

Theological Seminary Staff: Thomas Boslooper, Frank Elmo and. Warren Lewis

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UTS students Tim Elder [left] Kizashi Takemura [center] and Hiroshi Matsuzaki [right]

I arrived at the seminary at 11 a.m. Tuesday, right after students finished a test in Dr. Boslooper's "Introduction to Biblical Studies." Following was Dr. Lewis's core course on "The Origins of Christianity (A. D. 48-325)."

Dr. Warren Lewis held his class where many other seminary classes are held, in the lecture room above the large hall used for 120-day training and assemblies. Dr. Lewis, an ordained minister in the Church of Christ and professor at New York Theological Seminary, holds the equivalent of three PhD. degrees from Harvard, the Institute for Pontifical Studies in Toronto, and the University of Tubingen in Germany.

Dr. Lewis' Tuesday class dealt mainly with the canonization of the Bible -- the process of determining which writings would be included in the Bible, which would be considered apocryphal, and which would be excluded. Among the questions discussed in his class were: What are the criteria for determining the canonization of any given writing? Is the Bible rooted in the church, or the church in the Bible? What are the merits of limiting the canon or broadening it? To what extent are religious movements defined by what they accept into their canon?



UTS student Pauline Pilot [Eby] studies in the UTS library

After lunch students watched a film on group interaction for Dr. Elmo's next-day class: "Group Process for Individual Growth." Next was Dr. Thomas Boslooper's elective course in "The Writings." The course, including the third section of the Hebrew Bible, focuses on Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs, or the Song of Solomon.

Today's topic was the Song of Songs. As students followed, Dr. Boslooper read and interpreted key passages, pointing out the current shift in interpretation from symbolic to literal, saying that as a

collection of romantic poetry it aids in the understanding of the sanctity of romantic love when free from carnal feelings.

After the concluding two hours of Dr. Lewis' class, students dispersed to a variety of activities.

Available for the students is instruction in auto mechanics, furniture refinishing, and photography. Also regularly included in the afternoon are sports, including karate, group sports, and intramural competition between the several work-study groups of the seminarians.

After dinner some students joined in a discussion of the place of religion in the American tradition in Dr. Lewis' experimental course in American Civil Religion. Other students studied -- either in the newly created library in a former gymnasium, a student lounge, or their dormitory rooms. Although most students longed to have time to study while they were in the field, they are finding that full-time study also has its challenges.

Recognizing the seriousness of their responsibility, they often run their own tutorials to review material and help each other out. Japanese-speaking students have been given special attention by Tim Elder who, knowing Japanese, reviews the lectures with them.

Morning classes on Wednesday began after prayer service and breakfast. Dominant class of the day was Dr. Francis Elmo's "Group Process for Individual Growth."

Also happening Wednesday was a class in Evelyn Wood's reading dynamics, taught by two who had taken the course.

By Wednesday afternoon the students were preparing for their philosophy course, "God," taught by Sorbonne-educated Dr. Sebastian Matczak, also a Roman Catholic priest. Dr. Young Oon Kim teaches her course on Unification Theology at the end of each alternating week. Students also come into frequent contact with Academic Dean Therese Stewart and Mr. David Kim, president of the seminary.

Upon leaving the seminary on Wednesday, I looked forward to a return visit more than I ever anticipated returning to my college after vacations. By any standards, the students are receiving a detailed, varied, and loving education from a well-qualified faculty. The future can hold only good things for them, the seminary, and a future university.

Dr. Thomas Boslooper



Dr. Thomas Boslooper, currently the minister of a Reformed church in Closter, New Jersey, has his Ph.D. from Union Theological Seminary and has taught in Roman Catholic schools. What he feels are the strong points of Unification Theology are: "The sovereignty of God, God's providence in history, the idea of the coming of the Kingdom of God, the importance of genuine faith and a personal relationship with God, an emphasis on the Holy Spirit, reliance on the scripture, and the development of a more wholesome, realistic male-female relationship... If you just take these things, I think you have something tremendous here. I can look at the Unification Church as re-reviving the Reformation, but in a different dime ~ion since we are trying to do something for all churches..." In discussing our Church's present persecution he first put it in the perspective of the centuries-long conflict between den ruins. He added: "Fundamentally, people resist change, flying at whatever doctrinal excuse they can find -- if you were to set up the doctrines of any denomination you would horrify many people. Also throughout history there has been resentment towards people who are truly good. And there is a racial element involved."

He was attracted to the seminary from his first contacts with Academic Dean Therese Stewart and Chief Administrator Michael Warder. "As they talked, I thought that maybe this was a different movement." The people he met in his early encounters, he said, "made quite a profound impression on me as to what the movement stood for and what the seminary might be like." The mark of the students has borne out this impression.

"The attitude of the students is outstanding," he says.

"The work that they are doing is very good... and there is no putting down people with attitudes and ideals and heart like they have... It couldn't be a more desirable educational situation. I say that without reservation."

His main attraction to the seminary, he says, is that "it represents an attempt to unify the Christian church

and also that there is a genuine academic freedom. And there is a marvelous combination of the devotional aspect of religion and the intellectual."

In further speaking of these points, he affirmed that there "absolutely" was academic freedom at the seminary. "Nobody's ever told me anything of what to do or what to teach. At any other educational institution, although you may not be told that, 'there is a line you must follow if you are going to get along. There may be some seminaries where there is the kind of academic freedom that exists here but it is at the cost of genuine devotion -- there is a kind of freedom that is libertarian, leading to anarchy. We have what I call pure freedom- the freedom of men and women of pure heart and spirit. We have the freedom of kindness, of justice, of love for God."

Of our future, Dr. Boslooper advises the Unification Church to "stick to its guns.... My feeling about the future of the movement and its ideology is very good. It has genuine substance."

Dr. Frank Elmo



Dr. Frank Elmo, professor of religious education, is a Roman Catholic priest in the Yonkers diocese. He has had a longtime interest in the complementary relationship of religion and psychology, feeling that an understanding of God is essential for personal growth and yet that the more secular discipline of psychology has much to offer. He is, for example, attracted by the work of Abraham Maslow, famous for his "self-actualization" theory. Recently Dr. Elmo has explored non-Western and non-Establishment systems of thought and awareness, including ARICA, EST, and Sufism, a school of Islamic mysticism. After receiving his doctorate from Fordham University, Dr. Elmo wished to teach in a seminary setting, hoping to find one sufficiently ecumenical to accommodate his broad orientations.

After his first introduction to the seminary through Therese Stewart, whom he was pleased to find was a former nun, he carefully read the Divine Principle. He liked the Principle's stress on the family and on a blend of Eastern and Western thought; he also was grateful for its revelation of the centrality of the Christian tradition. When he came to Barrytown for lectures, he found himself deeply attracted by the "God-consciousness" pervading the atmosphere.

Acknowledging the workings of Divine Providence, he decided that if God wanted him to have the position, he would be accepted for it. He was, and so now is a resident of the Barrytown complex. His course this term, "Group Process for Interpersonal Growth," is not merely a compendium of techniques for the students to master in order for them to be good group leaders; its goal is also to help the personal growth and group consciousness of the students themselves. Highlighted in the course are the steps in personal and interpersonal growth: self-awareness, self-acceptance, self-expression, and the abilities to listen to, understand, accept, and constructively help others.

While Dr. Elmo prefers unstructured sessions, he makes use of games as stimulation. One, for example, has the goal of arriving at a group consensus about the fifteen most important articles to have if the group were marooned on the moon. Another is for each individual to determine the six outstanding accomplishments of his life and discuss these with another student.

In evaluating his students' response, Dr. Elmo praised their use of both prayer and interpersonal interaction to work out problems. He also spoke of the importance of the general framework of love and concern and of the specific strengths of the Divine Principle in aiding personal growth. "The students' feelings of God's love for them is a very powerful experience, leading them out of self-centeredness into God-centeredness." Also, he said, an awareness of Cain and Abel relationships helps to remove destructive competitiveness from interpersonal relationships.

Dr. Warren Lewis

I would like to talk about what I think of Reverend Moon. I think a lot of things about Reverend Moon. Let's examine some of the alternatives of who he might be. He might be the Second Coming of Christ, the Lord of the Second Advent. Short of that, he might be a religious genius, a prophet of God, an inspired person whom God has sent to revolutionize and revitalize the church -- in the spirit of Luther or Saint Francis of Assisi. Short of that he might be yet another demagogue leader who is destined like the others to be disappointed if they thought that they knew God's timetable but it didn't work out the way they thought it would and they had to go back to plowing. The worst possible thing would be a false prophet.

What do I think he is? I probably think he is in category two -- a religious genius who has distinguished himself from all other religious geni on the basis of several important matters. He knows the heart of God. Of what theologian or church reformer can we say that above all else he has plumbed the depths of the heart of God? Of Reverend Moon I think that I can really say that. That is probably his greatest contribution, some theologians have been saying that there finally has to be a getting together of Orient and Occident -- apart from simply sending missionaries to the Orient and receiving the latest hotshot guru from whatever new religion happens to come our way. After reading the Divine Principle, I can say that it is outstandingly to the credit of Reverend Moon that he is the first person to attempt this blend. He is also a great religious genius because of his sense of wholeness in his drive to get mind and heart and science and faith back together again. He is attempting to do what we gave up on 450 years ago with the splintering of Western Europe in the Protestant Reformation.



So if he falls in this category, we have great occasion to be glad. If he turns out to be a demagogue who finally has to go back to selling ginseng tea or mining titanium, we will still have cause for rejoicing -- due to the fact that this kind of movement within Christendom has tended to revitalize, to be creative, to be on the cutting edge of new discoveries.

What if he falls in the final category? We cannot be glad about that. If you want to know why I work here, it is because I hope that he is the Lord of the Second Advent, I think that he is the outstanding religious genius of our time.

Why do I teach here? I am completely fascinated by the movement and by Reverend Moon; my desire therefore is to get as close to him as possible to understand what makes him tick. In addition to that, it is the Family itself. There is nowhere in the world where I could teach a more international student body. That I find exhilarating, challenging, and fascinating. Also, they have different educational backgrounds: biochemistry, nuclear physics, etc.

To teach here means to become involved with the complete spectrum of the educated intellect in America and around the world. If you make a theological statement, it has to be acceptable not only to people who talk your theological jargon but also to physicists, sociologists, and philosophers. When the Unification Church loses its sense of sectarian apartness in that it is leading so far ahead that the others are running like crazy to catch up, when it loses its sense of motion so that it settles down to become another church among churches, that will be an unhappy day. Run out there as far ahead of the rest of them as you can and run up a flag and see if anybody salutes! If anybody does, good for you, you've led the way! I hope that we don't settle down, because we are calling into question the fallenness of the world around us.