

Father's Early Ministry in Pyongyang - Part 4

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Members brought many problems to Father to ask him for guidance. Their husbands or their fathers would persecute and threaten them because they had joined this church.

Members in general did not know Father's true value, because he lived such a simple lifestyle. But there were some who received by revelation who he was. When they received from God that it was not right for Father to live in such a humble home as he was living in, they wanted to make it more beautiful for him. Since they could not add on to the house, they wanted to change the wallpaper and put up a new kind.

Usually, people would make wallpaper paste from flour, so some of the members brought the ingredients from home and mixed up the paste, but the consistency was wrong. So they started over, still with poor results. These were people who had often made wallpaper paste perfectly successfully on other occasions, but when they tried to do it for the wallpaper for Father's house, somehow it would not work. Finally, they realized that the flour they were using was leftover flour and that their attitude was not appropriate for attending Father. Using leftovers was not good a good standard with which to attend him, so they went and bought new flour with which to make the wallpaper paste.

In wintertime, it gets very cold in Korea. Father would wear heavy cotton clothing designed to protect people against the severe cold. But when Father would speak, even these thick clothes would become soaked with his sweat. Thus the members had to wash his clothes every day. Now people have washing machines, but then the members had to boil the water and wash everything by hand. Moreover, these clothes were lined with cotton and required special care. (In order to wash them, all the seams had to be ripped out, the cotton separated and removed, and each piece washed and dried; then the clothes had to be reassembled, the cotton lining inserted, and everything stitched together again!)

Those who washed Father's clothes were taught by the spirit world how to serve him in this way, and they were very happy to be able to do it. For these members with so much spiritual sensitivity, even to touch Father's clothes was difficult, because they realized the seriousness of attending Father.

How the early members grew in faith

Some people knew who Father was by revelation and others came to understand by listening to his words. When people observed Father's daily life, their faith deepened and became very strong. People who did not receive revelations from God sometimes had doubts, and even those who did also wavered at times. Members were stimulated by other people who were receiving revelations about Father. For some people,

when doubts arose, they would receive a revelation which would clear up the question; when a further doubt came, still another revelation would answer that. For others, the more they learned about Father, the deeper their faith would become.

It may not appear to be so, but even a person of strong faith goes through ups and downs in his spiritual life. Those who seem weak in faith are the ones whose vacillations show. Those who don't express their doubts but just endure and overcome are those who seem to be strong in faith. If your course is like a straight line, it may be easy for your life of faith to collapse. In that sense, it is better for your life of faith to ebb and flow, to rise and fall.

You may wonder about me. Actually, I don't express my ups and downs; I just try to overcome them internally. Thus, you may think that I am a very faithful and strong person, but in actuality, I am no different from you.



How Father taught children

Along the children who were brought to Father's house was one little boy two years old, smaller than normal for his age. One day, Father asked the little boy to kiss him, but since he was so short, he couldn't reach Father's cheek. So the little boy climbed on Father's knee and tried to kiss him from there. Still, he couldn't reach Father's face. So he climbed up to Father's belly, and from there he could reach Father's face. Just as he was about to kiss Father, Father bent his face backwards, so the little boy climbed up a little more, reached for Father's ears, and brought his face down to where he could give him a kiss.

Usually Father played very warmly with children, but sometimes he made them cry! In the second story I want to tell you, there was one toddler who came with his mother to Father's house. He began to cry, and Father said, "Please don't cry." But he kept on crying, so Father gave him a little spank and the toddler cried even more! The child turned to his mother, as if to ask her for help, but his mother knew Father well, so she did not intervene but waited patiently.

Finally, the toddler recognized that as long as he continued to cry, no one could help, so he stopped. Then Father embraced him, comforted him and made him even more content than before he had begun to cry. After the little child was happy, Father returned him to its mother.

In the first story, Father asked the child to kiss him, but made him fulfill some conditions before letting himself be kissed. In a similar way, when God wants to give us a blessing, we have to fulfill our own responsibility in order to receive it. God created man and gave him three great blessings, but in order to attain them, we have to fulfill our own responsibility. Why didn't Father bring his face close to the child, so the child could easily kiss him? Why did he make the child go through three stages in order to reach him? Even a child has to go through the proper stages.

In the second incident, Father made the toddler cry, but later he embraced him and comforted him, returning him to his mother. In other words, the toddler did not follow Father at first, but wanted to do his own thing -- crying. So Father let the toddler continue crying until the toddler was satisfied, until the toddler itself recognized that crying was useless. Finally, the toddler quit doing its own thing and decided to return to Father. Then Father embraced him and made him happier than before.

How to help people change We can compare the relationship between Father and the toddler to our own situation. Before joining our movement, we chose our own direction. Then we met Father, but still we wanted to continue on our own way. However, Father made us stop and reorient our course. Yet we feared we would die if we followed Father's course, so we tended to go our own way. Eventually we recognize that the fallen world is not appropriate for us, and torn between following Father's way or our own way, we can understand which is better. Then, when we return to Father, he can give us much more. When we stop following our own way and turn to Father, we will receive many more blessings.

When you leaders guide your members, think about how Father treated this toddler. When Father asks us to do something, it's not always easy to inspire members to change their course. After telling your members, "What you are doing is wrong; you must change your ways," you have to really take care of them.

After they change, you must embrace them and love them, making them happier than before. When they receive this kind of care from you, they can repent and change themselves. Of course, after people see the results they can understand whether the course they were following was correct or not, but it's not so easy to perceive this while you are in the process of doing something. Even when people know that the instructions they are being given are right, sometimes they feel bad or cut off when they are being corrected. So after you scold your members, give them love and comfort, take care of them. Then members can feel that their leader scolded them because he loved them, and they will feel encouraged and motivated to try to change.

To tell someone, "What you are doing is wrong," is like hitting him. Even when we ourselves know what we are doing is wrong, we feel resentful instead of grateful. Very good suggestions may also be difficult to accept. Even when God points out something wrong, we feel bad about it. People react differently, of course; some people harbor resentments and others can respond immediately with gratitude; it depends on their situation.

Still, if we reflect very deeply, we can understand when we are corrected, feel grateful, and begin to change. When we are doing good and we are criticized and accused, we can generally handle that, but even when we are doing wrong and it is pointed out, we should feel grateful for the advice.

Therefore, don't just criticize or judge the members. Give them love and care; let them feel that they can reach perfection on their own. Remember that Father let the toddler cry until he realized that crying produced no good results. Father set up a situation in which the toddler could recognize what was right by himself. Then Father welcomed the toddler and gave him much love.

Thus, even when he was playing with children, Father was always trying to teach us something.