

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Jack Corley - Joining, the Best Decision of My Life

Knut Holdhus
September 17, 2024



*Jack Corley on the southern coast of South Korea
May 10, 2023*

After becoming a member 51 years ago, Jack Corley realised it was the best decision he had ever made

Part 4 of an interview in Episode 2 of "Why I Stayed - [Unificationist](#) Stories", where Jack Corley, a farmer's son from Ireland, tells his story.

See [part 1: Reason for Joining: God Became a Reality](#) See [part 2: More Than a Belief: Finding a Living, Loving God](#) See [part 3: Importance of an Ideal When We "Marry Reality"](#)

See the [video of the interview](#)

Presenter: We were talking about the nice feeling, amazing experiences that you had joining the [Unification Church](#). And how lucky you were to have your siblings there, because I think often a person who decides to change his or her life so drastically faces a lot of misunderstanding from family or friends. How did your life change the moment you stepped on this path?

Jack: Well, basically I would say, first of all, the truth of what I heard made a deep impression upon me because it gave clear guidelines about what is right and wrong. I was at the point in my life where I was really questioning all the things that I had been taught as a Catholic, the issue of morality of various kinds.



*Travelled the world: Here, Jack Corley with globe
in Irvington Library, New York, USA*

When I heard the [Principles](#), I understood that it answers those questions. I felt it was something that I would like to have as a guideline in my life.

As a student, when I was studying in Cork, one of the things I studied was navigation. And the reason I was doing that was I wanted to become a ships radio officer and then travel the world and just see the world before settling down.

Here I thought that travelling the world would be okay, but of course you can really go astray when travelling the world. But I found there's an ideal here which even if I travel the world, I can actually do it and do it right. When I joined the [Unification Church](#), I didn't realise that I would end up travelling the world.

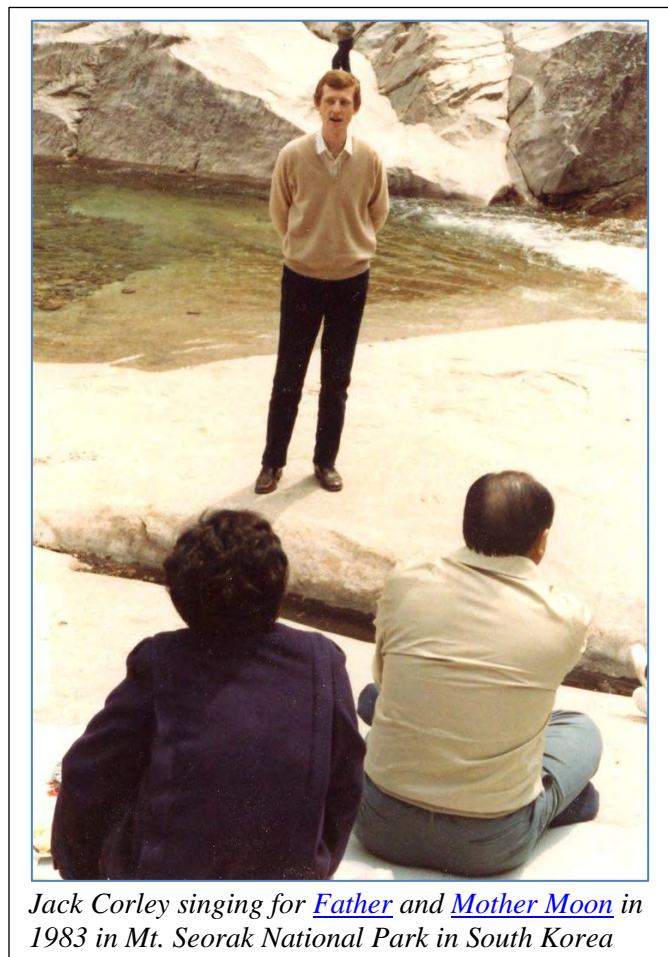
Maybe I wasn't paid as much as I would have otherwise as a navigator on a ship, but nonetheless I felt that was a great benefit also at the time, of course, I didn't know that I was going to be travelling all over the world.

So the big issue though is I found a way to live a more moral life, I would say. And that was

always something that I felt inside, that life is meaningful if you can live a more moral life. I did not want to fall into a trap of promiscuity, drugs, all these things which were a big issue among my friends actually at school. I felt I could not take that path. And I felt reinforced when I heard the [Divine Principle](#).

Presenter: So you came to live the life of your dreams, but there was another way leading there. Were there any rough moments, rough times?

Jack: Of course. I remember reading some articles in various media which were very critical of our movement and our founders. And it put some thoughts in my mind, "What if this is wrong? What if this is not really true, and [Reverend](#) and [Mrs. Moon](#) were charlatans?" And I had to wrestle with that.



Jack Corley singing for [Father](#) and [Mother Moon](#) in 1983 in Mt. Seorak National Park in South Korea

But the ideas were so strong, so rational to me that I just felt it's true. And of course, I met [Reverend](#) and [Mrs. Moon](#) many times in the course of my 51 years in the movement. I have no doubt about their genuineness and have no regrets whatsoever. After half a century, I have no regrets. I believe that the decision that I made in 1973 to join the movement was the best decision in my life.

Presenter: That should be amazing to feel that way. At hard times, when you were in doubt, or there were some things coming at you, what would you say made you stay? We already talked about why you joined, but a lot of people join, and then they leave, all confused and unhappy. And here you are, being absolutely content with your decision. What made you stay?

Jack: Well, again, the strong belief in the ideal of the [Principles](#), but also in the integrity of the founders of the [Unification Church](#), and in my experience of travelling the world. I've met our members in all kinds of circumstances, whether from the jungles of Mindanao to the steppes of Russia, to the south of India, wherever, or here in Ireland, where I also worked for some time. I always felt the

genuineness of the people and the conviction that they have about the belief that they now follow. So to me, that was a reinforcing experience.

And of course, we talk about each other being like brothers and sisters in our movement. And I feel this is not just a cliché; this is a real experience. We do feel that way among each other.

When you struggle with something, you can actually talk to somebody who very well understands, because they share your vision, share your faith, and they're able to guide and support you in times of difficulty. You have a worldwide family.

To be continued. Part 5 coming soon.

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Importance Of An Ideal When We "Marry Reality"

September 16, 2024 • Knut Holdhus

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Man of experience emphasizes the importance of an ideal when we try to build a most important relationship that is meant to last



Found more than a belief: Jack Corley in August 2024. Photo: Screenshot

Part 3 of an interview in Episode 2 of "Why I Stayed – Unificationist Stories", where Jack Corley, a farmer's son from Ireland, tells his story.

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Presenter: And as we jump to the family here, let's talk about that. Unification Church [now Family Federation] families are building "ideal families", as you said, and the Kingdom of Heaven on the earth. How is it going on in real life?

Jack: It's challenging. However, I believe that without a vision, as the

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Bible says, people perish. We actually need to have an **ideal**. But sometimes the practical realisation of the **ideal** is not easy. It's never been. But I do believe that based on our understanding, it is achievable. And I think that will become more real as time goes by.

Through our tradition of **Blessings**, as we call them, we believe that **God** should be a central part of a person's life and family life.



A happy family in 2012. Photo: Catherine Scott / Wikimedia Commons. License: CC ASA 2.0 Gen

If we can achieve that in reality, then we will build happier, healthier and more joyful families.

But not everyone succeeds. That's just the reality that we have to deal with.

Presenter: Would you say your couple is different from other couples?

Jack: I'm hesitant to use "different" because it sounds like exclusivity, and religion has often been guilty of that. [...]

Presenter: How long have you been married?

Jack: I've been married since 1989. My wife is from the United States.

Presenter: And I would assume she is a member of the **Unification Church** [now **Family Federation**].

Jack: Yes, she is, yes.

Presenter: All right, so you then probably dream of building that "ideal family" we just talked about. How does it come around?

Jack: Well, to be very frank, we believe in an **ideal**, but we marry reality. And of course, reality means having to bring a man and a woman together. That's the same for any **marriage**.

But what is an advantage, I would say, in our case, is that we do not just look at each other, but we look together at a **vision** for our future and how our family should be. Without that kind of **vision**, it's very difficult to have a guideline how to create a happy and successful family.

Through many trials and errors, like any **marriage**, my wife and I have developed a very happy relationship. Now we're both 70 years old and we are, I would say, in a very happy stage in our life. And I think that's the result of the common **vision** that we have about **marriage** and family.

Presenter: I think **relationships** and how to build sustainable, long-term **relationships** is always a big question. A **vision** is great, but what if you break it down to reality? How is it reflected in your day-to-day life?

Jack: One of the things that's a central motto in our movement and in our life is the concept of "**true love**". And what is that defined as? **Living for the sake of the other**. Let's say we habitually begin to think like that, in other words, when I wake up in the morning, shouldn't I think about my wife? How is she doing? Did she sleep well? Is she healthy?



Waking up. Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator, 16th September 2024.

And if we learn to practise that, make it a habit, then we mutually support one another. If we become self-centred, problems begin to arise. But when you try always, and with a sincere motivation, to be there for the other, then you are much more likely to succeed. I believe that's the root of where we're at right now.

Presenter: It sounds perfect. I live for your sake; you live for mine. It's an

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ongoing, constant effort. That sounds really great.

Slightly edited text

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Featured image above: A couple looking towards an ideal. Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator, 16th September 2024.

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