

How I, a 2nd generation member, brought a first generation couple to the blessing

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I've worked with the young people of our movement for 15 years. I always felt what I was doing was witnessing to 2nd and 3rd Generation who needed help filling in the gaps of their life of faith. Some of my most profound experiences and memories came from working with those precious young people. But there was always a part of me that was hesitant to begin fully witnessing to those outside of our movement. As I began blessing people and doing outreach work I found myself challenged and transformed each time - tearfully overcoming my fears and pains from the past and walking towards the sunlight like a sunflower, as True Mother says.

And then a miracle happened.

We had our first YCLC Young Christian couple receive the marriage blessing with full sincerity and begin their 40-day and 3-day journey.

From the moment I was introduced to Juliana Talabi it was clear God had prepared her. She read Mother's memoir and instantly felt so deeply connected with True Mother. She shared about it with her friends, on social media and taught about True Mother to the youth of her church. She read through the book quickly at first and then spirit world told her she needed to start over and read with strong intention. Spirit world was already speaking to her about the significance of True Mother. She told me that she was spending all of her money buying Mother's memoir as gifts for people, and I told her, Me too! She explained that at first she wasn't sure about the only begotten Daughter but when she prayed about it, Heaven gave her the Bible verse that says "Blessed are the Peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons and daughters of God." And from then on, she was full steam ahead.

As she began receiving Divine Principle education I could see her heart was so open and she was understanding a new part of God's heart. In particular after the first Fall lecture we heard together we discussed afterwards and we couldn't find the words to speak. We just cried and cried together. I thanked her from the bottom of my heart for who she is and we cried and cried. We began to make this deep heartistic connection that I knew God was working through.

As a 2nd Generation I don't have a lot of experience raising someone who didn't grow up in our movement at this level of closeness to True Parents. I have been nervous throughout this whole process. There are still pieces of myself that have a lot of fear about my identity and our beloved True Parents. But when I pray for Juliana, God shows me that she and her ancestors are desperately waiting for me to show her the way. With the encouragement of my local pastor, Dr. Achille Acolatse, I found courage even amidst all of my inadequacy.

So I invited her to the Pastors Summit for ACLC in US Subregion 2. She immediately agreed. At first she was going to come by herself, but suddenly her husband had a strong inspiration that he should be at the program. Our YCLC and GPA team pulled together babysitting for their children during the program so they could attend fully together. My husband and I offered conditions for their couple. The night before the beginning of the Summit I had a dream about Juliana. I saw her getting married and being made anew.

It felt like a holy experience. And I knew that spirit world was working 10 times harder than I was to prepare a miracle.

As the Pastors Summit progressed, Juliana was enthralled by the content. But what she was most amazed to see was a total transformation in her husband. She kept telling me this was not the same man she had married, but that she was so inspired by him. I saw her husband, Olufemi, being even more engaged than Juliana. I took a walk with Juliana during lunch and she told me she knows her marriage is being transformed by being here. Her father died a few months ago and since then she hasn't been able to pray sincerely. But on the way to the program she was finally able to pray sincerely. She told God that she wants to be ready for whatever God is preparing for her. The night before the program she had a terrible nightmare where she and her daughter were being attacked. When she shared with Olufemi, he told her the devil was trying to steal her blessing that was coming. As a result of all of this and so much more, they approached the program very intentionally. They were fully present and engaged even with Juliana being 5.5 months pregnant and not having slept very much.

At the end of the full day Olufemi found out he suddenly was called to come back to work the next day and would miss the Blessing. They were both really upset. I wanted the Blessing to be a perfect and holy experience for them because I knew they felt that way about it. Somehow right before the closing program, I felt so strongly they needed to be Blessed tonight. I asked them in the middle of the closing program would they like to be blessed and they both looked at each other and said YES.

Our incredible team made it happen with a few minutes notice and they received the Blessing! They hadn't received all of the education yet about the 43 days, but when Rev. Jackson shared it with them they agreed and began their 40 days purification that night without hesitation.

When it hit me what was happening I broke down in tears and had to step away. It felt like a miracle and it was so humbling. It's hard to explain, but because I'm a 2nd generation I don't have personal experience with joining the church and going through the 43 days. I'm an authentic leader and always try to lead by my own example and testimony, but I couldn't do that here. So to see this couple embrace this journey whole-heartedly has shocked me so deeply. My husband and I are taking the role of spiritual parents for them very seriously and offering extra devotion and building our relationship with them. We communicate everyday and are getting our families together tomorrow for dinner.

This couple is taking the 40 days very seriously and both are testifying that their marriage is being completely transformed through this experience. Juliana already began talking to her friends about the Blessing and what it's doing for her marriage and we are beginning the conversation of preparing education and blessing for her network.

We cannot deny Heavenly Parent's miracle here. My husband and I feel unworthy, but this is a true testimony to the people God has prepared to meet our True Parents. Femi and Juliana were just waiting for me to show up, and I know soon she will be outrunning me to heal God's heart very soon.

Juliana and I have felt from the beginning we have a deep sisterhood. She may be from Nigeria and I from America, but there is no separation between us. Our children already love each other. My husband and I know this family will be an important part of our lives and we are excited to grow alongside them. Thank you to Heavenly Parent and True Parents for laying an incredible foundation that is coming to fruition before my eyes.

Thank you to Heavenly Parent and True Parents for all of the miracles. Thank you to our leadership for pushing us to be ready to receive the miracles.

Since presenting this testimony at a pastors' conference, Kaeleigh has worked for UPF in the US, and is now the US WFWP president.