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Significance of Reverend Sun Myung Moon for Christianity

WRITTEN BY ANDREW WILSON

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With the passing of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, his church as well as the wider society are beginning to ask questions about his historical significance. To begin to dig into this topic, on December 5, 2013, a symposium was held at Sun Moon University, the school he founded in Korea, on the exalted theme, “The Meaning of Rev. Sun Myung Moon in the History of Civilizations.” The papers presented at that conference^[1] reviewed many of his accomplishments: the founder of a new religion, a fighter against Communism and for conservative values who founded *The Washington Times* newspaper, a visionary who proposed a religious council at the United Nations and a bridge-tunnel across the Bering Strait to link the USA with Russia, a leader in interfaith who worked with Muslims and Christians to prevent possible escalation at the time of the Gulf War, a savvy businessman who developed successful resort properties, an accomplished fisherman and much more. His auto-biography, *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*,^[2] was a best-seller in Korea.

The very title of the symposium, casting Sun Myung Moon as a world-historical figure, is indicative of the problems people outside his movement face in reckoning with his significance. If Rev. Moon were simply known for his outward accomplishments, it would be a simple matter for people anywhere to appreciate him. Yet they pale to near insignificance in the face of the messianic claims that are attached to his person. If he was the Messiah, it would make him the most significant person to ever live, at least on a par with Jesus Christ or even greater. Can any degree of outward accomplishment measure up against this question of his fundamental identity?

The Messianic Stumbling-Block

For Christians Rev. Moon’s messianic claim has been a huge, infuriating stumbling-block. It does not necessarily trouble non-believers, who see all manner of religious claims as equally dubious. A thoughtful non-believer can put the messianic claims aside and simply evaluate the man on the strength of his character and the good he has done. Christians do not have that option. After all, if Rev. Moon’s person and work cannot be properly understood apart from the claim that he is the Second Coming of Christ, where does that put Christians, who have been longing for the Second Coming ever since Jesus ascended into heaven with the promise that he would return (Matt. 24:30, 44; 25:31; Acts 1:11; Rev. 22:20)?

From the very beginning of Rev. Moon’s ministry, it was a great problem for Christians to believe such a thing. First, there was the obstacle of doctrine, in the form of the conventional Christian belief that the Second Coming of Christ would be a supernatural event, coming on the clouds of heaven. Rev. Moon’s identity as Messiah is not based on the Bible, they allege, because it is based on teachings of the Divine Principle, the truth revealed to Rev. Moon and set down in the Unification Church’s doctrinal text, *Exposition of the Divine Principle*.^[3] Even though the Divine Principle is largely an explication of the Bible, it explicitly disputes with conventional Christian teachings about the Second Coming and puts forth its own doctrine.^[4] Second, there is the exalted status Christians ascribe to Jesus Christ, on a par with God, which makes it difficult for them to believe that any mere human being could fill his shoes. Third, in Korea Rev. Moon was dogged by rumors of scandal, fabricated or exaggerated by his

opponents in the churches. Fourth, Korean pastors faced the unpleasant prospect of their members deserting to his church, which was alive and filled with young people. Fifth, to the degree that his followers exalted Rev. Moon, they seemed to ignore or disrespect Jesus. All these factors militated against Christian believers taking Rev. Moon seriously, first in Korea and then in the West.

Yet Rev. Moon's own words indicate that he took his messianic role with utmost seriousness. On numerous occasions, in public as well as to his followers, he claimed to be the Messiah and Lord of the Second Advent.^[5] He devoted his life to completing the work that he believed Jesus had begun but left unfinished,^[6] which was to usher in the millennial Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, it is not a simple matter for Christianity to properly assess the significance of Rev. Moon. It will not do to simply list Rev. Moon's works among Christians and on behalf of Christianity. His works could not be appreciated, accepted or acknowledged in the face of a messianic claim that was regarded as rank blasphemy.

Coming to Terms with Rev. Moon's Messianic Identity and Mission

On the other hand, for Rev. Moon's followers, clear evidence of his messianic mission was apparent. It played out in the steps he took to secure the promised Kingdom of Heaven. They included: (1) consummating the Marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9) in 1960, which recovered the original purity of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden before the Fall; (2) uprooting the original sin through a series of ever-larger Marriage Blessing ceremonies, which laid the foundation for recovering God's original ideal of the Garden of Eden worldwide; (3) securing the defeat of international communism, which had been Satan's final challenge to the establishment of God's sovereignty on earth, sealed by meetings with Mikhail Gorbachev in 1989 and with Kim Il-sung in 1991; (4) promoting the equality and rights of women by establishing the messianic model of a true man and a true woman together as True Parents; (5) securing the surrender of Lucifer—the original Satan—on March 21, 1999, who thenceforth resolved to support God's efforts to root out the evil in the cosmos; (6) presiding over the ceremony of God's enthronement as King on January 13, 2001 (lunar calendar), and in subsequent ceremonies that restored God's authority in heaven and earth which had formerly been under the devil's control; (7) posthumously establishing Foundation Day twelve years later, on January 13, 2013, an event which marked the opening of God's Kingdom.

Granted, these works are a far cry from the Bible's vision of a sudden apocalyptic transformation, something that every eye could see. Yet believers can point to the many sensitive people, outside as well as inside the church, who feel a greater sense of God's gracious presence in their lives, who have deeper intimacy with God as their Heavenly Parent, and who experience God's inspiration and guidance as they work through the myriad problems that have piled up in the human condition. And they ascribe these advances to the foundation that Sun Myung Moon and his wife Hak Ja Han have laid as the True Parents.

Yet Unificationists who expected more were taken aback when Rev. Moon died on September 3, 2012 without establishing the millennial kingdom in reality, and this posed a challenge to the faith of some. For those whose faith in Rev. Moon was wedded to expectations of a dramatic manifestation of God's Kingdom in the world, it created a crisis of disconfirmation. The church takes the view that the Kingdom, called *Cheon Il Guk*, has in fact been born, although it may take a long time to reach its full manifestation. Still, the shape and manner of its unfolding during this interim period are poorly defined, and among believers there needs to be theological accommodation to a millennium delayed or arriving only gradually.^[7]

In its current phase, various parts of the movement are wrestling with this issue. For some, including many in the core leadership, the priority is to pay homage to Rev. Moon's memory, codify his teachings, and build up his church. His teachings are being collected and organized into three volumes of scripture: the *Cheon Seong Gyeong*, a topical anthology of selected excerpts of his sermons, the *Pyeong Hwa Gyeong*, a compilation of his major speeches, and the *Cham Bumo Gyeon*, a life of Rev. Moon based on a compilation of autobiographical passages from his sermons. Efforts are being made to solidify institutional structures and promulgate a

constitution. Yet while the path to institutionalization is meant to preserve Rev. Moon's religious impulse and teachings that are profound and life-transforming, it falls far short of the hopes and expectations of those among his original followers who expected the outcome of his life to be more than just a church. They must deal with the inevitable letdown, the feeling that the world-transforming movement to which they had signed on and dedicated their lives is becoming more or less indistinguishable from more settled Christian churches.

Many Unificationists press on with the work of transforming the world, which they view as Rev. Moon's true legacy. Some find a home in the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) or the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP), two of the church's major auxiliaries that work with religious and political leaders to broaden cooperation across religious, ethnic and political divides. Another group, led by his eldest surviving son, has thrown considerable resources into peacebuilding activities through "global peace festivals." Currently its relations with the mainstream church are poisoned by family politics,^[8] although it is still possible that over the course of time they can be reconciled. Then there are countless individual Unificationists, working alone or in small groups, who are developing personal ministries to advance change in the communities where they live.

In time, his followers will come to terms with living for the Kingdom's fulfillment in the midst of much that remains unfulfilled. Their unrealistic expectations tempered, they will find new ways to appreciate Rev. Moon for what he was, what he did, what he taught, and what he has given them. Such has been the case for other movements that weathered the transition from their charismatic founders to institutional forms and became established religions. Hopefully many Unificationists will achieve a healthy integration of spirituality and social practice that honors Rev. Moon's person and works, suitably defined as messianic, and goes on to expand that legacy by doing "greater works than these." (John 14:12)

Some Christian leaders have also wrestled with the idea that Rev. Moon might be the Messiah. His church made great efforts at outreach Christian to clergy, especially in America. As clergy made common cause with Rev. Moon in the social and political battles they believed in, such as the fight against communism and work to strengthen families, they would be pushed by their colleagues and denominational authorities to confront the Messiah question. Many encountered persecution, including even expulsion from the ranks of their denominations. Therefore, those who chose to work with Rev. Moon had to at least acknowledge in their hearts that he might be the Messiah. That some clergy answered in the affirmative is evidenced by the participation of hundreds in his marriage Blessings, which are endowed with salvific value in Rev. Moon's theology. For the several thousand members of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC), respect for the man extended even to an appreciation of his teachings.

From the perspective taken in this paper, which focuses on the question of Rev. Moon's messianic identity, the struggles of this group of Christians to deal with their encounter with Rev. Moon and the push-back from their churches is comparable to what was faced by those Jews at the time of Jesus who recognized his saintliness and wisdom, people like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea (more on this below).

It is too early to judge how Rev. Moon's passing will impact these clergy who were touched by him and his church. While the impetus to reach out to clergy may have lessened, controversy over the messianic claims for him also becomes less pressing. Hopefully, with a lessening of controversy space can open for calm reflection, even reconsideration.

Convergence of Christian Teachings with the Divine Principle

One element that has improved the prospects for Christian reconsideration of the significance of Rev. Moon, as well as fostering Unification appreciation of Christianity, is the gradual convergence of their teachings. Christian doctrinal reflection has been moving towards positions that are compatible with several of the Divine Principle's distinctive teachings, which fifty years ago would have been seen as beyond the pale. This sort of convergence means that there is growing common ground between Unificationism and conventional Christianity. If this trend

continues, and over time Rev. Moon's teachings become doctrinally more acceptable, it will inevitably make his providential role more understandable as well.

For Unificationists, the fact that Christian teachings should move in the direction of affirming the Divine Principle is an affirmation of its truth. If the Divine Principle is true, then it is logical that Christians who worship God "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24) should arrive at similar ideas. The same God that revealed the Divine Principle to Rev. Moon has been quietly influencing Christian thinkers, even those who never read or heard of the Divine Principle. This can also be seen as a kind of indirect witness, of God moving within the Christian world to guide them into new ideas so they would be receptive to Rev. Moon's proclamation. God is the Source of truth, even the truths revealed by Rev. Moon. It stands to reason that God would plough the field by sowing these insights more widely. Let me share a few examples:

1. The suffering of God

Traditional Christians have long held that God is impassible, standing outside the suffering and misery of human life. On the contrary, in the words of Chang Shik Yang, a close disciple, Rev. Moon

...plainly teaches about God's sorrowful situation, about the heart of Him who is absolute, unchanging and eternal. After His children's fall and their expulsion from Eden, God the Father became the God of sorrow and grief, who every day sheds countless tears and emits mournful sighs.^[9]

Today many Christians have revised their theology to include the idea that God suffers. The Japanese Christian theologian Kazoh Kitamori, professor at Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, penned *Theology of the Pain of God*, the ground-breaking work in this regard, in 1946 just one year after Rev. Moon began his public ministry.^[10]

God's suffering entered mainstream Christian thought with Jürgen Moltmann's *The Crucified God*, whose Trinitarian theology links the suffering of Christ on the cross with the suffering of the Father. He writes,

Anyone who suffers without cause... and cries to out to God in this suffering echoes the death-cry of the dying Christ, the Son of God. In that case, God is not just a hidden someone set over against him, to whom he cries, but is in a profound sense the human God, who cries with him... We suffer because we love, and God suffers in us."^[11]

Based on the standard of the cross of Christ, he critiques the God of theism, the impassible God of Hellenistic theology, as "poor" because "he cannot love, nor can he suffer."^[12] More recently biblical theologian Terence Fretheim wrote *The Suffering of God: An Old Testament Perspective* (1984), in which he speaks at length about God's vulnerability because of His covenant relationship with humankind. These books were well received without controversy by American Christians.

2. Open Theism

Traditional Christian theology holds to God's omnipotence and omniscience: God is responsible for everything and knows in advance the choices that human beings will make in the future. By contrast, the Divine Principle upholds the principle of the human "portion of responsibility, with which even God does not interfere."^[13] This qualifies God's omnipotence and omniscience, because "God's purpose of creation can be realized only when human beings complete their portion of responsibility."^[14] Accordingly, when Adam and Eve were being tempted God did not know whether they would succumb, but "watched with trepidation" to see if they would be strong enough to repulse it.^[15]

Recently in Evangelical Christian circles, the movement called Open Theism has arisen, which takes a position quite close to that of Divine Principle. Open Theism is the belief that God does not exercise meticulous control of the universe but leaves it "open" for human beings to make

significant choices, in free will, that impact their relationships with God and others. This means that God has not predetermined the future. Nor does God know everything that will happen in the future. This allows God to be surprised, and even delighted, by what human beings do out of love. Were God to predetermine future events, God could never be surprised about anything. The elements of surprise and delight are inherent in love, and God designed the created world to provide such elements of love. Furthermore, to protect this ultimate potential for love which is inherent in human freedom, God makes Himself vulnerable to human beings and binds Himself to abide by our choices, painful as those sometimes may be.

The proponents of Open Theism include Richard Rice, who first propounded the idea in *The Openness of God: The Relationship of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Free Will* (1980). A second book on this topic by Rice and co-authored by William Hasker, John Sanders and Clark H. Pinnock^[16] was awarded Book of the Year by *Christianity Today* in 1995.

Today there are numerous Christian thinkers who subscribe to Open Theism. While they must contend with traditional arguments for God's omnipotence and omniscience, they make the case that Open Theism strengthens the philosophical case against atheism, is of benefit pastorally by supporting human dignity as beings endowed with freedom and responsibility, and is authentic to the way God is portrayed in the Bible where He is often disappointed with human choices. Yet despite the extensive biblical support for this doctrine, Open Theism only developed after Rev. Moon wrote and proclaimed the Divine Principle.

3. *Christian feminism*

In contrast to the traditional Christian belief in God the Father, the Principle of Creation teaches that God has dual characteristics of masculinity and femininity. Accordingly, the full embodiment of God on earth requires not just a male Christ but a couple—True Parents—who are to fulfill God's ideal for Adam and Eve as the substantial being of God. They were created in the image of God, who is both male and female. (Gen. 1:27) To underline this teaching, Hak Ja Han Moon declared that we should refer to God not as Heavenly Father but as “Heavenly Parent.”^[17]

This was not her own invention; she was reaffirming what her husband Rev. Moon had been teaching since the very beginning of his ministry. Thus in 1951 he wrote in *Wolli Wonbon*:

A couple represents Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother. Spouses stand as object partners who are extremely precious to each other. Therefore, they should respect and attend each other on behalf of Heavenly Father and Mother.^[18]

What is interesting is that after the Moons' Holy Wedding in 1960 which established this messianic reality in both genders, mainstream Christians began to explore God's femininity as well. Beginning in the 1970s Christian feminists, including Phyllis Trible, Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza and Mary Daly, began to speak out about this ignored dimension of God and about God's manifestation in the lives of Her daughters as well as His sons. Elizabeth Johnson even links these ideas together—the feminine Mother God with the reality of God's suffering.^[19] The late Young Oon Kim, while serving as a professor at the Unification Theological Seminary, recognized these Christians who saw what Rev. Moon also knew: “As theologian Mary Daly insists, modern theism must go Beyond God the Father.”^[20]

4. *God's ideal is marriage and family, not the celibate life*

A number of Christian denominations, Roman Catholicism in particular, have long upheld the special value of celibacy as the lifestyle most closely following the way of Christ. Yet Rev. Moon proclaimed that God is more fully present in a blessed marriage than to a celibate monk or nun. In 2001, Rev. and Mrs. Moon blessed Archbishop Milingo, a major Roman Catholic prelate, in marriage with a Korean woman, Maria Sung. This created an international sensation that rocked the Catholic world. For a time the Archbishop separated from his wife in obedience to the Vatican, but in 2006 he rejoined her, and braving the displeasure of Vatican authorities he began

campaigning for a married priesthood, forming an advocacy organization “Married Priests Now!”^[21]

Yet even apart from Milingo, voices within the Catholic Church are growing ever more insistent that the church drop its celibacy rule and allow a married priesthood. Today, a number of high-ranking Catholic leaders question whether this practice should continue. Pope John Paul II said in 1993 that celibacy “does not belong to the essence of priesthood.”^[22] Recently, Pope Francis remarked that celibacy “is a matter of discipline, not of faith. It can change.”^[23]

5. *Jesus’ death on the cross was not God’s original plan*

Few teachings in the Divine Principle have been more confronting to traditional Christians than the notion that Jesus did not come to die on the cross. Even though the cross brought the great benefit of salvation, the Divine Principle holds that God’s original purpose for sending Jesus Christ was even greater: he was to live and establish God’s Kingdom on earth. Now it seems that even this teaching is being at least discussed by mainstream Christians. Howard Kainz of Marquette University recently published an article in the conservative Catholic *Crisis Magazine* titled, “What If Jesus Had Been Accepted as the Messiah?” He argues that while the cross was “Plan B,” God had in mind a “Plan A” where the people of Israel would have accepted Jesus as their Messiah. In that case, he argues, the Temple would not have been destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD and the church today would look a lot more Jewish. Harkening back to the themes of Open Theism, Kainz speaks of the options of Plan A and Plan B as “evidence of the continuing sort of dialogue that God carries out with the world—God is desirous of pouring out all manner of benefits, but depends almost rigidly on free-will cooperation and making adaptations in response to both individual and group decisions.”^[24]

6. *Jesus was supposed to marry*

One of Rev. Moon’s most controversial teachings about Jesus Christ was that he was supposed to marry and raise a family. In several speeches he stated that Jesus’ intended bride was John the Baptist’s sister.^[25] For traditional Christians this seems blasphemous. Yet in the Christian cultural world of North America, millions of people now believe that Jesus may well have been married. The subject was first broached in 1970 by William E. Phipps,^[26] but it was not well received. The evidence that Jesus actually married is very thin, and Rev. Moon does not affirm that Jesus actually married, but only that he should have.

These days there is much interest in Mary Magdalene, on the strength of Dan Brown’s best-selling novel *The Da Vinci Code* (2003) and the popular movie of the same name that grossed over \$750 million in 2006. The idea that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were intimate finds support in the non-canonical Gospel of Philip, Pistis Sophia, Gospel of Mary and similar texts that were prized by Gnostic Christians in the second century AD. Today’s Christians are more willing to look seriously at these non-canonical writings because of scholarship on another such text, the Gospel of Thomas, which affirms it to be an independent witness to Jesus that contains many of his original sayings. Still more impetus has come from the recent discovery of an ancient manuscript, the so-called “Gospel of Jesus’ Wife,”^[27] although its authenticity is disputed.

On that score, Rev. Moon had something to say more than 60 years ago, when he wrote in his first manuscript of the Divine Principle, *Wolli Wonbon*, that Jesus did in fact have such a relationship with Mary Magdalene. It was part of a second course to find a bride, after Jesus’ family was unable to arrange his marriage to John the Baptist’s sister. Jesus’ intention was to restore Mary Magdalene by a process of reversing the Fall, which occurred when Satan took Eve from Adam:

Although [Mary Magdalene] was beloved of Judas Iscariot, she was also a faithful believer who would absolutely obey Jesus’ will. Thus, as Satan took Eve from Adam, Jesus would try to fulfill the Will according to the Principle by claiming her. For this, Jesus first gave Mary Magdalene to Judas Iscariot as if to be his wife, and placed him in the position to represent Satan. Then, in order to fulfill the providence to erect her in the position of Eve, Jesus tried to claim her as his own.^[28]

These are only six of Rev. Moon's numerous theological insights that have also been circulating of late within Christian circles. When he first began his ministry they appeared dangerously heretical, but now some have become widely accepted and others are at least discussed. Furthermore, since the Divine Principle has logical coherence, we see that as Christians accept any one of these ideas, they are inevitably drawn to see the reasonableness of others. Thus Open Theism is congruent with reassessing the inevitability of the cross, and with the suffering of God as well.

Christianity, which held basically to the same consistent beliefs for nearly 2000 years, is now in a time of unprecedented theological ferment, and we can recognize that the direction of this ferment is toward greater alignment with Rev. Moon's teachings. If this trend continues, then a Christian reconsideration of Rev. Moon may, at minimum, regard him as a genuinely inspired theologian and leader who was ahead of his time.

Historical Lessons from the Jews' Rejection of Jesus

Still, it remains a stubborn fact that by and large Christianity rejected Rev. Moon, and specifically his claim to be the Second Coming of Christ. In this regard, a historical comparison with Judaism's rejection of Jesus may be instructive. From the standpoint of acceptance or rejection, the relationship between Judaism and Jesus can be seen to mirror the relationship between Christianity and Rev. Moon. Two thousand years ago Judaism rejected Jesus' messianic claims when he came, and even to this day Jews do not believe he was the Messiah. Will Christianity, which has rejected Rev. Moon's messianic claims, continue to view him with disdain, as Judaism continues to disdain Jesus even after two thousand years? Or are there significant differences that could make for a more hopeful outcome?

It turns out that the Jewish-Christian relationship went through several stages subsequent to the death of Jesus. Jewish rejection of Jesus began during his lifetime, but Jesus also had a significant Jewish following. The earliest followers of Jesus were accepted as Jews and went about their lives as Jews. However, attitudes of Jews and Christians towards each other hardened during subsequent decades. By the end of the first century the barrier between Christianity and Orthodox Judaism had become indelibly fixed, although there is evidence that individual Jews and Christians could still readily cross into each other's worlds up to the time of Constantine.^[29] Similarly, the actions and attitude of the next several generations of Unificationists toward Christianity, and vice-versa, may well be determinative of whether Christianity hardens its stance against Rev. Moon or softens it over time. Let us review this history and its analogue in the times of Rev. Moon.

1. Possibility of reconciliation between Judaism and Jesus in the first generation

Jesus during his lifetime he had thousands of Jewish followers, including some of high stature like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. Scripture describes them as courageous in their support of Jesus, since they had to face opposition from their fellow Jews. (John 3:2, 19:38) Jesus himself was respectful of Jewish traditions, as when he commended the scribe who recited the Great Commandment, telling him, "You are not far from the Kingdom of God." (Mark 12:34)

Even during the first years of the Apostolic Age, many Jews were open to Jesus' message and held Jesus in high regard. The earliest followers of the resurrected Christ were Jews and accepted as such. The central Christian church during this period was the Jerusalem church led by James the brother of Jesus (Gal. 1:19). James was well regarded by the Jews of Jerusalem, according to Josephus.^[30] He was called "James the Just" because of his Jewish piety, praying in the Temple every day. Many Jerusalemites regarded this Jesus movement as a legitimate, if heterodox, expression of Judaism.

We can make an educated guess at the nature of James' preaching. First, Eusebius indicates that he was continually repenting on behalf of his people,^[31] and we can fairly conjecture that this was for their failure to receive Jesus. James was concerned about this issue above all else.

Second, the Epistle of James, although its attribution to James the Just is disputed, takes a remarkably Jewish approach to the Christianity in emphasizing an ethical life of piety and love that would have been appropriate to a Jewish culture that valued works over professions of faith. This shows that the Jerusalem church was well adjusted to preaching Christ to the Jews. Third, it is likely that James had something to say about the incipient conflict with Rome. It was his church of Jewish Christians that eventually wrote the Gospel of Matthew, which contains the Sermon on the Mount. James would have preached from the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:39-48) to advocate peace with the Romans,^[32] portraying Jesus as a teacher of peace. For this he ran afoul of the Zealots, the party that was agitating for the rebellion against Rome.

James was executed in 62 AD, yet according to Josephus many Pharisees “strict in observance of the law” were offended by what they regarded as a judicial murder.^[33] Many of these Pharisees, being themselves determined to resist the Zealots’ agitation and live peaceably with the Romans,^[34] would have been in agreement with James’ gospel message of peace and reconciliation. Thus, there was a 40-year period after Jesus’ death, from 30 until the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, when at least some Jews were open to Jesus’ message as preached by James and the apostles of the Jerusalem church. One can surmise that God was hoping for the Jews of that era to repent and accept the risen Christ, if not his messiahship at least his gospel teachings. Had this taken place, the leadership of Israel might not have fallen to the Zealots and their disastrous rebellion.

A similar dynamic unfolded between Unificationism and Christianity, especially if we reckon Rev. Moon’s long public ministry as comparable to both the three years of Jesus’ public ministry and the subsequent forty years of the Apostolic Age. If we regard Rev. Moon’s early ministry that culminated in his imprisonment in a North Korean death camp, which he miraculously survived, as comparable to Jesus’ earthly ministry, death and resurrection, then the subsequent 40-year period of the Unification Church, which began in 1954 and during which time the church expanded worldwide, can be compared to the Apostolic Age when Christianity was led by James and the Jerusalem Church.

2. Rev. Moon’s efforts at social and political collaboration

If Jesus, followed by James, tried to reach out to Jewish religious leaders in their day, Rev. Moon made far more efforts at outreach to Christian leaders, particularly during his 40 years of ministry in America from 1972 until his death in 2012. When he first came to the United States in 1973 he launched an evangelical crusade with the theme “The New Future of Christianity.” He founded the Unification Theological Seminary as a school of ecumenical learning and launched the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC). He developed the New Ecumenical Research Association (New ERA) for theologians and Christian academics to study his teachings. He took the lead alongside other Christians in the fight against communism and efforts to reverse the trend of family breakdown. He led Christian clergy on pilgrimages to the Holy Land and to work for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. He provided scholarships for Christian clergy to study at the Unification Theological Seminary. As a result, many Christians, especially in the United States, came to appreciate his life work. All told, Rev. Moon enjoyed considerable success as a twentieth-century *Christian* leader. This is all the more remarkable given that Korean Christian society still treated him as an outcast.

Above all, Rev. Moon had success in collaborating with Christians in the Cold War struggle against communism and especially against the aggressive designs of the Soviet Union. He was not alone in this struggle, which enlisted some of the best leaders of the free world including Pope John Paul II and President Ronald Reagan. Soviet communism was particularly brutal in its persecution of Christians. If we take the Soviet Union as a type of Rome, then this can be viewed as another parallel with the Jerusalem Church, which lived amidst circumstances where all Jews faced the overwhelming threat from their Roman overlords.

One factor that enabled Christians in the United States to accept Rev. Moon as a fellow-worker in the Cold War struggle was the growth of ecumenical cooperation around social and political causes. In this regard, a watershed moment came in 1980 when Rev. Jerry Falwell founded the Moral Majority, a political alliance of Evangelicals, Fundamentalists, Catholics, Mormons and Orthodox Jews around family values issues. It was predicated on the idea that Christians could

separate theology from social issues and make political alliances around the latter. Especially noteworthy was the inclusion the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in this alliance, despite it having a new prophet and new revelations that most all Christians reject out of hand. This would result in Mormons finding greater acceptance in the following decades to the point that Mitt Romney, a Mormon, could secure the Republican presidential nomination in 2012. But it was Falwell who opened this door for groups like Rev. Moon's church to join the mainstream of Christian groups in politics. Rev. Moon was grateful to Falwell, and the bond of friendship between the two men would lead Falwell to stand at the fore at the celebration of his release from Danbury Prison on August 20, 1985.[\[35\]](#)

Christians who worked with the Unification movement in the struggle against communism during the 1980s and 90s regarded Rev. Moon as a valuable ally, appreciating his insightful ideological analysis of communism presented in the CAUSA teachings and the commitment and reach of his worldwide CAUSA organization. Rev. Moon recognized Communism to be a satanic ideology that nevertheless grew out of Christian culture; therefore he understood that Communism could only be defeated by Christians and other believers who thoroughly understood the falsities of that ideology. His CAUSA educational programs conducted throughout North and South America became a major factor in clarifying attitudes toward Communism. He supported President Reagan's resolute stand against the Soviets, and with *The Washington Times* newspaper that he founded, threw his support behind the anti-communist *contras* in Nicaragua. When all these efforts are tallied, Rev. Moon's contribution to the defeat of Communism can be seen as an objective historical fact.[\[36\]](#)

Christians also joined Rev. Moon in his resolute stand for traditional marriage and family values. His True Family Values Ministry in the mid-90s attracted thousands of clergy, who were searching for new approaches to promoting marriage and monogamy. These seminars provided biblically reasoned arguments for saving sex for marriage and for making marriage a life-long commitment. *The Washington Times* newspaper also takes a pro-family stance.

These and other collaborations laid the foundation for enduring relationships with Christian leaders, even if they did not bring the Unification Church into full acceptance by Christian organizations. The church is still not a member of the National Council of Churches. The Unification Theological Seminary initially inquired about joining the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in 1988, but it took until 2010 to be formally accepted, albeit with only affiliate status. On the local level, a number of Unificationist clergy participate in interfaith and ecumenical associations.

The contemporary environment of religious tolerance has certainly been a factor in this. Christians who have become accustomed to working with people of other faiths do not find it difficult to work together with Rev. Moon's organizations, even while bracketing his claim to be the Messiah. This naturally changes the circumstances of discussions between Unificationists and Christians from mutual hostility to differences among friends. That tolerant situation did not exist between Jews and Christians in the mid-first century. It only could arise in the contemporary world a result of the religious freedom and ecumenical spirit that have flowered in democratic societies—societies which the Divine Principle holds to be the product of Christian culture.[\[37\]](#)

All things considered, Christians have been considerably more open to collaborating with Rev. Moon than were the Jews of two thousand years ago when James called them to follow Jesus' teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. In the first century, when Rome destroyed the Temple, ravaged Judea and brought an end to Jewish life in its homeland, a contributory factor may have been the Jews' poor response to the moderating teachings of Jesus that the church of James was propounding. On the other hand, in the twentieth century when Rev. Moon called Christians to stand with him on issues on which they could make common cause, they defeated the Soviet Union, Rome's modern analogue.

Again, much of Jewish messianic expectation in the first century focused on the hope that the Messiah would triumph over Rome. That said, should not Rev. Moon's success in achieving "victory over communism" be recognized as a point where he actually fulfilled the mission of

the Messiah? At least he accomplished the modern analogue of the very mission that Jesus would have had to fulfill 2,000 years ago, if he was to satisfy what the Jewish people expected of him.

The exception is Korea, where communist North Korea remains a threat, unbowed. Rev. Moon sought to mobilize the Korean people around the cause of unifying the Korean peninsula, including a major Rally for Korean Freedom in 1975 and the efforts of organizations like the Citizens Federation for the Unification of the Fatherland. He met with Kim Il Sung in 1991 and offered to him a message of Korean unity under God. This work on the national level remained unfinished at his death. It remains to be seen whether Korea is ever unified, and if so, whether his followers, led by his widow Hak Ja Han Moon, will play any sort of substantial role that could bear witness to his teachings in front of the Korean people.

3. The split between Judaism and Christianity hardens

After the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, the opportunity for reconciliation with Judaism had passed. The Zealots and Sadducees had disappeared along with the Temple, and Judaism reconstituted itself around the Pharisees. This became rabbinic Judaism, which endures to this day. Christianity changed its complexion as well after the Temple was no more; it became a largely gentile movement with a much diminished remnant of Jewish Christians. The rabbis came to see Christians as largely non-Jews and Jewish-Christians as only pseudo-Jews whose true loyalty was to a gentile faith. This meant that Jesus also was not regarded as a legitimate Jew. What's more, while rabbinic Judaism upheld the Law of Moses, gentile Christianity under the influence of Paul rejected the Law of Moses. Even if Jewish-Christians like James had honored the Law, their gentile co-religionists did not; this led to accusations that they only kept the law as a pretense.^[38] Distrust grew into open hostility towards Jewish-Christians, so much so that around 95 AD the Sanhedrin instituted the Eighteenth Benediction, a curse upon Christians and heretics recited by the congregation in worship. Jewish-Christians were expelled from synagogues—incidents that were written retrospectively into the Gospels (e.g. John 9:21).^[39]

At the same time Christianity turned increasingly hostile towards the Jews, accusing them of criminality, especially in the death of Jesus but also in persecuting the saints. The writers of the four Gospels put many such words in the mouth of Jesus (e.g., Matt. 23:29-35). These sayings, which arose against the background of such persecution, probably came from spirit-filled prophets who claimed to speak for the Risen Lord. Their context was a time when hostility from the rabbinic Jewish leadership was at its peak. Regardless of their source they became scripture, and thus Christianity became scripturally predisposed to attack Judaism. Thus the religions grew apart, and a hard and fast barrier arose separating normative Judaism from Christianity.^[40]

Can the Unificationist-Christian relationship avoid this fate? As mentioned, Rev. Moon himself made exemplary efforts during his lifetime to collaborate with Christians. What happens now that he has passed? Two thousand years ago, one of the main stumbling-blocks for Jews in valuing Jesus was that Christianity did not respect the Mosaic Law, and thus appeared hostile to the central pillar of the Orthodox Jewish faith. We need to ask: Is the Unification Church placing comparable stumbling-blocks in the way of Christians valuing Sun Myung Moon?

While Orthodox Judaism valued the Law of Moses, for Christians the central value is Jesus himself. Paul had good reason to belittle the Law, because its commandments were onerous for the gentiles who were the objects of his mission. Thus, the break with rabbinic Judaism over the Law may have been inevitable. There is likewise a tendency for Unificationists to belittle Jesus, based on the belief that Rev. Moon succeeded where Jesus "failed." Yet there is no essential reason for Unificationists to take that stance. Unlike the Mosaic Law that Christians had good reason to repudiate, it is not onerous or burdensome for Unificationists to honor Jesus. It is rather a mark of consideration for the other, which is a stated Unificationist virtue.

If Christians have the impression that Rev. Moon belittled Jesus and branded him a failure, that impression would have come from Unificationists, not from Rev. Moon himself. Rev. Moon frequently expressed gratitude for Jesus, who at a young age called him to his mission. He taught about Jesus' "victory on the cross," in the sense that given the circumstances of opposition, Jesus went the way of the cross as his best option for liquidating sin. By going to the cross, he wrote,

Jesus' purpose "was to pay off the debt that Satan demanded for the defiled fruit of history up through the Old Testament Age." And Jesus did pay that debt.[\[41\]](#)

Today, if Unificationists focus on exalting Rev. Moon as a superior Messiah than Jesus, if they lord it over Christians by belittling Jesus and declaring his work a failure, they will only encourage Christian disrespect for Rev. Moon. It will not matter that he taught appreciatively of Jesus or sought to support his mission by taking the burden as his own. History shows that the attitudes of subsequent generations of believers always override the founder's original intent. After all, the Gospels portray Jesus as continually fighting Jewish opponents, when in fact he had a substantial Jewish following. Even Jesus' controversy with the Pharisees over the Law, e.g. in the incident of healing on the Sabbath, merely reflected fault lines on the issue that existed among Jews themselves.[\[42\]](#) The narrative of the Unification Church could introduce similar distortions into their portrayal of Rev. Moon's life, for example if the hostility he faced by Korean Christians is allowed to eclipse the good collaborations he was able to form with Christians in the West.

However, the ecumenical environment of this age has created circumstances that are significantly different on the Christian side. Christianity has not suffered the contraction that befell Judaism after the destruction of the Temple, which saw the diversity of Jewish beliefs—Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, Zealots and the followers of Jesus—supplanted by a single Pharisaic-rabbinic orthodoxy. Hence, even though some Christians continue to take offense at Unificationist teachings, others are not constrained to follow their line. The collaborations that Rev. Moon promoted during his lifetime can continue. Still, this calls for Unificationists to do their part to continue them. And, at the same time as they collaborate with Christians, they would be well advised to offer public expressions of gratitude and praise to Jesus as a fellow-worker with Rev. Moon in God's vineyard.

4. The triumph of Christianity and the growth of anti-Semitism

Suppose in the future Unificationism triumphs and becomes a large and growing world religion while Christianity declines. Will that possible future lead Christians to finally accept Rev. Moon as the Messiah? Not if history is any guide. Judaism was eclipsed by the rising star of Christianity, particularly after the Constantinian Age which began in 325 AD, but that did not lead Jews to accept Jesus. Not at all.

Christianity in the days of Emperor Constantine saw its triumph as validation of Jesus and refutation of the Jews who continued to reject him. This attitude of "I win, you lose," was inimical to any sort of reconciliation.[\[43\]](#) It would have been far better if Christians, on gaining victory over the pagan Romans, had shown generosity to their Jewish brethren as fellow witnesses to the work of God. Had they embraced the Jews, Christians could have created a narrative casting the resurrected Christ as the victor over the Romans not only for Christians' sake, but also for the Jews who been longing for their Messiah to do just that. If Christians had expressed that sort of heart toward their Jewish brethren, they might have brought many to accept Jesus.

Instead, as soon as Christianity gained power in the Roman Empire it began persecuting Jews. The history of Christian anti-Semitism is well-known and does not require repeating here. Jews became second-class citizens. They were forbidden from owning lands and Christian servants. In time they were driven into ghettos, expelled from one country after another, and victimized by murderous mobs who despised them for rejecting Christ. Their victimization continued into the twentieth century, culminating in the Holocaust.

The problem for Jews was that they could not see Jesus in the Christians who persecuted them. Instead they saw Jesus and his followers as a curse upon their lives. They wanted nothing to do with Christianity. They firmly rejected the story of Jesus as something other people believe and not part of their own history. The hatred of Christians towards Jews also blocked Jews from coming to Jesus, because in that climate of hostility and prejudice, to convert to Christianity was seen as an act of betrayal. Thus, the triumph of Christianity paradoxically made it more difficult for Jews to receive Jesus as the Messiah.

Let the history of the Jews serve as an object lesson to any who might fancy that the triumph of

Unification Church as a world religion, should that ever happen, will bring Christians to their knees before Rev. Moon. The main factor in determining how Christians will value Rev. Moon in the future, and whether they ultimately will come to recognize him as the Second Advent of Christ, is whether future generations of Unificationists demonstrate love towards them. If, despite Christian opposition, Unificationists can remain large-hearted and generous toward Christians, then many Christians will be able to see Jesus in Rev. Moon. But if Unificationists become arrogant and use whatever new-found power and status that accrues to them to diminish Christians, they should not expect much in the way of respect from them in return.

5. Loss of messianic hope

We can identify one more factor in the historical encounter between Judaism and Jesus that may have a bearing on the future of Christianity's attitude toward Rev. Moon. This concerns Judaism's loss of messianic enthusiasm roughly 100 years after Jesus. Yet even though Jews lost hope in the imminent coming of their own Messiah, it did not make them any more open to accepting a Christian Messiah.

Divine Principle teaches that God had prepared Judaism to receive the Messiah. In fact, during the approximately 150 years prior to Jesus' advent expectations about the coming Messiah were strong and widespread. The New Testament mentions a number of messianic movements in Jesus' day (Acts 5:36-37), as does Josephus. One hundred years after the death of Jesus, Jews rallied around Simon Bar Kochba and launched a rebellion against Rome (132-135 AD), which ended in disaster. The Bar Kochba rebellion was fueled by the proclamation that he was the promised Messiah, put forward by none less than most respected rabbi of his age, Rabbi Akiba. With the failure of the rebellion, Akiba was executed. Christians could have said that the Jews' tragic experience with Messianism happened because those of Jesus' day did not know the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44). But the two religions had grown too far apart, and there was too much hostility for Jews to be able to hear that.

After that, Jewish religious leaders turned away from messianic enthusiasms and adopted a more inward-looking faith that emphasized personal holiness. Nowadays, Jews are bemused by Christians who ask them, "Are you looking for the Messiah?" as if they were still thinking like the Jews of New Testament times. Judaism in the centuries after Jesus ceased, with minor exceptions, to be a messianic religion.^[44]

Likewise, from the standpoint of Unificationism, Christianity was being prepared for the Second Coming in this age, to be fulfilled with the advent of Rev. Moon. During last two centuries Christian millenarian movements flourished, from the Millerites who believed Christ would return in 1844 to the Jehovah's Witnesses who predicted his coming would be in 1914, 1918 and then 1925. These messianic movements were in preparation for Rev. Moon's birth in 1920 and his ministry that began in 1945.

Accordingly, as with Judaism after Jesus, one can surmise that Christianity after its rejection of Rev. Moon will lose its messianic fervor. The decline has already begun. The marker of the millennium came and went with only the insignificant secular brouhaha about Y2K. There was a brief efflorescence of millenarian predictions, which garnered only minor interest. A Korean church predicted the Rapture for October 28, 1992, and the late radio evangelist Harold Camping predicted that Christ would return on May 21, 2011. A few believers quit their jobs and sold their homes, putting all their faith in these dates and their expectation of the return of Christ on the clouds, only to be bitterly disappointed. But most Christians ignored these predictions as aberrations or ridiculed them as farcical. The response to them was nothing like the Millerite expectation of 1844, which spawned the great Adventist family of churches that live on to this day. Then, Christianity was riding the wave of enthusiasm leading up to the Lord's return; but now that the Lord has already returned—so Unificationists believe—and was not received by the Christian world, a loss of interest in the Second Coming is only to be expected.

For Unificationists, this means that introducing Rev. Moon as the Second Coming of Christ will lose its potency. Heretofore that was the evangelical message of the Divine Principle. Unificationists will need to create new messages that present Rev. Moon and his teachings in new ways that can appeal to new generations of Christians for whom Messianism does not

feature strongly. This strategy can also circumvent Christianity's allergic reaction to Rev. Moon's messianic claims, which can be expected to persist, even as Jewish resistance to Jesus as the Messiah has persisted.

Brother Religions for Establishing God's Kingdom

These historical parallels suggest that Christianity's rejection of Rev. Moon as the Messiah need not be final. The future is open; the final narrative has yet to be written. Which direction it will move depends mainly on the attitudes of future generations of Unificationists. Will they meet Christian hostility with their own hostility? Or will they act charitably towards Christians in a way that the Christians of the first three centuries were unable to act towards Jews—to love and embrace them as they are and be forbearing of their theological errors?

The reason for forbearance is the goal of the Kingdom of God, which is shared by all three religions. Rev. Moon taught that the purpose of all the central figures in history, from Moses to Jesus to the True Parents, is one—to build Cheon Il Guk, the Kingdom of God on earth. He also taught that Jews, Christians and Unificationists are like three brothers who should be united for this purpose:

Judaism, centered upon the Old Testament, was the first work of God and is in an elder brother's position. Christianity, centered upon the New Testament, is in the position of the second brother. The Unification Church, through which God has given a new revelation, the Completed Testament, is in the position of the youngest brother. These three religions are indeed three brothers in the Providence of God.^[45]

God is the root of Moses, Jesus and Rev. Moon alike. If the Unification Church can maintain the ecumenical spirit of Rev. Moon and place God first, then there is every reason to continue ecumenical collaboration. Then, little by little, Christians will come to see the goodness in Rev. Moon. As the Kingdom unfolds, they should even be able to recognize his historical messianic significance.

On the other hand, if the Unification Church builds its belief in Rev. Moon into a defensive wall of faith; if it glorifies the blessings of being a Unificationist at the expense of everyone else; and if it reduces its involvement with Christian leaders and with the world at large, there could be another historical failure like the tragedy that befell the Jewish-Christian relationship after the death of James. In that case, Christians will never come to respect Rev. Moon. But then the Unification Church would not be respecting Rev. Moon's desires either.

The saga is not over; rather it is beginning a new phase. The life of the Unification Church over the next 100 years, and its attitude and practice towards conventional Christianity, will ultimately determine whether or not future generations of Christians will regard Rev. Moon and Mrs. Moon as the saints worthy of praise that their followers believe they are.

Notes

[1] This paper is considerably reworked from a paper the author presented at that conference entitled "The Significance of Reverend Sun Myung Moon in the History of Christianity."

[2] Sun Myung Moon, *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen* (Washington, DC: Washington Times Foundation, 2010).

[3] *Exposition of the Divine Principle* (New York: HSA-UWC, 1996), and *Divine Principle* (New York: HSA-UWC, 1973); both are translations of the Korean text *Wolli Kangron* (1966).

[4] *Exposition of the Divine Principle* explicitly takes issue with the conventional belief that Christ will return on the clouds of heaven, holding instead he will be born as a child on earth, and specifically in Korea. See *Exposition*, 381-399.

- [5] Moon went public with this claim in the summer of 1992; see Sun Myung Moon, “The Reappearance of the True Parents and the Ideal Family,” Seoul, July 6, 1992. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/SunMyungMoon92/SunMyungMoon-920706.htm>. Accessed April 8, 2014. Before that time this claim was often implied but left unstated.
- [6] *Exposition*, p. 119.
- [7] See Lukas Pokorny, “The Millenarian Dimension in Unification Thought,” in Frank Rudiger et al, *Korea 2013: Politics, Economy and Society*, Korea Yearbook Volume 7 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 181-82.
- [8] Michael L. Mickler, “Battle for the Americas,” *Journal of Unification Studies* 14 (2013): 71-106. <http://www.journals.uts.edu/volume-xiv-2013/214-battle-for-the-americas>. Accessed March 21, 2014.
- [9] Chang Shik Yang, “Opening the Gate of Cheon Il Guk through the Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony of the Parents of Heaven and Earth” p. 29. http://www.unification.net/csyang/csyang_2003_02_03.html
- [10] Kazoh Kitamori, *Theology of the Pain of God* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, reprint 2005).
- [11] Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), pp. 252-53.
- [12] *Ibid.*, p. 253.
- [13] *Exposition*, p. 43.
- [14] *Exposition*, p. 156.
- [15] *Exposition*, p. 65.
- [16] William Hasker, John Sanders, Richard Rice and Clark H. Pinnock, *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God* (London: InterVarsity, 1994).
- [17] Douglas Burton and Lymhwa Kim, “True Mother Announces New Directions at Leaders Conference in Korea,” Family Federation Website, January 8, 2013. http://www.familyfed.org/members/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4021:true-mother-calls-church-to-pray-in-name-of-heavenly-parents&catid=87:true-parents&Itemid=298; also <http://mbasic.facebook.com/notes/unification-church-facts/true-mother-announces-new-directions-at-leaders-conference-in-korea/10151381887356690/>. Accessed April 21, 2014.
- [18] *Wolli Wonbon*, manuscript, 368. (page references are to the pages of the hand-written folios)
- [19] Elizabeth A Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), pp. 246-72.
- [20] Young Oon Kim, *Unification Theology* (1980). <http://www.tparents.org/Library/Unification/Books/Utheo/Utheo-3a.htm>. Retrieved October 31, 2013.
- [21] See Michael L. Mickler, “The Milingo Affair: Rethinking the Unification Position on Clerical Celibacy and Ecumenism,” *Journal of Unification Studies* 8 (2007): 41-60. <http://www.journals.uts.edu/volume-viii-2007/74-the-milingo-affair-re-thinking-the-unification-position-on-clerical-celibacy-and-ecumenism>. Retrieved May 22, 2014.
- [22] “Pope Seeks to Clarify Reasons for Celibacy,” *The New York Times*, July 18, 1993.
- [23] Tracy Connor, “Pope Francis spoke of being 'dazzled' by girl, possible change of celibacy rule,” worldnews.nbcnews.com, March 21, 2013. http://worldnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/03/20/17386717-pope-francis-spoke-of-being-dazzled-by-girl-possible-change-of-celibacy-rule?lite. Accessed April 21, 2014.
- [24] Howard Kainz, “What if Jesus Had Been Accepted as the Messiah,” *Crisis Magazine*, June 14, 2012. <http://www.crisismagazine.com/2012/what-if-jesus-had-been-accepted-as-the-messiah>. Accessed April 9, 2014.

[25] Sun Myung Moon, "View of the Principle of the Providential History of Salvation," *True Family and World Peace* (New York: FFWPU, 2000), p. 54. Sun Myung Moon, "True Parents and Blessed Couples," New York, March 23, 1993. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/SunMyungMoon93/930323.htm>. "April Leaders' Conference," New York, April 19, 1996. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/SunMyungMoon96/Sm96041a.htm>. Retrieved April 9, 2014.

[26] William E. Phipps, in *Was Jesus Married? The Distortion of Sexuality in the Christian Tradition* (University Press of America, 1986).

[27] Laurie Goodstein, "A Faded Piece of Papyrus Refers to Jesus' Wife," *The New York Times*, September 18, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/19/us/historian-says-piece-of-papyrus-refers-to-jesus-wife.html>. Accessed April 9, 2014.

[28] *Wolli Wonbon*, manuscript, 243.

[29] Even after the split hardened on the institutional level, there was still frequent interchange between individual Jews and Christians according to Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (San Francisco: Harper-Collins, 1997), pp. 49-71. These contacts were particularly strong among Hellenized Jews who had accommodated to secular life and had distanced themselves from the Pharisaic-Rabbinic religion that would become Orthodox Judaism. This population of Hellenized Jews was fertile ground for Christian missions. Evidence for concourse between Christians and the Jews who formed the bulwark of the new Rabbinic orthodoxy is much weaker.

[30] Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 20.9

[31] *Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History*, trans. Christian Frederick Cruse (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991), p. 76.

[32] Jesus' teaching to turn the other cheek and walk the second mile (Matt 5:39-41) applied specifically to dealing with insults from the hated Romans.

[33] Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 9.1. Josephus states that James was brought before the Sanhedrin in a judicial murder, but he does not indicate the reason the charges were brought. The fact that it happened when the Zealots were agitating the populace to revolt indicates that political motives cannot be ruled out.

[34] Rabbinic passages like this one from the *Pirke Abot* may stem from this period: "Rabbi Hanina the deputy of the priests, said, "Pray for the peace of the government; for, except for the fear of that, we should have swallowed each other alive." (Abot 3.2) It is poignant to realize that "the government" referred to here was the hated Romans. These Pharisees, who preached submission to Roman rule, would go on after the rebellion was crushed in 70 AD to found an academy in Jamnia (Javneh), having gained permission to reconstitute Judaism. Ironically, this was at the very same time that Mark was writing his gospel with the intent to show that Christians also were pacifistic, but his approach was to sharply distinguish Jesus from the Jews who condemned him to death and to portray Pilate, the Roman governor, as a man who knew better. (Mark 15:1-15)

[35] Susan Osmond, "God and Freedom Banquet to Welcome Reverend Sun Myung Moon on His Release from Prison," Washington, DC, August 20, 1985. www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/SunMyungMoon85/SunMyungMoon-850820b.htm Retrieved April 18, 2014.

[36] See Thomas J. Ward, *March to Moscow: the Role of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon in the Collapse of Communism* (St. Paul, MN: Paragon House, 2006). Also Thomas J. Ward and Frederick A. Swarts, "Rush to History: A Notable Omission in Postmodern Literature on the Cold War," *Journal of Unification Studies* 1(1997): 1-22. <http://www.journals.uts.edu/volume-i-1997/3-rush-to-history-a-notable-omission-in-postmortem-literature-on-the-cold-war>. Retrieved May 22, 2014.

[37] *Exposition*, pp. 282-83.

[38] These were the substance of the Jews' accusations against Paul when they attacked and beat him in Jerusalem; see Acts 21:28.

[39] The Gospel of John was probably composed around 95 AD.

[40] This narrative applies to the Rabbinic Judaism that is heir to Phariseeism, not to the Hellenized Jews of the Diaspora, among whom mingling with Christians was common; see note 30, above. Although the Rabbinic Jews were considerably outnumbered by the Hellenized Jews of the Diaspora, they established the religious norms that shaped Judaism into modern times.

[41] *Wolli Wonbon*, manuscript, 262. The same attitude of deep respect for Jesus can be found in Rev. Moon's early speeches from 1956 to 1959.

[42] The upshot of that intra-Jewish debate was that modern rabbinic opinion on the permissibility of healing on the Sabbath—it is permitted and even encouraged—is largely in agreement with Jesus' view.

[43] James Carroll, *Constantine's Sword* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001), pp. 201-07.

[44] Such self-proclaimed Jewish messiahs as Shabbatai Zevi and Menachem Mendel Schneerson have been thoroughly marginalized by the Jewish mainstream.

[45] Sun Myung Moon, "America and God's Will," Washington Monument, September 18, 1976. <http://www.tparents.org/moon-talks/sunmyungmoon76/sm760918.htm>.