

CHAPTER 46

The Challenge of Life

Life changes as an individual passes from childhood through youth and middle age into old age. Not only in human life is this true, but also in nature. We see four seasons coming one right after the other. If you were to insist on living always in summer and never prepared for winter, you would have a problem when winter arrived. In the winter those who don't get ready for spring and confine themselves in snug, warm rooms will be uncomfortable as the season changes. Do you insist on wearing winter clothes when summer comes? No, you need to change your clothes to suit the season.

This is exactly how it happens in our life. Those who belong to the summer of life — the prime of youth — want to have eternal youth. But that is not possible. It's natural that there must be change. In a world of constant change it's good to learn to accept every event in a positive way, so that you can continually grow.

What are we looking for?

All of us are constantly seeking happiness. The happiness we would like to have would include every aspect of life. A person who is happy in the broadest sense is likely to be thinking about the whole world. This is the nature of human beings.

Although we know what humankind is seeking, we don't see it anywhere around us. Such happiness is apparently something that humankind has lost. We are not daydreaming. It is not the concept of happiness we are seeking but the reality of happiness.

Some people think that money can bring happiness. Money is indeed important and powerful. However, those who have great wealth tend to protect and isolate themselves. Certainly money does not seem to be the sure way to bring happiness.

The next thing we consider is knowledge. You may think a university education will help you in your search for happiness. But we see that knowledge alone is also inadequate as a tool to achieve lasting happiness. If you take knowledge seriously, it becomes very narrow and specialized. So happiness doesn't seem to be found in knowledge either.

How about power? Everyone thinks he would like to be powerful. Can power produce happiness? If you have power, do you want to share it with others? No, you want to keep it to yourself.

Therefore we can conclude that although money, knowledge, and power may help people in their search for happiness, none of these is itself the essential path to happiness.

Is there any way to reach happiness?

Have you experienced how difficult it is to make another person do your will? An elder brother, for example, will rarely if ever listen to his younger sister. Even in a small family there are walls. How can we bring them down? Can you force your way

into another person's mind or heart? Or because you are so smart, can you bring down the walls through flattery? It might work at first, but once they find out they've been deceived, the walls will be higher than before. That is human nature.

All sorts of walls between people exist in the world today. What could possibly penetrate those walls or bring them down? In our world there is only one hope to eliminate these barriers. That is love. If we become truly loving people, there is no place we cannot go. Only true love belongs everywhere.

You can love yourself when your mind and body are in harmony with each other. If you love yourself when your desire and actions are going in different directions, then your love has little meaning. When your mind and body are united into one, then your love will be eternally protected by God. Unity is the beginning point of love, the point where love can come to abide.

When your mind and body are in perfect oneness, you can even hear your mind singing and you feel light, as if you are flying or dancing. When you look at the world, it is so much more beautiful. It's as if you have eyeglasses of unity, and you are looking at things through God's eyes. Through those eyeglasses everything in the world is beautiful.

Love starts within the individual, and then is expanded to the family, society, nation, and finally — to the whole cosmos. And this is the way to bring harmony and happiness to the world.

The way of love

Love means giving. In giving we must not be narrow-minded; we will not draw small circles around ourselves. We must be generous, not only to our family members but also to friends and neighbors and the society around us. We want to give out not only things but also our whole being to the last person alive, stretching ourselves until we can reach the other end of the world. There is no limitation according to East and West in our life. Nations that long have been enemies can come together and love each other. We can enjoy things among ourselves, sharing with each other what we have cherished. Since there is no barrier whatsoever, there are no enemies; we can safely say that we are the happiest people. In human society some people want to possess more than other people and they want to invade others' ownership to possess more people, more land, and so on. That's what makes people fight. Where the principle of true love is put into practice, there cannot be such a thing. If you want to possess things with a self-centered motive, you are liable to ruin.

In love your trials and your struggles are not painful. However hard we have to toil and labor, we are happy to do that. This is the secret to possessing love.

Love is something precious that you want to keep deep inside yourself like a secret. This secret between you and God will make you great. In giving out the love of

God to other people you are sharing your love with them, and your love, rather than being diminished, will be multiplied. You will be proud of what you have given. Only by giving can we receive. So we want to give out our whole being. Are you going to be really generous givers?

We have talked about happiness. From this perspective we have to truly understand what is the happy way of life. Then if we choose to live in this fashion, we don't try to attract love or people to ourselves, but people will come to be our friends without our making any special efforts. Then you are where God wants you to be. Through logic and reason you see clearly that in this huge and complicated world every imaginable wall exists. You cannot even travel a short distance without being blocked by some kind of barrier. Only through true love can you go anywhere you choose — a good place or a dangerous place. You can go anywhere fearlessly with a truly loving heart.

Life is like a river

Be patient — it takes time to become a person of true love. We cannot just do it in a moment of magic. It takes many days, weeks, years, and we have to make consistent effort. To graduate from school takes a number of years. If you are learning to go to Heaven, can you do that overnight? You might see a cloudy sky and say, "Oh, it might rain today, so I don't want to go to school." Would you be allowed to do that?

If you say you hate to undergo disciplined training because you don't like it, you have been defeated already. It's good to have the attitude that you want to face

whatever comes with great expectation and interest. Try not to look through just one point of focus, but look around at your situation in all four directions. Looking at a mighty river, you know the deep water runs silently. But upstream there have already been many events: Sometimes the water swirls in a deep eddy; sometimes it pounds down on the rocks, as a waterfall; sometimes it rushes past big rocks or runs over small pebbles to be gathered into the ocean. If you are faced with a very rough current when in a boat, you cannot just look immediately in front of you, but you must set your gaze far and wide, and you must be quick to manipulate the boat. Otherwise it will be wrecked on the rocks right before you. In your life too, there are waterfalls; sometimes the water will even form walls or cliffs in front of you. So you must dodge quickly past one place or steer directly through the waves in another.

Be prepared for the wave. If you are riding the wave, however hard you may struggle not to be carried on the current, you cannot resist it. If your destiny is to float on the current of the river, you must flow as it does. You may very well be like the waterfall or the water running past the rapids, but don't become discouraged by the roughness of your course. If you are trained on

this course, things to come will become easier for you to handle. If you take interest in what you are going through, and if you are thrilled to find new adventures, then when you are faced with even greater difficulties, you can tackle those with more zeal and capability. But if you are unwilling to confront the problems occurring in the environment around you and are afraid of them, then you will not be able to turn





the experience into training to face new problems. Only by having gone over the rocks and waterfalls can you lead yourself to the heart of the ocean.

*Do not fear what lies ahead —
go all the way*

We must look at how the water runs down from the mountaintop. It will encounter many obstacles. If we compare our lives to that stream of water, where are we? Can the drops of water say, “I hate to pound down the cliff”? At the top of the cliff you must get ready and say to yourself, “It’s thrilling, and I want to jump down from this cliff and reach the ocean as soon as possible.” If you are eager, then you will succeed and attain your purpose.

Under the Roman Empire, Christians were faced with iron bars when they tried to advance. But because Christians had more onward determination than the stopping power of Rome, Christianity overflowed and flooded the Roman nation and the world.

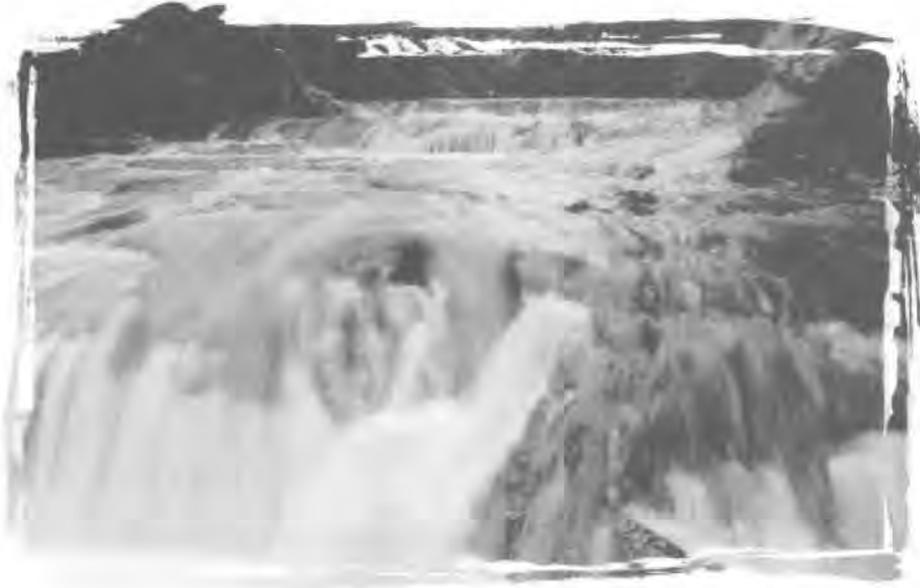
Our life itself is something like a river. Unless you can flow past all the obstacles in the tributaries, you cannot meet the main river. You are all a part of one group now, but once you graduate from school then you will be like small streams running through your own course to reach the mainstream. You cannot foretell if all of you will meet at the mouth of the river. You do not know if you all will reach the heart of the ocean. If you are faced with any power stronger than your own determination, what will you do? If you are faced with a power greater than your own strength or spirit, will you be absorbed and surrender? It is not easy to answer.

Sometimes people are small-minded. If a difference of interest occurs between you and another person, you may become angry with each other and argue. Then someone else may want to reconcile the conflict between you and say pacifying things to you both; but you will only become more fierce toward each other. If you had a broader mind and would let the other go, that person would cling to you and want to solve the problem. You should be of such a broad mind that you can smile and return to the work waiting for you. If you are like water trying to surmount a wall, you will be eager to rush over it as soon as possible and join the larger body. Time will solve the problem. If you can pass on from the difficult place quickly, you will succeed. Tell the other drops of water, “You may stay there, but I must rush on.”

Overcome with love and be victorious

As you go along, it’s good to be able to add something to what you are. You have heard of many successful people in history. In their backgrounds they have many adventures. The more they have had to overcome in their lives, the greater people they are. If someone has had even one more such experience than another, he is a little bigger person than the person with less experience.

When our circumstances are difficult, we must be determined to face these and win over them; otherwise we will be defeated in the long run. How to digest and conquer your environment is the question. Don’t try to escape from life, but feel challenged and persevere on your way. On an uneven road, ups and downs are to be expected; but where there are peaks, there are valleys at another time.



Imagine yourself in a race, feeling that kind of determination, so that you can win over whatever the obstacle may be. When you are faced with difficulties that look really hopeless, you may feel as though you are going to perish indeed; but there is always a way out if you look for one. Try to focus on today, on this very moment, and if you are alert in winning the very moment you are faced with, you will set the pattern for being a victor your whole life through.

And when our life on this earth is completed, the record of how we lived will become the measure for how much heaven we deserve. This will be the standard:

- ✘ The love you unselfishly bestowed upon your fellow man;
- ✘ The service you willingly rendered for the benefit of others;
- ✘ The sacrifice you courageously offered for humanity and for God.

The sum total of these deeds will become your treasure for eternity.

— Entire text excerpted from a speech by Dr. Sun Myung Moon