

Young Unificationist's Response to Racial Boundaries Aired on Primetime TV

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Immanuel Rinkema speaking with mother about racism on the hidden camera t.v. show "What Would You Do?" on ABC.

The young 19-year-old Unificationist, Immanuel Rinkema, was recently shown on ABC's television show, "What Would You Do," this past Friday, March 25 at 9 p.m. This primetime news show is famous for setting up elaborate realistic scenarios with actors testing real controversial subjects to see what ordinary people would do when pushed to act, or if they act at all. This week Mr. Rinkema was one of these ordinary people.

The purpose of one scene in the show was to see what customers would you do if they saw a caretaker refusing to buy a black doll for a white girl who insisted that she wanted the black doll. Soon, other customers became involved with this explicit act of racism.

Mr. Rinkema was the last customer recorded by hidden cameras while speaking with the customers at the toy store in New York City. He is first introduced on the show as a "remarkable young man, who surprises all of us with his wisdom and maturity."

While not knowing that he was on camera, Mr. Rinkema was filmed talking about the importance of acknowledging someone for his or her internal self, instead of his or her race and outer appearance. "All I have to say is that we are all God's children, and the value comes from the inside, not the outside," Rinkema says to the caretaker.

Originally from Chicago, Illinois, Mr. Rinkema himself is half-Japanese and half-Dutch and has grown up in a church community in which mixed race is common and welcomed. He also tells the customer that, "As a Sunday School teacher, I have a lot of different races in my class. It kind of hurts me to hear you say that about African-American children."

He is soon surprised by the host, John Quinones, who appears with cameras and tells Mr. Rinkema that the caretaker and child are actresses who had tested his response to the scene. Mr. Rinkema is then shown crying, as a narrator explains that he had been holding back his emotions for the sake of the child.



Immanuel speaking with "What Would You Do?" host John Quinones.

Both the show host and actress watch in awe as Mr. Rinkema gives his views: "We create the boundaries between the nations. We create the boundaries between people. We create, 'Oh, she's white.' Everyone is our brother and sister, I feel. We are one big family, and we need to learn to love people like that."

The clip finishes with Mr. Quinones' observation: "The wisdom of this young hero shows us just how far we've come as a society."

Mr. Rinkema has shared with familyfed.org that although it was not aired on the show on Friday, after he spoke, the show host said to him "Wow, I'm impressed, a 19-year-old boy with this kind of outlook. Where do you get it from?"

Mr. Rinkema says that he responded: "I grew up in the Unification Church, and I learned this standard of taking care of people from my parents and their love for the True Parents. They teach us how to take care of each other and this standard of love like a real parent would. I had a picture of my parents and True Parents with me, so I showed it to the show host. They (True Parents) gave me the understanding of who I am as God's child, and that is where I get my value from."