

On Approaching God

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Photo date and location unknown

Before we can begin to understand the will of God we have to understand God's nature. The vague ideas about God that existing Christian churches now put out are simply not convincing enough. We have to know God more specifically. Christian churches believe that God is absolute and unconditional love. Is this true? Let us imagine: if God's love is unconditional then why will the Christian churches alone be saved and no other religions?

God has said that only those people who believe in Christ will be saved. Why did He say that? Whenever we think about this we have to think about the mainstream and also the force which goes somewhat against the mainstream. Among existing political systems, when there is a main party or government party there is also an opposition party. Surely He can have unconditional love towards those people who are on God's side. But what about those who are not on God's side? The situation is different. God has those who are closest to Him, some who are further away, and He has servants yet more distant. He cannot treat them all the same. For example, when He gives His heart, when He gives love, He gives the most love to those closest to Him, and less according to the distance from Him.

With your children, the degree of love or the quality of love -- whatever you might call it -- is different for each one. When you get married can you love your spouse out of duty? From the very beginning you consider whether you like that person. Or, you think that someday you will come to like him or her. Imagine those people who don't know you, don't care about you, and don't think about you; there's nothing you can do to become closer to them. How can you love those people? We all understand that God is not a vague concept, but He is like a person. He is a personal God, and as a person, there are some who are close to Him, and some who are very close.

Our problem is how to become close to God. There are two ways to come to be liked by God. Some people are liked without any effort on their part. Others like to help God's work very much. Then God can like them and love them. Likewise, while God exists in many different religions, He has certain preferences. Those people that He can like easily He will like under any circumstances. God will also like those people who try their very best to fulfill His will. So a religion is either one that God can love easily, or it is one that can do much to fulfill God's will. It has to be either one or the other. There are Christianity, Buddhism, and other major religions and minor religions. Every one of them must be liked by God. If there is a religion that God cannot like, then it has to be abolished. As soon as a new group appears on Earth, the second best group has to diminish. Unification Church is an entirely new group which is trying its best to become one that God can like. If it succeeds it will win God's favor.

Why did God create man in the Garden of Eden? God created Adam and Eve so that He could love them. Also, He created man so that He could entrust some of His tasks and works to man. Has He realized His desire? No. Since Adam and Eve fell, the rest of mankind automatically fell, too. Now He is re-creating fallen man. Re-creation is saving those people who have fallen. So our mission becomes very clear: we must become re-created men and also we must instill God's desire to save fallen man in ourselves. In order to meet these two vital qualifications, we must learn about the heart of God. The heart of God has been introduced here for the first time in man's history. Along with coming to know the "heart of God" in the Unification Church, we are the group which is very anxious to help fulfill the will of God. This is very easy to say, and it is even quite logical. Everyone wants to do these things. Then why can't we do them?

Because man fell, Satan came to exist, and sin too. Another way of explaining this is, if you do away with sin and if you do away with relations with Satan, then you automatically become close to God. What is the number one wish of fallen man? It is to cut his relations with sin and Satan. So we have to know how to disconnect from Satan and do away with sin. Then -- as the second step--we can come closer to God. As soon as you can understand God's heart, then, in doing His will or doing His work, you don't have to try, you automatically become like Him. Doing away with our connection to Satan and to sin is the purpose of all religions. But religions don't know that. We say "Satan," but we hardly know about Satan.

What is Satan? What is sin? Those things are not only very simple matters, but also very complicated ones. There is local sin or what you might call contemporary sin. Then you have historical sin. And also you have the sin of the future. The conclusion is very obvious, but also unavoidable: Do away with our historical sin. We also have to do away with contemporary sin, the sin of this age. We have no hope of completely doing away with sin of the future.

Some people, with a lesser faith, say, "God is omnipotent. Why doesn't He do it Himself?" There's a very good reason why He cannot do that. That's because man caused the fall. Man brought Satan in, not God. God will not do and cannot do what man has to do. God intended an ideal world. But man did not do as God willed.

This is why we have sin. For example, if the son commits a murder, and the father goes to the court and says, "Because this is my son, and I'm the father, I'll be responsible for my son's murder," can it be accepted? No. If the son was the one who committed the murder, then he has to compensate for it. The son has to do it, but he cannot because he's ignorant. So God is here, and the son is here, and Satan is here but no one can do anything because no one knows. Does everybody know that there is Satan? Those people who do not, will they know God really exists?

They don't know God, they don't know Satan. Where do they begin? This is a historical problem. No one in history has known God as He is. Not a single soul on Earth knew God. Likewise, no one has known for sure if Satan exists, and that these two great powers have been struggling and fighting a fierce battle. No one knew that Satan and God were each struggling to have one individual on their side. No one knew about ideal families. They hardly knew anything. This is the crux of the problem. Those people who do not know much about God, and who know very little about Satan, how can they do God's work?

God exists and He created men and angels, even Lucifer. Therefore, He has to find a way to teach them about Himself. We have just begun to understand the most elemental things. You will have an even harder time to understand how much God has worked and suffered to make one perfect individual on Earth, just one in all these millions of years, and long before that, to make even a sacred man, what we call a "prophet" or a comparatively perfect man. It is not too hard for us to understand that He had so much trouble in sending even one; ordinary prophet and then a man who can give some truth, so we can also understand that God has worked His way step by step, finding a better man and a better man still, on and on. It stands to reason that among religions God has gone through the same step-by-step process. The very primitive religions are like a primary school-then there's grammar school, and then high school, college, etc. The proximity to God of religions is increasing. What degree will the Unification Church have fulfilled? Yes, post-graduate school, but the main thing is that we have to be qualified for that Ph.D.

How can we know that God exists? The main problem of existing society centers around this problem. Those people who really know that God exists (and this doesn't mean those who believe God exists) have solved the most difficult problem of all. You not only understand that He exists, but also you should feel it, this is the main thing. You have to feel by heart, and also by acting you have to know. You won't know until you become one with God and become one with His work, that God really exists. To those who experience things, not many words are necessary. The way in which the Unification Church is different and excels is the fact that you can experience God. Then if someone comes to you and cuts your throat, it really doesn't matter; that cannot alter your knowing. As soon as you experience God, then martyrdom isn't menacing to you in any way.

If there's anything to fear, it is God. The most fearful thing for us is the possibility that we may lose God. Nothing else matters. So long as God is with us we can pierce right through the heart of the enemy, Satan.

To those who have that confidence and that determination, everything is possible. I hesitate to say this, but can I trust you as I can trust my God? You have to trust God, that's the safest thing. So we must understand that even if we promise God, "I would like to be responsible, and I shall be responsible," if God cannot trust a person, then God cannot say "Yes." If there is any small thing-or one large thing-you want, have all the Unification Church get together and say "Forget about God's will just one moment, and let's do this: because this is what everybody wants." If you did that, Father wouldn't budge. He will not go along with you if you forget about His will. He will kick you out and start all over again.

If there is only one way open to fulfill the will of God, and if it means doing some impossible thing, we would have no other choice but to do it. The Unification Church started in a very serious and severe situation; we knew only that God exists, and that the God we know is the historical God. The God that is with us now is the same God that will be with us in the future. We have to know what God is now, the God that exists in this country, in this era. We also have to know God's overall plan to a certain extent. Before we know that, we cannot really progress successfully.

To know about God, we have to know His history. In order to understand God we have to understand what kind of life He has led so far. Then we have to study what He is doing now. Where can we find that material? Can you go to the best and biggest library in the world to find that out? Can you find it even in the Bible? We have to find out whether God was a happy God, whether God has been consistently sad, or if God is a contented God. We have to find out the true feelings and deeds of God. If God is an unhappy and sad God, but a group of Christians is saying, "God is an almighty and happy God," how would you feel toward them? You'd be very indignant. We have to understand why God has been unhappy. We have to go a little deeper. We have to find out when God became very unhappy. Did His sadness start a long time ago, or recently? If He's a sad God now, does that mean He used to be happy? If so, then what made this happy God into an unhappy God? To know that is the crux of the problem. This is what you are studying -- the history of restoration.

All this time, throughout the Old Testament Age, God has been a frustrated and very sad God. This was also true in the New Testament Age. Now, at the fulfillment of the New Testament Age, God is still working. You have to be able to imagine and understand the situation of Adam and Eve when the fall took place. You must experience the same sadness God experienced from the fall and also the joy that comes after you have overcome that fall. Then we can compare the sad stage that God once felt, and the happy stage in which we have passed that test. In Noah's family, and at the time of Abraham, we must feel the same thing. We must be able to feel the situation of Jacob and Esau, of Moses. Knowing is not enough. You must experience the same sadness if you want to become a friend to God, and then certainly God will come close to you. Once we understand that, we also understand the enemy Satan, and we become so furious that we are going to fight no matter what the cost is. When we practice that, God will really be a consoled and happy God.

It is important to understand the historically true God. But now, what God wants are people who meet today's need, who are in such a position that Father can like them now, today. We have to qualify for the present day, not the past. To understand the past is good, because that will make our present will stronger, but we have to meet the present need and also extend that to the future. In the future God will encompass all the globe, and He is going to save every one of His children.

We have to know inside and out every detail of God's will. Just imagine, when we see each other, how much each one has changed from the old style of life to the new style, after knowing God. That's what is needed in this country and in the whole world. God will need every one of these new reborn persons. I want you to believe one thing: If I am making you suffer, it is so that you and God can become closer. We have to be very grateful, no matter what the difficulty is, because God wants it this way. One of my many experiences in prison, when life was hardest, Father was right beside me; he embraced me, slept with me all throughout the night, and to remember this is the greatest treasure of all. I know that same God who did that to me will do it to you. If you expect the worst, win over it, and go, only good results will be waiting for you. Now you know what God is like.

Morning, noon, and night -- 24 hours a day-Satan is working. So we have to determine in our minds that we are going to work 24 hours and more each day. Then that can serve as a condition God can work through for God to cooperate with you. We cannot liquidate Satan until we commit ourselves more than Satan. The less sleep you have, the less ashamed you feel. You can really shorten your sleep time. While we are fighting wars, can we sleep in the daytime? That's the kind of war we are fighting. Do your very best to fight fiercely against evil and Satan. Have nothing to do with sin! If you remember that, then without your knowing it, you are gradually emerging into the heart of God. As soon as you chase out Satan, chase out evil, chase out sins, then so much of God will move into you, and gradually occupy all of you.

Keep in your minds a few more things that may be helpful. Jesus died, but he left a spiritual foundation, so Christianity has widened and widened. Why was that so? Because Christians were persecuted. They persevered, they tolerated injustices. Perseverance is the main thing of all. We can learn this lesson in

great detail from the life of Jesus. When Jesus was about to be crucified, he knew that he was to have been the king of all kings. But, still he prayed very deeply, "Let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." He yielded his wishes to the wish of God. And he persevered. If Jesus had protested to God, "You promised me that I would be king, and now you forsake me," if he had spoken one word of complaint toward God, then everything would have been broken, and there would have been no spiritual foundation. When Jesus prayed as he did, God really felt pity for him, and He commended Jesus for his perseverance. Even after he died, Satan tried to mutilate him. That, God did not forgive. After that, all the opposition was completely turned the other way around by God. Those who were persecuted, were given the blessing. Imagine God's feelings-it's very hard for Him to persevere when He sees His representatives treated very badly. But God persevered, because by persevering He can be an omnipotent God.

Even Satan, looking and watching, sees Father persevere, falls to Him and says, "You really are God." Perseverance can be the secret way to repel or even to prevent hardship from coming. When it becomes apparent that you're going to fail, but you persevere, then there is a way for you to win! God has been using this tactic, and we ought to adopt it and make it part of ourselves.

Jesus did two things on the cross. The first was to persevere. And the second was that he prayed for his enemy. He felt towards even those who opposed him, "You need me. You don't know now that you need me, but in the future you will know that you need me." This also shows very eloquently that God did not create man for Himself. Just imagine: Satan tried to expel someone who was going to love him. When he killed him, then he could no longer remain in that place, and had to leave. We often see this in society. When an unjust, bad man comes around to try to overrun the town and do a lot of bad things, there are people who won't stand idly by and just watch. They stand up and try to expel this bad person. Also imagine that one good man is persecuted very much by this bad man, but he won't say anything. He won't fight, rather he perseveres. Later the people gradually understand that he was right, then everybody will come to his side. So Satan and sin will no longer be able to remain where they are. They will have to withdraw, to retreat. Even to those people who try to kill me, when I love them, when I pray for them, I am showing them the heart of God.

Parents are like that; no matter how bad their sons and daughters are, they still pray for them. God has been persevering, not only one time, but several thousand times. He will keep on persevering. We have to learn that, and follow that pattern. Throughout history, we have witnessed that righteous men are persecuted, but all of them came to be praised later. The more you persevere, the more you go through difficulty, later you will realize that you are going deeper and deeper into God's heart.

Watch if this is true. When you go hungry for a certain number of days, then God will come to you and feed you. Reverend Moon has had numerous experiences of being fed. For hours and days he did without food and would be nearly exhausted. He would go up a very steep hill and come down; when he came to a certain place, without his expecting it; there would be a man waiting with a fully prepared supper for him. Then he asked, "How come? How did you know?" The man said, "In last night's dream, a sister appeared to me and said, "Tomorrow there will be a passer-by coming, so you ought to prepare for him." He not only ate enough himself but there was even enough food to give out to those around him. But if you cannot go over that hill, and if you stop short of that hill, then you wouldn't have met that feast. There may come a time when God will be really serious and say, "If you had persevered a little bit longer, I was going to give you a lot of blessings. You could not persevere, so you're losing 1000 years of preparation."

Always expect to meet God at the most difficult place where no one has ever been. You want to meet God there. Expect that position and march forward.

It's all up here in our minds how close we are to God. What is precious is not property or rare jewels. The tears that you can share with God are what's precious. Look at ourselves: God has more able people than us, yet if God selected me to this position, just pity God for a few moments. Then we cannot meet God without tears. Whenever there is such a heart and feeling, God will be with you. This is mistake-proof. When we become like that, God is always there. If God doesn't come there, then God doesn't exist. We might as well forget about God. Let that be a very basic element of your life.