

My Testimony: I accepted the Divine Principle in January 1962 (Part 2)

Peter Koch
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The beginnings of the European journey

On June 13, 1963 I came to Europe. I first printed eighty copies of the Divine Principle in German. I decided to start the mission in Heidelberg, but I didn't tell anyone. I packed a backpack and told my mother (who understood the Divine Principle to some degree by that time) "I am going to a city where I will start to work. I can't really tell you which city it will be. I'll write you when I get there."

I had to explain another point to her. I was not going to take the train. She was used to my doing strange things. I would walk to Heidelberg. The distance turned out to be three hundred and sixty kilometers. I figured it would take twelve days. To be well equipped, I wore American army boots. I would go with just my backpack and a raincoat.

Unfortunately, there was something wrong with the boots. A piece of leather under each heel came loose. My first destination was the city of Hamm, exactly forty kilometers away. By the time I arrived there at six o'clock at night, I already had big blisters. When I entered that city, more dead than alive, all the church bells started ringing. I said to myself, How significant!

I went to the first place where I could sleep, and fell into bed. I just could not move. I was in such pain. I decided that the next morning I would take a taxi to the station and take the next train home because I would never make it. That night, Father came to me and said, Do you think you are badly off, do you think that hurts? That's nothing! You should understand what I have been through. Keep going!

With no alternative, I had to go on. Do you know what a blister is? It's when water builds up between your flesh and skin. With every step you take with a blister on the bottom of your foot, all the pressure goes to the edge of the blister. The more water in the blister, the more your skin pulls away from the flesh. On the third day, the blisters had grown extremely large. I bought some painkillers, which did not work at all. Then, on the third or the fourth day, I walked all day but covered only thirteen kilometers, almost nothing. By the time I got halfway through, the blisters were up to my ankles, all the skin pulled off the flesh. Underneath I was bleeding, walking on bare meat. I bandaged that. I bought all kinds of things that did not work. What a tough experience it was! After about two weeks of walking, a voice came to me saying that if I made it in twenty-one days, that would be all right.



Oh, what a relief! Instead of twelve days, I had twenty-one days in which to get there.

Many things have happened to me, but this was the worst. Once on the road, I felt so miserable. I said, "God, I wish I could die, but I can't; I have not yet fulfilled my mission." Half a minute after I spoke, a

truck passed by me and I heard a crash. The truck had hit a woman in a Volkswagen as she turned out of a side street. The force of the accident flung the woman out of her car. She was dead on the spot. I just kept walking.



Rev. and Mrs. Koch and their children

Several times in dreams, I heard God crying and calling, “Adam? Adam? Where are you?” I deeply felt God’s heart calling out for His pure, unfallen son.

I had to stay in bed late and have breakfast. I could not stop for lunch; if I stopped, I could not go on. At night, I sort of dropped dead before I could get anything to eat. So breakfast was the only meal I managed to eat for the twenty-one days. One morning I woke up and my knees had swollen. I was thinking I might run into bad weather. I told myself I had better walk some distance and take it easy later on.

It rained. The rain itself did not bother me much because I had my raincoat, but every passing car splashed dirty water all over me. Three times people stopped, wanting to give me a lift. I could not accept that. I felt so miserable. “If I only had a stick to lean on.” I took three more steps and saw a beautiful stick in front of me. “Thank You, Father.” I picked up the stick and walked on. At night I would find someplace where I could sleep. Other people parked their cars there. I parked my stick. From using the stick over the days to come, I developed blisters on my hands also.

Entering Heidelberg the next day, the weather completely changed for the worse. I could not have gone on down the slippery road with the ice and snow. I had just made it in time. God held back the clouds until I got there and then He let go. How glad I was to have arrived in Heidelberg!

That was certainly my worst experience. I did a forty-day fast once, but it was nothing compared to that twenty-one-day trip to Heidelberg on raw feet. I’ll never forget that. That was my foundation for starting the mission in Germany.

A Letter from Korea

June 24, 1963

Dear Mr. Koch,

In the name of our Master, I have the privilege of writing this letter to you.

You are so far away from us in the distance, but so near in our hearts, because you are a pious son to our father, doing his urgent work before he urges you. Above all, we know you well enough, for Miss [Young Oon] Kim has written us so many times about you while you yourself wrote so many nice, informative articles through “The New Age Frontiers.”

Your personal testimony on paper helped us positively to make a vivid picture of you, together with many other stories of witnessing experiences, which made us laugh and cry with you. Especially, your letter to our ‘Little Prince’ was a very touching one. Your farewell letter to Miss Kim from New York compelled us to weep over the departure, but in the next moment we felt as though you were coming to us after leaving

America.

Miss Kim in her latest letter to our Master, wrote about how you challenged the American family to the 'Divine Battle' by saying, "Remember, I am a German," meaning that you are confident in establishing the Foundation of Restoration on the Continent of Europe more rapidly and firmly than the American family. Master smiled a big smile as he read the letter aloud to a few of us. Ever since, he is talking about you so often and taking your example when he encourages the young members being trained in the Forty-Day Training Course.

Remember, he is proud of you! We hope and believe that you will live up to his expectation. In sending you to the vast continent of Europe, which is as yet a spiritual wilderness in light of the Divine Principles, our Father is concentrating his loving care on you. You will hear his encouraging words in time of distress and his shouting voice louder than yours when you are in joy over winning people into the Way of the Principle. You can be sure that He will walk with you, His protecting arms always stretched out to help you when you stumble. Believe it, and He will work in place of you. When you do his work, you are his substitute.

Like one conspicuous star among the vast number of constellations, you are going to shine upon the vault of the European sky.

Here in Korea, 120 couples of young members will be blessed in marriage during the summer months. You know we built a fishing boat to conquer the marine world both spiritually and physically; we are going to have the launching ceremony on the 26th of June.

You shall hear more about what is happening here.

*Sincerely yours,
(Mrs.) Wonpok Choi, in Father's name*



April 1964, celebrating Children's Day at Frankfurt Bleichstrasse