

Chong Goo "Tiger Park" - Activist Holy Man

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In January of 1977, all CARP members on the East Coast were summoned to UTS for a special conference with our new leader, just assigned by True Parents: Chong Goo "Tiger" Park. He and his family are from the 36 Couples.

We wondered, "Who is he? Is he to be feared with a nickname like this?" True Parents were just beginning to bring more Korean leaders to work with us in America, so it was a bit of a mystery.

We were waiting for him when he arrived at UTS. A special room on the professors' wing had been prepared. We were ready to show him up there with his two bags. One was quite bulky.

His handshake was quite soft - not what we thought it might be for a "Tiger." He was quiet; and resisted being taken to his special room, and said, "Please take me to the room where we will hear the Divine Principle." He also asked, "Who will be the teacher?" I had been

assigned, so he was also introduced to me.

We took him across the building to the meeting room. He said, "Thank you. Please bring all the members in now." He remained there with his luggage.

He then spoke to us for a couple of hours, bursting with energy, warmth, passion, humor and love. Many said afterward, "This is almost like being with True Parents."

The meeting was in the evening. As the members filed out, Mike Smith and I and a couple of others remained with Rev. Park to say good night. He was again quiet. He went to the larger of his two bags, pulled out a sleeping bag and rolled it out on the floor!

He said, "Thank you, this was a very good evening. I will stay here tonight to pray for the lectures." As we left, he was kneeled on the sleeping bag, in prayer, for me (the lecturer)!

When we came early next morning, he was already in the same position, praying again for the lectures. As the days ensued, we got to know a powerful man who loved True Parents with all his heart, and who lived to try and transfer his love and passion to all of us who were privileged to work with him.

The workshop lasted for seven days. Tiger Park stayed in the meeting room for the first three days, in prayer every morning and night, and finally moved to the special room that had been prepared for him. My thought was, "This is an activist holy man. This is a true example for us. He is prayerful, but he is also working hard to change the world."

Later that year, we had many new members at Camp Mazumdar who had joined in Southern California. I had been assigned as the Director. Tiger Park came to visit. Again, we had a special room for him in the staff cabin. The first evening, after closing prayer, we noted he was not in the room. As was my custom, I went to check on the brothers' area, which was a large building a few hundred feet away. There was Rev. Park, sleeping bag on the floor, sharing and laughing with all those new member brothers. They were in Heaven with him, and he with them.

A little later that same summer, I got a call from Tiger Park after one of the weekend workshops for brand new people. About 30 had attended. He asked how many had stayed on for the 7-Day workshop. I said, about 10. He flew into a rage and said, "How can you deny these people the chance to meet True Parents?"

I stood my ground. Many of the people who had come were street people, addicts and people with mental issues, met on the streets of LA and San Diego. I told him, "I understand how you feel; but many of these people cannot join, they have too much pain and many scars. They will not stay and will cause a lot of problems." Tiger Park was further enraged, finally saying, "You are very arrogant!"

I continued, "Rev. Park, I am happy to go onto the street and witness; I will show you the kinds of people who can actually join and stay." He got quiet. I had just volunteered to be fired!

The next morning, he called again, "OK - you please go to San Francisco and witness, as you told me." I

felt somewhat liberated, and looked forward to joining the team in SF. After all, I needed more spiritual children.



Tiger Park and his family

When I arrived, there was a huge welcome party for me - as the new leader of a 70-person team! Rev. Park had actually been impressed with my guts to stand up to him and for my confidence. That summer, we brought many strong people to join CARP, many of whom are still with us today. A while later, he said in a meeting, "Many great new members joined in SF."

The five and a half years we spent with Chong Goo "Tiger" Park were among the most profound in our lives for those of us who were blessed to work with him.

After his tragic passing at the young age of 43, True Father had a short meeting with those of us who had been fortunate to be on Tiger Park's leadership team. When we came into the room, Father was sitting on the floor, quiet and gently rocking back and forth. We sat and waited. Finally, he said, in a soft voice, "You don't need to be concerned about Tiger Park's death; instead, just think about how he lived." That was all True Father said to us about this great activist holy man. 'Nuf said!

All photos submitted by H. Schauffler