

## My Unificationist Memoirs Chapter 70

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Before dawn this morning, I awoke from a deep sleep experiencing the heart and love of God, in a state of mystical union. Then, quite suddenly, I felt my "self" in a dizzying free fall into deep space, leaving me feeling dispersed and scattered. In the midst of this disintegration, I nonetheless maintained a sense of centeredness and awe, although there appeared to be "no self" to be centered. Just as suddenly, my being reintegrated and I returned to a state of mystical awareness within my body. I sat up in bed feeling a perfect ecstatic calm, and as I presently write, a sense of joy pervades me.

This experience occurred on the final morning of a 40 day prayer for our country. I wonder, does this grace have special meaning in the context of my prayer condition? Or, simply "is it what it is." I hesitate to conjecture. Rather than impose or force a meaning, I will simply share what has been roiling the waters of my heart and mind. And possibly, a correlation between the experience and my immediate concerns will naturally take shape.

I have been deeply troubled by our nation's overheated partisan divide, especially the ideological and political extremes seeking momentary advantage by stoking divisive resentments. However, in juxtaposition to the spiritual experience, these political animosities now appear transient. Not that the differences are unreal, but a fundamental unity of being as our enduring reality has been profoundly impressed upon me. First and foremost, the experience has renewed my sense of direction and therefore, hope.

Direction first: There is a spiritual solution to every problem, to paraphrase Wayne Dyer. The immediate

spiritual resolution to our toxic national animosities is to unequivocally adopt the maxim of Jesus to "Love your enemies." Then, we must go beyond even that: we must eliminate the concept of "enemy" from our hearts and minds. We can have no enemies if we wish to create a world of true love. While this transformation may be more difficult than the scriptural camel going through the eye of the needle, the Kingdom of Heaven is a state of being, and we cannot be present "there" if we possess the concept of an "enemy." Our hearts cannot simultaneously be home to our Heavenly Parent and be set against an "enemy." The concept itself is a triggering event, one that casts us into the outer darkness of anxiety, anger, hatred, and alienation, which sounds a lot like our politics today. In this age of rebellion against the constraints of reality, when masses of people are defining their own "truth," and declaring past certainties to be nothing more than social constructs, this one unalterably stubborn fact remains: we must love if we are to be complete and at peace.

Hope: By virtue of my early morning spiritual experience, a fundamental sense of our created and resultant nature has been reawakened within me. Even if we disperse into a zillion partisan embers, the energy and power of God operates in our universe to draw us back together. We are Cosmos, an ordered existence of interdependent and mutual entities. Unless we embrace our utter sameness with love, we are mistaken in our thinking. A sense of alienation from self and from others has been the great deceit from the whispering of the Serpent in the Garden to the fevered Orwellian rhetoric of race and resentment threatening to unravel our country today. If we hope to be liberated from a history of suffering and violence, we cannot impose the resentments of the past on our relations in the present. The genius of America is that we have been able to shed historical animosities, granted very slowly, in pursuit of a national ideal defined in our founding political documents.

In practical terms, this means exposing philosophies of racial division and alienation, laying bare their underlying untruth by meeting them with love. Achieving this requires that we emulate the persistent resoluteness of the "still quiet voice" operating in our own hearts. The only real victory (not to be confused with momentary partisan political triumph) will come through the operation of the individual conscience convicted by the light of God. The public square provides the meeting place for the engagement of our respective insights, gleaned from the operation of conscience. Thus, we must uphold the principles of an open society which allows all opinion to be aired in a healthy marketplace of ideas - and disdains the ideological censor. Our constitutional order and tradition of free speech is threatened by political intolerance, and we can reclaim our public spaces only by the appropriate practice of our fundamental rights. If we ever hope to shed the concept of "enemy," we must grant the conversational space to those with whom we differ, and listen with generous, understanding hearts.

This is essential: to understand is to forgive, and to understand completely is to forgive unconditionally. To forgive others, that we may be forgiven, is a minimum requirement, not simply a nice thought.

This remains difficult for me but I can see no other path forward. Can you?