

The Most Precious Is True Love

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"And if I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove all mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor and if I deliver my body to be burned but do not have love, it profits me nothing." (Corinthians 13:2-3)

In my mission in Zaire (D.R. Congo), most of the time I had to travel and visit brothers and sisters in very humble conditions. Even when I can enjoy the best meal in America, I think back to when we had to live on very, very poor meals, but still enjoyed them. Members get up every morning, go out to witness or work on some of our farms there, and come back and try to do something else. I cannot be disconnected from that. I am always thinking about them.

A few times I have had people ask me what I am planning to do next. Once you start learning, you feel like learning more. After studying here for one year, and taking several courses, I find in myself a lot of interest in seeking to understand more deeply a few things. However, there is the reality of the field. People are out there in

confusion. They need direction, and somebody has to stand and give it. Especially now that we have a few small churches in Zaire that want to be affiliated with our church, all these ministers need some training. It is not just providing Divine Principle lectures, but they also need to see ways in which they can take better care of their own congregations and invest themselves toward higher purposes.

Humility, God acts

For me, coming to the Seminary has been kind of a struggle, but more than that it has been the expression of love. When I was expecting to come to the Seminary, thinking maybe I could be qualified to come, God never allowed me to come here. But when I got to the point of thinking maybe God doesn't want me to go there, maybe it's not somebody like me that God wants there, getting ready to do other things, the invitation came. One day a car stopped in front of the center as I was walking along the street, and I came back to ask the driver what he was looking for. He was delivering a special package of papers from the Seminary for me. I had been planning to go downtown, but I had to come back to see my central figure and find out what the plan would be. Sometimes God acts in that way.

When we feel we are very qualified for something, feeling proud or arrogant about something, that is not the point when God is going to act. With such an attitude, we can do everything externally, but nothing will happen. However, when we can get to the point where we can think, maybe I am not the one God wants there, maybe there is something I need to change in such a setting God is going to provide something.

Today the most important thing to me is not knowledge. When I was between fifteen and twenty I was so excited about learning things. I thought maybe I would get four or five different Ph.D.s. I was thinking that international law would be good, and education would be good. My brother-in-law got his Ph.D. in political science, and when he got it there was such a big impact on the nation. So I thought, yes, I could go for that, too. What was I going to do? I felt like everything attracted me. But God had a different answer for me. When I turned twenty I met the family and studied the Principle. From there my life went in a different direction.

My cousins and relatives received

Ph.D.'s and have high positions in society. I can also feel that at the same time, they have a very narrow mind. They are busy thinking about how much more money they can make. It is a big struggle, because right now there is an economic recession in Zaire, and it is not easy. Some businesses are losing money, so they are feeling like the world is turning against them. The people I visited and tried to nurture in the Principle have been writing to me. It is not so cheap to send a letter over here. When I receive letters each month, I feel I did not waste my time.

I am doing my fieldwork at the State University of New York at Albany. My focus is not just to display my knowledge of biblical studies but to try to see how much I can express my love, and how much attention and care I can give to people. Even if we just stay friends that is no problem. Good friends can be very precious. If people can feel something from a relationship, they can do something for somebody else, and that is one way of improving the world.

Only when uncomfortable

Whatever gifts I have, the basic thing is how much I can experience true love, God's love. When the time comes for us to go to the spirit world, there is nothing else we can take with us but true love. The only thing we can have at that point and forever is our experience of God's love. We don't get this love when we have a comfortable situation. We get much of that in a relationship with somebody who we feel is our enemy, somebody with whom it is very tough to get along with, someone we dislike. There is where we can find and experience God's love.

In an international context such as here at the Seminary, I think God is putting us in a situation where we can see ourselves for what we are. If we cannot go forward, we can feel how much we need to overcome our internal barriers, learn to love without condition, and learn to be available to the most prominent person as well as the humblest person in the community. We shouldn't keep double standards and think we are going the path of heaven. We should have one single, clear standard for everyone, everything. This takes a lot from us because we are not those original sons and daughters of God. We have to struggle with a lot of feelings, with a lot of obstacles within ourselves, with false perceptions.

Sometimes we know a lot of words that Father said which makes us feel comfortable, and then whenever we argue with somebody, we bring them up. There are many, many other words that Father said that we have a hard time relating to, and we don't remember those. This way of acting just blocks our growth. When I read Father's speeches, I look for words I have a tough time relating to, because then I am offered a chance to grow. I need to grow. I don't want to be the same individual when God's Day comes next year. I want to be a different person even if it is just a little thing that changes me towards the direction of true love, that is very precious. True love goes where I don't want to go as a fallen person. That is where it wants me to go. Of course, if I can really push myself to go, God will be there. It is so important for us to think about that.

Those "other" words

Acquiring knowledge is good. Being able to give prophecies is good. Being able to quote Father in your conversations and all that kind of thing is very good. However, is what you quote the only thing Father said? Is what Father said that can make you grow? That is the big question we have to deal with every day. Our mentality as fallen people is to focus on what Father said that can make us feel comfortable. Such things we can always remember. However, there are many, many other things that Father said to us that we have not been able to accomplish, that we have not been able to make concrete in our lives. Whenever we come across those words in a speech, our eyes don't want to look at those words. However, I think that if we want to grow and inherit the most precious thing in the universe, there is no other way to go. We have to face ourselves; we have to really push ourselves in the most difficult situations. If I feel like somebody destroyed me, if I feel like somebody is my enemy, that is the person I should go to, because through that person I can get a drop, a spark of heavenly love.

When we speak about brothers and sisters, I see the drug addicts on the streets of Brooklyn, I see terrorists in Tripoli, Libya. Those are also my brothers and sisters. It is so true that sometimes God brings the person who can seem the most strange to us to help us in certain situations. Every day we have to think, if my life were to stop at this point, what kind of inheritance can I get from the universe? What can I claim in the face of eternity? The answer is the experiences we have with God's love on our spiritual journey as we march towards Canaan. That is why it is important to go beyond ourselves. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking it's easy to relate to this person because we speak the same language and come from the same country. It's true, but if we are going to make it to Canaan it will not be that way. We must go beyond that.

We are offered the opportunity to go beyond our own culture, and our own feelings learn to really become a new person, to learn to relate to both the top and bottom of society. If there is something we are going to take with us, brothers and sisters, it is only our experience of love. If it is true love, we can see God and dwell in His presence forever. The farther our experiences stray from God's love, the farther we are going to be from God and True Parents.

It is very important that we don't keep deceiving ourselves by selecting only what makes us feel comfortable. As we look for what makes us feel lost or meaningless, the deepest experience of God comes, and there we achieve the most fundamental purpose of our existence. As we study, we need to remember that the most precious of all is our experience of true love. Even if we have to wash dishes, or somebody asks us to help with this or that, we have to remember this focus. For generations to come, the most precious thing is our investment in true love. That is something we can be most proud of. On that, we can stand forever and ever.