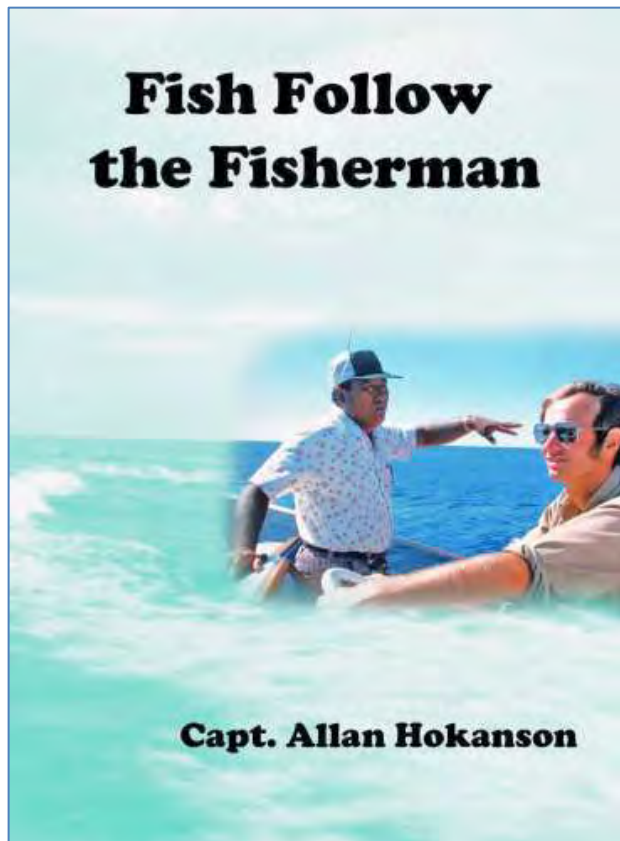


Fish Follow the Fisherman

Adapted by Michael Mickler from Allan Hokanson's book
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In the early 1960s, in the little-known land of Korea, a man with a great vision had begun the work of developing the ocean's resources by tending fish traps on the coastal mud flats.

He then looked toward the oceans of the world with the heart to provide food for all humankind facing the world's growing population and the shrinking resources on land.

Meanwhile, across the ocean in the USA, and unknown to me, I was being prepared to take up the challenge of a life with God on the ocean. From the day I stepped aboard a boat bound for Alaska in 1966, my life would never be the same.

In a few years, our paths would converge. Rev. Sun Myung Moon came to America in the early 1970s with a plan that included unlocking the secrets of the ocean.

As the first captain of his boat, the *New Hope*, I had the great fortune to be with him from the beginning of the ocean providence in America. Suddenly I found myself at the controls of a high-performance sport fishing boat with Rev. Moon at

my side -- his life in my hands.

The hours at the controls seemed unending as records fell to this extremely successful fisherman. Every day the first three fish were released so they could "bring back their friends," and it seemed to work as we loaded the boat with them all.



However, more important than navigation skills was my need to unite in heart with True Father (as I came to know him). I was determined to keep up and have the boat ready whenever he was ready to go.

Father never slept on the boat for more than three hours a night. Also, he never ate more than one meal on the boat each day.

Sometimes, his directions were contrary to my own thinking or experience. In such cases, it became necessary to let go of my concepts and find a way to accomplish his desire safely.

Ten Years on the *New Hope*

There I was at the helm of the *New Hope* with Father at my side. This was not an ancient harbor ferry, but a brand new 48-foot sport fishing boat. With two 380 HP diesel engines, it cruised at 22 knots -- one of the fastest boats in its class at that time. I'd been at the helm many times and on much larger boats but this was the first time to be at the controls with the Messiah sitting next to me.

Needless to say, I was nervous. I also knew Father kept a very demanding schedule. During that time, we would leave around 3 a.m., go fishing all day, and return to East Garden at 11 or 12 at night.

Father quickly demonstrated his amazing ability to catch fish. On one occasion, he got 120 bluefish in 12 hours, and another time 360 bluefish in 24 hours. And none of the fish ever went to waste. They always went to feed the members. However, from the beginning, the main purpose was never to catch fish, but to train and educate. There were always guests on board, ranging from fundraising teams to national leaders.

In Search of Giant Bluefin Tuna

It wasn't long after we started fishing that the owner of a local tackle shop told us about giant bluefin tuna. Father got excited at the mere mention of a fish over 1,000 pounds. So we bought six super heavy duty

fishing poles and reels, along with all the supporting gear, installed a fighting chair, and prepared the *New Hope* for the trip to Gloucester, Massachusetts.

Every morning we headed out early to the fishing grounds and every evening we returned home empty. In fact, during the two weeks we spent in Gloucester in 1974 only one fish was caught by the entire fleet. However, it was not a total loss. Many evenings found Father on the boat next door talking well into the night, learning everything he could about tuna fishing.

In July 1975, the *New Hope* returned to Gloucester to seek the giant bluefin tuna. Every day, Father went to sea very early in the morning to arrive on the fishing grounds before daylight. It wasn't long before we hooked the first fish, but due to lack of experience, it was lost. Two more fish were hooked and lost in the first three days. Although 13 more fish were hooked, the *New Hope* would go 21 days without landing a tuna.

We're talking about 1,000 pounds of muscle. A tuna can swim all day at 20 miles per hour with bursts over 50 miles per hour. He will take line at an unbelievable speed and, in an instant, turn and come right back at the boat, trying to cut the line on the propellers.



One of the many giant Bluefin tuna caught on the New Hope, ranging from 700 to 1,000 lbs. Pictured from left to right: Rev. Won Pil Kim, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Kenji (Daikon) Ohnuki, and Capt. Allan Hokanson.

Day 22, and the *New Hope* was on its way home with not one, but two tuna on board. This was the beginning of a new era in Gloucester tuna fishing in which Father would become known not only as a great fisherman, but also as a friend of the fishermen. Over the next eight years, Father would set the standard, averaging 35 fish in 70 days each season. No other fisherman could come close.

Rough Seas

One morning there was a storm in the forecast -- 50 knot winds from the northeast. Father said, "Let's go." Although the skies were dark and gray, the sea was calm as we dropped anchor and began fishing. Needless to say, we were alone. Over the next few hours, the wind and sea increased until we were taking water over the stern. It was time to go. By the time we stowed the gear and hauled anchor, I was looking up at waves from the fly bridge.

My eye level was 15 feet above water but the waves were cresting at least 10 feet above that. Quartering the waves, I attempted to find the low spots, and at all cost, avoid being hit broadside by one of those towering mountains. Wrapped from head to toe in yellow rain gear, being pelted with ocean spray and driving winds, I had to harmonize with the sea. Eventually, we got close enough to shore to begin getting some protection from the land, and I was able to swing our course up toward Gloucester. Four and a half hours later we pulled into the dock, glad to be home.

Friend of Fishermen

Around this time, three local fish buyers froze the price of tuna at 75 cents a pound. This was up from 25 cents a pound, but Father, knowing the value of the tuna, decided to take action, and give the fishermen their fair share. A small lobster company had been purchased by Unification Church members in Gloucester harbor and served as a tuna buying station. Then, under Father's direction, the opening price for tuna at the lobster company was \$1.50 per pound. How the other buyers howled! But within two weeks, everyone was paying \$1.50.

Sometime later, after everyone was comfortable with \$1.50, Father bumped the price to \$3, and again the fish buyers howled. But, as before, within two weeks they were all paying \$3. That was the last time Father intervened with the fish price. From that point on, the market forces took over and the tuna price

continued to rise over the years.

Ocean Church and Ocean Challenge

The beginning of Ocean Church in 1980 was an exciting time. Tuna season was over, and Father had gathered all the seminary graduates at Morning Garden in Gloucester. After explaining about the ocean providence, Father announced the first Ocean Challenge workshop would begin the next morning. As the primary instructor, I had just a few hours to prepare!

Every season after that began with an Ocean Challenge workshop. It was the most fun I ever had in the church, and all UTS students were required to attend. I taught navigation and seamanship, while other brothers explained fishing techniques. The program ran for 3½ days with lectures throughout the morning, and hands-on training every afternoon -- everything from knot-tying to boat operation and maintenance. The students practiced maneuvering around the dock and following a compass course.

In the end, everyone passed. At that point, my job was finished and participants joined the more experienced fishermen to begin their fishing adventure.

The All-Sisters Boat

After teaching a couple of seasons, I discovered that it was easier to teach the sisters than the brothers. With many of the brothers, first I had to explain why what they already knew was wrong, but the sisters were like sponges, soaking up everything with no preconceptions. So I wasn't worried when Father asked for an all-sister's crew. About 20 sisters volunteered and we began a special two-week training session to prepare them to take full control of a tuna boat.

The hardest job was selecting the four sisters to be on the all-sister's boat. All of them had good qualities, but none was skilled in all aspects. I had to put together a team that would cover all the bases. One was a good navigator, and another understood the gear. The third was a black belt in *tae kwon do* and had the strength to handle a tuna. The captain, however, wasn't the best in any of these skills. What she was endowed with was a mother's heart. The key to the success of this boat would be teamwork, and the captain must be able to bring the individuals together into one cohesive unit. Only a mother's heart could accomplish that.



The fleet engineer gives a lecture on the outboard operation and maintenance to the sisters who are preparing for the all-sisters boat.

And so they challenged the ocean -- four sisters in a boat. Every fisherman took notice, as the radio crackled with the news and all eyes were on them. That crew, which became known as "Allan's Angels," went on to catch more fish than any other boat except the *New Hope*. The key to their success was their unity.

Commercial Fishing

Father's vision for the ocean was to develop the vast resources hidden there for the benefit of all humankind. So out of his love and desire to feed the people of the world, True Father began investing in the fishing business.

I knew of Father's amazing success as a fisherman, and so the burning question was, "Can I do the same?" At the dinner table one evening Father had told me:

"Today, the fisherman follows the fish, but actually the fish should follow the fisherman."

Could this be true?

Looking back on our first season commercial fishing, I was in awe of how we were able to succeed in each new area. It certainly wasn't the result of our skills. We were inexperienced and the level of our skill was barely enough to survive. Every step of the way we were helped. Over the years, we had numerous opportunities to go ashore and experience the Alaskan wilderness. But fishing gave me the freedom to follow my heart and pursue my ultimate goal -- to become the fisherman the fish would follow.

The Secret

The life of a fisherman has been hard and challenging for me and even more for my family. However, through my life on the ocean I have had the incredible blessing of experiencing the words of True Father and God's Word as recorded in the Bible:

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the lord and his wonders in the deep." (Psalm 107:23)

Thousands of years ago, men were hunters and gatherers on the land but, as the population increased, this was no longer sufficient, so we learned to be farmers and ranchers. Today, we are still hunters and gatherers on the ocean, but as the resources onshore are depleted we will increasingly look to the ocean for our survival. In the words of Rev. Moon, "The era of just catching fish for food will pass. We have to develop ocean agriculture and ocean farming."

I see a future of true farming and ranching in the ocean. I can visualize underwater villages where farmers tend their crops or miners extract minerals from the ocean floor, and floating communities in the open ocean that can submerge at times of bad weather. My experience on the ocean tells me that one day this will all be possible. The future is bright, but it will take our combined efforts as brothers and sisters to bring it about.

Adapted by Dr. Michael Mickler from Allan Hokanson's book, Fish Follow the Fisherman. The book is also available in digital format.

Allan Hokanson has been a sea captain and fisherman (1966-2003), Sun Moon University professor (2003-14, retired), and now a Peace Road coach and rider (2014-). One lesson he learned from commercial fishing is if he did everything he could to have the boat and gear ready, and a pure and loving heart, God would take care of the rest. That has been the foundation for training the HJPA Peace Road teams who had only two to three hours a week for six weeks to prepare for the 600 km trek from Pusan to Seoul. They did all that they could and all exceeded him.