

FFWPU USA: The 41st Anniversary of the 1981 God Conference - God and Us

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It is our aspiration and our desire to meet God, to live with God and have Him dwell with us. When you connect yourself with the eternal love of God, you and God become inseparable beings for eternity. - True Father

December 26 marks the 41st anniversary of the first "God Conference" initiated by True Parents in 1981. The weeklong conference, titled "God: The Contemporary Discussion," was held in Maui, Hawaii, and featured distinguished academics and religious leaders.

Dr. Frederick Sontag, philosophy professor at the University of Pomona and author of *Sun Myung Moon and the Unification Church* (1977), suggested the conference as an "internal" equivalent of the annual International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS) founded by True Parents in 1972. The God Conference attracted 170 participants from 33 countries and represented all major religions. Seventy-five papers were presented, 22 of which were selected for inclusion in Dr. Sontag's resulting book, *God: The Contemporary Discussion* (1982).

The Youth Seminar on World Religions (YSWR) also emerged from the first God Conference. From

1982 to 1984, it sponsored annual seven-week global pilgrimages for 150 students and professors to religious sites associated with Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Unificationism. This expanded the movement's ecumenical and interreligious network and involved esteemed religious scholars.

In 2020, True Mother rebooted the concept of the conference to launch the first International Conference on Science and God (ICSG) in Seoul, Korea. The annual conference has since drawn the world's leading academics who explore the links between science and God.

Below is an excerpt from True Father's 1982 speech "God and Us" where he shares about our original nature as a reflection of God, our Creator and Heavenly Parent.

Excerpt:

Throughout history mankind has been pondering the fundamental question of whether or not God exists. But history has developed until the present time without a definitive answer being found to that question... Many people believe that man came into being through an evolutionary process. This is an expedient explanation but it cannot actually be the fundamental one. Even evolution must have had an origin somewhere...

Evolution rests on the assumption that the development of life just happened by chance or accident on its own, automatically. But there is no way for such development to occur automatically. Every essential element of matter has a different origination point... The theory of evolution falls apart simply because evolution cannot explain how one nucleus changes itself into another nucleus...

As humans we have a common character working within us. We strive for betterment and we pursue goodness. Because these strivings are common to all men, we continually reach out for new horizons, for greater and higher universal character; in other words for something better, some way to progress. Since such character distinctly exists within the common human nucleus, the whole of humanity continually moves itself toward betterment.

Because there is a common human search for goodness and betterment, there is something bigger than our own character within the universal character. As a collective group we recognize that there is some greater nucleus; we recognize ourselves as objects to that greater subject. The human consciousness involves this collective effort to reach out to that universal consciousness. Because of our human consciousness, we can reach out to that greater consciousness and we can communicate with it...

It has become clear to us now that the origin of all existence was thought and mind which formed the universal nucleus. The universe is heading toward the fulfillment of true love. We have to recognize that there is a universal consciousness, a universal thought, that wants to fulfill this ideal of love throughout the universe. We call Him God. This is a logical, modern and scientific conclusion. It is not mystical or superstitious. It's a fact that we are reaching together toward God.