

## The Ignorance of Mankind

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*Photo date and location unknown*

Thinking about the crisis that the world is in and trying to discover its cause, I realized most of all that we're ignorant of God, of God's love, of the truth and beauty that surround us. If we weren't that ignorant, we wouldn't live the way we do. We must be ignorant of the love that people have to give, of how much we long for a world of peace, or how to create it -- otherwise we'd have it.

Where did the ignorance of mankind come from? We have to go back to the beginning of human history, to the Bible. The Bible is really the only book which gives us the origin of mankind as being created by God, a God of all people, whom we call Heavenly Father. Ignorance comes about by separation from God. In the beginning of time when man became separated from God we lost our ability to know love, to know each other, to see and appreciate beauty.

The air that we live in has become filled with vindictiveness. There is such a lack of trust among people. The Watergate situation was a true example of how we cannot or will not trust people. We don't trust anybody in authoritative positions anymore, from our government down to our parents. We don't trust, we're vindictive, we want to get back at people. This is the kind of world that we live in.

St. Paul in his second letter to Timothy, said, "Charge them before the Lord to avoid disputing about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. Avoid such godless chatter, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will eat its way like gangrene." (II Tim 2:14-17) He added, "Have nothing to do with stupid, senseless controversies; you know that they breed quarrels."

He was speaking to Timothy, a leader of the people, requesting him to encourage the people not to quarrel or to mistrust people because of words which only cause quarrels, separation.

He also wrote about the coming of the last days, in II Tim. 3: "In the last days, there will come times of stress. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, fierce haters of good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God."

That does describe a lot that we see in our world today. Many times when I see something very unusual happening, I say, "This must be the Last Days or it wouldn't be happening!." The attitudes people have, the things we do to each other are quite incredible. How is it that Paul could have predicted such things would happen? Only because the cause of what is happening today took place many thousands of years before him.

Good and evil are contradictory to each other, but they start at one point. They've gone their separate ways throughout history; good has borne fruit on one side, evil has borne fruit on the other. Now, they've gone the full circle and are coming together so there's great conflict. People are confused as to what is right and what is wrong because they see them side by side. This is the meaning of Last Days -- the time

of separation of good and evil.

If we are living in ignorance, how do we learn? We know that as children we learn from our parents our attitude toward life, our ability to love, to give and to receive. Then we go to school and learn about the world around us. We learn to use our minds. How are we going to bring together that which we've learned at home and at school? At home we've learned how to use our emotions, how to develop our will power. At school we've learned to develop our intellect.

We must be able to bring these three together. To learn is to use your whole being.

I'm sure if we went to mathematicians, scientists, or historians and said, "Mankind is quite ignorant today," they would say, "What!" They could tell you all about history, the theory of relativity, etc. "And you say we're ignorant! How are we ignorant, what are we ignorant of?" We're ignorant in our hearts. We cannot create a united world of peace with intellect alone. We have proven this. But we need intellect also. We need our entire being.

Can you prove to someone God exists? Can they prove to you God does not exist? There are many things that cannot be proven with facts and figures. Why are we created with emotion, intellect, and will? Each person has these three things. We seek to be good; we seek knowledge; we seek truth, beauty, love. To really learn about our existence -- who we are, why we are -- we have to use our entire being to do so. When someone says, "You can't prove to me God exists," I say, "You're not listening with your whole self." Only that way can we know God exists. Otherwise we're only experiencing a part of God; until we experience all of God with our entire being, we can't say "I know God exists."

Let's look at history and see how we fell into ignorance. When we say we're born with original sin, what does that mean? Did you know God from the day you were born? Why do we have churches? Why do we need the Messiah, Christ if not to teach us about God, our Father. We are born into ignorance, not knowing God. It's inherited, and we pass it on to our children. Adam and Eve must not have been one with God when they fell away from Him, because if we're one with our Heavenly Father, we can't hurt Him. If we are one with our brothers and sisters, how could we do something that would hurt them? If you love your mate, would you do something to really hurt that person intentionally? Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden after they disobeyed God, yet God had warned them: If you partake of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall die. That's a pretty strong warning.

Adam and Eve actually continued to live, but how did they die? They lived in ignorance of their being, they began to search for a way to live. They became ignorant of life, of God's love. Their children were born the same way. If they themselves had not experienced the complete Being of God, how could they teach it to their children? How could our parents know if their parents didn't know? How can we teach our children what we don't know? It's a vital relationship -- parent and child.

If the first parents fell and became ignorant, their children were born in ignorance, and so it has been throughout all of history. Only certain people have truly listened to God, and they have become leaders of religions, trying to bridge the gap between man and God.

We're not only ignorant of God, we're also ignorant of Satan. We're chained and don't know how to free ourselves. Today we live with the result of the situation that happened so many thousands of years ago. We ask ourselves, what's going to make it change now? Where is our hope?

Our hope began when Jesus Christ came to earth and pledged that the Son of Man would come again. He said, I have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now. If I tell you of earthly things and you do not understand, how can I tell you of heavenly things?

It also says in the Bible, the truth shall set you free. Perfect truth leads you into perfect love, which leads you into perfect unity. So the truth is vitally important to our growth, to overcoming our ignorance of God. But the truth is not ours until we live it, until we make it part of us. We can listen to the truth, we can study the Bible, we can study the words, but what good does it do if we don't live it. The truth has to become a pathway into living it, then it is ours.

With all the great knowledge we have today, we cannot unite blacks and whites, we cannot solve the food shortage, we cannot overcome the ecological crisis.

Today, God is speaking to mankind, as He has throughout history. He is not a God who sits in the sky and waits, but He is continually involved in our lives and in world affairs. It's we who go off in a corner and wait for God to speak to us. When do we truly speak to God?

The thing that touched me so much when I understood that we are living in ignorance is the fact that this can lead us to a deeper love for our brothers and sisters. We can understand them better. How can we be so critical of our fellow man knowing that they're living in ignorance? We should take up the responsibility to help. If we give out what we have, God will fill us anew.

How can you feel hate? You can feel sympathy for the situation that exists, but how can you change anything with hatred? Vindictiveness won't change wrong that's been done to us. That will not bring about a world of goodness. Where can God dwell if we are filled with consistent criticism, if we are

always looking to find what's wrong with each other or in the world?

Our Father cares about what is good in people. He knows that all people are created with good. All people have inside of them their origin-God the Creator because Satan cannot create anything. Satan is not the creator of the world; God is the creator, God gives life. Therefore every person who has life, who is breathing, has God, and that goodness inside a person is what we want to strengthen, and then the evil part of him which wants to destroy is overcome. So we need each other so much, we need each other more than we know, because we can't do it alone, we aren't complete.

Reverend Moon in one of his speeches said, "Everyone has weak points and strong points. You have to get your friends, coworkers, brothers and sisters to supplement your weak areas so you can be perfecting those areas. They will fill the gap of your weak points. The only way to do this is by loving them, respecting them, and working with them. Then you will recognize how important they are to you."

The only way we can overcome the ignorance of mankind about God is to speak for God, to be involved. If we're afraid to walk up to someone and say, "Yes, I believe in God," how can we ever hope to even awaken a spark that might be inside waiting to hear those very words: God exists, God loves, and God will say...

Throughout all of history He has been saying that He will not leave the world -- His will has been made and it will come to fruit. He has spoken this to us many times. We have no reason to doubt it now. We need to become involved, we need to pray for our country. America was founded upon a desire for freedom of worship, freedom to live as we want to live and to think as we want to think. The blessings that America has had were given by God. The economic freedom we have in America is based on the rights of individuals, of people who believe in God.

We need to pray for the land of America because America has a very important mission in the world. We have the ability to give to the world what it needs, but many of the poor countries are stronger in their belief in God in this day than America, and it's quite scary, because America is losing God. We're becoming more and more ignorant of God rather than becoming closer to God.

Reverend Moon talks about America and its relationship to God: "When I first came to America, I stood on Fifth Avenue during the rush hour in New York until suddenly tears began pouring down my face. I looked at the wonder of the Empire State Building and the magnificence of the city -- the tallest buildings in the world. But I asked myself, 'Does God dwell in those buildings?'"

We need to ask ourselves that same question wherever we live. Does God dwell here? If He doesn't, we have to bring Him. "In America you must not think that you have such wealth because you yourselves are great. The blessing of God came so that God could use this nation as His instrument in saving the world," Reverend Moon says.

He warns us, "Today there are many signs of America's decline. Why are problems with drugs, crime, the breakdown of families, race and the economy occurring? These are signs that God is leaving America. If this trend continues, in a very short time God will be with you no longer."

That doesn't mean God has left yet. As long as there are people who are willing to fight and live for God, God will stay in America. We must not love America for America's sake alone. We must love the world and therefore love America. We must love our brothers and sisters and therefore love ourselves.

We need to cackle the impossible. With God, the impossible is made possible. We have to know this. It's only through our ignorance that we don't believe it. It's only through our ignorance of God that we have fear. But that can be overcome. Leaders in the past have overcome it; we must become the leaders of tomorrow. To become leaders means that we must be the example. We cannot speak leadership. We must live leadership. We must go the path before those who are following us, otherwise we are not qualified to be leaders. We must have the faith that our followers don't have.

Many of the problems of the churches today are due to the fact that congregations are leaving it up to the ministers to speak and to act, but the congregation has to become involved, too.

We as individuals must take on the responsibility for God's success or failure in this world. Politics are a mess because we don't speak up. The churches must speak in politics. If we want to continue to have freedom in the world, we must bring God back, we have to make God welcome in our world.

There's always more to be given, there's always more to be done. But there's always power to do it if we unite with God and overcome the ignorance that we allow ourselves to live in. Once we have the truth, we cannot claim to be ignorant. Then we have to live it. Our foundation of faith in God is acceptance of the truth. The substance of that is living it becoming the truth, changing our hearts, overcoming our relationships. This takes us out of ignorance.