

How God Has Been Working In My Life

Paul Yasutake

February 8, 2015

1800 Couples' 40th Anniversary Sunday Service Sermon

Belvedere Training Center



Paul and Gertrud Yasutake have four sons and four grandsons. They live in Bridgeport, CT, and were Blessed at the 1800 Couples' Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony of the Unification Movement in 1975.

It is good to see all the old and new faces. It is a privilege for me to be here this Sunday because this is a holy place. This is a place where our True Father spoke so many times. In the 1970s and 1980s, he would speak almost every Sunday. I had the privilege of coming here many times; I am sure you did too. I want to thank everyone who contributed toward the restoration of the beautiful grounds and buildings, not only here in this main training center, but also in the main house with the new façade. I am sure it is going to be very beautiful.

Today is our anniversary. I woke up early in the morning and found these little signs all over the house that said, "40" and, "Happy 40th Anniversary," and "14,610 days." I do not know who put them up. It may have been one of our children or friends. This morning the title of my talk is be "I Can See Clearly Now How God Has Been Working In My Life." This could probably apply to each one of us because God has been working in your life too.

Today I want to examine some of the turning points and new directions in our life, and step back and see how strangers came into our life and transformed it. They showed up at a certain time and place; without them, we would not have experienced what we did. First of all, I will read from *Cheon Seong Gyeong* "Why did God need Adam and Eve?"

He had two purposes, first to realize the Ideal of love, and second for the invisible God to make Himself visible after taking form. So when Adam and Eve reached perfection and go to the Spirit World, they are like God's body. God's purpose in creating human beings was to have perfected people in the Spirit World.

So often we forget or do not think about the fact that God created us not to live this life on Earth, but He created us for the afterlife. Actually, the life on Earth is a training period. This is where we need to fulfill our portion of responsibility, and then we would live eternally with God as a divine being. People in heaven are created on Earth and must achieve mind-body unity in their lifetime; our ultimate destination is the eternal spirit world. This Earth is the endless producer of heaven. In other words, where are the people in heaven created? They are created here on Earth. After death we transmigrate to the spirit world. It is very simple, but often we forget it. We are here in a training period. During our time here, we need to fulfill our responsibility of loving God and loving our fellow man.

Looking back, I can see God has really worked in my life. There were many events and circumstances in which teachers showed up to guide me on this path. I was born in Hawaii, as was mentioned, and you have seen a few pictures of my childhood. Hawaii is a very special place. There is the natural beauty of the beaches, and the fruit trees; but the people are beautiful too. It is the most multicultural place in America. How many people have been to Hawaii? Okay, well, you have seen a little bit of the lush, green,

tropical paradise. True Mother said that God created Hawaii to remind fallen men of how the Garden of Eden should have been. If you want to see the Garden of Eden, go to Hawaii. If you are already married and had your honeymoon somewhere else, you can take your second honeymoon in Hawaii. If you married yet, it is a beautiful place to take a honeymoon.

Anyway, there are several events and people who shaped my life. When I was nine years old, I and my family moved to Hawaii. My mother converted from Buddhism to Christianity. She was a devout Christian. I have five other siblings, and they all have secular names like, Edward, George, Kathy, Dorris, and Cliff. She named me Paul after Saint Paul in the Bible. She really wanted me to be a minister, so I did church work for many years. When we moved to Hawaii, we attended a Protestant Church; actually, it was kind of unique, it was a Japanese-American Protestant Christian Church. When I was 16, I talked to Rev. Toyotomi, who was the pastor at the time; I really respected him because he was a missionary to India for many years. I asked, "What is the purpose for God in my life?" He said, "Pray about it; pray to do God's Will. That became my unconscious prayer for many years. I also asked him, "What about Christians, will they go to Heaven? And what about non-Christians, will they go to Hell?" He responded, "Yes." I asked, "What about a man like Mahatma Gandhi, who was not a Christian, but a very humble and righteous person, will he go to Heaven?" Very sincerely, he said, "no." That made me think, and I came to the conclusion that I would rather go to Hell with people like Mahatma Gandhi, than go to Heaven with the hypocritical Christians; therefore, I started to search.

We used to go on a retreat in the summer, in Mount Hermon, in the Santa Cruz Mountains of California. It was one week in nature and a lot of revival meetings. I remember one meeting where pastors were talking about church growth and the return of Christ. I was really shocked when one pastor said to the group, "I am saved and I am going to Heaven. It does not matter if Jesus comes back. The Second Coming is a non-event; because I am already saved." That confused and surprised me too; and made me wonder about Christianity.

After I was in the Army, I went to a Christian school for a year. During that time, I was talking with all the students and a Chinese person. We had an affinity and talked about philosophy long into the night. He said one thing that shocked me, "I don't think Christianity is the ultimate religion." That made me wonder, what was I doing in a Christian school? So, I went back to the secular school; it was Los Angeles City College, which was free. It was \$6 for student fees, in the late 1960s and early 1970s. That is where I met my spiritual father, Gary Jarmin. He was in the same philosophy class. He had short hair, and was a teacher's assistant. One day he said, "You know, there is a new philosophy from Korea."

I was very interested in the East because I had rejected Christianity. So I went to the meeting, and I was the only person there. It was in a classroom. He stood up and started making circles on the chalkboard: Subject and Object, Give and Take, and Spirit World, Physical World. That is how I first heard my lecture. That is when I joined the Unified Family. It was not the Unification Movement. It was like an ashram of people living together and I liked that a lot. What I liked was the spirit and the love that I felt there, because at the same I was attending Buddhist seminars where you meditate and felt very peaceful. It was the dynamic love which I felt when I went to the Unified Family. Young Oon Kim, one of the first missionaries, had a red book called *Divine Principle and Its Application*. Some of you, of course, know it; I borrowed that book. The first thing I did was to read the last chapter.

Basically, it is saying Christ is here, and so that is when I became a Unificationist in 1970. I met True Father and True Mother in Los Angeles in 1971 when they first came to California. I went through many different missions: FFWPU state leader in Connecticut, New Hampshire, Florida, student at UTS, member of AFC, all church missions. I did not have so many business or external activities. In 1975 to 1996, I went to Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is the former Yugoslavia. You have seen the map and the pictures of the devastation that took place there. It was like going to the Ukraine today, if you have seen the pictures of the Ukraine. It is like going to the Wild West. The people were very wonderful there; you could not tell the difference between the Serbians, the Croats, or the Muslims because they look the same. The only difference was their name. When people met new people they would say, what is your name, and where are you from? By the city that they are from, you could tell who they are. In the beginning, there were different license plates. If you saw a car with a Serbian license plate you knew they were from Serbia or the Federation. Later on, they had only one generic license plate. They also changed the flag.

Anyway in America, we had different activities. The reason why I remember this spot so vividly is the Carnegie Hall, Madison Square Garden, and Yankee Stadium campaigns. These were all conducted here in Belvedere, New York, and Washington Monument. Being in the Seminary, we came here many times. As state leader of Connecticut, we came every Sunday to Belvedere since it was only a 45-minute drive.

The most important motto or heavenly law of the Unification Movement is "live for the sake of others." Living for the sake of others really means not just living for myself, but it is living for others, and even sacrificing for others. In the Bible there are many references to this, but in Mark 12:31 it says, love thy neighbor as yourself. Jesus said there are two commandments, love God with all your heart, mind, and soul; and love your neighbor as yourself. Loving God is the vertical relationship and loving your neighbor

is the horizontal. If you fulfill these two commandments, everything else will be okay.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, there were no Unificationists and no church centers. There were four of us who went there; we started the first church center there. Many, many times, when we were there, people would say to me, "You must be crazy. What are you doing here?" When I told them I was from Hawaii, they said, "You *really* must be crazy. Why would you want to come here?" I also would like to mention that while I was there I actually got a job with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. They are still active today in the Ukraine. We worked to have fair and honest elections; we had about 2,000 international supervisors who would visit each polling place. I was fortunate to be able to get a job with them. I did that by volunteering and after a week my supervisor said, "Paul, you're not getting paid? Come with me." He then put me on the payroll. It is amazing how God works.

I was first stationed in the boondocks somewhere in Siberia. Before I went there, I went to the headquarters, to see the Director, and her name was Malia. Malia is a Hawaiian name, and I asked Malia if it was possible to stay in Sarajevo? She said she would work on it. The next day she said, "Paul, you are staying in Sarajevo." I stayed in the center and worked in Sarajevo. The next year, the director of my branch office became the director of the whole country and said, "Paul, how would you like to come with me to headquarters?" So I went to headquarters.

It is really how God works in mysterious ways, unseen ways. I am sure in your life, you have had circumstances like that. I was able to see a lot of the country in that way; I had a car with a driver, and an interpreter we visited hundreds of places in Poland. That would never have happened if I did not get that position.

God has a plan for you, and God had a plan for me. God has been guiding us; He has sent teachers and guides to help us. Unseen forces have been working in my life, and in your life to raise us up to people who can fulfill His purpose. So, are we a spiritual being having a human experience, or are we a human being having a spiritual experience? Which do you think? We are both; first, we are basically a spiritual being because our spirit never dies, and we are to become a divine being. How has God worked in your life?

I was talking to my wife about the sermon, and she said, "Well, it is just different cycles. There is spring, summer, autumn and winter; there is North, East, South, and West. We go through ups and downs, and we go through cycles." It is true. Now we are experiencing winter, but spring is coming. In Hawaii, we have eternal summer. There are different cycles, and viewed against the backdrop of our lifetime, childhood is the time to prepare for adolescence, the prime of life is the time to prepare for old age, which in turn is the time to prepare for the spirit world. In Buddhism, there is something similar to this. We had a Buddhist friend who said that we are born, have a childhood, go to school, get a job, get married, work, and then go to the Monastery to become a monk. This is their life cycle. In Confucianism, there are different cycles, but interestingly Confucianism is not really a religion, right? Qong Xi, Confucius, did not really talk about the spirit world so much. When someone asked him, "Master, what do we do after we die?" He said, "I do not know about life; how can I tell you about death?" In other words, do not worry about the spiritual world, worry about how you live your life here on Earth.

When you pass the age of 60, you should retire from public life, return to your former village, cultivate the Earth, and prepare to go to the spirit world. Now many of us are past the age of 60 and still working, but the concept is there. At a certain point in our life, we need to go back to nature, to walk along the beach or put your feet in the water, just sit out and meditate, and watch the sun go down. Very simple things. Through nature, we come closer to God, true? When you go to the spirit world, you will clearly know how miserable those men and women are who failed to live for the sake of others, who failed to live with love.

The highest ideal is to occupy God's love. Rumiis, a poet, said, "Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself." How true it is. We have to do both. We have to think of changing the world, but also we need to change ourselves, and become a divine person. In the end, the love you take equals the love you make, have you heard that before? That was from *Abbey Road*, the Beatles' last album, I resonate with this. The Beatles were great.

The greatest aspiration of the human conscience is to follow Heavenly fortune, to become one with God, and to possess His love. This is really our aspiration, and we will all be in the spirit world one day; hopefully, we will have loved to breathe. I just wanted to conclude by saying there are two kinds of people, the way I look at it: there are people who received the Marriage Blessing and there are others prepared to receive it. Also there only two other kinds of people: those in the spiritual world, and those who are preparing to go the spiritual world. Thank you very much.