

About my imprisonment in Seodaemun Prison in Seoul, South Korea

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Chambumo Gyeong - Book 7. True Parents' Course of Suffering and Victory, Chapter 2. The Ehwa University and Yonsei University Incident and Suffering in Seodaemun Prison, Section 2. Seodaemun Prison and Section 3. Bearing Society's Sin



Section 2. Seodaemun Prison

Wild rumors

1. Many sectors of society opposed the Unification Church. Government offices, schools, religious groups and families all turned against our church. We were persecuted not because I was an evil person or because the Unification Church was an evil church. Rather, it was based on rumors that Christian leaders contrived by accusing us of all sorts of evils and wrongdoing as have been seen throughout history. As a result of these rumors, Christians began to hate us.

I was educating people with the words of the Principle; that is why whoever came to the church had spiritual experiences. If they did not come back, the spirit world gave them a hard time. This would become a serious problem for them. When intelligent people listened to the Principle, they were bound to join the Unification Church. That is why, in order to stop us, Christians began taking all kinds of terrible measures against us. (104-069, 1979/04/01)

2. Christians raised the issue of the heretical groups in the history of Christianity and said we were like those groups. They threw every sort of accusation against us. Because this continued for about ten years, the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) investigated us. They spent 40 days investigating the rumors that had accumulated over ten years and concluded, "There is nothing there." But they did not make a public announcement about it. They did not say, "Moon of the Unification Church has done nothing wrong, and all the rumors you have been believing are lies." When I was declared not guilty after my trial, the newspapers devoted only a few lines to it.

How could the negative image that was established nationwide be changed? Even though our church did public relations work to change public opinion, everyone still opposed us. Finally there were legal proceedings, and based on the investigative report from the police, we made an announcement that the Unification Church is not the kind of place that people think. They still did not believe us. Although the police confirmed it, people said, "The Unification Church has bribed the police!" (104-070, 1979/04/01)

3. There was a woman, a devoted mother and wife. She was so close to her husband that she thought that without him she would die. But after she joined the Unification Church, her life changed. Instead of going back to her house at 5:00 p.m. to prepare dinner, she would stay and listen to my teachings late into the night. In those days I often spoke until 4:00 a.m., regardless of how many members were with me. I was sleeping just two hours a night on average.

Naturally, problems arose within her family. Her husband asked her not to go to the church, but still she

came, saying, "No matter what, I will go." This kind of family dispute was a good reason for Christian ministers to oppose me. From their point of view, I was causing their best members to go astray. Hence, many of them gathered and organized to oppose our church. As a result, I was falsely accused of all kinds of wrongdoings. However, I thought to myself, "Go ahead, put all the blame on me," and I did not make excuses.

After the court found me not guilty and I was released from Seodaemun Prison, I did not hear any Christian ministers say that I was found innocent of the rumors and that they must have been false. (249-206, 1993/10/10)

4. Unification Church members were persecuted severely, especially the women. It is because when they left home to go to the market, they ended up going to the church in spite of themselves, which led their husbands to jump to all sorts of wrong conclusions. These incidents were common in the early days of our church. If you understand spiritual phenomena, there is nothing mysterious about them. Yet the rumor spread that I controlled our members by some kind of electrical device that I had secretly implanted in them.

Actually, even people in the secular world use hypnotism to exercise mind control on people. How much more powerful are the spiritual experiences that people have when they connect to the Spirit of God! There was nothing unusual about what these women believers did, coming to the church with a heart yearning for the Word of God. Do you have any idea how great the power of prayer is? If you pray, you can have such experiences. (076-142, 1975/02/02)

5. Around the time of the Ehwa Woman's University and Yonsei University incident, five cabinet ministers tried to knock me down and obliterate the Unification Church. Since they could find no fault in me, they tried to convict me of evading military service. They accused me of lying about my age, that I claimed I was two years older than my real age. However, despite a thorough investigation, the court could not produce any evidence, and I was found not guilty. (239-021, 1992/11/23)

6. We held a 60-day witnessing campaign at Ehwa Woman's University and Yonsei University, and many students and professors joined. The two universities were in an uproar, and their administrations felt so threatened that they had to do something about this situation. So they made allegations against me. They called me a heretic and hurled all kinds of false accusations at me. But no matter how much the prosecutors investigated me on those charges, they could find nothing criminal.

The university authorities accused me of being anti-family, and that I practiced sexual immorality, but the prosecutors could not find any evidence to support those charges. Therefore, they arrested me on the charge that I evaded military service. Did I evade military service? I had short hair during the Korean War, so they thought I belonged to the North Korean Peoples Army. Even though I was willing to join the South Korean army, I was classified as Third Class, which exempted me from military service. Hence I was not able to join the army. In the end, no matter how much the prosecutors tried to make a case against me, they could not find me guilty of any of the charges. That is why I was acquitted after three months.

However, most people did not learn that I was declared innocent. Christian ministers did not inform their members that the court had acquitted me. The newspaper reports about it were very brief. Our church leaders suggested, "Let's make a statement about the Seodaemun incident and the groundless allegations against the Unification Church." Yet to me, the allegations were not the issue, and my imprisonment was not the issue. The issue to me was that the Republic of Korea had betrayed me. It would do no good to regard Korea as my enemy and fight back. Rather, in order to restore Korea, we would have to move on to the world level and then return to Korea. This was the path of restoration through indemnity that lay before us. (185-206, 1989/01/08)

Life in Seodaemun Prison

In Seodaemun Prison, True Father was assigned number 390. Four disciples were imprisoned with him: Kim Won-pil, Eu Hyo-won, Eu Hyo-young and Eu Hyo-min. So many people visited Father in prison that it must have broken the record for the number of visitors. He encouraged all the church family members who visited him, telling them, "Do not waver." By his heart and way of life, Father earned the respect of the guards, the warden and the other inmates.

7. I was imprisoned in Seodaemun Prison in 1955. Many rumors were circulating about me as the leader of the Unification Church. So as I entered the prison in shackles, the manager of my cell block glared at me angrily and shouted that he would punish me. I said to myself, "Wait and see. Within one month, I will win you over."

In the beginning, I was watched and treated as if I were a monkey in a zoo. I thought, "Do as you please! Unlike you, I am not a good-for-nothing!" Within one week, I won the hearts of the guards. People began calling me "Teacher," even in the prison. When I was released, the warden of the prison came out and called me "Teacher Moon." (039-050, 1971/01/09)

8. When I entered Seodaemun Prison, the manager of my cell block belittled me. I was quite upset with

his behavior, but I determined to win him over before my departure from the facility. A few days later when he came to my cell, I greeted him cheerfully, "Good morning!" Sometimes he silently walked by my cell, and I thought, "You are just passing by, but you will come back." Then, just as I expected, he actually did.

One day he came to me and told me that on a certain morning he was eating rice cakes, and one got stuck in his throat. Why do you think he choked? It was because his ancestors caused it to happen to him, knowing that if their descendant kept on mistreating me, they and that descendant would be in trouble. Not only that, he was eating the rice cake by himself, and his ancestors wanted him to change his ways. After I explained all this to him, his attitude changed. He started to call me "Teacher," and he also ran errands for me.

Even the warden came to respect me. On the day of my release, he brought me a cantaloupe, a watermelon, and other seasonal fruits. He shared personal stories with me that he had not revealed even to his own siblings. He testified about me to the prison officers and guards. Do you think he testified to me because I witnessed to him? I never witnessed to him directly, yet I knew how to witness to him. (033-267, 1970/08/16)

9. I know the yearning heart you had when you came to see me in Seodaemun Prison, as if nothing else in your life mattered. History will remember your names. Someday in the future I will reward all the family members who came to visit me in prison. So treasure your visitor's pass and keep it safe. Any of you who has one should regard it as a family heirloom. And when you marry, keep it close to your bosom.

When I left the prison, all the guards and even the warden came to see me off. Some of those guards later joined the church. In this way, despite the enemies I faced, I pioneered the path of heaven. In order to become Abel, we must unite with God at all costs. Therefore, whatever the suffering on your path, you should never think that you are walking that path alone. God chooses as Abel those who will not rest until they win over those who accuse them.

True religions start from prison. A new history can begin from the worst place, if in that place you have more hope and a greater vision than anyone else. Then Satan's world cannot accuse you or interfere with you, even when you are later elevated or promoted. That is why in prison you can make a new start that connects you to a new world. In prison we can experience the heart of God and become one with Him. (034-050, 1970/08/29)

10. People wanted me to die or come to ruin, but I didn't. Why didn't I? I was insulted and isolated, but the more people cursed me and drove me into a corner, the more people shed tears for me and comforted me.

Our members fought for a place in line to visit me in prison. Visiting hours began at 8:00 a.m., but our members waited in line from 1:00 a.m. to get a pass. Seodaemun Prison had never seen such a thing in its history. Some people even waited in line more than 24 hours. (168-264, 1987/09/27)

11. When I first arrived at Seodaemun Prison, people disparaged me as "Moon of the Unification Church." It sounds odd, but in prison everyone thinks he is a prince. Everyone thinks he is better than the others. However, whenever inmates spoke to me in a derogatory way, I kept silent. From the first day, I did not say a thing. I could stay that way for one or two months. However, after one or two weeks, the inmates started to regard me with some kind of awe. When they woke up in the morning, they saw me praying. Who could stop me from praying?

One inmate was giving everyone a headache, and the other prisoners wished he would die. However, I took him under my wing and started speaking with him. People said that after I came to the prison, this troublesome man changed. When, after some time, that inmate no longer said anything to insult the other prisoners, the rumor started, "That troublemaker listens to Moon very well."

This happened because I try to have the heart that the president of Korea should have. My heart prompted me to live for the sake of all the prisoners. I believe that it is the right heart for a loyal citizen of this nation; it is the heart that all the people of Korea should have. So I prayed, shedding tears for that prisoner. In other words, my heart was the heart of an owner. That is why he bowed his head to me. It is heaven's principle that people bow their heads in front of a good person who takes responsibility for them. (024-041, 1969/06/22)

12. I can still picture the faces of those who tormented me when I was in Seodaemun Prison. Vicious rumors about me circulated inside the prison, but I did not say a word in response. Despite the negative environment, my cellmates came to like me very much. Also, I had many visitors. Some of those who came had bad intentions toward me. Aware of their intentions, I admonished them, "In the future, do not visit me with such a heart."

There was an inmate who used to be a pastor. He called me a heretic and an enemy, and angrily challenged me, shouting, "What you teach is no good!" But after hearing me, he came to see me on a regular basis and we became very close.

The rumors about me spread quickly, so much so that even the warden wanted to meet me in person. In the meantime, my disciples who were imprisoned with me served and attended me wholeheartedly. Then the people there started to say, "Many people insult and accuse Reverend Moon of the Unification Church, but he withstands it so well. Truly, he is an extraordinary person."

In this way, even though I was in the lowest place, I upheld my position as God's representative with integrity and authority. I had to, because there was no one else who could take my place. There is no one else, no matter how much worldly power he has, who can take over my responsibility before heaven. (021-160, 1968/11/17)

13. People looked at me with jaundiced eyes and said, "That guy Moon is no good." Yet I am not ashamed of anything in my past. The question is: Did others fabricate this image of me, or did I create it by my own deeds? It is either one or the other. If others fabricated it, it is their fault and they will perish, even as the one who is unjustly criticized will prosper. Evil perishes but good prospers. You will never perish when you stand in a position that is true, pure, and attested to by history.

When I was in handcuffs, Christian women passing by would look at me out of the corner of their eyes and grimace. I thought to myself, "Now your path seems holy, and this man whom you look upon seems miserable. But you cannot tell the outcome because you do not have the standard for comparing my situation with yours. When that is revealed, the judgment will come as to who is right and who is wrong." With these thoughts in my mind, I could come this far. (040-325, 1971/02/11)

14. I should have been able to guide the Republic of Korea centering on the Unification Church, but instead I was put in prison. Yet even in prison, I was not anxious about when I would get out. I was calm and peaceful, because I regarded prison as my path for the sake of the Will. I was resolved to stay on my path no matter how many years I might spend in jail, even to the end of my life. This is one way that I am different from others. Even in that situation, I focused on spiritual self-cultivation.

What kind of self-cultivation? I meditated on how to resolve the situation of the Republic of Korea, which had lost a glorious opportunity. I contemplated how I could create a path of hope for the nation, one that would bear fruit. It was as if I was surrounded by mountains, and I had to look for ways to drill through them one after another to make a tunnel and build a highway.

I thought that if I happened to collapse, God would take responsibility. However, as long as I had energy to go on, I would not ask God for help. Therefore, I did not pray for myself. Without asking God for help, I gave out all of my energy, knowing that by doing so, God would surely help. (033-167, 1970/08/11)

15. As the Unification Church advances, the question is, within the limited time you have every day, how much can you wholeheartedly invest yourself for the whole purpose? We will rapidly advance and win victory if the standard of our life is higher and deeper than that of the early Christians. It is good to taste the sorrow of loss. Experience shame and suffer humiliation to such a degree that you cannot lift up your face.

I had such a time. In the courtroom before going to Seodaemun Prison, an ex-member said to me, "You were in jail in North Korea, and here you are again. You just cannot give up the old habit." I cannot forget those bitter words.

While going in and out of prison, I carried on the fight to dissolve all of God's bitter grief. Although I faced many painful, even resentful situations on the way, I knew that if I kept going, the time would come when it would all be dissolved. That is why even now I cannot afford to grow weary. Though my lips are blistered and my body suffers aches and pains, I will move forward until the day I defeat the enemy Satan, until he lies prostrate and I am standing with my two feet upon his back. I will fight him all the way to the end. (025-332, 1969/10/12)

Section 3. Bearing Society's Sin

All charges dropped

On October 4, 1955, True Father was found innocent and released by the Seoul District Court. The members were overwhelmed with joy to welcome him back. Three days later, they moved the church from Jangchung-dong to Cheongpa-dong, and on October 10 the church celebrated Father's release from prison. Everyone sang "New Song of Inspiration," which True Father himself wrote in Pyongyang, and reflected deeply on the meaning of his ordeal.

1. The whole nation was in an uproar in 1955 due to such incidents as the expulsion of students from Ehwa Woman's University. Under the influence of Syngman Rhee's government, they arrested me and tried to expose me for crimes, but I had committed none. They charged me with all kinds of heinous things, but there was no crime with which to implicate me. When I came down from North Korea, I had short hair. I went to enroll in the armed forces, but they investigated me, thinking I had been in the North Korean People's Army. As a result, they did not allow me into the armed forces. That is the reason I was

not accepted. Since those were my circumstances, my accusers were not able to implicate me as a criminal. Therefore, I was released with the verdict of innocent.

Christians did not know that fact at all. At that time, we could have proclaimed that fact as we do now; however, back then it was not the time to do that. On my path, there was a cross I had to bear on a worldwide scale. I could not be proud just because I had become the victor in the individual battle on the path of the cross. I could not forget that on the victorious foundation of the individual level, the cross of the family level was next. (184-273, 1989/01/01)

2. Newspapers played up the story that I was imprisoned with banner headlines. However, when they wrote about my release after the not guilty verdict, they printed only one sentence in small letters. Hence, no one knew about my acquittal.

When I came out from prison, some people told me that we should fight about this matter. But I did not fight. By not fighting, we made a condition to pull out the root. Anyone who opposed me by fomenting this historical injustice will be uprooted in the end. Their children may believe that their parents were good pastors who were loyal to the nation, but eventually they will understand that their parents were betrayers. When they realize that their mother and father stood in the position of betrayers who opposed the great Parents of Heaven and Earth as they strove to fulfill their duty in front of heaven, they will want to dig up their parents' graves. These are not empty words. (240-231, 1992/12/13)

3. During the administration of the Liberal Party, five cabinet ministers tried to knock me down. President Syngman Rhee issued a special directive to five departments to eliminate the Unification Church. This included the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After a perfunctory investigation, they used the rumors to fabricate stories about me and the Unification Church. For instance, they accused me of the crimes committed by the founder of the Pure White Sect. Thus, they tried to tarnish me with all kinds of allegations.

Yet when I was brought to court and investigated, they could not find any fault. Although they brought me to trial, they could find no evidence that would prove their case, and after 90 days I was acquitted and released.

In those days, Korean society truly believed I was a criminal. Later this became the basis for me to be accused throughout the world. Still, I have been silent these 40 years. Why? I knew the principle that after being struck, I can claim what I am entitled to. They believed Reverend Moon was the worst person and tried to knock me down. Yet I thought, "You are bound to perish! Go ahead and strike me! One day you who strike me will be driven into a corner and shattered into pieces." I could say that because I had done nothing wrong. (182-306, 1988/10/26)

4. We put up the sign of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity in 1954. In those days I was opposed by the entire nation of South Korea. An incident occurred which resulted in my imprisonment. Within any three-year period there is always indemnity to pay. There is no way to avoid the restoration through indemnity. It is a formula, and it works without fail.

In those days, the government of the Republic of Korea tried to knock me down; they took all kind of measures to eliminate me. Christianity and the government joined forces for this purpose. However, when my case came to trial, I was found not guilty and released. Thus, the Unification Church could continue, and it remains to this day. (087-059, 1976/05/01)

5. What does it mean that the court released me with the verdict that I was innocent? If I was acquitted and discharged, shouldn't the Korean government offer me compensation? The Republic of Korea charged me, claiming that I was guilty when I had not been proven guilty. I declared I was innocent. When God examines the Republic of Korea in His court, God's verdict will be, "Republic of Korea, you are guilty. It is because you caused suffering to a man who committed no crime, and you charged him even though you already knew that he was innocent."

The key officials in the Korean government who opposed me were Christians. Are Christians a group of people who support God, or a group of people who oppose God? We read from the Bible, "One's foes will be members of one's own household." (Matt. 10:36) These words came true. Indeed, Christianity committed a sin.

The person who supports a criminal is like a partner in his crime; hence, he may be convicted as an accomplice. Therefore, the Korean government and the Christian churches may perish, but not Father. (187-219, 1989/02/11)

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