

True Father Was My Sunday School Teacher

Kyung-do Park
July 13, 2016



Park Kyung-do worked in our church offices during the 1990s. Many Western members in Korea at that time met him as he was in charge of helping them get their church worker visas.

Kyung-do Park met Father earlier than almost anyone else in our movement outside of Father's own family—before Mother was born and eight years before Rev. Won-pil Kim joined Father in Pyongyang. He shares some of his earliest memories of Father.

It was in 1938, when I was in the fifth or sixth grade of elementary school, that we moved from the Sobingo neighborhood of Seoul to Heukseok-dong [just south of the Han River in Seoul]. It was then that my parents acquired a house to use for student lodgings.

I met True Father that year. He arrived in Seoul from Pyongyang to begin studying away from home, at Kyungnung Industrial School. As a student, he lodged at my parents' house for almost a year and a half. My mother and older brother, who also worked with the railroad during that time, did most of the work of caring for the student lodgers. There were around twelve students lodging in the house.

After this Father moved to the lodgings that our church kept as a memorial to that era of Father's life. There was a Pentecostal church in Heukseok-dong that my family used to visit, but when the Han River was frozen we would walk to one in Sobingo. On warm days, people

would have to walk a long distance to cross the Han River by bridge, but when the river had frozen over they could just walk across the ice.

Then the small Jesus Church worship hall was built in Myungsudae, part of Heukseok-dong. Father became a Sunday school teacher there and I was a student in his class [*Father was in his late teens and Kyung-do Park was 12 or 13 years old*]. There were three classes divided according to age: the youngest students were in the "love class," the next age level in the "hope class," and then the oldest were in the class Father taught, the "faith class." Altogether there were twenty or thirty students.



Jesus Church worship hall at Myungsudae; Father is standing ninth from the left, in front of the window; third from left is Kyung-do's Park sister.

Most students of middle or high school age want to meet people who are older. They do not want to meet younger people. But when he was a student, Father loved the younger children very much. He played very kindly with children, and felt a lot for them. He would hug them. Father made strong connections with

many people very well. If someone asked something of him, he would never refuse him. He accepted and embraced people spiritually.

As I remember, Father did not speak about his own revelations and spiritual course during Sunday school, but whenever Father met his friends, other students of his age or older people, he would always talk about the providence, and about God's Kingdom. This was the era of Japanese colonial rule.

On Sunday, Wednesday and Friday evenings we had meetings at the church. Other than the Sunday school students there were about fifty or sixty members. Many of the women congregants listened to Father's words more carefully than to those of the pastor or the witnessing leaders.

After the service, from 9:00 or 9:30 p.m., they would stroll around Heukseok-dong for an hour or so. While they were walking, Father would speak about God's providence, and they would listen with interest.

Before he went to Japan to study, Father lodged at our house, as I mentioned. Such lodgers paid some rent money. If a student skipped meals over the course of a week or ten days, my father returned some money to the student. True Father lent his own rent money to other students— one or two *won*—and he would not ask for it to be returned; instead, he would go without meals. He would fast and would spend his time praying on a small pine-covered hill across from a public cemetery near the Kyung-sung Industrial School where he studied. This hill was razed in the course of Seoul's development and no longer exists.

Father's main area of study was electrical engineering, but Father never spoke about this. He spoke only about the content of the Bible. It was the time we were under Japanese domination, and the Japanese policemen persecuted Korean Christians. In general, most people, including church ministers, carried just the New Testament with them, not the Old Testament, but Father always carried the Old and New Testaments together. Father always spoke about God, and he said, "Korea will be the second Israel."

Only a few people who had contact with Father in those days remain. Many have since passed away. If I had attended the church I could have been blessed among the 36 couples, but because I did not attend regularly I was not able to join that Blessing.



Left to right: Colonel Bo-hi Pak, Sang-kook Han [later, Ambassador Han] and Kyung-do Park at an outdoor Sunday service in the late 1950s

Korea was liberated in 1945 and Father remained in the South for a time before he went to North Korea. I worked in the United States embassy in Seoul, and for the U.S. army. I was also working for the Korean Economic Support Delegation. That is how I learned English.

In 1951, Father came down from North Korea to Busan. He wanted to meet Kim Baek-moon [*leader of the Israel Monastery, of which group Mr. Pak was once a follower himself, and who is said to have held an important John the Baptist position*], and persuade him. But Mr. Kim was too proud and did not accept Father, so Father continued his activities by himself. In 1952 I went to Pomnetkol in Busan [*where Father had built the little hut out of cardboard*]. I was a student of English literature. Because of the Korean War my university had moved its headquarters out of Seoul to Pusan [*Pusan was never captured by the North Korean advance*].

One day after class, I was walking in front of the Busan City Hall, and met an American distributing Christian flyers that were written in Korean. Because of the war there was normally no one witnessing on the street. I went up to the man. He was happy and grateful to see me, because I could speak English. He was a pastor in the US military. His name was Clayton Wadsworth. I brought him to meet Father, and later I took a photo of him with the members at Pomnetkol. I told him that Father was the Messiah.

He had graduated from a seminary, and he could not accept Father's words 100 percent, however. In the mid-1980s, when I was in charge of the PWPA international office in Korea, we held seminars for overseas ministers, inviting them to Korea. I invited Rev. Wadsworth to attend but, sadly, he declined to come.

Over the course of three or four months in 1952, Rev. Wadsworth came to see Father five or six times. Father spoke to him about the Principle and, among other things, explained to him that Korea was in the position of the second Israel. I was glad to be able to help Father as his interpreter.



Kyung-do Park took this picture of the hut that in 1951 Father built in the Beom-naet-gol district of Busan. The American in the picture is Clayton Wadsworth, who was with the US forces in Korea, and to whom Mr. Park had witnessed.