

Letter to the UTS Community about the Corona Virus Pandemic

Thomas J. Ward

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Dear Members of the UTS Community,

Warmest greetings in this challenging time. I hope that you and your families are safe and well.

This moment in the history of our nation and in the providence of God, Our Heavenly Parent, invites us to reflect and grapple with the most basic questions regarding the relationship between God and humanity.

U.S. President John F. Kennedy closed his inaugural address of January 20, 1961 with these words: "With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own."

Although not a theologian, John F. Kennedy intuited or understood that God could only achieve His work on earth through the efforts of human beings. This understanding of God resonates with what has been taught to us by Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, the Co-Founders of Unification Theological Seminary and so many other major initiatives worldwide.

As Reverend Moon once said, "God does not need people who believe in Him; God needs people in whom He can believe," that is, people who have won God's Trust. Abraham, Moses, and Jesus put their lives and all of what they held most dear on the offering table of God.

When I read Charles Darwin's diary as a University student, I came across Darwin's correspondence to one Asa Gray that deeply struck me. In his correspondence, Charles Darwin described cruel acts in nature and confessed: "There seems to me too much misery in the world. I cannot persuade myself that a beneficent and omnipotent God would have designedly created the *Ichneumonidae* [wasp larvae] with the express intention of their feeding within the living bodies of caterpillars, or that a cat should play with mice."

At a Unification Thought seminar that took place in 1997 in Washington, DC with Dr. Sang Hun Lee who pioneered Unification Thought under the direct tutelage of Reverend Moon, I had a private moment with him and shared Darwin's quandary that had led him to question both God's beneficence and God's existence.

Dr. Lee responded to me that there were things in nature that, human beings, once having achieved the original purpose of Creation, were responsible to address due to our role as co-creators with God.

In April 2020 COVID 19 ravages our country and the world. Some may say, "Why doesn't God do anything?" The days of COVID 19 may invite a new "hate of God," as thousands fall victim to what could be seen as a visitation by a spiteful, jealous God, who like Zeus, chief of the Greek gods, seemed to lash out against humankind at times for no reason.

We can be sure that God IS doing something about COVID. Yet, President Kennedy was prophetic when he said, "...here on earth, God's work must truly be our own."

Somewhere, somehow, someone or some ones have been prepared their entire lives by God to address this crisis. Now, they need our prayers and our support to find inspiration, illumination, and a solution as soon as possible.

At this time, we all need to pray for those afflicted with this grim disease.

Let us also pray for the safety of those close to us and for all 7.7 billion members of the human family whom Mother Moon prays for every day.

Let us also pray for the selfless professionals working in hospitals and clinics in America and around the world to care for the victims.

In this challenging time, let us also harbor Father and Mother Moon's vision of a liberated God and a liberated humankind. Let us find solace, knowing that in that vision, the problems we face today will be addressed expeditiously.

The direct Divine-human partnership that our Heavenly Parent originally intended and that we have given our lives to realize is coming closer every day.

May God bless, protect, and inspire each of you and renew our world in this time!

Thomas J. Ward

President
Unification Theological Seminary