

## Blessing and Seonghwa Ceremonies: Good Places for Tribal Messiah Witnessing

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*Relatives and friends at the seven-year memorial of the writer's father's Seonghwa; he considers such events excellent witnessing opportunities*

I returned to my hometown with my family twenty years ago. I then guided my parents and older sister to the 360,000-couple blessing ceremony. Around that time, I witnessed about True Parents to my relatives at a family get-together. However, due to various factors, my relatives started avoiding my family and me. Since then, my family and I have had a distant relationship with them. Furthermore, a Christian minister barged in to convince my sister to leave the church, and I was too preoccupied to carry on tribal witnessing.

When my father passed away in 2011, I decided to hold a Seonghwa ceremony. It was such a big decision to make. But by doing this, my relatives started to show positive reactions. Since then, my family and I have held my father's annual memorial service at the church or our house every year. This gave us more opportunities to meet my relatives.

Furthermore, as a result of singing holy songs, offering prayers and listening to a church central figure's lectures at the memorial service each year, my relatives got used to wearing white neckties and started to offer bows to True Parents along with us.

The wedding reception of my oldest son, who had received the blessing in 2016, became an opportunity for my family to adopt an aggressive approach toward tribal witnessing. Regarding this reception as the greatest chance for us to testify about the meaning and value of the blessing, we planned the event with four objectives in mind before inviting our relatives: First, to show them a video of the blessing ceremony; second, to have them listen to True Mother's prayer; third, to have husbands and wives drink holy wine in turn instead of raising their glasses in a toast, and fourth, to explain the meaning and value of the holy wine in so doing that. As a result, the wedding reception turned out to be a happy and delightful event. Little by little, I felt a response to tribal witnessing.

In September last year, my brother-in-law, who had entrusted us with creating a plan for his trip to Korea, came to see the blessing ceremony that my second son participated in. The large scale of the 2017 Hyo Jeong Cosmic Blessing Ceremony and the stunning stage impressed my brother-in-law.

A short while later, my mother passed away. In the same period, my oldest son's wife had a baby. We held my mother's Seonghwa ceremony and Won Jeon ceremony with my relatives and we were able to socialize with them as we spoke to them about the newborn baby. This February, we rented a hall in the city and held a joint memorial service for my father and mother. In the first half, we showed a slide show of our family photographs including ones of our children's blessing ceremonies; in the latter half, we showed a video of the Unificationist movement by introducing it as a movement my parents took part in.

Every time I invite my relatives to something, I become deeply worried about how they might react. This time, I was especially worried about my cousin, who used to be a board member of a famous company as well as my sister who had left the church. Fortunately, it was easier to bear than to worry about it had been. Both of them showed the best reaction within the range of responses I anticipated.+

Through tribal witnessing, I came to realize the amazing grace of having blessed my parents and the greatness of the blessing ceremony and the holy wine ceremony. Currently, two of my cousins have started to study the Divine Principle. Furthermore, my brother-in-law received the blessing for previously married couples a few days ago. I shall march forward with hope as I link to and cooperate with my wife and children.