

When We Think We've Become Experts On God, A New Message Arrives

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It's when we think we've become experts on God's word that we start telling God to shut up when a new message arrives. It's an ongoing conversation.

When my daughter came home from her first day of school, we gave her a snack, then said, "Ok, let's do your homework."

"Dad, no!" she said, "I can't do my homework now!"

"Why not?" I asked.

"Because the teacher said, 'Do your homework tonight.' The sun's still up. It's not night yet."

"It's ok, dear. You can do your homework now."

"Daaad, no! The teacher said 'night'!"

It took some persuading for her to accept that it was ok to do it at home, when the sun was still up. We laugh about it now, but for them it was a life and death issue. I wasn't aware that we'd been raising little fundamentalists, but I had to admire their chutzpah, the way they stuck to their principles.

We laughed about it, but don't we act just the same when we understand the literal words but not the gist? I mean, it's cute when my daughter took her teacher so seriously that she berated us with her literal understanding, but I've acted the same way myself on several occasions.

How many times have I understood the words but not the heart behind them? I've lost count.

Nowadays, of course, we could text the teacher and get an instant answer, but that wasn't possible back then. Just as now, with the Providence the way it is, we can ask Heavenly Parent a question and get an instant answer.

It's like now, with cell phones, we can call home and ask what kind of bread we should get. In the past you had to just wing it, or go to a pay phone and call, hoping they were home to talk to. But you couldn't really keep running in and out of the store to the payphone. Plus you'd run out of dimes.

We now take it for granted that we can call or text and get an instant answer. In the past, getting an answer meant looking it up in an encyclopedia at the library, if the library was open. Or you could call up someone who knew, if you knew who they were, and had their number, and it wasn't long distance, and they were home to answer the phone.

Just as before we could pray at home, or go to church or a holy ground, if one was nearby. You could do a condition for 3, 7, 21, 40, 120 days and maybe at the end you'd get an answer, if you'd paid enough indemnity and were listening when it came through.

Now we can go to Cheon Shim Won and have a conversation with Father, God, and hear answers right away. We can even set up our own Cheon Shim Won at home.

I'm aware that this exists, but I still find myself toughing it out without asking, trying to keep going when I could just check in.

Whereas in the past we could only go by what we'd heard, we don't have to wonder what we were sent to the store to get, we can call and ask. We don't have to stew in the sour juices of our own confusion, we can check in. But the tendency is still there. Even in this new era, I still tend to not ask when I could. But think about it as a parent: do you like it when your children ask you questions? How do you feel when they cling to their own ideas and don't want to hear anything else? Or when you know they're struggling with something but they're afraid to ask, even though you're dying to talk to them about it?

The gates are wide open. We just have to get ourselves through them.