

Growing a Nose for God

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My wife and I have recently been reading about physical death and ascending to the Spiritual World during our morning Scripture study; and we are also listening to a lecture presentation on Unconditional Love. Both have really had a big impact upon on us, and so as it turns out, my message this morning is sort of pulling those two topics together.

*“You have heard that it was said,
'Love your neighbor and hate your*

enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” - Matt 5:43-48

We are a spiritual community with roots in the OT, the NT, the life and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the leadership and teachings of Rev & Mrs. Sun Myung Moon. So that's a spiritual root that is 6,000 years deep, but also quite modern. To illustrate today's topic I'd like to read this quote from a message given by Rev. Moon.

“What should our body be doing now? As you were “breathing” through the umbilical cord in the womb, you were also preparing the nostrils through which to breathe later. Then, when you burst out from the womb, you change the organ that you use and begin to breathe.

Likewise, what you need after your birth is to experience love to the very core of your being. You need to breathe the air of love from your mother and father. You should go through everything in life while being supplied with the air of love.

Once you are born as a baby in a family, you go up along a growth curve and then you eventually age and fade away physically. You are born as a baby and go back to being a baby in the Spiritual World. When that happens, you should detach yourself from the world of the second d womb and connect yourself to the realm where you can breathe the elements of love in the third stage. You leave behind parents' love and siblings' love on earth and enter the world of love that is in total harmony with the Original Being of the great cosmos, God.

The spirit world is made up of the air of love. Therefore, while you live in the earthly world, you should prepare a supply line in order to breathe love.” – Rev Sun Myung Moon January 31, 1986

We're All on the Same Team



Several sermons ago, I used analogy for football game which at least the men in the audience related to. A LOT of people complimented me on that analogy. It seems that people like to use sports analogies. Here is a quote from a recent article in the NY Times:

“It seems that no one works for a company anymore; we play for a team. We take one for the team. We fumble or drop the ball. We stick to the game plan. We hit one out of the park, or we come up with a slam-dunk of an idea. And when those ideas fail, we drop back 10 and punt. “

Why is it that team sports contests are so fascinating to follow? Is it because the dynamics of a sports contest does seem to be an excellent analogy for life? Fortunately the outcome of the sports event doesn't

really matter in the big scheme of things, but we have an experience of life where the outcome does really matter. Perhaps we like sports analogies because we can actually use them to understand what is going on in our life!

Rev Moon was like a coach for many of us who worked with him for a long time. He tried to coach us out of our bad habits – out of our self-centeredness and into living a God centered life for the sake of others. He told us very clearly what we must do in this world during our precious time on earth.

Living for the Sake of Others

Actually, Father Moon admonished us over and over again; we must learn to live for the sake of others, loving unconditionally. We should use our time, our talents, our resources to relate in a principled way with others and to benefit others. In every meeting we go into, in every conversation we have, in every activity we undertake, we need to naturally learn to be thinking of the heart, the happiness and the joy of everyone, instead of being focused on ourselves.

But is living for the sake of others a sensible way to survive and thrive in this physical world? Don't we quite naturally want to focus on our own survival, comfort and happiness? Do I have enough food? Do I have enough clothes? Do I have a nice place to live? And on and on, focusing on the obvious and basic needs of our physical life and emotional life.

How the heck does living for the sake of others fit in with all of that?

The Nose in the Womb Analogy



Let's think about the fetus developing a nose while living in its mother's womb. I heard Rev. Moon talk several times about the curiosity of the baby's nose developing while in the mother's womb. The fetus in the womb has no idea about the next world that it is heading towards. Everything that is needed for life in the womb is coming right through that umbilical cord.

So that's it...it is quite obvious, just focus in on that umbilical cord. The little person in the womb has no NEED for anything else. So why, develop a nose while in the womb. The nose and even the mouth is completely useless in the womb. But the actual need

for a nose and even the very purpose of life in the womb is beyond the comprehension of the fetus.

The period in the womb is preparation for life in the next world – the world of air. The nose and mouth that are useless in the womb are essential for basic survival in this world of air. Thank goodness we develop our nose in the womb.

Life in this world is preparation for the afterlife with God

So why did our coach teach us to live for the sake of others. Why did he always quote his favorite Bible verse: "Those who seek to gain their life will lose it, those who seek to lose their life will gain it."?

Our precious life here in this beautiful garden is sort of like life in a new womb. Rev. Moon taught us that this earth is our second mother – "Mother Earth." We may get very confused and disoriented and start thinking that my purpose here on earth is to enjoy myself and be safe and comfortable. That's like thinking that life in the womb begins and ends with that umbilical cord.

In fact, we are only here as an intermediate phase of our life. We are like caterpillars, walking upon the earth, without even knowing it, we are preparing our self to FLY. We are here, preparing for the third and final phase of life. In one sense, like the baby in the womb, we have no idea of what that world will be like.

Celebrating the next stage

In our Unification faith, at the time of someone's passing, we have a special ceremony to celebrate the deceased ascension into the eternal realm of God's love. Despite our ignorance of the next world, when it comes time for this ceremony, we know exactly what to testify about.

At the Ascension Ceremony, no one testifies how much wealth the deceased accumulated, or how well he or she played the violin, or what title he or she attained in their organization (whether it be a business,

church, university, etc.), or how much time he or she spent looking at a screen. The words we share are testimonies of the ascending person's successful life in preparing to go to the spiritual world. To what extent, did that person live for the sake of others. To what extent did they serve others, to what extent did others benefit from the deceased's life?

Jesus is Our Example



That is why the story of Jesus is so powerful. Jesus died for the sake of others, in fact for the sake of those who hated him! Rev. Moon, is quarterback on this earthly playing field. He explained to us – that is exactly the game plan – to live a life of sacrifice for the well being of others like Jesus did. While we are in this world we must grow up to resemble God. And God creates and lives for the sake of others.

In this world we receive God's love indirectly, through our parents who are substitute parents, temporarily representing God. In the next world, that we are now getting ready for, God is our parent – our

Heavenly Parent. We need to prepare ourselves for that. While in this world we need to grow to resemble our parent so we can have a relationship of love with our parent. And we do that by learning to love the way that God loves – unselfishly.

Breathing Love in Spiritual World

We need to learn to love the way God loves while we are in this world, before we depart from this world of breathing air, through our nose, for the world where we must breathe God's love through our heart. You can get by in this world without developing your heart; just the same way you can survive in the fetus without a nose. But you will be totally unprepared for life in the next world.

The reason I am talking about this today is because I have been learning, rather late in life, that I am really not living for the sake of others. I have learned that, many times when we express anger or disappointment to another person we are often thinking about ourselves. The anger and frustration are coming from a self-centered viewpoint.

The people we express our anger to, our children, are created to receive God's love. They are not prepared to receive self serving love and therefore it injures them. Our expressions of anger and disappointment are most often not expressions of God's love, they are expressions of our self-centeredness.

How do you live for the sake of others?

I spend my life interacting with five groups of people:

- My spiritual community
- My business, the people I work with
- People I play music with (Thursday night)
- People I workout with (early morning)
- My family



I have to ask myself these questions, *Am I living for the sake of these people each day? Am I trying to help them do their best, seeing that they get what they need, being sure they feel appreciated and supported?*

Or, am I on the sidelines, just thinking about me: my role, my acceptance by others, my satisfaction, my comfort, my success, my future. These are tough questions for me. They are probably tough questions for all of us because this type of thinking goes against the ways of this self focused world.

When Jesus came into this world he taught people things that went against popular culture, even popular religious culture. That's why it was so difficult for the religious leaders to accept him. But his teaching and example remain to this day because the heart and soul of every human being knows what true love is when we see it. We honor those who have served and sacrificed themselves for others because it is the supreme example of God's unconditional love, the true love that we all long for.