

**David J. Loew,
Las Vegas, Nevada, 1970**



I met our church in the desert and ended up at sea. I was a 19-year-old college student at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas and a member of a small Christian church. I first heard of the Unified Family (in March 1970) from my minister, who had been a missionary in China for the greater part of his life. He told me about a nice couple (Jack and Gladys Korthuis) he had met who were practicing a type of Korean Christianity. I found my way to the center, where I heard the *Divine Principle and Its Application*, by Miss Young Oon Kim, the Red Book as it's known.

When you live in Las Vegas, people automatically think of the Las Vegas Strip and life in the fast lane. But in Las Vegas there are many Jews, Christians, and Mormons, whose lives have little to do with the "Las Vegas" most people think of. I was working for my Jewish father, who was in the furniture business his whole life, except for his three years as a Marine in World War II. He is in *Who's Who of Nevada* because of his extraordinary work in the furniture business. We employed hundreds of people, some church members, and even my political-science professor, a Korean, worked for my father at night to make extra money.

When I wasn't working or in school, I loved to fish and hike, especially in southern Utah with my friends. There I would fish for trout at the northern end of the Grand Canyon, up into an area called Lake Panguitch.

I enjoyed the mountains, and our family had a cabin on Mt. Charleston, one of only 20 that existed at that time in the Nevada part of the Sierras. I would hike the mountains and enjoy the snow in

winter — not the image most people have of Las Vegas.

My favorite book in college was *The Old Man and the Sea*, by Ernest Hemingway. I read it while attending college at UCLA. I ended up in UCLA because the whole Las Vegas church had been asked to move to Los Angeles in a “consolidating” effort. And so, I transferred to UCLA, where I lived in our student center along with six other students. I met True Father for the first time when he came to America, landing in Los Angeles. And in short order, I dropped out of school (much to the despair of my father) and began working with True Father’s first speaking tour in America, originating in New York City. There I lived with True Parents in the basement of a small house in the Bronx and began in earnest to learn about True Parents, especially True Father’s approach to things.

The first thing I learned was “don’t consolidate.” You consolidate for an event, but after that you pioneer. True Father called us youthful followers “pioneers.” The second thing I learned was that indemnity equals hard work. This has stuck with me for many years: “You can always out-work others.” You learn this especially when you fish with True Father. He might not be the best, but he’ll out-work anyone. He truly believes in indemnity and restitution. And so, during the coldest winter on record, we set out to sell \$18 tickets to a three-day speaking event, using a flyer which said, “God Speaks Today” with a photo of True Father on it. I learned a very valuable witnessing lesson in New York City in the winter: It is better to stand over the skyscraper heating vents built in the sidewalk to speak with people than to stand at a Wall Street subway entrance at rush hour. Over the heating vents, you have a captive audience to hear about “God Speaks Today.” At the Wall Street subway entrance, one can get trampled (I weighed 130 lbs).

In the winter of 1972, the World Trade Towers were in the early phases of construction; America was in a fierce war in Viet Nam and sometimes at home over the same war; the Cold War was accelerating; our President was heading towards unprecedented trouble with

Watergate on the horizon; Christianity was faltering around the nation; drug abuse was on the rise; families were failing. Our church was divided into two camps. There were only a few hundred members across America working together for this campaign; there were only eight or nine American centers, mostly headed by couples from the 777-Couple Blessing, all preparing for True Father to come and speak publicly in their city. We were broke, and our founder believed that Americans cherished pizza with ice cream ... pizza with ice cream on top or on the side like cole slaw. We were frozen, with the terrible winter rarely letting up. In fact, one of our buses (we had to push-start this one) had broken down in a blizzard in Frederick, Maryland, on its way to Los Angeles; and WE were going to part the seas of despair in America, like True Father said, as “a firefighter come to put out the raging fire,” and do it with the seven-city speaking tour.

We kind of got creamed. But ... we endured, getting better ... at least we hoped so. When we hit San Francisco (city number 6), hopes were high. My parents came to hear the speech. But finally in Berkeley, we prevailed. Probably a lot was due to the effort and wisdom of Dr. and Mrs. Edwin Ang, Berkeley church leaders, and a very special Korean sister, Young Soo Lim, who would later be known as Onni Durst. For whatever reason, the end of the rainbow was on the Berkeley/Oakland area. It was good waters for fishermen of men. And the best fisherman wasn't even a man but an optimistic woman called “Onni” who made people believe in themselves and believe they could change the country. Naturally, the genesis of their conversion would take place in a chicken coop, renamed the Chicken Palace, located in Boonville, California. There, more people would hear the Divine Principle than in all the other buildings combined in America. If the end of the rainbow was in Oakland/Berkeley, the Pot of Gold was in Boonville.

True Father set off again to Korea after his Berkeley speech. Before he left, he did his style of consolidating: one person per state; two bus

teams, one led by Mr. David Kim and the other by Miss Young Oon Kim. My assigned state was Rhode Island, a maritime state with many Portuguese people, mostly fishermen like you find in Gloucester or San Diego. I never suspected I would end up around the Portuguese. Yet, I would cross paths with the Portuguese over and over again.



David and Keiko Loew

Since 1979, I was involved with the ocean in one way or another, except for a three-year stint with the San Diego Padres, one year managing a seafood restaurant, and one year doing the flower business while I battled to control my arthritis, something I've had since high school. But when the Good-Go boats were built, I was really drawn to the sea, mostly on the Pacific Ocean side of things. I've worked in San Diego, Baja California, Mexico, San Francisco, Hawaii, and Alaska. I traveled the whole West Coast, towing oil barges. I actually spent more time in San Francisco, at the refinery docks, than at home for a couple of years. I spent time with True Father in many of these places, as well as Gloucester and New York, and created a Holy Ground with other members in San Diego, overlooking the Pacific down into Mexico. (True Father came and consecrated the site on the day the United States invaded Grenada during the Reagan Administration.) I've gone

there regularly for years. At times, the work is long and dangerous. There Father was able to chat with me about the future, where I might live, and my wife. "So David, where would you like to live, San Diego or Alaska?" After a pause to think, I said "Both." Laughter from everyone. "You have the heart of a fisherman," he said

There are many beautiful places out west and good men who work at sea. There are many terrible places with terrible people as well. The most beautiful place I ever saw was the Greenville Channel in British Columbia. The cruise ships can't fit in the channel. Only smaller boats and tugs travel there. It is dramatic beyond words. It is the best argument for the existence of God I've found. You don't need to say a word.

Looking back, I think it is a good idea to spend some time at sea — at least two years. It can change your life, make you humble and careful in your actions, and give you deeper insight into people, nature, and God. There are many brave and capable men who work at sea, better mariners than me, better people. There are many in our church, mostly overlooked, or forgotten. It is worthwhile hearing their stories. For them, like me, their journey began with hearing the Divine Principle. For me, it began in the desert in the spring of 1970 and ended at sea.