

Father's Early Ministry in Pyongyang - Part 3

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During Father's first imprisonment in North Korea after the Second World War, the Inside-the-Belly Church received the revelation that they would meet the Messiah in prison, just as Choon Hyun (the heroine of a famous Korean story) met her beloved in prison. They were also told that they would meet the Messiah at a time when they happened to be gathered together (not of their own planning).

One day in 1946, many leaders of the Inside-the-Belly Church spontaneously came to their headquarters. At that time when they were all together, the police came, arrested them, and threw them into prison. Several months afterwards, in August, True Father was also arrested and placed in the same prison.

The members of the Inside-the-Belly Church donated their money and property to the church; therefore, the police became suspicious and wanted to investigate them. Also, the members were so happy at the hope of receiving the returning Lord at their church. They had been given so many blessings from God, and they were always joyful, often singing and dancing together. To onlookers, their actions seemed very strange and became another cause for suspicion by the police. These were the two reasons behind the arrest of the leaders of the Inside-the-Belly Church.

Father had come from South Korea to North Korea [at a time when people were generally going from North to South, not the other way around], and he did not have an ID card, like the North Koreans did. Thus, the North Korean police suspected Father of being a spy sent from the South. This was one of the reasons Father was arrested at that time. Furthermore, our church seemed somewhat similar to the Inside-the-Belly Church. We were so happy; we would sing holy songs together, and in Father's house people were singing and talking day and night. Onlookers thought our behavior was very strange, and they became suspicious.

When Father was being held, the policemen would follow him everywhere, even to the toilet, because they feared he might use some kind of magic and escape! Also, they knew he had studied electrical engineering, and so they suspected that he had some kind of machine that could brainwash people. This sounds strange, doesn't it, but even now American people sometimes think Father uses some kind of magic.

For instance, during the tuna tournament of 1980, Father's boat caught many more fish than the others, some people thought we had some secret. They could not understand why Father's boat could catch so many fish; they thought we were brainwashing the tuna!

One of the most severe tortures of the time was to prevent a prisoner from sleeping. Whenever a prisoner was subjected to this treatment, after several days he would automatically confess to some crime, whether he had committed any or not. When they tried this torture on Father, policemen in shifts guarded Father at every moment. If he started to fall asleep they would do something to wake him up. Even when he went to the bathroom, several policemen would accompany him.

They subjected Father to this treatment for seven days, but during this time he trained himself to sleep with his eyes open, so he could sleep even when they thought he was awake. Therefore, he was able to persevere under this treatment.

The cell Father was thrown into was the same as that of one of the Inside-the-Belly Church leaders. When this man saw Father, he immediately felt an impulse to explain to Father everything about the Inside-the-Belly Church and confide in him about his own life.

The communists had given the Inside-the-Belly Church leaders two alternatives: to deny their revelations and be released, or to maintain their faith and stay in prison. Even under severe torture, they would not deny their revelations.

When Father heard about this, he explained to his cell mate why their church was prepared, and urged him to deny the revelation so he could be set free. Eventually, this man did deny the revelation and was liberated, but because of the severe torture he had endured, he died shortly after his release.

Father felt responsible for the woman who had received these revelations. In prison, it was very dangerous to write letters, but Father secretly sent a note to her on a piece of paper hidden in a rice bowl. The contents of the note were instructions to deny the revelations she had received and to pray to find out who had written the note. However, the note was discovered and Father was tortured. The Japanese had previously ruled Korea, and the torture in this prison was Japanese-style. It was severe and nearly unbearable. Finally, after about 100 days in prison, Father was set free.

When he came out of prison, Father vomited incredible amounts of blood. The members around him were very worried and thought he would die. But they took care of him and miraculously, he recovered. Immediately upon recovery, Father resumed teaching and giving guidance to the members.

The woman who was leader of the Inside-the-Belly Church could not accept Father's request that she deny her revelations and be released. You can imagine how difficult it would have been for her to do so. Because she had been guided by God directly and because whenever she neglected to obey even a small part of her revelations she was chastized by Heaven, to deny the revelations would have meant denying herself and everything she had done in the past. Through many experiences, she had learned that if she followed the revelations exactly, many good things happened, but if she did not follow them, bad things would happen.

So she knew that the revelation was absolute. However, the last revelation she received was that she would meet the Messiah in prison. Her own responsibility was to discover who he was. Father told her to pray in order to find out who had written the note, but she could not.

The leader was severely beaten, but she would not renounce her faith; eventually she died in prison. Furthermore, all the members of the Inside-the-Belly Church were taken to a concentration camp, and when the Korean War broke out, all of them were killed.

Daily church life during that time

There were old, middle-aged and young members of Father's church at that time, but I was one of the youngest members. The others, especially the spiritualists, seemed so wise, and I was almost in awe of them. Once I came to the church, I would remain there until somebody told me to go home. Sometimes I would stay a very long time. Of course, who would tell me to go home? Still, in Korea there was a curfew which began at midnight. When that time approached, I would leave, but sometimes even when midnight came around, members would stay on and listen to Father. So I sometimes joined them and remained there all night.

At that time, because people were searching so earnestly for truth, they would listen to Father, completely oblivious of the time. We would completely forget about the passing hours, because Father's lectures were so good, and we became so totally absorbed by them. When midnight came, often we didn't notice it. Many housewives would be among the group; some people had jobs which began at midnight; others were students who had to go to school. But listening to Father's lectures and guidance, we were all so happy that we cared for nothing else.

People forgot about their jobs, family and school, preferring to stay on and listen to Father. Among those who came regularly to the church were well-to do people, and the food they ate at the church was more humble than their food at home. But everyone agreed that the food at the church was more delicious than anywhere else. Father ate this humble food, along with the rest of us.

There were members who had stomach troubles, but when Father gave them food left over from his plate, they were cured. So the rumor spread that the food in the Unification Church was miraculous food.