

My Unificationist Memoirs Chapter 23

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"How can I return the blessing, though in all my life I will try, I can never stop feeling, how unworthy am I." - Sun Myung Moon, "The Blessing of Glory"



Since moving to Northern California in 1995, my family and I have been embraced by the Bay Area Family Church and the blessed couples living in our community. Though Cindy has not been interested in church activities, she values the friendship of our members and deeply respects their commitment and sacrifice. Over the years, she has been moved by their testimonies and unfolding lives. One of the most important activities for us has been our monthly book club, started by Gary and Birgitta Fleishman. We have been meeting for nearly 15 years. Without the support and prayers of brothers and sisters, none of what follows could have occurred. My indebtedness is varied and deep.



When I returned home from Uruguay, I had no idea how I was going to realize True Father's direction. But, as with any providential activity, I knew if I made a sincere beginning, the handiwork of God would become clear. I simply needed to trust that God had prepared the way. I began by suggesting to Cindy that we restart our marriage by offering a condition of seven months abstinence. Cindy agreed. While I was thinking of making a spiritual foundation, Cindy struggled with back issues at the time. She had had disc surgery in San Diego, and her sciatica remained a serious impediment. I believe Cindy's willingness stemmed more from a concern for her physical than her spiritual health. Her motivation, however, was less important to me than her willing consent.

As I recall, sometime early in 1997, True Father began to speak about the 3.6 Million Couple Blessing. A close friend from the Church, Greg Dishman, approached me about participating and blessing our marriage through the Holy Wine Ceremony. Of course, I agreed, but because of my prior blessing, I felt we needed official clearance. Greg approached Pastor Kevin Thompson of the Bay Area Family Church, who sought the advice of the Blessing Department in New York. We received official approval and Greg came over one afternoon in the spring of 1997 and performed the Holy Wine and Indemnity Stick Ceremony. Cindy was present by picture only. We extended our separation period by an additional 40 days and concluded our offering through a "Three Day Ceremony" and prayer... the details of which I will leave obscure.