

Father's Early Ministry in Pusan - Part 5

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The first Christian minister to follow Father was Rev. Yo Han Lee, a man very well versed in the Bible and deeply interested in spiritual phenomena. He had a good many followers in Busan, and some people believed he was the returning Lord. He had heard about Father from someone, and that what he was teaching was very good, so in late 1952 he came to visit Father. The day he arrived, Father gave him some money and asked him to go to the market to buy some groceries. This was a shock to Rev. Lee, because he was a distinguished Christian minister and Father was treating him as if he were a young member. But he obeyed Father's request and went shopping. Through this experience he realized that Father was no ordinary person. Later he listened to the Principle, accepted it and followed Father. In August 1953, Rev. Lee was also sent to Taegu to do pioneer missionary work. He and Mrs. Kang experienced success in their work, and they would come back and give reports to Father. Thus, he and Mrs. Kang are the ancestors of witnessing. One of the 36 blessed couples, Rev. Lee was for a long time in charge of our church's theological seminary and training center in Korea. [Editor's note: Rev. Lee was a year or so older than True Father. He ascended in 2019 at the age of 100.]

Another woman who became a member in Busan had known Father when he was a student many years earlier. At a prayer meeting at which she and Father both were present, the minister asked Father to pray, and she was so moved and excited by his prayer that she went to shake hands with him. She had led a profoundly religious life for more than 20 years and had received much grace from God. Now, many years after that prayer meeting, she met Father on the streets of Busan, and he brought her to the shack which was the church at the time. Even though by then she was a grandmother and Father a grown man, she still looked upon him as the young student she had known.

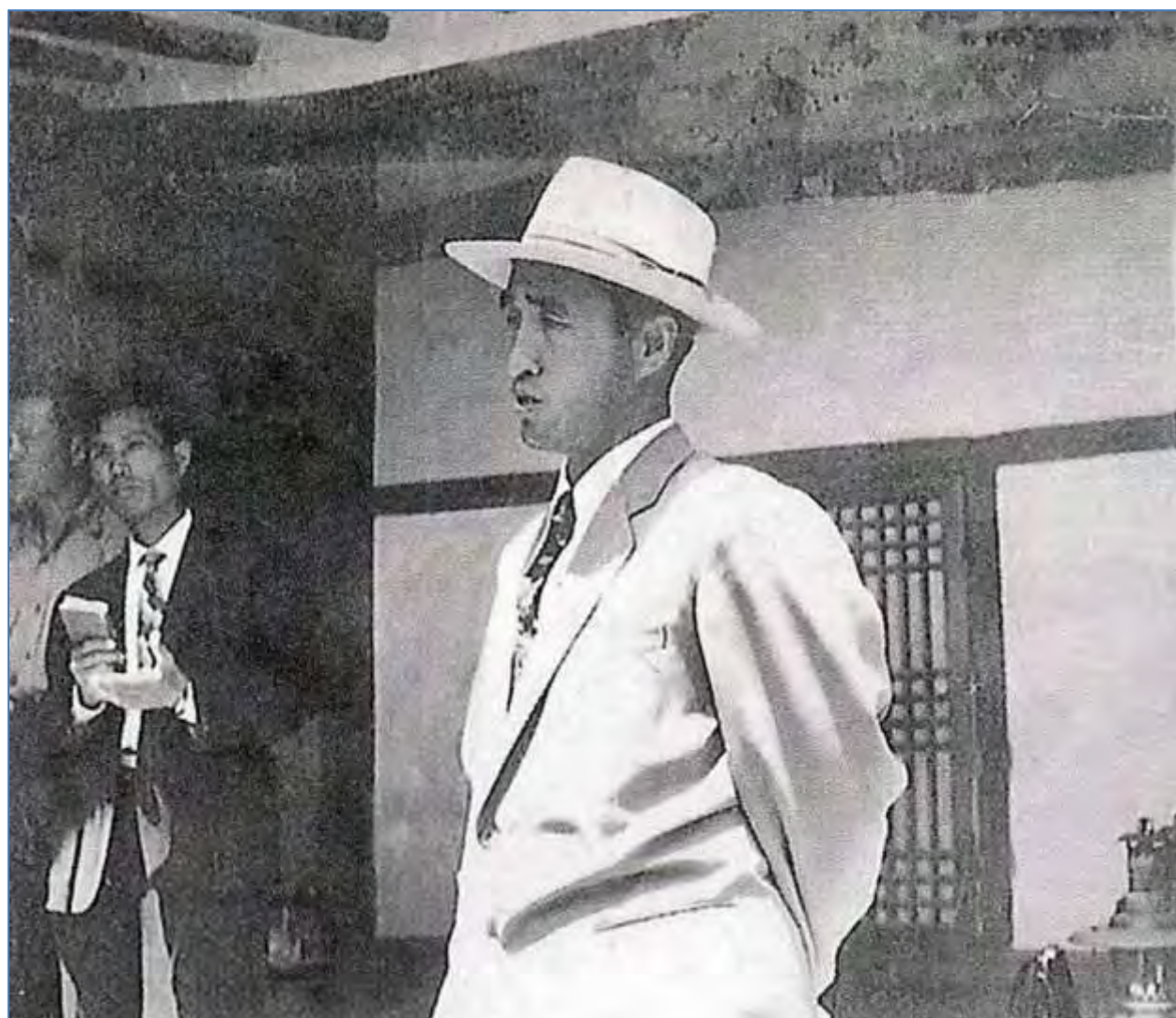
A woman of deep faith, when she prayed about something, Heaven always answered her almost right away. Father told her to go and pray, asking God whom Heaven loved more -- all humankind or one individual, Sun Myung Moon. This took her completely by surprise. She didn't think it was right to pray that kind of prayer, but she knew that this was no ordinary man and that he was sincere in what he had told her, so she decided to go ahead with it.

That night she went to her usual place of prayer, on a hilltop, and prayed very sincerely all through the night, focusing on what Father had told her. As she later explained to Father, to her surprise, God responded, "I love Sun Myung Moon more than all of humankind together."

Early church life

Many people would come to visit Father: former acquaintances, people who had joined in Pyongyang or Seoul, refugees from the North, and people who had heard he was living in Busan. Father would often take them to a small hill near where we lived. At other times Father would go to the hills to meditate all alone. In the beginning, Father went to the hill near his house, but later he began going to more distant, higher hills, sometimes taking members with him for meditation or teaching. When Mr. Aum came, Father would have him sing for many hours. If the New Hope Singers had been with Father in those days,

they would have had to sing from morning to night! Father really loved listening to Mr. Aum sing, and he would often have him sing almost the entire day. During 1951, Father wrote the holy song, "Suffering Heart."



When the members were away, Father always missed them very much, more than if they had been his own sons and daughters; and because of his love, the members also missed him, especially when they were not free to visit the church whenever they wanted. He missed the members so much that if they didn't come for some time, he would go to visit their home, just as he had done in his Pyongyang days. He was always longing for the members to come.

A fire burned in the hearts of the members. In the summer, we would often go up to the mountain and meditate, sometimes holding all-night prayer vigils there. When members had questions, they would go to the mountain and pray, and God would give them answers. Day and night meetings would continue.

From morning to night, many guests came and listened to Divine Principle. Even though our house was so small and miserable, it was a free place which we could use as we liked. After hearing the Principle, people would go up to the mountains to meditate. Many people who visited the church and listened to the Principle accepted and joined. Just as in Pyongyang, people received so many blessings from God that at night they wouldn't want to leave the church and return to their homes, so we built a small tent near our home where people could stay and pray all night.

In Korea at that time, and probably in many other countries, women were generally more religious than men. In happy cases, a woman would come to the church, stay there all day and even into the night. Then her husband would become interested in what was going on at the church, come and listen to the Principle, and wholeheartedly accept it. In other cases, however, the wife who came to the church would neglect her domestic responsibilities and cause resentment among her family, or her husband would visit the church for a while and then turn against it.

There was a certain pattern by which members were restored: first, they heard some kind of rumor about the church, then they came to visit, listened to Principle and accepted it. Feeling resurrected, they would remain for hours on end at the church, even spending the night there. As a result, opposition would develop. This pattern from Pyongyang was repeated in Busan. Actually, this happens not just in our church, but to any religious group in its pioneering period. Thus, there were two types of early members: those who joined but gave up their faith because of persecution, and those whose faith and devotion were strengthened by persecution.