

FFWPU USA Virtual Program: Never Defeated: Father Moon and Danbury

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"Many of us remember it like it was yesterday, we remember the heart and attitude that True Father demonstrated throughout that time, and the bravery and courage of our True Mother," said Dr. Thomas Ward. "[True Father's imprisonment] was such a sad day for our movement's founders, America, and Christianity. It was a heavy and difficult time, but True Father assured us that he would never be defeated, nor abandon his course."

Dr. Ward was among Unificationist leaders who spoke in the July 19 virtual program, "Never Defeated: Father Moon and Danbury," which honored the 38th anniversary of True Father's unjust imprisonment at Danbury prison on July 20, 1984. Some 525 Unificationists from around the world joined the program organized by the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS), FFWPU USA, and TribeNet.

An historic interview with Dr. Peter Kim, senior advisor to UPF International and longtime personal assistant to True Parents, was conducted by Dr. Thomas Walsh, UTS president and UPF International chairman. Dr. Kim recounted his personal experiences with True Parents as the caretaker of their children, as well as the time of True Father's 1982 trial for alleged tax evasion and his wrongful conviction two years later.

"I would always be the first person to sign up for visitation to see True Father [at the prison]," said Dr. Kim, who quickly got a condo in Danbury to be close by. "I'd go in and we'd sit on a bench. Sometimes True Mother would also join us, as well as other leaders ... She was his number one supporter, praying every day and every night."

Dr. Kim, who lost his own father during the Korean War at age four, described True Father as the father figure he never had. "Until I graduated from high school, I never said the word 'father,'" shared Dr. Kim. "When I learned the Divine Principle in 1965, I really fell in love with the word 'father' ... this word really lit me up."

Dr. Kim recounted his trip to Danbury prison before True Father's incarceration and the heart-wrenching realization that followed. "I talked to the warden about the next steps True Father had to take. By the end of the meeting, I almost knelt down on the concrete floor of his office and begged him, out of my ignorance and foolishness, that I could stay and be imprisoned with True Father. I was so desperate to protect him because of all the criminals at the prison."

The grave reality of True Father's imprisonment struck many people, who struggled with such injustice and religious persecution occurring in America. "I was critical of the prosecutor, the judge, and even, in a way, True Father's lawyers," said UTS Prof. William Lay. "But I had the impression that True Father didn't really look at it that way. I had the sense he wasn't blaming anyone and he was viewing this ordeal from a higher perspective."

"I remember how shocked I was to see True Father dressed in an old military uniform in prison," shared Dr. Walsh. "But I saw how much he totally invested in the people who were there with him. He gave them so much inspiration and hope ... I marvel at how much True Father accomplished in the midst of this tornado of difficulty."

True Father persevered through his incarceration with a forgiving heart of kindness and service. Mopping floors and scrubbing toilets, he was a model inmate who personally touched fellow prisoners and guards. In and out of Danbury, a deep respect for True Father emerged, as a number of inmates studied the Divine Principle and Bible with him, and supporters rallied on his behalf.

"True Father had a regular stream of visitors, including political and religious leaders," said Dr. Walsh. "There was an outpouring of support among Christian and religious leaders who were calling out the injustice."

"What True Father accomplished with this incarceration was three-fold," said Dr. Kim. "He laid a foundation for the revival of Christianity and our members' unity by sacrificing himself; he brought all the True Children together with internal unity by going through this course, and, all this clearly showed the kind of person True Father really was."

Nearly 40 years later, the powerful effects of True Father's sacrificial heart remain. "True Father decided to accept prison and love America even more," said Dr. Chong Sik Yong, FFWPU regional president of North America. "We should never forget this. Let us never forget True Parents' willingness to give everything to save America and all humanity."

You can learn more about True Father's life course in his autobiography available [here](#).