

After UTS I Had Hope for America

Bruce Sutchar
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My experience at the Unification Theological Seminary taught me to understand the Founders' vision for world peace through ecumenical fellowship and community service. Through three years in Barrytown I came to understand that the God-centered family is the center of hope for America and that love between brothers and sisters is the foundation for creating a True Family. The confidence that I gained as Father Moon's son has had a dramatic impact on my life as a minister, a husband and a Father of five wonderful children.

Let me state for the record that I did not desire to attend the seminary. I had already spent seven years in college and graduate school and had an advanced degree in Psychology. But when I stood on the soccer field and asked God why he had brought me to UTS, he answered simply, "So I can be with you." I spent much of my three years in Barrytown walking on Father and Mother's trails, even while I was still on crutches I would always feel the spirit of God when I was in nature at Barrytown. One day I picked up a pansy. It was yellow with four purple splotches across each leaf. I thought, "How can anyone see this and not believe in God?" This was certainly not random chance and accident.. I consider myself fortunate to have attended Barrytown while most of the original faculty was still there. David S.C. Kim was still President. Dr. Young Oon Kim was still teaching Theology and publishing her books. Dr. Joseph Hausner was still teaching Judaic Studies and taking groups out for cheesecake every Thursday. Dr. Thomas Boslooper was still beginning each class on the life of Paul by singing "How Great Thou Art," Dr. Henry Thompson was teaching Homiletics, Dr. Matczak was teaching Philosophy and Marxism, Dr. Kim was teaching Oriental Philosophy and Dr. Joe McMahon was teaching Psychology. On the other end, I was also a student in Tyler Hendricks' very first church-history class after he finished his doctorate.

The staff still included Dr. Edwin Ang as the academic dean, Therese Stewart as the dean of students. Sarah Witt was our media relations lady, and Shirley Stadelhofer served as the registrar and Divine Principle Instructor.

Most of all, True Father was still visiting on a regular basis. I was still a relatively young member, and the opportunity to fish with True Father, the late Heung Jin Moon and Hyo Jin Moon down on the 3rd bridge and to attend Father's talks in the cafeteria or walking throughout the grounds and down to the Hudson River was a blessing upon blessings. Likewise, spending moments with President David S.C. Kim and Young Oon Kim were among the most memorable of my life.

I entered UTS as young Jewish member. I expected to write my thesis on some topic of psychology, but rather, wrote a comparison of Judaism, Christianity and Unification Theology. At UTS I began doing church visitation as part of our curriculum designed by True Father, and 33 years later I am the anchor of the Chicago American Clergy Leadership Conference, continuing to do church visitation for the 30 plus years that I have lived here. At UTS I gave sermons on "The Reality of Evil," "Growing up Jewish in the Unification Church," and "The life of Abraham Lincoln"—for which I grew a beard, dressed up and became Lincoln—afterward, one member told me that he had seen Lincoln standing right behind me during my sermon.

Dr. Henry Thompson taught me how to give a sermon, and Dr. Thomas Matczak (who was a student with Pope John Paul in Poland) taught me the essence of Marxism.



Bruce Sutchar (left) greets Father and Mother Moon at a banquet in 1985

To this day, I still love to preach and have spoken before our Chicago congregation, numerous African-American Churches, college religion classes, and in centers all across the United States from Charlotte, North Carolina to San Francisco.

One extra-special blessing at UTS for me was that after my first year, my Austrian wife was able to join me. We got to know each other by walking the grounds of Barrytown, fundraising together in Vermont and Massachusetts and doing a nightly prayer walk for 40 days before we graduated. We even did an all-night prayer on Father's trail, much to the chagrin of our nervous brothers and sisters. It was probably the most amazing prayer of my life as it seemed that shortly after I began praying at midnight, the sun was coming up at 6am.

Immediately after graduating from the seminary, I pulled the Denver ticket out of a hat at Belvedere to determine my new mission, and eventually became the state leader of Wyoming. In 1987 I was chosen for the American Freedom Coalition mission and returned to Chicago to work with Rev. Michael Jenkins. He had been my central figure in the summer of 1984 when I worked with him on the first International Conference for Clergy Conference before my Divinity Year at UTS.

Currently I am doing Human Resources for 120 county employees in Chicago. Because of my seminary experience I feel confidence, determination and have a vision for a peaceful world which dramatically affects my life every day. Whether talking to the mayor of Chicago, the president of the county board or the governor of Illinois, I know that I am the son of True Parents. The education that I gained at the seminary allows me to dialogue with members of any religion and most importantly, as Robert F. Kennedy once said, quoting George Bernard Shaw, "There are those that look at things the way they are, and ask why? I dream of things that never were, and ask why not?"