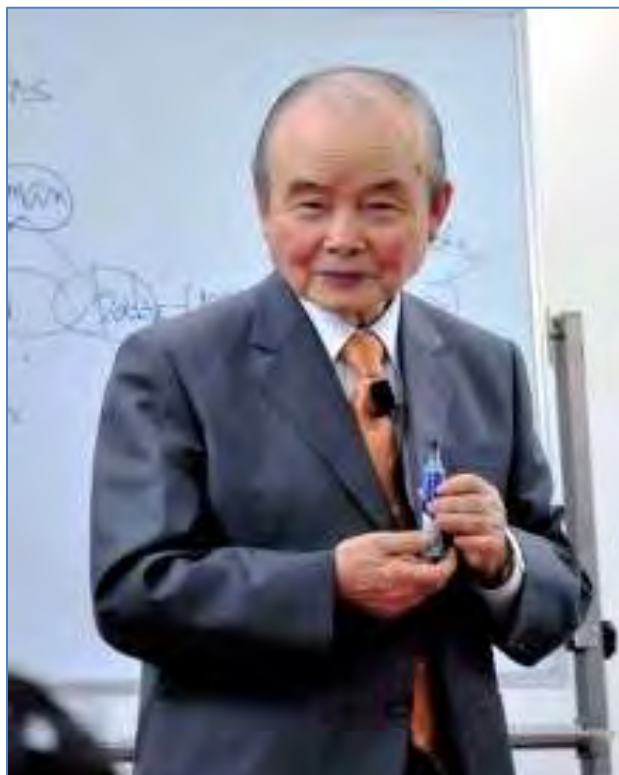


My memories from when I joined the Unification Church of Japan - Part 7

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During this period, other than the training itself, we had two very important experiences. The most important event was True Father's visit to Japan at the beginning of 1965. The second one was the experience of the 40-day pioneer witnessing. (The second one was important mainly for myself.) The first one is deeply connected with Father's second visit in 1967. Therefore, I want to conclude this part of the testimony with some experiences of our pioneer witnessing.

About sixty members were called to Tokyo to begin the 40-day pioneer witnessing in the spring of 1964. Papa-san Choi might have felt that I needed some spiritual renewal, so I was included in this project. I was happy, but anxious and worried at the same time. We were told that we were going the same course as Heavenly Father had gone. God lost everyone whom He loved; He was alone when He began witnessing. We have to go by ourselves. God lost all things to Satan, so we had to begin bare-handed. There was no place to sleep, and nothing to eat. By putting ourselves in God's situation, then we could understand "the Heart of God." With such lofty guidance, we began the pioneer witnessing.

By lot, I was assigned to Niigata City, whose population was about three hundred thousand. When I stood on the platform of the train station, it was sunset. I had never felt so lonely with so many people around me.

Please send me the most righteous person

I was fasting for three days. I bought a small city map, studied it and then went to the opposite of the city side (near the sea); I went up to a hilltop. Looking down at the lights of the houses, I began preaching to the city from the hilltop. As a condition, I declared the arrival of the new message of God. I went down to the street and, after much hesitation, began street preaching. At night, my request for shelter having been rejected by a minister, I slept on the landing of the train station. For several days, I slept there with the homeless. This was the beginning of my pioneer witnessing. I am sure almost all of us must have gone through similar courses.

I fasted, I did street preaching; I collected old newspapers; I visited door-to-door; I gave lectures. But no matter how much I tried, I could not understand the heart of God. This was my greatest difficulty. Especially for the sake of one hopeful student, for whom I finished the series of lectures. I thought he would join, but he rejected this and went his own way. According to the theory that I had lost a spiritual son, I should be feeling pain similar to when God lost Adam. But I could not feel anything. I was disappointed and frustrated to see such coldness in my own heart. I thought, "What a heartless person I am!" My spirit went down miserably. I was so depressed I felt like going back to my small, miserable room and just sleeping. Fortunately, the next moment I felt that I had to do some condition. I prayed to God, "I will do a forty-minute preaching condition; therefore, Father, please send me the most righteous

person in this city."

I was desperate! I preached forty minutes, but no one responded. At the end I found one old, shabby and dirty lady-like a bag lady, whose left eye was blind, standing in front of me. I did not pay any attention to her, because she was not the most righteous person in the city that I was looking for. However, when my speech was over, she took some wrapping from her sleeve and gave me all the money she had. She bowed to me, then went away without a word.

I did not know what to do. When I realized that without money, she had no place to sleep and would not eat anything that day, I began to run after her. But I couldn't find her.

That night, I sat down in my small room and meditated about God who, wanting to respond to His miserable son's plea, had gone through the city from corner to corner to find that righteous person. He could not find anyone but this lady. He then apologized to His son for His unsuccessful effort which He had been undergoing for tens of thousands of years.

Thus, I finally came to the point of feeling the broken heart of God, who had lost His sons and daughters and is calling to them day and night. I broke into tears, "Father, don't worry about me; I can do it, and I will do it." This changed my life of faith. I felt like I was reborn.



Seek first His Kingdom

There is one more unforgettable experience. At the middle of the pioneer period, I received a letter from Mr. Masuda who was doing a special condition to just witness and not fundraise. I was surprised, but it inspired me. I decided to do the same thing. I pledged two things: (1) not to fundraise and (2) not to eat by myself.

Soon I realized the seriousness of these conditions. The only way to get money was to receive donations. Even if I got money I could not eat by myself. The only way to eat was to witness to someone and eat together with that person. I went crazy for witnessing, but it was not easy to have a chance to eat.

By that time, I had two people with whom I could share Sunday service: one was an office girl who worked at a bank, and the other was a medical school student with a beautiful voice. He taught us holy songs. We had Sunday service under a pine tree on the hillside from where we could see the Sea of Japan (East Sea). It was a blue-sky church! I can never forget the atmosphere.

The next day was Sunday. Usually I invited them to lunch after Sunday service, but this Sunday I would not have the money for it. Since the start of my condition, I was eating just one meal a day. I began visiting door-to-door until 10 p.m., without success. Exhausted, depressed and without any power, I returned to my room. There, I found seven letters and post cards. I read them one by one. I found other brothers and sister were working harder than I was. These letters really consoled me. When I opened the last one, some money fell from the envelope. It was exactly the amount of money I needed for the next

day!

When I began the condition, I had felt I must prove Jesus' words: "But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be yours as well." (Mt. 6:33) So it was proven that Jesus was right. When I finished the pioneer witnessing, Papa-san Choi visited me and we had a meal together. It was the greatest blessing for me. I was very happy.



Sent off by two spiritual children, I left Niigata City by train. On the train, I looked back on the first pioneer experience in my life. I thanked God. I felt such a deep feeling of love for the city. My memories were inscribed everywhere: in the pine trees, the sea shore, street corners, and the landing of the train station. I remembered tears shed for God for the first time. I remembered the lady who offered all she had. I could not stop praying for the spiritual son and the spiritual daughter I left behind.

The next morning, I was really surprised to see the headlines in the newspaper. A big earthquake had occurred in Niigata City, which I had left only the day before. Bridges were broken and houses had fallen down. I was shocked, but I felt peace within myself. I felt that what Heavenly Father had done through me would never be destroyed.

In later years Rev. Sudo came to the United States and taught workshops. Even though his English was limited he could express amazing depth and goodness of heart, leading him to be greatly loved and respected by members there too. Although Rev. Sudo's wife has ascended, and although he is now in his 90s, he is still a full and active member of the Japanese church community.