

FFWPU Japan: Bang Sang-il: Korea and Japan which live for the world

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Good morning, everyone!

Today is April 24. On the same day in 1998, I came to Japan for my mission here. It's been twenty-five whole years.

On March 11 of that year, True Father unexpectedly gathered a group of Korean leaders and entrusted them with his hopes for our mission to Japan. There were 185 leaders and they all came to Japan, the early ones arrived in 10 days of that meeting but no later than a month did the rest come. On the other hand, it took me more than 40 days to prepare. Do you know the reason why? It was because I did not want to come to Japan.

My father had worked as a forced laborer in Japan. He worked in a coal mine in Iwate Prefecture for two years. Many of his co-laborers died due to the hard labor.

My father was very strong, physically. Among hundreds of laborers, a Japanese soldier praised him, saying, "You look strong." In Korea, a rice bag made of straw used to weigh about 80 kilograms. My father was able to stand up and lift one of these bags with a rope tied around it. He was so proud of his strength.

But as he worked in the mines, his body started breaking down. As he thought about his deceased co-laborers, he was overcome with anxiety. One day, he had a gut feeling that if I did not escape from the mines on that day, his life would come to an end. My father ran away and walked some 2,000 kilometers to Shimonoseki (Yamaguchi Prefecture).

About a week after he arrived home, Korea was liberated from Japan. At that time, my father was 24 years old. He never spoke Japanese again.

In Korea, the schools thoroughly teach the period of Japanese rule of the Korean Peninsula. Korea was deprived of its diplomatic rights by the Eulsa Protectorate Treaty in 1905 and annexed by Japan in 1910. The country was liberated in 1945, but it is not easy to erase this 40-year period from the memory of the Korean people - of the blood, sweat, and tears of hardship that the nation endured. I grew up hearing my father speak harsh words against Japan; he had survived those tough years in his life. So, it wasn't surprising that I had come to dislike Japan.

In Japan, when a child doesn't stop crying, don't we say, "Onigakuruyo (The demons are coming)," or "Obakegakuruyo (The ghosts are coming)"? In Korea, we used to say, "Japanese soldiers are coming." The moment the children heard those words, they stopped crying. They were afraid of the Japanese soldiers that much.

(Koreans pleaded that) we would never have a peaceful life unless we broke free from Japanese rule. In response to the people's cries, patriots rose up in the independence movement. The independence activists are still deeply respected by the Korean people.

Do you know An Jung-geun, who is considered a righteous man in Korea? He assassinated Japan's first

Prime Minister, Hirobumi Ito, the first Resident-General of Korea, in 1909. He was 30 years old. He left his wife and three young children behind and was prepared to give his life for the independence of his country.

To the Korean people, An Jung-geun is a hero. Even so, murder is something that should never be done.

Koreans who worked hard to protect Japan and Japanese who raised 3,000 Korean orphans

Japan has been a leader of Asia since that time. It won wars against the Qing Dynasty and the Russian Empire, which both had vast areas of land. Then it attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii and plunged into the Pacific War against the Allied Powers, led by the United States. At that time, it was Shigenori Togo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, who consistently opposed advancing the war (in America). He argued that the U.S. much stronger than the countries with which that had fought to that point. But his voice was not heard. Despite the tremendous sacrifices made by the Japanese people, Togo made efforts to protect the nation (maintain the Emperor System) and bring an end to the war.

In fact, Togo was a descendant of a potter who was taken from the Korean Peninsula during the reign of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. He was born in Kagoshima Prefecture under the name Park Moo-deok. During his childhood, the Park family purchased a family stipend from a samurai family that called itself Togo and entered its family register, thus giving him the name Shigenori Togo. Please keep in mind that a person of Korean origin played an active role in protecting Japan.

After the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration by the imperial decision of Emperor Showa and the Pacific War ended. If the war had continued, atomic bombs might have been dropped on other major cities such as Tokyo and Osaka. If that had happened, what would have happened to postwar reconstruction?

The occupation policy of Japan was implemented by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces. Its head, General Douglas MacArthur, decided that it would be easier to control the Japanese people by protecting their national identity, and so Japan came to exist as it exists today.

During the Japanese colonial period, many Japanese went to Korea. After the defeat in World War II, most of them returned home, but some Japanese women stayed behind as they had married Korean men.

One such woman was Chizuko Tauchi, who, along with her husband, dedicated their lives to helping orphans in Mokpo, in the southern part of the country. Even after her husband disappeared during the Korean War, she devoted herself to the cause, protecting and raising 3,000 orphans. She was the first Japanese to protect the lives of Korean orphans when everyone else was busy saving their own lives.

She is known as the "Mother of Korean Orphans" and is still honored by the Korean people for her dedicated life.

True Parents encouraged marriages between citizens of previous enemy states

Unless Koreans live for the Japanese and Japanese live for Koreans, Korea and Japan will forever be countries that hold resentment and enmity, and will never intersect as one.

I was blessed by True Parents to have a Japanese wife despite my father having a deep resentment toward Japan. Of course, I was very much conflicted. However, as I practiced the teachings of "living for the sake of others" and "loving the enemy" that True Parents showed me in substance, my hatred for Japan disappeared.

True Parents told us that individualism is one of Satan's principles and is just as problematic as communism. Individualism is also prevalent in Japan. We must dispel the individualism that infests the world. Through "altruism," which True Parents emphasized, we should invest ourselves towards others, even if we are in a difficult position. That is true love.

Japan and Korea should not only think about themselves. Both countries should become one and live for Asia, and Asian countries should become one and live for the world. This is the teaching of True Parents and what the Family Federation should continue to appeal to the world.

True Parents have tried to bring the world together through international marriages. Among other things, they encouraged marriages between people of different countries who've had enmity between them: South Korea and Japan, Blacks and Whites in America, Christianity and Islam, Israel and Palestine... When people, whose cultures and customs were filled with vengeance towards each other, love and forgive and become one, peace will come to the world and spiritual resentment will be resolved.

Even if it is a Japanese-Japanese couple, if you trace back the lineage of each partner, they may be of

different backgrounds, such as Korean. Therefore, it is necessary to have the perspective of resolving historical resentment, rather than just looking at and loving the person in front of you.

Love the enemy through prayer

Prayer is great. When we pray, we can love the enemy in a strange way. However, the moment we open our eyes from prayer, we see the enemy again. So, let's walk around with our eyes closed. (Laughter) I'm only joking, but we should always walk with a prayerful mind.

For just a moment, think of a person that gets under your skin. Husband, wife, parent, child, neighbor, it could be anybody...When you pray, do you ever ask spirit world, "How can I discipline that person?" I think that even if you are filled with anger, you'll probably ask in prayer, "I want to love that person. I want to reconcile with that person, somehow. Heavenly Parent, what should I do?"

The more time you spend in prayer, the more your hearts will be purified and your lives will be filled with joy. True Parents lived a life of prayer. If they did so, shouldn't we, their children, imitate them?

There is a world you will never understand unless you become a parent. Becoming a parent is worth more than money.

Recently, more and more young people are saying they don't want to marry in both Korea and Japan. This choice of not wanting to get married is not heaven's original desire. It is a great mistake to think that living alone is the way to happiness.

Men do not understand what women are thinking or feeling. Conversely, women will not understand men. The more a couple enters each other's world of the heart, the more treasure they will discover which shines like diamonds. That is why the life of a married couple never gets boring. Even if they spend a hundred years together, they will never lose this sense of stimulation.

In the (secular) world, couples try as much as possible not to provoke the hearts of their spouse, fearing that something terrible like a demon or a tiger may come out. We must break such a tendency. The Family Federation was established to teach the true nature of husband and wife, parents and children, and the family.

Many of the older senior members who led Korea's pioneer days had Christian backgrounds. If Christians studied the Principle without prejudice, I think most of them would've joined the Family Federation. Fearing that everyone would become a member of the Family Federation, pastors even tried to prevent their followers from joining, saying that it was heresy, or even Satanic.

The Divine Principle contains numerous quotes from Scripture with a more accurate interpretation than conventional biblical understanding. If you talk to a Buddhist, who is unfamiliar with the Bible, especially about the Fall, he or she might say, "What do you mean?" But when you talk to a Christian about it, they may be impressed.

If you know any Christians, please share the Principle with them. They have the potential to become better members because they have a good foundation of faith, since they study the Bible and pray from morning till night as they wait for the Second Coming of Christ to come on the clouds. It is true.

Faith begins with reflection

In Catholic cathedrals, there are confession rooms where followers confess their sins to a priest. After confession, the followers are forgiven by God and are resurrected, wherein they are able to work twice or three times as hard as before.

A person cannot be reborn unless he or she reflects on his or her own mistakes. (People accuse each other and say,) "You did this terrible thing to me!" "No, you did this to me!" As long as we keep blaming each other, we will never find a solution. Only when we forgive each other can we move forward.

Who in this world can claim that they have never sinned? If we go back to our parents, our parents' parents, and up our ancestral tree, many sins have been accumulated. Faith begins with reflecting on them before heaven.

"Heavenly Parent. I thought I had been doing my best, but I didn't realize my own mistakes and shortcomings..."

When you close your eyes and pray, no matter how hard you have worked up to that point, you will feel like you should've done a little more and feel unfortunate. Prayer is to reflect on your actions and strengthen your resolve. As we repeat this daily, the ground we stand upon will become as solid as

concrete, and our faith in heaven becomes unshakable.

Parents hope their children will be better than they are

Ladies and gentlemen. Get up from your seats and stretch and rotate your arms. It feels good, doesn't it?

One day, a teacher said to his students, "Stretching and rotating your arms are good for your health and brain function, so please do them a hundred times every day. All your wishes will come true. Believe in it and keep doing it." The students responded cheerfully and said they would do so.

Fifteen days later, the teacher asked how many of them had continued to rotate their arms every day and half of the students raised their hands. The teacher reminded them that if they do it every day, they would get better, smarter, and be more successful in life. When he checked again fifteen days later, only one student had continued.

The pupil who continued to believe in the guidance of his teacher was Plato. He is an ancient Greek philosopher with whom you're all familiar with, and the teacher was Socrates.

Plato also gave the same guidance to his own pupils. And the pupil who left his own mark was Aristotle.

Their thinking still influence the whole world today, don't they?

It was Alexander the Great who studied under Aristotle, who was his tutor. The great king succeeded to the throne at the age of 20, and after many expeditions, he had built a great empire that spread over Greece, Egypt, Persia, and parts of India by the age of 30. However, he died at the age of 32. No matter how vast his territory is, if you are called to the spirit world, you have to go.

Alexander the Great ruled his empire by force, but True Parents established a foundation in a hundred and ninety-four countries throughout the world with the Principle, given by Heaven. Missionaries have been dispatched to all countries. This great One is our Parent.

Parents want their children to be better than they are. But do you say it's impossible to be greater than True Parents and give up? Or will you clench your fists and vow to surpass True Parents?

The blessed second generation, Jacob's children, and the young first generation here today should move forward with the spirit of doing more than what True Parents have done for us. Please don't just dwell on the small things.

Take interest and work with the second generation who've grown distant from the church

Japan is the third largest economy in the world. How awesome is that? However, you should not think only about Japan. In Africa and other poor countries, many people are still dying because of poverty and starvation. True Parents have been helping such people all over the world.

Japanese members have supported the providence, that True Parents have endured, both spiritually and materially. I believe your fathers and mothers have dedicated their efforts for this cause. The opponents and the mainstream media condemn them, but what is wrong with working hard for the sake of world peace, or for those who are in a tougher position than we are?

There may be people here who feel that they did not receive love from their parents and that they were lonely. Do not let such feelings get the better of you. Fathers and mothers have seriously tried to realize one family under god, where people all over the world live happily as brothers and sisters under God the Parent.

One blessed second generation sister who is working against the church has voiced her complaints in the media that her mother had donated the money she saved from her part-time job. When I confirmed whether this was true with the mother, it was not true. However, the media only reports her side of the story and used her complaints to bash the Family Federation without confirming it the story with the mother.

Unfortunately, there are second generation who, like her, harbor resentment toward the church. I believe it is because of loneliness. Let us sincerely reflect on what we have lacked, and let us promote church reform so that we can surround them with love and protect them.

I am sure there are many second generation that you know who have not been able to come to church. They, like you, are blessed by heaven and are very precious. However, do you think it's alright if you only receive grace because you come to church?

I have six children. Each of them has a different personality, and some are not interested in church activities. Which do you think the parents will focus on more, the ones who attend church diligently or the ones who don't attend church? They would put more care into the children who don't go to church. They will constantly worry about them. I think Heavenly Parent and True Parents are the same.

Before participating in the 21-day workshop, many of you may only have thought about your own selves. However, you have been completely reborn through God's word. Now that you have been restored, your responsibility is to take interest in and work with your brothers and sisters who are distant from the church.

In addition, take more interest in the problems of society and pray to Heaven for each one. Let us strive to convey true love of the Heavenly Parent to all second generation and to society. If we do so, the Family Federation will grow by leaps and bounds.

Take action to keep grace from flowing away

Finally, there are four things I would like to ask of you.

The first is that you take action based on the grace you've received here. You can call your parents and say, "Thank you for allowing me to participate in the 21-day workshop. The Principle is truly wonderful." Or you can send a message to your second-generation friends and say something like, "The 21-day workshop was great! You should come, too!" You could even pay respect to your parents and tell them, "Now, I understand what the meaning behind the devotion you've made towards God's will. I respect that. I haven't been going to church, but I'll try and go with a new heart."

You may have received many blessings, but if you are not connected to the church, you will not be able to retain those blessings for long. It is not easy to change a habit.

When you pull on a coiled spring, it tries to return to its original position. But if you keep pulling on it to the point where the coil stretches too much, it will never come back. I urge you to keep going to church and keep pulling yourselves in the direction that Heaven wants you to go, so that you do not fall back into the habitual ways of the past. The church will protect your spiritual life.

Second, make sure to offer a tenth of your earnings. Express gratitude to Heavenly Parent and True Parents in your lives. Let us also give offerings of thanksgiving for the services.

Third, listen carefully to your leaders at church. They will provide words that will become your "flesh" and "bones".

Fourth, when you attend a church service, be seated 30 minutes before the service starts, or at least 10 minutes before, and be prayerfully so that your hearts can be prepared to receive the service. There is no need to speak out loud. In your heart, say, "Heavenly Parent, we are starting our week. Please guide us," and pray while naming family members, friends, and those that you're thinking of witnessing to.

I congratulate all of you on your new beginning. Thank you very much.