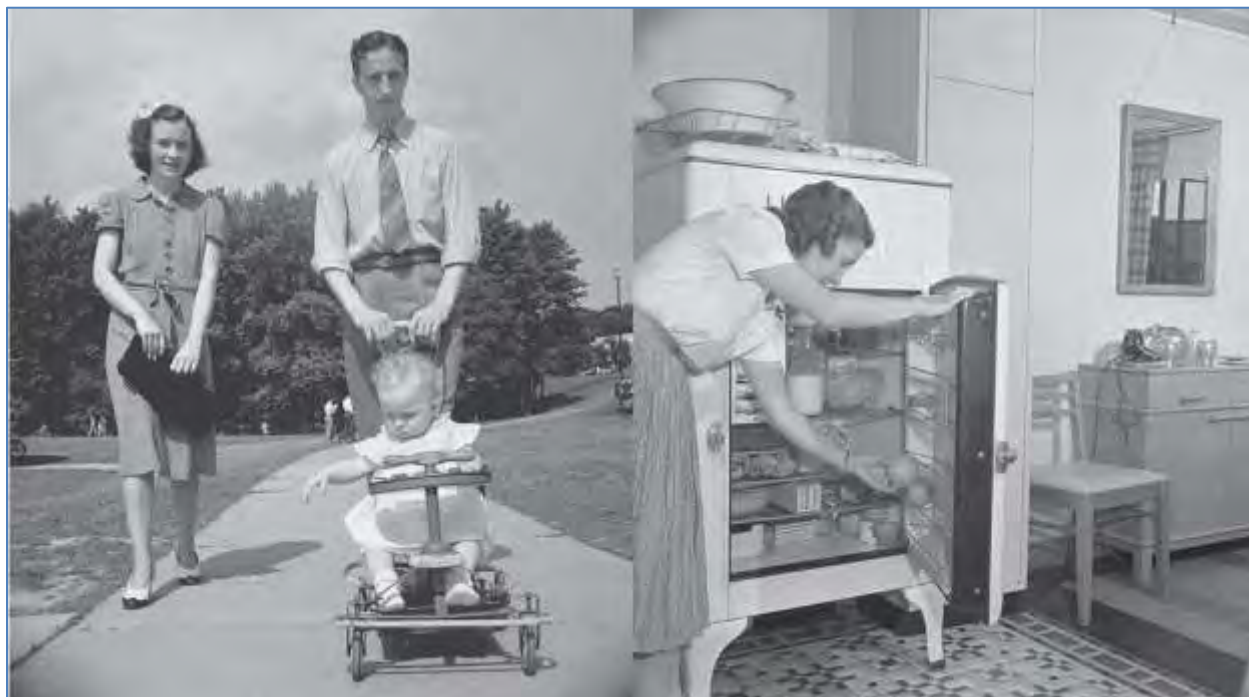


Aglow in the Fire of New Revelation Divine Principle Via the Bible

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In Greenbelt Maryland, in the United States we have begun using a marvelous, new (actually, the original) way of teaching the Divine Principle to Bible-oriented new spiritual children. We teach right from the Bible, since Christians, Muslims and Jews accept the Old Testament figures and scripture from which most of the Divine Principle comes. This is, in fact, the way True Father taught the Divine Principle in the beginning, when he was preaching in North Korea -- using the Bible. There were no Divine Principle books and no diagrams, just the Bible and True Father's understanding of the revelations he had received.

Recently, as we sought to find culturally-based ways to introduce people to the Divine Principle, we had the idea that since this culture is rooted in the Abrahamic faiths, which subscribe to worldviews based on the Bible, we would immediately connect with people if we created Bible study programs based on the Divine Principle.

Our first three efforts have been successful. The first was a hoon-dok-style workshop with slides that started with numerous Bible verses showing the basic Principle teachings. The second and third have been Bible study sessions at the home of Gary and Wanji Rowe, a blessed couple in our neighborhood who graciously opened their home for this public program. This article will focus on the home study program, which was by far the most hopeful new development.

We gather around a kitchen table, Bibles in hand, to study Divine Principle -- only we called it, "A Bible Study: Lessons on Successful Living." We start by reading over several life-oriented study questions and briefly asking which ones seem most important.

We then lead the group through several Bible verses that the introduction of *Exposition of the Divine Principle* uses. We ask each member of the group, new students and seasoned ones alike, to read a few verses from a preprinted sheet. (This is much easier than thumbing through from verse to verse in the Bible when there are many verses.)

Joy from natural interaction

At the conclusion of the readings, whoever is leading the group that day asks, "What do these verses mean to you?" Then the heavenly sparks start flying! Everyone chimes in with wonderful insights -- discussing such verses as, John 16:12-13: "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...." One new student asked, "Will the Spirit of truth come to all of us, or will it come in a person?" Wow! Great question! A blessed member answered, "That is one of the main purposes of our group -- to let God answer questions like that directly to us from the Holy Bible."

Then we launched into the Principle of Creation, though we simply called it Creation. We read selections, round-table style, from Genesis Chapter 1. This time we used the Bible itself. Each student was guided to

select passages such as, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," and "male and female he created them," down to verse 1:28 -- "Be fruitful, multiply and have dominion...." The entirety of the verses we used was on a separate sheet.

We then asked the group questions about each verse, in an attempt to highlight the various sections of the Principle of Creation. For the purpose of the Creation, we highlighted, "And God said it was very good." For the dual characteristics, we used, "male and female he created them." For the three blessings, of course, we used Genesis verse 1:28. The group leader augmented these by showing a diagram or two from the Divine Principle hoon-dok slides simply printed on paper. Finally, we read Matt 16:29 ("Whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven....") regarding the spiritual world.

Everyone gained

New students and seasoned members came alive. (We have pushed ourselves to get away from the word "guest," which engenders a sense of "us" and "them" and separates us from our new friends. We are using terms such as "new friend," "student" or "neighbor" -- anything but "guest.")

Each person has something extraordinary to say. The Divine Principle had come alive through the Bible. New students were afire with their newfound revelations through the Bible. Seeing how the spirit could work in this way electrified our seasoned members. We felt united; there were no distinctions between new students and blessed members. All were aglow in the fire of new revelation from God as seen through the Holy Bible.

One new student, in answer to the question, "What is God teaching us about how to live on earth through Matthew 16:29?" said, "It's as if God has a video camera and is capturing everything we do as we live our lives. When we die, he plays that video.

That will decide if we go to heaven or hell." Amazing! True Father has been using that analogy on the global speaking tours; now it's coming out of the mouth of a new student studying the Divine Principle from the Bible! Another new student said, "I love this way of studying the Bible. In my church, the pastor reads a passage or two and then just gives another sermon. In this group, you ask each of us to share and give our opinions -- we find the truth together."

In the end, everyone around the table felt that it had been a fantastic evening. We scheduled the next home Bible study of the Divine Principle without any resistance -- in fact, one new student asked if he could bring a friend and a long-time member asked if she could bring her neighbor. Everyone who has participated in the Bible study feels that God has shown us a whole new way to teach the Divine Principle, at the same time, we realize it's not actually new; True Father set the pattern seventy years ago.

Our plan is to go through the entire Divine Principle starting from the Bible. We do not read entire chapters; only those sections that are relevant to teaching the Divine Principle. We use a little different flow than *Exposition of the Divine Principle*, one that we believe is more in line with how the early members might have taught it.

The Principle of Creation: Genesis 1 and 2 and selected New Testament verses cited in Divine Principle; The Fall of Man: Genesis 2 and 3 and selected New Testament verses cited in Divine Principle; Adam's Family: Genesis Chapter 3; Noah's Family: Genesis Chapters 6 and 9; Abraham's Family: Genesis; Jacob and Esau, Moses' and the Israelites Course: Exodus; Jesus' course: Matthew, John and selected verses cited in Divine Principle; Consummation of Human History: Selected verses cited in Divine Principle; Parallels and The Second Coming: to be developed.... We are not sure yet exactly how to approach these two chapters of Divine Principle. What we are sure of is that the idea of teaching the Divine Principle directly out of the Bible is a winner!