

Testimony: Father apologized to me and said, "I didn't mean to make you cry."

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Photo date and location unknown

I was a State Leader in the Unification Church from the spring of 1972 until January 1975 when I attended 120 day training at Barrytown and participated in the 1800 couple Blessing in Korea. After returning from foreign missionary work and other missions I was again State leader in Colorado for one year 1983/84, before attending UTS, and afterwards for half a year in Southern California, 1986/87.

Each month in the 1970s, the fledgling pioneer state leaders would be called to Belvedere and later East Garden, NY to meet with True Parents. This was Father's total investment in educating our young leadership. We would spend several days listening to True Father's directions, including his little black book which held our assignments for the following month. It was most magical to sit at the feet of the Messiah and drink in his wisdom and feel God's amazing love.

I always sat right in front of Father, at his feet, looking up from the floor so as to 'breathe his air' and to feel his powerful love and energy. Any problem I had could be solved by just being close to the source of truth and love. Even judgement was okay because I was in a constant state of repentance for not being able to do enough in my mission and when receiving any scolding from Father, I felt that my mistakes were forgiven and I could start again, refreshed. My sitting or hours on the floor and feeling his words cleanse me I felt renewed. I totally trusted Father, I knew he loved me and though I was flawed, I was still there, at his feet trying to grow and fulfill my portion of responsibility.

My shortcomings were always an obstacle to giving my 100%. Yet at his feet my shortcomings shrank and I could realize how to grow more and become a better person. I looked forward to these monthly gatherings in joy even though the short time I was in my state made fulfilling his directions nigh on impossible, yet still I tried my best.

One month, early on in our service, the Greyhound bus driver was so kind to drop me off at Belvedere's front gate. I guess I had talked to him from my seat just behind him. I remember skipping down the driveway to the gathering as I waved to the driver. I felt I had come 'home' and I was so happy to be there. At this particular meeting Father asked the leaders if they felt dread coming to see him this time. I was shocked and wished to shout 'no' but I was too shy, so I only shook my head vigorously. Perhaps I was the only one who skipped down the driveway.

At one meeting in East Garden before Father had to go to prison, I was again sitting at his feet on the carpet so very close to him. I drank up his energy, his smiles, his jokes and his general scolding. Suddenly, Father looked down at me and said, "I was shocked to hear that the great missionary from Iran wanted a vacation!" I gasped and wanted to speak the reality of those words, but Father stopped me by saying, "You don't have to explain." I didn't want to excuse my words nor try and make me look better

but the situation was unique and vacation wasn't the point.

In Colorado I had been visiting other churches, meeting the ministers and trying to find ways to cooperate and become co-travelers on God's road to the Kingdom. I had visited a Church of God in Christ church (COGIC) where for six nights in a row they had a powerful revival. Unusual to honor a woman in their church, nonetheless they sat me in the honored front row ... right in front of the loudspeaker, and the preaching really didn't need loud speakers. I felt that my hair was blown back away from my head as if I was driving fast on a motorcycle. My body was beaten by the reverberations coming from the six-foot tall speaker, three feet in front of me. Each night when I returned to our peaceful center I told our Regional Leader, Rev. Yu, that I felt as if I had beaten up in a street fight. My body ached from the constant pounding from the loudspeakers. It was such an ordeal, but I always smiled and thanked the preachers. After attending all six nights I returned home, triumphant, and announced with a big, grateful smile to Rev. Yu, "I'm finished. Now I need a vacation from salvation!" He was very proud of me and said so.

So as Father began to show his disappointment at my 'needing a vacation' I turned to Rev. Yu and asked "why" with my eyes. His sad face was as horrified as mine. He shook his head gently and raised his shoulders in surprise. So, I turned back to Father who was going on in detail about this point. Then I looked inside of myself and realized what Father had actually seen in me.

Yes, I did actually want a vacation from my mission. My only daughter, 2 year old Donsu, was in the 24 hour nursery in Bolder Colorado. I couldn't visit her much as I was expected to sacrifice to the mission and set a good example for others. My husband had gone onto another mission and I was alone in my Denver center without my family. Yes, there were about 30-40 members there so I had plenty of people to work with but it wasn't my sweet little girl. It was a painful offering but I did it with sincerity. Yet in my heart, I did want a vacation from my sacrifice. But I hadn't allowed myself to say those words inside. I offered up my desire on the altar and knew that God understood my pain.

At that realization of the truth in my heart, I began to weep quietly. My tears flooded down my cheeks as I looked at the floor, so sorry that Father had been able to see my real heart and know that my resolve to serve God wasn't 100%.

My tears came and came, large globs of snot dripped down from my nose. I didn't have any tissues with me so I had to use the back of my hand to wipe the snot away. Then a miracle happened, several hundred tissues were surreptitiously passed to me from behind. My brothers and sisters had pity on me who was receiving such a scolding. Many probably thought I was humiliated and ashamed. But no, I was merely totally repentful that I had let Father down and disappointed him.

My clothes were wet, my skin was wet, my eyes were swollen and my nose too. As the tissues continued to be stuck under my elbows from behind I realized the members were probably grateful that Father wasn't yelling at them. Then I knew! He used me to make a very important point because he knew I would understand, I gave him a lucky situation he could expound upon. I looked up at him and smiled with my red, swollen face and smiled more. He could trust me because I understood his heart. He wanted us to be strong and truly determined because the months ahead would challenge even the strongest of us.

Then Father leaned -- and said, "I didn't mean to make you cry." I was so upset that he felt he had to say that, I wished the floor would open up under me so I could fall into a pit. But I knew I was being dramatic and he really is my Father so I only felt gratitude.

Then he changed topic and his energy soared. He started to talk about how he was buying up hotels in different countries and then he said he wanted to buy a 747 so he could take all of us on a vacation for a year! He asked, "Who do you think will be first on that trip?" I looked up at his happy face and he said, "Susan Fefferman." The group cheered. Aghast, I put my head down and blushed.

After that incredible experience, the Korean leaders asked me to put in a good word for them to be able to go on that trip as well! From then on, this small American woman, as Father called me, received more respect from my elders and smiles from across the room. Everyone had been liberated from our regrets by Father's love and encouragement.

And although I have never gone on a trip with Father, my life following True Parents has given me great joy and a real sense of value and mission. I am so grateful for this experience of a real father at work and am happy to relate this story.