

## The Fate of the Elder Generation

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When I joined the church in 1976, I heard about many of the early pioneers, like the Pumphreys, the Verheyens and so many others that joined with Dr. Young Oon Kim who was our first missionary in 1959. But I never saw nor met any of these icons and I often wondered just what they were doing. Even Farley Jones, the First American Unification Church President, whose wife Betsy was active with the Blessed Family department was not very visible to the general public.

Then from 1977-2011, my generation became the heart and soul of the Unification Church. We were the members, the MFT, the witnessers, ran the businesses and made up the bulk of the centers from Oakland to New York City and everywhere in between. I remember when I became the state leader of Wyoming, I found Philip Burley's journal, detailing the activities of the Denver region in the mid-1970s.

Fast forward to 2013. I have been in the church for 36 years. I have been a witnesser in Oakland as well as taking care of the new "actionizer" members. I worked in a Jewish deli (my MFT), went to the seminary, got matched and blessed, was a city leader in New Mexico, a state leader in Wyoming, an AFC member in Chicago, a businessman, an active ACLC member (working side by side with Rev Jenkins) and am currently the Midwest regional UPF Representative.

I must admit that I have loved this active life. Along with my Austrian wife, we have raised 5 western children, who have all been outstanding athletes and have either finished or are finishing their college careers.

But things are changing here in Chicago. Faster than you can change the sign board outside of our church from Unification Church to Family Federation for World Peace to Chicago Family Church, the philosophy of our movement is changing.

Whereas, no one ever consulted my teenage children as to their wants, needs or desires, suddenly, no one is contacting me anymore as our entire movement has moved closer and closer to becoming a church almost totally absorbed in and concerned about the second generation.

On one level, this is fine and great, as it will be the second generations' ability and desire to embrace Father that will dictate the future of our movement. But, "here today and gone tomorrow" is a little too drastic for me.

I volunteered to give the first sermon after In Jin Nim's departure and my request was accepted—albeit included a list of stipulations and instructions a mile long—which I had never been given since seminary days. Yet, it was a positive experience and thus I offered to preach a "Christian type sermon" on a monthly basis so that members could bring their guests. I even included my resume, noting my master's degree from Indiana University and my Masters of Divinity from UTS. However, my offer was politely rejected. I offered to teach at the summer and winter camps as well, which I had done for years, but again, I never even received a response from our leadership.

I have been invited to preach in smaller church centers (my daughter is in college at one) but I guess in Chicago the need is not there. It's an adjustment. I am sure that the Pumphreys, the Verheyans and the Jones' had to make the adjustments in their lives. I know that my neighbors, the Vincenzes have had to make adjustments and I guess it's time for me to make similar adjustments. I am grateful that through my AFC contacts I was offered a very secure job with a pension and health care for my entire family.

I am grateful that in addition to True Parents I have been trained by Oakland leaders, 36 and 72 couples, Dr. Young Oon Kim, President David S.C. Kim, Dr. Bo Hi Pak, the AFC leadership, Dr. Michael Jenkins and Bishop Ki Hoon Kim. I am deeply grateful (more than any words can express) for this heavenly training in my life.

So, as the great Indian Buddhist guru once said, "this too shall pass," and accept that it's now time for me to stop looking back at Sodom and Gomorrah and make those needed adjustments