

My experiences with the prisoners at Danbury Prison

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Chambumo Gyeong - Book 7. True Parents' Course of Suffering and Victory, Chapter 3. Suffering in Danbury Prison and True Parents' Victory, Section 3. Prison Life in Danbury



6. The prisoners at Danbury Prison were starved for love and yearned to receive it. So I spoke every word with a heart to love them. Consequently, they all wanted to be close to me.

At mealtimes, in the beginning I would sit in a corner and eat by myself. But within three months there were people who would gather at my usual spot and wait there for me to come and sit down. When so many people came to my table that every seat was occupied and there was no seat for me, I would go to a different table; but then they would leave their seats and come to sit near me. This happened frequently.

Why do you think this happened? Were they forced to do it, or did they want to? The human heart is attuned to heaven's heart. People are spiritual beings who know innately who loves them, who cares about them and who guides them in the right direction. They can recognize a loving heart and an upright mind. This is why we do not need to witness to people with words. When love is overflowing from our heart, flowers will naturally bloom there. Even if a frigid wind blows, some flowers will bloom through cracks in the rocks. Some flowers can bloom even in the arctic regions amid the world of ice. (163-284, 1987/05/01)

7. I thought that if I had a mind to love the inmates in this American prison, even if I was only able to love one of them, it would be as if I were loving all the citizens of America. I regarded the prison as a microcosm of heaven and earth. So in loving the inmates, I would be loving America. In that place I determined that I would love America more than anyone else. No one tends to like prison inmates, but I loved them more than anyone else ever loved them. When I make such a claim to the world, no one can dispute me. The people in the prison will testify to it. Whenever the prison served some delicious food, the inmates would bring it to me.

In general, prison life is not easy. Even so, you have to live for the sake of others. When you serve others, new and higher things can be created. And when you continue to serve, those newly created things will fall into your possession. This is God's fundamental principle. This is what is signified by the Garden of Eden that God created in the beginning; it is the realm of heart where people live for the sake of others. (163-284, 1987/05/01)

8. Shall I share with you one of my experiences from when I was in Danbury Prison? I received a letter from someone who had once been a member of the Unification Church. After seven years of hardships doing fund-raising activities, he could no longer endure, and left the church. But after he left, all the things he had learned during his time fund-raising helped him to become a self-reliant person capable of earning his own living. What he had learned helped him to become a person who had compassion for others, whereas before he had always expected others to have sympathy for him.

He wrote that all the principles of the Unification Church had proven true in every situation. He had gone on to complete graduate school. But during his school years, not a single professor helped him to establish

the foundation to have a bright future; nor had his parents done that. The only person who taught him how to establish his foundation for the future was me, a teacher from the East, and he was truly grateful for it.

As I read this letter in prison, I thought, "Hmmm, what I have been doing is not wasted." This ex-member is proof that I am resurrecting the American people who are withering away, helping them to become new sprouts that will bud and blossom. The young people whom I am deploying in crucial positions, and who love this country, can become mainstays of a new America in the future, and through them this nation of America will be renewed. (200-120, 1990/02/24)

9. After my release from the prison in Danbury, I heard that one of the supervisors said, "I never knew that one person could make such a big difference." He said that while I was at the prison, those who drank alcohol would not do it except in hiding somewhere out of my sight, those who smoked marijuana would not do it except while hiding in the woods so that I wouldn't spot them, and those who were fighting would immediately stop if I happened by. That man said he had never seen criminals behave with such guilty consciences. However, only three days after I left, things went back to the way they had been. Reflecting on this, he said, "How could one person make such a difference in the world of the prison without speaking one word? He must have some kind of incredible power!" This became a topic of conversation.

These are not my words. Investigators from the Department of Justice went to the prison and reported all this to me. Wherever I go, whether I am in a prison or anywhere, I give all of myself with a heart of love so I can leave something good behind. This has been my life, and I live it vigorously. I live as if I were the ancestor of the world in which everyone will live this way. (190-030, 1989/06/18)

10. Even though I had lived in America for some time, it was through experiencing prison life in Danbury that I really came to know America. The small community in Danbury Prison includes the best and the worst of America. There I could meet the best people and the worst. I took my stand, expressing my heart to educate them so they would be with me in heart and surrender to me. I did so to make an indemnity condition in the realm of heart, so I would be able to teach all the American people in the future. In Danbury I could really learn about America.

Those inmates were depressed. They thought they had done nothing wrong that deserved prison. Some of the most cunning inmates met together and agreed to kill me if I did anything to cross them. There, it is easy to murder someone in their sleep. It could happen; I knew that very well. However, I did not fight the people of that small community; instead I reached out to them and helped them live in harmony. Six months later, all the inmates had come to respect me. I had the ability to make that happen. (182-094, 1988/10/14)

11. In Danbury Prison, I sometimes kept working at my prison chores even when lunchtime came around. When I did that, the kitchen leader came to me and said, "It's lunchtime now, so quickly stop what you are doing and get something to eat." Such is the heart of people. He was concerned I might miss breakfast and lunch, so he came and urged me to eat the food he had prepared. Sometimes he even shared a portion of his own meal with me. People everywhere have a conscience, even in prison. If you live a life of serving others, you can make friends even in prison and they will protect you.

Please do not forget what I am telling you. It is extremely valuable advice. I received this teaching from heaven, and I must convey it to you so you can make it your own tradition. Truly, the one who strives to live for the sake of others will not fall into ruin. Even if you are headed toward destruction, the universe will protect you. Even if someone is trying to kill you, you will live and he will die instead. It may seem as if nothing is working, that you are failing and going to ruin, but instead you will live, prosper and advance. Things will turn around for you, because God is protecting you and the universe is protecting you. (134-249, 1985/07/20)

12. I have served prison terms many times. Yet because in prison I lived my life for the sake of the whole, I ended up meeting many people who were willing to lay down their lives for me. When I worked in the fertilizer factory at Hungnam Prison, many inmates wanted to work by my side. My time in Danbury was like that too.

Once, I heard that a particular person wanted to be close to me but found it difficult to approach me. Later he confessed that he approached me several times but could not even open his mouth to speak. It is amazing that such a thing happened. He was a tough man who relied on his fists, yet I had some kind of power such that even he behaved that way in front of me. Even such tough-minded prisoners liked me.

The reason I have the power to pull and attract people is because I know God's heart and how God has been working. Thus, I live for the sake of the whole just as God does. When I do, then even while not saying anything, I project a natural authority. (134-250, 1985/07/20)

13. Most of the inmates in Danbury Prison were about 30 years old. Not many were above that age. Quite a number were incarcerated because of drugs. Often they were Christian believers. Many more had Christian backgrounds, coming from either Protestant or Catholic families. The fact that these young people ended up in jail indicates that the Christian clergy, whether Protestant ministers or Catholic priests,

had not taken responsibility for them. I strongly believe that those clergy should repent.

As a spiritual leader myself, I had to seriously reflect upon and evaluate myself with regard to the following questions: Ever since I hoisted the flag of my new church in America, how much impact am I actually making on the young people who are falling into corruption and are on the path of death? Am I making a positive or a negative impact on them? (134-233, 1985/07/20)

14. Whenever I went to prison, I was most interested to see the particular inmates whom God brought to me and with whom I would form a relationship. This was always so intriguing. It was the same with Danbury Prison. One Italian prisoner there said he was just happy to see me for no reason. He thought it strange, but whenever he came to do his chores after his meal, he would always check to see if I was there. He would say, "I do not know why, but I feel comfortable only when I see you nearby." He added that he had never had such a feeling, even toward his wife when he was falling in love with her! He kept on saying, "It is really weird." He also said that when he was alone he would often become anxious, but whenever he was with me he did not have a worry in the world. As a result, he used to stay up all night and guard me after I went to sleep.

Do you think I forced him to do that? No. Somehow he felt he had to protect me. He volunteered to protect me, even losing sleep, because it was something he wanted to do, not something I forced him to do. He did it out of his heart toward me. (166-242, 1987/06/07)

15. Once I decide to do something and carry it out, even if the result turns out to be poor, I do not complain about it. This is why I do not complain about the persecution I receive in America, and why I do not complain that I was sent to Danbury Prison. After all, my experience in prison helped me to better understand American society, the American people and the system of the western world. I did not suffer any loss from it.

Many Americans do not know what prison life is like, but I came to know it. Prison is where I learned the reality of America. In the future, I need to turn even that prison into heaven. It will not be an easy mission, but my experiences in prison will help me do it. This is why I say it was not a loss.

When I was in prison, there were a lot of people who followed me around. I did not preach to them. I did not say much, but I influenced them through my everyday life. I am sure that if I asked those who were with me in Danbury and have now been released to come for a gathering, they would all come. While many Americans reject me, saying, "No, I do not like him!" those prisoners learned who I am firsthand -- and when they did, they welcomed me. (167-232, 1987/07/19)

16. Even now, one thing I miss about Danbury Prison is the big rock on which I used to sit and rest from time to time. On Saturdays and Sundays when we did not work, I would not sleep in my cell all day long as many of the other inmates did. Especially during the summertime, being cooped up in the cell was stifling for me. So I would go out to the big rock on the shoulder of the hill, lie atop it and fall into a deep sleep. Sometimes I would begin snoring and then wake up, startled by my own snoring. You have no idea how much I miss that! I have never slept so soundly. When I have to focus on fulfilling the Will every day, how can I ever be at ease to sleep with my limbs spread out? A person who lives a public life cannot just enjoy his sleep. (202-181, 1990/05/20)

17. When I had to go to prison in America, I was not anxious about it. Compared to the other prisons, my time in Danbury was like a comfortable vacation. I am used to sleeping only two to three hours a day, but in Danbury Prison there was a rule that you had to sleep eight hours a day. If you stayed up and did not sleep, they would not give you food. Therefore, in prison I could indemnify all the time I did not sleep throughout my life. Ordinarily, my life is so busy I have no time to enjoy myself. But on weekends in Danbury there was nothing to do but relax 24 hours a day. I could read as many books as I wanted, and no one would fault me for it. For that I said, "Thank you, God!" Actually, what I did in prison was totally opposite to what America anticipated. It was God's strategy for me to reach out to the other side -- to Satan's world. In loving the people of Satan's world, I did what Satan cannot do. I can embrace and love people anywhere, whether in God's world or in Satan's world, as represented by the prison. Satan cannot do that. He is an expert at hating, but he cannot love. This is why he can rule only the people on his side, not on both sides. This is why Satan will inevitably lose to me, the expert at loving the people on both sides. Thus, as we head toward the realm of liberation, Satan cannot follow us. This is why America and the world will surrender sooner or later. Now, no one is blocking my way. (196-206, 1990/01/01)

18. Jesus said we should love our enemies, and he demonstrated this on the cross. Likewise, it was while I was carrying the cross of Danbury Prison that I set the standard in loving the American people. Indeed, in Danbury I truly loved my enemies.

When several inmates would sit together and complain about the prison employees and the government, instead of joining them in their complaining I would express compassion. This is how I guided those inmates. In the end, I created an environment of love in which they respected me. Also, when I worked, I worked in such a way that drew them into harmony with me, into a position where I could love them. Love governs everything. Thus, although I was in a prison cell, even without their realizing it, they became woven into the very fabric of my love and came to respect me. (136-062, 1985/12/20)