

My Life as a Unificationist Missionary in Zambia - an African Testimony [Part 2]

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In 1975, Father asked trinities of one member each from Japan, the United States and Germany go out and work in some 95 countries received missionaries. Rudolf Faerber was a young member when he left for his assigned country of Zambia, in southern Africa. He is still there today. Zambia is now one of the nations in which our movement shows significant growth, and the story offers ideas to those pioneering anywhere in the world.

Uwe Schneider, the German missionary to Kenya, who could not renew his permit there, joined us in Zambia. He was soon inspired to start a piggery, because getting pigs was difficult and the demand for our sausages was increasing. The piggery is still in operation today, more than thirty years later, and still helps supply the pork for our sausages. Alongside his journalism, Eiju ventured into rearing chickens and selling eggs. Many women bought them for their small businesses. Small scale trading is still the main source of income for many families. Women or girls selling a few vegetables, fruit or other goods on the roadside are still a common sight today. If there were more vocational training, "to teach a man how to catch fish," it would permanently change the lives of many families for the better.

Registering a church from which to witness and teach the Divine Principle was difficult, so we registered as the Cultural Foundation, a limited company. We invited neighbors to a weekly afternoon Bible study group, where we explained the Bible based on Divine Principle. We could now meet and teach lawfully. The athletics club continued and we participated in some school competitions.

One way or another, we managed to stay together as missionaries and tried our best to fulfill the conditions of making unity that True Parents wanted us to accomplish at that time. In February 1978, Lady Dr. Kim [Shin Wook Kim] was on an assessment tour through Africa. As a South Korean, she could not enter Zambia, which had close connections with North Korea. We attended a regional missionary meeting, in Kinshasa, Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo). We quickly mobilized members to look after everything. I left a stock of sausages so that the members would have an income while we were out of the country.

After hearing our report, Lady Dr. Kim told us that we should focus on witnessing. "Pigs don't have spirits," she said, "and the three years will soon be up. Who will continue the mission?"

Taking this advice seriously, we decided to close the factory and concentrate on witnessing. It was a spiritual struggle for all of us, but soon we had many guests joining our three-day workshops. Our first members became active, made up their minds and moved in. We had center activity and the church was growing.

Sometimes on weekends, the house was congested with around thirty workshop guests. We had visitors sleeping on tables because of the lack of space. Usually they were young people, some still going to school, but they wanted to do something for God and True Parents, and their parents permitted them to stay with us. We gave them time to do their homework and they helped with chores. They witnessed to their friends. We also witnessed on the university campus.

Our living room became too small for the growing Sunday services, so we worshipped outside, in the shade of the beautiful trees in front of the house, where there is now a holy ground. We sold pigs and chickens, which we still raised, to cover our expenses.



Rudolf Faerber with a work crew in the early days of sausage making

New vision for the church and business

Among the parents of missionaries, many had concerns when we left for our mission countries at such young ages. Over time, however, parents often became proud of how their son or daughter had matured, learned new languages, and so forth.

One day we received the news that Robert's father had been hospitalized in Scotland. On Robert's way back from visiting him, he stayed at Lancaster Gate, the United Kingdom's church headquarters, in London, where True Father was then residing [Father was beginning the Home Church providence there]. Hearing that a missionary from Africa was in the building, Father asked Robert to give his testimony. Father was interested to hear more about the sausage factory, and I was called to London. We were asked to make a report on what we had done. We waited for three days for an audience with True Father. It was the first time I met Father and I was rather nervous. Robert and I gave our report and Father said he wanted us to continue the project and even to expand into other countries. It was clear to us that we would have to continue beyond the original three years that the mission had been expected to last. Perhaps an official notification was sent out to all missions to carry on, but I don't remember one. In any event, our foundation was not strong enough after the three years; and the main concern was to leave a foundation that local members could continue to develop on their own.

Father mentioned that we would have to learn different skills – plumbing, bricklaying, welding and so on, to build new facilities. We did a lot of work by ourselves, making building plans, making concrete blocks, doing electrical installations, starting a repair shop for cars, a carpentry shop and so on. This was good training, of course, and saved money.

Father knew that many people in Africa were lacking even adequate food. He wanted to feed the people and provide them training to improve their lives. He looked at a map and gave details and plans to help Africa. He told us to buy a certain number of pigs and make a certain amount of product. This was written down and Father signed it. We have kept that as the founding document of our company.

This meeting left a deep impression on me. Later, I often reflected on it. Father could sense my thoughts. He saw me clearly. A Blessing Ceremony had been held in London just before that. Father asked me why I was not yet blessed. When I said it was because we were out in the wilderness, Father laughed.

Back in Zambia, we reopened the factory, and sausage making recommenced with new zeal. We trained several of the new members. We imported machines from Germany and expanded the variety of our products. Now we were producing different types of sausages -- polonies, salamis, and so on. Father had spoken about fish sausage; I made several tests with fish sausage and smoked fish with good results, but since Zambia is a landlocked country, we could not get the type of fish needed for regular production.

In 1981, I visited Kinshasa, Zaire; Douala and Yaounde in Cameroon; and Lagos, Nigeria to do feasibility studies for new sausage factories in West Africa. I found it quite promising.

Over a short time, nearly twenty brothers from various countries -- Zaire, Kenya, Cameroon, Nigeria,

South Africa, Ivory Coast and Tunisia arrived for training at our sausage factory.

It became an international training camp! All brothers worked responsibly and learned various production and management skills. During their free time, they witnessed. Our products became known nationwide, because they were the best. Our policy was to represent True Parents to the best of our ability in all aspects of life.

In June 1987, we opened a small factory in Kampala, Uganda. From Kampala, I went to Kinshasa with a brother who had also completed his training. We arranged everything in a rented building. Under Mr. Abdel Mesbah, who was in charge of businesses there, members began to build a good company. The products sold easily. I returned from Kinshasa with an attitude of repentance and reflection on True Father's vision for Africa. I felt I could not do enough to meet Father's expectations.

In the following years, factories in Douala, Cameroon, and Bangui, Central African Republic, opened. One of my responsibilities was to visit and advise the new sausage factories, so I travelled once or twice a year and held seminars for further business education.



The factory in Zambia has expanded greatly in size and become more automated and productive since

Challenges and development

The late seventies were quite tumultuous with liberation wars going on in Rhodesia and South Africa, fierce civil wars in Angola and Mozambique, and political instability in Zaire. Zambia did not actively participate in these conflicts but hosted many freedom fighters, which operated from camps here. The country also became the home of many refugees. Prominent freedom fighters stayed in our neighborhood in Lusaka West; at times jet fighters screamed overhead and bombed training camps, and machine-gun fire could be heard. The situation was extremely tense. In this confusion, I was once arrested as a suspected South African spy. I spent a night in a prison cell.

With the end of the civil war in Zimbabwe, in 1979, the situation improved, though armed robberies still made the country dangerous for several more years.

In February 1980, the Holy Spirit Association was approved and registered. The Unification Church of Zambia was finally born. We opened more witnessing centers and held regular workshops, so our church expanded. From about twenty members, we increased rapidly to thirty. The witnessing centers financed themselves through a delivery service of our meat products to homes, offices, banks and so on. It was also a means to train the members to survive financially. Over time, we set up a number of other projects, including a clinic, cattle ranching, gardening, light engineering and baking.

The missionaries were invited to attend the celebration of Father's sixtieth birthday on February 21, 1980. Immediately after that, I attended my first forty-day workshop, in New York City. It was an unforgettable experience; we visited the Belvedere training center for Sunday Pledge Services, where Father usually addressed the congregation. Through the lectures, testimonies and living with other missionaries, we were able to broaden our horizons and gain greater vision and new inspiration for our mission work.