

What Building Cheon Il Guk Means to Me

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Being a Cheon Il Guk Youth Missionary was a life-changing experience, which helped me to grow and discover the real me. I met many remarkable people, with whom I became so close that I felt as if we were a family. In six months, my team and I went to seven different countries in Europe -- Estonia, Russia, Moldova, Italy, Latvia, Ukraine and Spain. One thing that I realized during this mission was that Korea is a very small country (109 on a list of 257, by size).

By encountering many great people -- pastors, my fellow missionaries, church members, guests -- I learned to accept different values. From their perspective, we were all from True Parents' country. Therefore, they were eager to learn everything from us, especially our country's culture. The way in which members were both tentative and passionate about True Parent surprised me.



Raising funds

We raised funds only in Spain. One of the goals of raising funds was to support a seminar held in the Czech Republic. Raising funds proved a tough experience but it helped me to discover myself, who I am as a blessed child. I realized an important value through raising funds. At first, I tried to remind myself that I was doing it with True Parents. However, as time passed I became tired and went off by myself. I totally forgot about True Parents, which eventually brought me to a negative outcome. Often, I could not reach my goal for the

day. When I declined even to the point that I was unable reengage in the activity, I reminded myself of a message that True Mother had given to all blessed children: "Now, my children, can you please help me?" This caused me to become serious. True Mother had sent me and I sincerely wanted to be a son who was capable of helping True Mother. I also felt sorry for her, because True Mother should not have to ask for our help. From this, I stood up, collected myself and moved forward.

Reaching others' hearts

As a Cheon Il Guk missionary, witnessing was our main activity. Through witnessing, I recognized an extraordinary fact: We can save people's lives. For example, when I was in Estonia, I met a young woman. She was enduring a terrible time. Her parents were going through the divorce procedure and her younger brother had been sent to prison for distributing drugs. Her situation was unbearable. The Divine Principle has a magic power; it can renew hope in you and renew life in anyone who studies it with an open heart and an open mind. This is exactly what happened to her.

Having come to our church center to listen to a lecture on the Divine Principle, she was so touched that she decided to participate in a seven-day workshop. Since that day, her life completely changed. She has become increasingly more mature through studying Divine Principle and is better able to cope with her difficult circumstances.

She is now active in Estonian CARP, which we established upon our arrival in that Northern European country. CARP in Estonia can now count several members and CARP has become an active part of the Estonian movement.



Confronting the opposition

Another realization I came to while witnessing is that Satan will do anything he can to prevent people from joining us, and that doing Jeong Seong (conditions as an act to express sincerity) is important. When working in Russia, the parents of one of my guests forbade their daughter from participating in any activities we had organized. Yet, she loved CARP activities; moreover, she wanted to listen to Divine Principle lectures. She is an only child, so her parents are overly protective. One day, despite her parents' objections, she

decided to join us in one of our activities. Unfortunately, en route, she was involved in a terrible car accident. As a result, she had to remain in the hospital for two weeks. To me, that Satan was doing everything he could to block her was clear. I had been offering prayers to support her since I initially witnessed to her, but on the advice of our leader, I started a three-day fasting condition. After that condition, I went to the center and there she was. It was wonderful.

This, however, was not the end of our peregrination. We kept organizing workshops, but the more strongly she set her mind on participating, the more intensely her mother worked to stop her. In the end, she did come to a couple of our workshops.

Through this experience, I realized that making conditions is vital to witnessing success. Every morning, we gave God first place in our lives by doing Hoon Dok Hae as soon as we woke up and doing a hundred and twenty bows as we said the names of our guests. When we felt we needed extra spiritual support to reach our goal of helping someone, we offered a fasting condition. These conditions might seem excessive but they were a great support through all the programs.



Community involvement

Besides witnessing, we did many other activities. Most of our large projects took place in Bolivia and Latvia. We took part in Peace Road in Moldova, which was a nice event. Moldavan television even interviewed one of my team members. Moldova is the poorest country in Europe, so in association with an Italian NGO, we organized many volunteer projects, such as street cleaning, caring for homeless people and collecting and giving notebooks and pencils to very poor students who could not afford them.

Witnessing is all about communicating our beloved True Parents' teachings to other people. However, I cannot communicate in Russian, Estonian or Moldovan. Even if in most of these countries many people can speak some English, we have to learn a little bit of all these languages. Every morning after breakfast, we would study English and the local language. On the other hand, True Parents' language is Korean, my language, so every day after witnessing we organized a Korean class for local people. We taught them the Korean language and Korean culture.

In that spirit, we organized a festival in Latvia, which was a great success. It attracted many people, including civic leaders. We sang, taught Korean and played Korean games like yute. We also introduced Divine Principle and True Parents' lives.

The local leaders were deeply impressed and inspired by True Parents' history, especially by the meeting between True Parents and Gorbachev. Most of the participants attended the Divine Principle workshop we held after the festival. In Latvia, we now have many new members. Some of them came through that Divine Principle workshop. This happened in Russia, too.

To conclude this six-month program, we made a compilation video of all our activities and results and sent it to True Mother. Before applying to take part in this missionary activity, I had heard some youth leaders saying that our Missionary Organization might disappear in a few years. Having had these experiences, I have come to see how essential witnessing is to building our Cheon Il Guk tradition.