

My experience at being matched by True Parents - Part 2

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Photo date and location unknown

Many people have victorious testimonies of being matched by True Father. This is not one of them. In telling what I remember of my second matching, I do not use the names of the others involved. Their side of the story is theirs to tell, if and when they choose to.

To go along with Easter weekend, I'm posting the failure story on Friday and the resurrection one on Sunday.

I was first matched back in 1981, only the second time I saw True Father. But she left the church bit by bit, and I didn't know what to do about it. I waited for many years for the next matching.

I had learned a few lessons from losing my first blessing. It's different from a marriage between two people; a blessing is two people on their path to God, and when they are both on their path, the relationship is clear. The other thing is that each person has their responsibility, and no-one can do it for them. Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Sigmund Freud and Tom Cruise could appear in person and talk to them, but if they don't do their part, not even God can change that.

You waited indefinitely in those days, never knowing when the next matching would be announced. For me, it was three years. Whenever one of the leaders of UTS rang the announcement bell at lunch or dinner, my nerves jumped, hoping this was it. After months of this, finally one day Dr Ang rang the bell and announced a matching in three days. I thought I was ready. I had been going to therapy for years and had worked out a lot of stuff.

But in the matching room, my emotions were flying all around like a roller coaster, like an untied balloon, and I couldn't calm down. I tried to find a calm, faithful place but surges of anxiety, hope and despair kept knocking me around. These few moments could determine the rest of your life. You don't want to do something wrong. And that made me even more nervous.

I had sudden thoughts of this one sister I vaguely knew and told President Kim about it. He sent someone to get her to the front so he could suggest it to Father. She didn't appear, and suddenly Father stood me up. He had with him a sister from the seminary that I knew and liked. But she had a teenage daughter. "She has baby. Is that ok?" Father asked. I was stunned. Not sure about instant fatherhood. Still thinking of the other sister. All I could do was make an indefinite grimace.

Father immediately started grabbing sisters who were standing up, grabbing onto one, then pushing her back and grabbing the next one. I looked at some of them and just about died. Then he grabbed a tall sister with long dark hair and pushed us together. We went up to the balcony of the Grand Ballroom. Found out we both spoke English, waved off the translators. Said hello. Then she pulled out a piece of note paper.

"I prepared some questions. Is that ok?"

“Sure.”

“How long have you been in the church?”

“9 years.”

“What is your mission?”

“Seminary.”

“Do you have spiritual children?”

“No.”

“Have you been on MFT?”

“Yes, 5 years”

“Good, that shows you have stick-to-it-iveness”

“I don't know how to ask this one. Are you, um....do you have a problem with....”

“Am I gay? No.”

“Oh. Ok.”

“Have you ever been blessed before?”

“Yes, once”

“I've been blessed twice. They both bailed out on me. If you're going to say no to me, do it right now, don't do it later.”

Woah, I thought. That's a little intense. Makes me wanna back off.

“Are you committed to the blessing?”

“Yes”

“What do you think?”

“You've got a temper, don't you?”

“Well, we can agree to be nice to each other.”

“Ok”

Here I was, absorbed in my 'I have a broken blessing' woes and here Father matches me to her, who has trumps on me with her two broken blessings. And already she's doing the grabbing thing, and I'm doing the backing off thing. Doesn't feel good.

I don't remember how we decided, but I felt a little compelled to be the good guy, do the right thing. We went and bowed to True Father, and I got a sinking feeling as I did it, because I wasn't 100% sure. We passed into the mezzanine, with the well-wishers crowded around taking pictures and squealing.

It was quite the scene, but imagine, you work with people, fundraise, sleep on the floor, get persecuted, eat baloney sandwiches together, see them at their worst, and then suddenly you get to see who they're matched to. Quite the show. An engagement party for several hundred. Well, she had her support group all ready to cheer and clap and take me aside to tell me to take care of her, she'd had a hard time. So good to see her matched, after all she's been through. But what about me?

Well, after a short eternity of that, we went outside to grab a bite at a diner. And standing on the corner, it just hit me full force. This was doomed. My stomach went down past my knees into the ground. I wasn't ready to commit, she was the spitting image of my mother when she was young, and her game was already stacked. She was the victim, she was the one who needed help. And I saw myself that same way.

I swallowed, turned to her and said "I'm sorry. I don't think I can go through with this." "But we just bowed to True Father!?" "I know, and I feel terrible, but it's not fair to you. I'm just not ready." "We should talk to someone." We went back in, snagged someone from the BFD who suggested we pray. She holed up with a sympathetic sister and I got her Japanese central figure in my face. "You, what you doing?" "I don't think I'm ready to commit to the blessing" "What your mission?" "Seminary" "Cemetery, no faith. She good sister. You pray, one hour, come back. You say yes or no. Go!"

I went, I don't know where. I tried going into Pat Detlefsen's therapy room, but it was occupied by the sister in question and another sister. So I went somewhere, I don't know where. I tried to gather myself in prayer, but my self was in full retreat mode. Get out of here, get away from her, it's already bad and it'll only get worse. I tried to rally my faith but it was just not strong enough, not as strong as the emotions that were raging all across the spectrum. (This was not an unusual thing to happen when you were around True Father, and especially happened a lot at the matching. It could last moments, hours or days. Most overcame it. This time, not me. My faith was not as strong as the emotional storm.)

Anyway, I couldn't find a yes. Nor could I find anyone to talk to on my side. At the end of the hour, I met with her. I don't remember who else was there, maybe her central figure, maybe another sister. "I'll understand if you never forgive me for this. I can't do it. I'm not ready. You go back in."

I had driven myself down in my little red Subaru wagon, parking in a lot far away to save a few dollars. An indication of how unfocused I was. I drove back up to the seminary, wondering how I was going to come back from this. I couldn't believe what I had just done. After waiting for 3 years, bowed to True Parents, then broken the matching two hours later. And hurt the seminary's reputation, to boot. If I'd had integrity, I would have just said no at the beginning. The rules for that matching were that if you refused your match, you didn't go back in. if you were the one who got refused, you could go back in and get rematched.

The crowd at the seminary were puzzled when I got back. "Sam, what happened?" Marilyn Kerins (now Angeluci) asked, "We were getting news on the phone and everyone let out a cheer when we heard you and she got matched. Then we heard you weren't matched anymore. What happened?" I had to explain it several times, and it hurt every time to have to say it. Anyway, she got matched again, to a very steady brother from down under, and as far as I know, they are still together.

I remember Peer Brunschweiler asking me what happened and I just said "Hey, man, take a look at a fool." He shook his head and said "You're not a fool." If I hadn't had friends to talk to me like that, I don't know how I would have gotten through it. And the thing was, most of them knew the sister I had been matched to. Plus, I had to look at the first sister Father had asked me about (and her daughter), every day at lunch and dinner, and in class. That was awkward.

But God knew a thing or two. When the Heung Jin Nim channeling explosion happened, this sister's fiance, a quiet British brother, was there. He got rather overwhelmed by it all and needed a rest. She asked me if I could take care of him. I agreed and he and I had what I called an 'old man weekend' where we slept a lot, ate a lot and sat around, not moving much. Very much like contented potatoes. It brought him down to earth. And serving and helping him was also enough to remove any strange feelings I had – which were plenty - 'Should have been matched to her, he's only here because I failed, Oh God what have I done, etc.' It was good to put them behind me.

The lesson for me was clear and impossible to avoid. My faith had to be stronger than my emotions. I had been so intent on wanting the matching that I hadn't checked if I was ready for it. I wasn't ready, and I don't think anybody could have told me. It is a very common thing to have emotional and spiritual attacks when True Father comes around, and especially so at matchings and Blessings. So the takehome is this: Make sure your faith is strong enough and deep enough to weather any emotional storms when you're going through a matching and Blessing. If it's not, you're going to be in for a very rough ride and you probably won't be in the saddle when it's over.

When the next matching came around a year later, Dr Ang asked me if I thought I was ready. "I think so." "What will you do if the same thing happens?" "If I find out I'm not ready, I'll just leave the matching. I won't go." He seemed to think this was enough.