondo Island, she could make a lot of money.

It turns out she was the elder sister of Sun Moon University professor Son Dae-oh. This was a very surprising turn of events. I realized that Heaven is really working with us, and surprising things like this could happen. What was even more surprising was that the woman's son, the young lady's husband was from the same Eunjin Song clan as I am.

In that moment, I suddenly had three strokes of good luck. First, since it was a restaurant, it meant I would be able to eat. Second, I had a place to sleep. Third, no matter how good a driver the woman's son was, he could not drive their van and their passenger car at the same time. From that moment, the car become mine.

Feeling that Heaven was working with me, my fear evaporated.

I decided the next morning, Sunday, at 9:00 a.m., I would knock on the door of the official residence of the island's mayor. He woke up and answered the door, and asked me "Who in the world are you?"

I showed him the photo of Baengnyeongdo Island on the front page of the Segye Times. And I said, "Since the Segye Times is doing such good promotion for the island, don't you think you could do something for us in return?"

The island mayor agreed to let us hold the Blessing in the community center, and to offer the congratulatory message. So I reminded him that the Blessing would be soon - in two days, and asked him to prepare his message well.

Next I contacted the revival team to tell them to come quickly to Baengnyeong-do Island, because back in

those days, the stipulations for Blessings were very detailed, and we had to have a "Holy Wedding" banner, and both members of the couple had to be there, and the ladies had to wear white veils, and we had to have very accurate information about all the couples.

There was no way I could manage all of this by myself. And we had to give presents to the participants. So I told them to come quickly and bring all the things that were needed. Since the Blessing was in two days, I told them to take the boat the next day. But the boat, which was supposed to depart at 10:00 a.m., was canceled because of fog and high waves.

I told them that since the wedding was in the evening, if they took the boat the next morning, they would still arrive in time. But the 10:00 a.m. boat the next morning was also canceled. Now I thought, "The Blessing is this evening, and I am going to be all along, looking very awkward and unprepared." At 6:00 all the village mayors would be there with the couples from their villagers, and had promised them they would receive gifts, but I didn't have any. It would be a disaster.

I was praying and worrying, and then about noon, I suddenly got a phone call from my team. They told me they were on the way to the island. Oh, ok. But then the line was cut, and I could ask them anything. Since they were out on the ocean, there was no phone service or cell service. Then about 4:00 o'clock, they arrived.

There was no way to even ask them how they had managed to come. We had to go straight to the Blessing site and get ready. We put all the items we need for the Blessing in the noodle shop car and went to the community center. We decorated the hall for the Blessing, and the couples from the six central villages began to arrive, and there were so many that they did not all fit. We had to divide them into two groups to conduct the Blessing. That day we blessed about 450 couples.

After we finished I finally had a chance to ask them how on earth they had managed to find a boat to bring them to the island. The answer my team members gave was very surprising. Since the 10:00 a.m. boat had been cancelled, there were no boats scheduled to go to Baengnyeongdo Island. But they felt they could not go back to the church.

The team members had promised to go to the island for the Blessing, so they thought we have to stay here and wait, in case there is going to be any chance to go. So they sat in the empty departure lounge and prayed. Then suddenly around noon, there was an announcement, "If anybody wants to go to Baengnyeongdo Island, please come board the boat right away."

Suddenly a high speed boat had appeared which was headed to Baengnyeongdo Island. Surprisingly, the next morning, following after our Blessing that evening, KBS was scheduled to film a talent show at the Baengnyeongdo beach. So KBS had arranged for a military boat, just like the one Pastor Hwangbok Guk was talking about, to take them to the island, and after they loaded it with all the singers and equipment, a high-speed boat was suddenly available and our team was able to come. So KBS made a huge contribution to our success.

And beside the son at the noodle restaurant being from the Song clan, the emcee for the KBS talent show was also from a Song, Mr. Song Hae. I felt like all of the Song clan's connections had been mobilized.

And the day after our Blessing of more than 400 couples there was a huge festival on the island. It was such a big festival that KBS was holding their talent contest there on Baengnyeongdo Island. After watching the talent show, a huge number of people came to the noodle restaurant for lunch.

There were too many customers for Professor Son's elder sister and her daughter-in-law to take care of. So our four team members all became waiters for the day, and the restaurant made a ton of money that day.

But then, after lunch was finished and all the customers had gone, my team members came to me and said, "Mr. Song, we have a huge problem." What the problem was is that all the Christian pastors and their elder members had been there eating lunch and having a meeting, and my team had heard them talking. They were talking about our Blessing Ceremony the night before, and they said that the Unification Church had come into town and stolen the souls of all their members.

They were all in big trouble now because they had drunk our holy wine. So the pastors had all agreed to give sermons about how their parishioners should not even look at holy wine, and should not go and participate in our events.

So I said we should quickly sit down together and have a meeting about how to respond to this. We planned that we would finish our Blessings before everybody heard those sermons on Sunday, so we divided into two teams, and each day we could give two Blessings at lunch time and two Blessings in the evening, so by doing four Blessings like this we were able to finish blessing 700 people by Saturday evening.

The next day was Sunday. Time for us to depart. But before we boarded the boat for Incheon, we blessed

70 more couples at their homes and the noodle restaurant.

We told them to continue little by little until they could finish 160 couples, and headed for the port. The boat made a stop at Daecheongdo Island on the way to Incheon.

Since they boat had to stop for a while to unload and load, I had another small revelation about what to do there. We still had a few gifts left over, and before we left Baengnyeongdo Island, I was wondering whether we should leave them there for them to use, or take them back to Incheon with us. I felt that we should not leave them in Baengnyeongdo, but take them to Daecheongdo. So we got off the boat at Daecheongdo, and told a driver who was waiting there that we had some gifts that had to go to the town office, and the driver cheerfully took us there.

When we got to the town office, there was a staff member there, even though it was Sunday. I said I would like to meet the town mayor, and as it happened, he was also there. I told the mayor about the Blessings we had conducted at Baengnyeongdo Island, and said I would like to hold a blessing here on his island as well. I suggested he call the mayor at Baengnyeongdo and ask him about it, but the mayor said he did not need to make the call.

He said please hold a Blessing here for us too. I told him there was one condition. I said that my schedule was very tight, and that I had held the Blessing at Baengnyeongdo just two days after arriving, but the schedule was even more tight here, and I would have to hold the Blessing right way the next day. He agreed, and we scheduled the Blessing for the evening of the next day.

I found a room at an inn nearby, and was taking a short break when I suddenly heard a message being broadcast on the loudspeakers outside. The message said "Where are you, Mr. Song Gwang-seok. Please come to the town office right away." I was very surprised and wondered what was up, so I hurried over there.

When I arrived, I was directed to the third floor, where there was a meeting room. When I entered the meeting room, I saw several elderly people lining both sides of the table, and the town mayor at the head of the table, with one empty chair next to him where he wanted me to sit.

After I sat down, the town mayor said, "Village mayors, we will now begin the meeting to plan the True Family Blessing Ceremony." The town mayor was challenging the village mayors. He told them, "Mr. Song is very busy, so we don't have any time. We have to do this True Family Blessing tomorrow, so I need your help."

Hearing this, the village mayors began to complain and say it was impossible. So I thought, "Its going to be difficult." As I was thinking it would be difficult to manage to do a Blessing here, one of the village mayors said, "Tomorrow is Monday, and everyone will be going out on the boats, so it will be hard to gather them together. I think it will be better to do it this evening." So they town mayor asked all the village mayors if they agreed with this.

And they all agreed. And what was even more surprising was, he asked each of them how many couples they would be bringing. Then they made a transportation plan to get all the couples to the town hall so that everybody could arrive by 7:00. As I watched, I felt they were setting everything up just the way we do it in the Unification Church! And that evening at 7:00, we conducted a Blessing with 270 couples.

The town mayor gave the congratulatory message, and amazingly there was a high-speed boat the next morning to take us back to Incheon. Right after arriving at the Incheon Port we went to the Olympus Hotel, and were just in time for True Mother speech in Incheon during her Korean speaking tour.

So I deeply realized that if we determine to do something and set out to do it, Heaven will prepare everything, and that this is possible because of the Heavenly Fortune of True Mother, of True Parents.

Do you know what is significant about July 19, which is the date that I went to Baengnyeongdo Island? The day that True Parents' helicopter crashed, but miraculous nobody was seriously injured was also July 19. So, when I was doing Peace Road in Sakhalin, Russia, where I heard there were no members living, I deliberately schedule the event in Sakhalin for July 19. I went there with the deep belief that a miracle would occur.

I went there having heard that there were no members there. But surprisingly, "One Family Under God," there was one family there. There was a second generation couple there with an adorable third generation baby. I took a greeting video of the family and sent it by Katalak to Mrs. Wonju McDevitt so she could show it to True Mother. True Mother sent back a return message, saying "I love you." I think that family in Sakhalin will never forget the connection they had with True Mother that day. Let's express our gratitude to True Mother, who did want to miss even this one second generation couple.

The Peace Road event in Sakhalin was truly amazing. We held the opening ceremony at the auditorium of Sakhalin University which was built by Koreans living in Sakhalin, and all the Korean there, those supporting both North Korea and South Korea all gathered together. They all gathered there and joined

the Campaign March together, with one of them and myself carrying the Peace Road flag, and we went by boat from the Corsak port in Sakhalin to Wakanai in Hokkaido, Japan and handed over the flag to the Japanese Peace Road runners.

This was not planned ahead of time. Following the direction of True Mother, and choosing this fortuitous date, we made our determination and went forward, and amazing things just kept happening.

Another really mysterious thing is that I had several more invitations to visit Baengnyeongdo Island. I was invited there by the Peaceful Unification Advisory Committee, but all three times the trip was cancelled. This made me feel even more strongly that there is really a right time to do things. We cannot do them when we want to, but in order to gain support from Heaven, we need to do them at the right time.

When I went to Pyongyang to discuss cooperating for Peace Road, I had the opportunity to tell more about True Parents and about UPF. During that trip I heard a North Korean official deliver the big news that the North Korean government has decided that UPF is a civilian version of the United Nations. It was an almost overwhelming challenge, but we set the goal to do Peace Road events in 120 countries, and we succeeded in holding Peace Road events in 121 countries.

And the members in every one of those countries sang the Song of Unity in Korean. When I showed the Koreans the video of all those countries singing in Korean, they were so surprised, and asked how Africans could sing Song of Unity in Korean, and how Latin Americans could sing in Korean like that.

This was not due to our effort. True Parents have already set up that foundation, and it is a big failure on our part that we have not made better use of that foundation they have set up.

True Mother accelerated VISION 2027 to VISION 2025, and directed us to restore this nation. I believe that when True Mother gives a direction, it is because she knows that Heaven had already prepared the foundation to achieve it.

When True Father established the Citizens Federation for South North Unification, he gave a direction for CARP students from around the world to gather at the Berlin Wall and shout out that the wall must go. Led by Hyo-jin nim, the CARP students prayed with tears and shouted that the wall must go. And two years later, the wall collapsed and Germany was reunited.

True Mother made the goal two years sooner than VISION 2027, and she directed us to prepare for Korea to be reunited two years from now. I am afraid. Why? Because I experienced the Berlin Wall, True Mother's words frighten me. Are we really going to reach 2,000 people and prepare for the time of reunification? Or are we going to be unable to achieve this, and have to continue with our country divided? There is only one way to prepare for reunification.

As True Mother said, we need the numbers. We have to witness. What we need is not guests who come for a short time and then leave, but comrades who will just with us to accomplish God's Will. This means that witnessing is a fate that we cannot avoid.

Some people say we have already tried, and wonder if there is any point in trying again, but they might say to try one or two times. The choice is up to each one of you, but how you choose will make a huge difference.

The early members, our elder brother and sisters, received the direction from True Parents to witness to 1,000 people, and they devoted their lives to building a world level foundation. Now our goal is to mobilize that foundation and complete the national restoration of Korea. We must make this determination. We absolutely must be victorious before the time of True Mother's death.

I will take on this challenge. I and the Korean headquarters will place our faith in Heaven and move forward. I think the pastors and church staff gathered in this room and the member watching by video link probably have more pastoral experience and deeper faith than I do. I prefer to take on the challenge rather than having regrets later because I did not try. I believe in the Heaven that is created when we are truly united and I believe in True Parents' heavenly fortune. And after six months we will clearly see whether we have made the right choice.

I believe that the members and leaders who choose to challenge together with us will be happy to see they have made the right choice. If we all move forward with life or death determination, we will surely be able to raise the Cheonil Guk flag on the day of national restoration. I pray that 2023 will be a year when the grace of and love of Heavenly Parent and True Parents will pour down on the pastors and CheonBo family church leaders who are working hard in the difficult and lonely Cheonil Guk mission field.

I will conclude my humble message here, with a prayer that the blessing of Heavenly Parent and the grace and love of True Parents will be with all the pastors who are gathered here, and with the 34 major churches, and all the other churches and CheonBo family churches, and with every family and member. May you all be showered with tremendous grace. Thank you.