

Testify

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The Kingdom of Heaven on earth cannot be realized without the thorough eradication of evil in its multiple forms. In Judeo-Christian tradition, this is tantamount to the complete solution of sin, from the individual to the cosmic level, a gradual passage from a sinful to a sinless world. The solution of sin, particularly in the Christian tradition, entails salvation. Is salvation achieved by faith alone? Jesus says to the adulterous woman: "Your faith has saved you. Go and sin no more." (John 8:11) How was she going to do that, that is how was she to "sin no more"? Or is salvation by the gratuitous grace of God? "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy" (Rom. 9:15-16). How does one reconcile this with St. Paul's other injunction: "Work out your own salvation in fear and trembling" (Phi. 2:12). Or again, what are we to make of those who have faith but "have not works" (James 2:14)? Furthermore Jesus is categorical in his affirmation that nobody goes to the Father but by him. Did he fully know of the origin of sin and deliberately withheld information relative to the process of the Fall of Man?

The Catholic position on salvation is given new dimension by Pope Francis' recent declaration that salvation is universal, Jesus having died for one and all, including atheists. This is a far cry from the restrictive dogma of no salvation outside of the church, the Catholic Church, that is. What is the position of the Unification Church on this central issue? Possibly none and all of the above. At the risk of grossly simplifying, it might be said that salvation happens through the fulfillment of two complementary conditions, namely what is termed the Foundation of Faith and the Foundation of Substance. The Foundation of Faith requires a Central Figure, a condition of indemnity over a period of time. The Foundation of Substance takes place principally by uniting with a Central Figure in the position of Abel whose sacrificial offering is acceptable to God according to the Cain/Abel paradigm. For a detailed explanation, the interested reader is referred to the comprehensive exposition in the Divine Principle pages 221-370.

Unificationism makes the further claim that the appropriate conditions have been met in this age for the advent of the Messiah, for the Second of Christ in the person of Sun Myung Moon. With his spouse Hak Ja Han, he has completed the messianic mission through to the family level and they have together become the True Parents of all mankind. Through them sin is solved, not just absolved. Through the sacrament of the blessing they provide, there is a change of blood lineage marking a separation from Satan, the father of evil. The process for the total eradication of evil is launched and the Kingdom of Heaven is not only at hand, but it has begun, it is here for those who have eyes to see.

However, the situation has been made more complex by the premature passing on ("ascension") of Sun Myung Moon, the True Father. Strike the shepherd (and his family), and the flock will scatter, will scamper in disarray and go to ground. There are rumors of schism, of failings and failures in the very true family (neither true nor a family, say the detractors), the family that is supposed to be the model Jesus was unable to establish. This "betrayal" of the True Parent constitutes a formidable setback, if not a disturbing prolongation of God's Providence. So, critical opinion goes, all is not well in the kingdom. As some older members of the movement pass away, others are disillusioned. Is the Unification Church destined to become just another denomination?

Almost in desperation many Unificationists pray for a revival of faith, in expectation of a new Pentecost. May the Holy Spirit fill the remaining faithful and the new generation with courage and conviction enough to raise the flag and man the fort. A good part of the prevailing attitude among even sympathetic well-wishers is one verging on pity for those poor "Moonies".

But this is counting without the real bravery of admirable brothers and sisters who, assailed on many sides, simply close ranks. See how they support and love one another. Even so-called backsliders stop in their track and take stock. Individually and collectively these "Moonies" stand their ground, find opportunity in adversity, surprise the world by their obstinate refusal to capitulate or abdicate. And so they stand up and testify.

They testify on the personal level, examine their lives and remind themselves of what God has done for them. How they have been reached, been lifted up from their desolate condition, raised up to know what they do know in their heart, to have made them what they have become, emancipated sons and daughters of God. And they are grateful to all those who assisted in their salvation. They know of the necessity to maintain the course of the chosen, ensuring that neither the passage of time nor adversity undermine their resolute faith, constantly growing thanks to the life and vitality elements that principled living provides. They are thus kept healthy and strong. They do not simply grow old: they age gracefully, with dignity, ever growing in wisdom and their capacity to love. Never mind if some of their kin, kith or kids do not (yet) accept True Father as their Messiah. They know of the once in a lifetime God-given opportunity to assist meaningfully in the liberation of their own ancestors and those of their spouse. They remain steadfast in their course, an uplifting source of inspiration to their children. They testify by what they are, by what they say, by what they do in every situation. They testify at home or at work. They testify here, there and everywhere. They extend their influence to their immediate community, shining examples of the Word incarnate. They assist in the consolidation or the creation of new institutions that become solid and enduring foundations of the Kingdom of God.

They testify via Internet, Facebook, PowerPoint presentations and other electronic devices. Publications, thematic conferences, projects. They become more and more professional in the delivery of Divine Principle. There is no limit to the vistas the imagination, a possible emanation or function of the original mind, can open. And when it comes to take dominion over the created world, they will tap the power Jesus used to perform miracles. They build on the modern-day miracles performed by True Father in his lifetime. And greater things than these they will do, if we are to believe what Jesus said to his companions.

They thus testify convincingly as to why they believe Sun Myung Moon is the Messiah. They are familiar with True Father's providential course and eloquently, from the heart, testify to the authenticity of the Messiah. Filled with the Holy Spirit, for this is their Pentecost, they will have and display the gift of discernment to know what to say, to whom and when.

Then, there will be those called to take on the sacerdotal mission, ordained and vested with sacramental powers. In a decentralized church, as select representatives of the True Parents, they will not only take people to the blessing but take the blessing to the people. Indeed, salvation becomes universal. The gates of Heaven are thrown wide open.

And when the time comes to leave this world, Moonies don't just die: if the heroes of MacArthur fade away, Moonies "ascend" to continue in the other world whatever mission may be required of them. The guru, it is said, when his time has come, calls his family by his bedside, delegates his powers to his progenitor, says goodbye and leaves. David S.C. Kim similarly made his dignified exit. So ought to have been True Father's departure. Alas, his life was tragically cut short and his agony prolonged.

Who then will assuage the sadness of God, comfort His grievous heart? It would appear Almighty God, in all His omnipotence, cannot liberate Himself from the self-imposed bondage of having to deal with fallen humanity. Who will help our Heavenly Parent overcome His possible frustration, his many disappointments? Well, first and foremost, the Moonie testifies to the Heavenly Parent. S/he helps God develop His personality, enabling Him to address all those feelings that the Heavenly Parent has had to experience while working out the providence of salvation. S/he joins the hosts of Heaven to murmur into the ears of our Heavenly Parent, again and again: "I love you, I love you, I shall always love you".