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“Faith learned through Experience”

Today I would like to talk about faith that is learned through experience. Faith requires learning through experience; we need to go through certain experiences. No matter how long we have believed, faith that is not based on learned experience will not last.

There are three elements that are important to faith, ie absolute faith, absolute denial, and absolute love. Adam and Eve were the parents of humanity but because of the fall their family was ruined. After the fall, God established religion, and through religion He has been conducting his providence to take ruined families and bring them back to the original families.

Adam and Eve fell because they were insisting on their own position, so we have the task of restoring all this. Adam and Eve fell based on their self-centeredness, so now we need, through faith, to find a way back to God that goes through True Father.

Next, Adam and Eve fell because they demanded love centered on themselves; because they insisted on gathering love to themselves they ended up losing everything.

Today I would like to think how we can recover the conditions that were lost as a result of our self-centeredness. We have to go beyond the place our ancestors Adam and Eve fell. We have to have absolute faith and absolute denial. To have absolute faith, we need to continue in our faith until we die. We have to continue in that faith even after we die, and even as we are dying we need to maintain that faith.

The most difficult thing about absolute faith is maintaining the faith even as we are dying. If we are able to maintain faith even in that situation, even as we are facing death, then there can the providence of resurrection can take place.

Members of Sanctuary Church today are being persecuted right and left and front and back and all directions, but if we have the determination that we will continue in this path even as we are dying, then many people will bow their head and submit to us.

The completed religion begins from the point of self-denial. Jesus also said, “You must pick up your cross, and follow me.” It means that we must deny ourselves. We need to know how large, how vast this aspect of self-denial is; we have to deny not only our body but also our mind.

Satan’s primary place -where he resides- is our body. Many times as Father was speaking, he would pause and ask, “Are your mind and body united?” But there was never a person that could say that their mind and body were united. Even today we can see that our mind and body are in conflict and the reason for that conflict is that we are fallen.

When things were difficult Father would say, ‘Still we need to continue; we need to endure on this path. If we cannot endure we cannot succeed. “Jesus also prayed, “If this is possible,

let this cup pass from me, but not my will, but Thee will be done!" He said this when he was faced with the cross. So Jesus till the end was faithful to God.

Even in the face of death, he did not show weakness, but he showed a model of strength. It was not an easy path; it was a difficult path that Jesus walked, but he showed us self-denial, not only a few times but hundreds of times.

In every instance he placed himself on God's side. In every instance he had the conviction that he was working for the salvation of humanity, and that is how he could achieve victory. This is why Jesus insisted on absolute faith, absolute denial and absolute love and that is the model that he showed us. Jesus knew that even if he died on the cross, the blood that he shed would bring about the resurrection of humanity some day in the future.

The path that we take is not a path that we go along just singing or humming along with happiness; instead we go a path where we need to experience God's heart and Father's heart of pain and sorrow. If we do not do that, then we cannot establish a relationship with God and Father. We need to have that experience, because we need to learn through experience about God, about Father and about their hearts, and if we are able to practice what we could learn through these experiences, then God can accomplish amazing miracles through us.

For a child to express filial piety to his parents he needs to experience the difficulties of his parents and know the difficult situation of his parents; it is difficult to express filial piety without that knowledge. That child needs to have the same heart as the parents, and also the same heart as God and True Father in order to express filial piety, and also to be a loyal subject, a loyal patriot. Without doing that it will be easy for us to fail.

It is not easy though, for us to learn through experience in that way. To learn about Father's heart. When our heart rises to the point when we are able to know God's heart, then Father will come to us, and God will come to us, and we will have that incredible unity.

Some day we will have to face judgment before God. When we are facing that judgment we'll be judged on the basis of the heart that we were able to maintain even in the face of crisis, even in the midst of confusion, It's only when we are able to have a heart that is united with God so completely that there cannot be any division, that if someone was trying to cut our relationship with God it would not be severed; it is only then that we can have true eternal life.

Father often said that among spiritually open people there are people who can see how he lives, and see what he is doing. He said that around the world, without other people knowing, some people are receiving Father's instruction and living their lives according to Father's guidance.

Today we are living in a world where the spiritual world has become quite close to us. This is a treasure, a strong point that only we possess. It is because religions until now did not have this aspect of experience; they have become secularized and they have fallen away.

To learn through experience it is necessary for us to pray and offer great sincerity and dedication. Father told us to be careful, and not to ignore the revelations and the realizations

that we receive through that process. We need to take the things that we receive through these experiences and put them into practice in our actual lives.

I witnessed how Father was also living his life in a spiritual way. There were times when Father was touring the country when he would make a phone call in the morning and say, "OK, I am going there today" but then when he actually set out, he would go to a completely different place. We saw many times that Father was living according to the spiritual waves or the spiritual vibrations that he would receive, and that he would do as God told him.

So let us also live our lives with God and with Father. When we can do that, people will realize how we are living, and they will listen to us. When we live our lives together with God, then people will see that we are full of life; we will not be living a self-centered life but a life centered on heaven.

Father told us that there was a time when things were very, very difficult and he prayed, "What shall I do?" Then Father heard a voice that said, "You need to die; you need to die so that you may live." He said he heard the voice saying, "You can receive blessing, but you can also become able to give blessing to all humanity." He said God was always telling him to endure and to endure.

In Chinese characters, the characters for patience or endurance are a combination of the two characters for mind and sword, meaning that we must endure even if someone puts a sword to our mind or to our heart. How painful it would be if someone was to take a sword into our heart! But if a person can endure a thousand times he will be victorious a thousand times.

That's why before we act we must think one more time and act on the basis of taking another moment to think before we act.

Father also trained us in patience and endurance, but he also exercised an incredible endurance. It's difficult to endure many times but that's how Father practiced. Father endured with the thought that if he could endure with a person that gave him difficulty, the he could inherit all the blessings that that person had received. The Bible also said that those who endure to the end will be blessed. It can also be understood to mean that if we endure a long time we receive that much more blessing.

God has endured for 6,000 years and God is our Father. Because we are God's children we must also endure in order to have victory in our life today. So the philosophy of our life in this fallen world should always be to have patience and to endure. We do that for the sake of God and for the sake of True Father. That's where we get the philosophy of filial piety and loyalty.

There was a family that I knew where five generations were living under one roof. Father said that three generations should live together, but this particular family had five generations and I knew the daughter-in-law of that family. Many people came to this woman- she was an old woman- and asked her, "How is it possible that five generations can live under one roof. What is the secret?" She took the person asking question to the place

where they store various foods in the ground. There was an earthen jar that she opened and showed the questioner what was inside. In the jar the character for endurance was written on paper and it filled up that jar. She did not endure; she endured to the end.

Endurance takes an objective. There has to be a purpose or a final goal to your endurance. Father would endure even in the face of the greatest enemy. This is how he could stand as True Parents of all humanity.

It's not enough just to endure, because if we say, "Oh that was very difficult," then we lose that condition. It's when we are grateful for the difficulty, and when we are able to sing hymns even as we endure that we can have victory. If we are complaining in the process of enduring then God cannot come to us. So we need to have a heart of gratitude even as we are enduring; that is absolutely necessary.

Without that heart of gratitude we cannot endure forever. Without that heart of gratitude, God cannot be present with us as we endure. So, as we endure, we have a goal before us and we have to go through a certain time and process in order to accomplish that goal. And when we continue to endure day after day, always keeping the goal in mind, we can in the end achieve the fruit of victory.

As we endure we must even go beyond the 10 plagues of Moses. The path of faith is the path of overcoming and we need to continuously go over the obstacles that arise before us. Religion tells people to endure and to sacrifice; Jesus said that in order to gain our lives we must lose our lives. So if we can sacrifice in that way we can overcome something even as difficult as the 10 plagues of Moses. Father taught us the secret to endurance.

The Israelites thought that when the messiah would come they would be able to take over the world, centering on their own country. So they were thinking just about their own happiness. Because they did not think of all humanity but only thought of themselves, in the end they were destroyed. As we too are going on our path, if we are not able to overcome that kind of a thing, in the end we cannot have victory.

The only way to overcome in that case is through sincerity and dedication, not through any kind of external means. When Father would do bows at the time of an event, I could tell that he was bowing to the living God that he could experience. When we saw the sincerity and dedication that he expressed before God, we also learned how to express that sincerity and dedication. It is through this sincerity and dedication that he could have this father-son relationship with God.

He did all of this for us before he passed to the spirit world. So, also this morning let us remember the way that our father expressed sincerity and dedication to God with a heart of gratitude. Let's also express that same attitude in our lives and live our life of faith in that way. Thank you very much.

Video: https://youtu.be/ossEQQNEb_Y?t=3072