

Tribal Messiahship is our calling - Our motivation is that we felt called by God

David Earle
September 2018



As part of the Seonghwa anniversary event, the FFWPU International Headquarters held a workshop in a room above the main hall at the Chung Pyung Training Center for new leaders and seasoned leaders in new posts. One of the speakers was David Earle, who with his wife Patricia, practices a lifestyle of tribal messiah outreach. This article is an edited transcript of parts of his presentation that day.

My wife is not here, so, I'm at 50 percent power. We have been doing tribal messiahship for many years and we work as a team, as a couple. That's part of our "secret." Patricia is from Belgium. Everywhere we have gone in our mission and travels, she always did home church -- in London, in Manchester, in Massachusetts, in New Jersey and in Birmingham. Mother said, "Tribal messiahship is like an extension of home church."

Though we have been working as a couple, we feel that we are all working together -- we are working with you and you are working with us. I hope that through my presentation, you can connect to my city, Birmingham, and feel that we are working together.



Sometimes, the national leader can be a lonely position. If you feel connected, it's not so lonely. Tribal messiahship is the same. You can hear 430 couples or some other goal and you feel that it is difficult, unless you feel connected to each other. That is behind my presentation. I'll share just a few points about motivation and a little about methodology. We have been working at tribal messiahship for about twenty-seven years. I hope some of the things I say will be helpful to you.

Birmingham is a city of one million, one hundred thousand people, but it is almost 25 percent Muslim. Imagine! There are a hundred and sixty mosques in a West European city. The whole world is in

Birmingham. We have many Afghanis, Africans, people from Syria, different places. My wife and I find that exciting. A religious leader came to Birmingham last year from Ghana. He is a wonderful person and unusual because he was Sunni and he became Shia. That's not simple. He's open-minded and he loves the Family Federation; he loves UPF. He loves our work. We were able to give the blessing in his mosque, which had been a dream of ours for twenty-five years -- not just to bring people to the blessing but to take the blessing into a mosque. I will tell you more about that later.



Connect in heart

I went to Dakar, Senegal, in January. The main thing in Senegal I did was meet Dr. Sakena Yacoobi, a co-recipient of the Sun Hak Peace Prize. I felt I had come to Senegal to meet this person. I invited her, "Please come to Birmingham to speak," and she said, "Yes, I'll come." She's already come twice to speak in Birmingham. She is like the Mother Teresa of Afghanistan and the Middle East. She spoke to more than two hundred people in our home and spoke on a radio show.

She was an incredible choice by True Mother. When she finished speaking in our home, she wanted to record a special message to send to True Mother. She sent this message to True Mother straight away, because when she first met True Mother, she connected deeply in heart with True Mother.

The driving force

I'm coming now to my main topic, motivation. I used the words, "our responsibility" and "calling." If you were born into our movement, perhaps it's not simple. Certainly, most of us in the first generation to join our movement feel God called us. We had deep experiences to have this sense of a calling. To feel a sense not of having to do this, or being told to do this, but that this is my calling is important for tribal messiahship. God needs me to do this. When Father was lifting bags of fertilizer in Hungnam, he said in his autobiography that he was born to do that. That creates a different approach to what you are doing.

Father talked a lot about tribal messiahship in the early 1990s. We were in America at the time. In Belvedere, we were sitting on the grass, and Father was speaking about hometown. He said, If you feel you should go to your hometown, you should go. We had a deep feeling inside that we should go to our hometown. This made no sense: I had just gotten a green card [legal US residency]. I'd spent three years and a lot of money for legal fees to get a green card. I had a good job. The green card was waiting in London. All our future was in America, and then we heard Father. We felt we should go.

We felt a calling and we prayed deeply. It was not an easy decision; we had three small children, but we decided to go back. We've never regretted that decision; for us tribal messiahship is a calling. Our fundamental motivation is that we felt called by God through True Parents.

The warmth of a home

When we arrived back in the UK, we had just brought some toys for our children and our children's clothes. We had nothing, but within a year, we had a house. Why is that remarkable? When my wife joined, her parents kidnapped her; they handed her over to deprogrammers. They disinherited her. We

came back to the UK following God's calling and within a year, her father bought us this house. And this house has been the basis for all of our tribal messiahship. We feel that someone inviting us into their home is something beautiful and it's a privilege for us to invite someone into our home. That aspect of godliness is in home church.

As the number of guests has increased, we've had to make the house bigger. We had to extend the house four times. We had to extend our kitchen three times. This is the center of our work. Making people feel part of our family, our Unification family, and to treat each other like brothers and sisters is part of our motivation. If we go to a mosque or a church, we want to feel as if we are part of their family. Everything else follows that. If people feel part of our family, they will want to do things with us. They want to go to the blessing or come to Korea because they feel a heart connection. That for us is the bottom line, a heart connection, a sense of trust that we can build. Whether it is us going into a church or a mosque or welcoming people into our house, we want to take care of people as members of our family.

In our living room, we can seat around a hundred and twenty people. We had to build an extension from what used to be a garage for cars. We made it into a meeting room. Over the last twenty-five years, maybe ten thousand people have come through this room. Sometimes we have forty or fifty nationalities in the room. It is a fantastic feeling.

We began at zero and it went up steadily over the years. When we have study evenings, we meet in the kitchen before we go to study the Principle in the other room. Sometimes the kitchen meeting is more important than studying the Principle, because people begin to feel that sense of family. They meet somebody, they start to chat and they eat together. Sometimes I have to ring a bell to get people to go from the kitchen into the other room. People are so happy, talking and making friends. Then they look forward to coming back to meet their friends.



Make an offering

The second important aspect for us is to offer everything upward. That's part of our motivation. My wife and I are not so interested in personal tribal messiahship -- whether it is forty, 430 or four thousand. We never counted the number; we just wanted to bless people. We just want to keep blessing people. It is important to offer everything upward. Rev. Song Yong-cheon was like a brother to us. We wanted to offer results to him to inspire him so that he could inspire True Parents and ultimately they could inspire God. Offering things upward is part of our method, if you like.

We do not take ourselves too seriously. It may seem like we have blessed many people but it's just a drop in the ocean. We never saw tribal messiahship as a purely personal thing. I like the idea that we are doing it together. If you do it in your community or nation, have a sense of togetherness; we are in this together. We can rejoice over each other's happiness.

Of course, we want to bring the people we meet to the blessing, a unique event when they can receive grace from God through True Parents, but we feel that before and after the blessing are also important. We commit ourselves to these couples and go on an eternal journey with them. That is our commitment to a couple as we bring them to the blessing. It's exciting, but it means we have to grow with that couple.

The journey

We've known some of these people for more than twenty years. One such gentleman, when we first met was not important; today he is the national co-chair for an interfaith group in Britain. He is in Korea at this time at the leadership conference. We've kept in touch with him. We always send him a Christmas card and we phone him sometimes. He came to Korea representing a national organization.

We commit to going on a journey with each couple or family because we want to arrive at the same destination together. I feel the same about you. I want to be at the same destination with you. If you aren't there, I'll come back to get you. If I'm not there, I hope you'll come back to get me. So the blessing is an important event but its not the only event. Before and after the blessing are parts of the journey.

Connected to going on a journey is the need to grow. If you start out at one point and later bless 430 couples, in the process, you should grow; you should be different people, because of your investment and your heart. Father said, "I have prepared a mountain of treasures for you. You will inherit them once you become a messiah," and just before Father passed away, he said, "I give you the name 'tribal messiah.'" We have to grow into that responsibility. "God will not help you, nor will I, my children or other church members. Still, follow me. Walk the same path I walked in the past. Afterward, you will have freedom."



Small acts of kindness

Another thing I like about tribal messiah work is that by relating to all of these people, you gradually become freer; you have fewer barriers. My children are also free, having grown up with all of the people you've seen in my house. They know people from Africa, the Middle East, everywhere. In the caring professions, they don't have any barriers to caring for people. It hasn't been easy for them because we've had public lives. It was a bit hard for them because our house was public.

In terms of how we work, we have a secret ingredient: Do small things consistently. Everyone can do small acts of kindness -- a birthday card, a telephone call, visiting somebody in the hospital -- but to do them consistently is not easy. Small acts of kindness done consistently and treating others as family builds trust. We send our Christian friends an Easter card. In Islam, they say the ones who feed those who are fasting get ten times the blessing. We visit hundreds of our close Muslim friends during Ramadan. It's an effort, in the evening when you're tired, but once you're there, it's a beautiful experience. That's the foundation for our work. Our children have inherited that, too. They will bake a cake and take it to our neighbors. That is the magic ingredient to our work -- not something theological or big. My wife's favorite quotation is from Mother Teresa, "Not all of us can do great things but we can all do small things with great love."

Bringing extremes together

Another thing we like to do is to connect to and serve people from the top of society to the bottom of society. In the UK, we have a good foundation in Parliament. We have had perhaps two hundred meetings in the British Parliament. We meet members of Parliament at the top. One problem in our work today is that often politicians forget the people at the bottom, not necessarily deliberately; they are so involved in meetings in Parliament. Likewise, the people at the bottom don't trust the people at the top. In your work as national leaders, if you meet your president or prime minister or religious leaders, don't forget the people at the bottom. If you are working at the bottom, try to connect that to the top. I will give you some examples.

I organized street cleaning in Birmingham and through that, we met a member of Parliament. Not long ago, my wife joined a women's group and went door-to-door, helping raise money with a Sikh organization. You might ask, What value is that to us? The value was that we met Lord King. We were raising money for the elderly. The lady in charge told my wife, You bring some white elderly people. I will bring some Asian elderly people. We have black elderly people.

The guest speaker at the event was Lord King, who became the foundation for all of our work in the British Parliament. He was one of two people, chosen by Mother, who spoke at Father's Seonghwa Ceremony. The point is, try to connect the bottom and the top. He is an incredible person but we met him from the bottom.

Another point is to utilize women's unique qualities. Father said, "In the Last Days women need to take the lead in overcoming conflict, strife and division with their motherly love and create a new history of reconciliation and unity." For my wife and me, the age of women is the age of the couple. Yet, women have a unique role to play in blessing and in tribal messiahship. If you make a connection to the women, you can reach the husband, the children, the community. Women are of course concerned about their children's education, purity and future. Women are usually looking to be peacemakers, to reconcile and bring others together.

We have regular activities connecting to people and doing little acts of kindness. We have regular activities that we can invite people to and build friendships: peace meetings, family evenings, where we share the Principle, interfaith worship and the Interfaith Peace Blessing, which we hold at least once a year. We hold those four activities on a regular basis. We invite brothers and sisters and we invite our friends.



Events that draw people

We have speakers from all over the world. Someone will come to speak about Syria or Afghanistan or Turkey. We will hold a discussion and we will see what we might do help practically. At a typical family evening, people come to study the Principle -- old, young, black, white, oriental. We hold interfaith worship services in a Muslim educational institution.

We have Family Federation, UPF and the Women's Federation. Through these, you can connect to just about anybody. We've found that when these organizations work together, amazing things happen. Even if you are not part of UPF or Women's Federation, keep up with their activities because that gives you the capacity to talk to people about what we are doing.

Not long ago, I was in London so my wife had to take a taxi to a meeting. The driver was from Afghanistan. Patricia spoke to him about Dr. Yacoobi, and at the end of the journey, she asked him how much it was, and he said, You're my guest. You don't need to pay. She wanted to pay, but she gave him our card and he came to our next family evening and he came to the blessing with his wife. She had something she could connect with him about.

Floodgates are opening

In Western Europe, we are trying to take the blessing to the mosque or church. So we need to connect to the good work being done in society. If we go into communities, work with those communities, recognize their goodness and devotion so they feel comfortable with us, it's possible to bring the blessing into those communities. It takes a bit of time and we sometimes have to change our mind-set a bit to do that.

The women in one mosque completely accept Patricia. They all face Islamophobia and many difficulties. We have helped that mosque to reach out to their local community. Last December 23, their young people wrapped two thousand roses and on each rose put a label with a saying from Prophet Mohammed on one side and one from the Bible on the other. On the city streets in Birmingham, they gave the roses to members of the public as a gesture of peace and goodwill. We can do this with them because they trust us.

For two or three years we considered how to bring the blessing into this mosque. We began giving blessing presentations to elderly people. Some of their people had come to the interfaith peace blessing, but we were thinking of how we could bring the blessing to their mosque. Seven or eight weeks ago, it happened. They were having a national meeting, all the ladies in one room, all the men in another. My wife had had a dream the night before that we were giving the blessing in a religious place. She didn't

know if it was a church or a mosque.

We prepared holy juice and brought a hundred cups. People had come to the mosque from all over the UK. When she got there, she realized it is possible to give the blessing today, but there were about two hundred and fifty people. She called me to ask me to bring more cups and holy juice. My phone was on silent. When I got the call, I had thirty minutes to multiply holy juice, get more cups and rush to the mosque. They had just finished their prayers. Five ladies went around with the juice on trays with them. There was such a beautiful, holy feeling! They took it with such devotion. They all took the holy nectar.

Since people had come from London, Leicester and other cities we can take the blessing into their communities. Patricia already has gone to Peterborough. She has laid the foundation to take the blessing to those cities. One lady there is the wife of their president in Europe, so we have the possibility of going to Europe.

It's all on the foundation of trust -- at Ramadan breaking fast with them, making friends. You know True Mother's expression "create the environment for witnessing." We feel this is doing that; going to where people are and building friendships and trust, being with them and becoming part of them.

We feel it's important to provide education before giving the blessing. People who receive this education tend to come even if they are involved in other activities. We have a nice slide presentation developed by Tim Miller. We try to give this one-to-one in our home or to groups of people, in this case in a mosque. We tell people, You are renewing your relationship as a couple so it is a personal experience. As a couple, you are going to become part of a new lineage, create a new future, but you are doing this with people from all over the world. This blessing is taking place in Korea, in Turkey, in Afghanistan. People are so inspired, in our experience, because it's personal but it is connecting them with brothers and sisters all over the world.

We've held the blessing in a church, in a Hindu temple, in a Christian community center; in the Hindu temple in 2017, we had made plans for a hundred and fifty people. People started coming and coming and coming. Over three hundred people came. The floodgates opened. I am confident that wherever you are in the world, the gates are opening for the blessing. In whatever your country, the gates will open.

A summary

This work has allowed Patricia and me to bring our family together -- the concept of the Cain-type tribe and the Abel-type tribe... There was fighting in our family, but we could bring them all together on this foundation. In summary, consistently invest in people -- directly or by telephone, whatever. Commit to going on a journey with people; that's an eternal commitment. Discover the beauty of sharing the Principle. Try to make the Principle relevant to their particular day-to-day lives. Give them access to True Parents' lives; give them the autobiography. Share your personal testimony. UPF, Women's Federation... Share all our activities with them. From the top to the bottom of society, bring people to the blessing and beyond. Whatever you do, wrap everything in love.

Develop an unconditional heart. Of course, that's a constant challenge, a never-ending journey. Let's keep moving forward together, you and me, Birmingham and Kyrgyzstan, Birmingham and Afghanistan. Let's do it together.