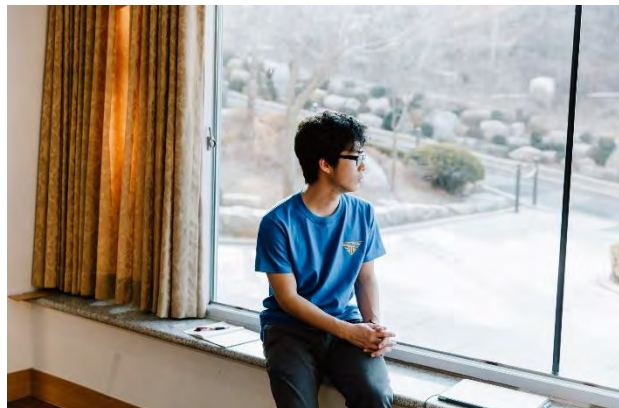


FFWPU USA: Who Is God to You?

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The concept of God varies across different religious, philosophical, and cultural traditions. There isn't a universally agreed-upon definition. However, when most people describe this entity, they use words like powerful, ruler, creator, divine, transcendent, or eternal. These words have gravitas, but also create a feeling that God is far away, distant.

While there is a general concept of God, every person has a personal understanding of who He is, too. For some, it is love, for others God is the only way, the beginning and the end, or even the alpha

and omega. Unificationists believe that He is [a personal God](#).

So how can you find your personal God?

"God is without form. If we should conceive of Him as large, He is infinitely large, and if we should conceive of Him as small, He is infinitely small."

- Cheon Seong Gyong 1.1[a].1

As we can see from this quote, creating a personal relationship with God can be difficult since [God can take any shape but no shape at all](#). So if we truly aim to achieve a relationship with God, we need to use more than just logical thinking since who/what God is cannot be placed in a box.

"We should not perceive the existence of God only vaguely and conceptually. It is impossible to understand the existence of God through logic alone."

- Cheon Seong Gyeong 1.1[b].4

Even though it can be hard to connect with God, it is not impossible. The best way to start is to find a way that you can feel God or talk to God, through prayer, songs, reading, or [nature](#).

"You should know how to love nature and love people. Because all things of creation are symbols for God and because people are substantial beings, those who know how to love all things of creation and people will come to love God."

- Cheon Seong Gyong 2.5.5

Unificationists, for example, believe that "God, the Creator of all things, is the absolute reality, eternal, self-existent, and transcendent of time and space. The fundamental energy of God's being is also eternal, self-existent, and absolute. It is the origin of all energies and forces that allow created beings to exist." (Divine Principle 2.1)

Thus, God is not a bearded guy on a throne in the sky. We believe that God wants to be with us, His children, all the time, and even though He is not able to directly communicate with us due to [the fall](#), He is still closer than we imagine.

"God's home is in the middle of our heart."

- Cheon Seong Gyong 1.1.2

If you are feeling lost about where God is, don't feel bad. It's like that for a lot of people. For me, it has always been hard to build a personal relationship with God, since He has always seemed so far away. But as I thought about it more, I saw that God is with me all the time. He is with my family when we are having lunch together, within my niece when we are playing, in nature. He is in every little thing we do. If we start to pay attention, we will see that He's there.

God is with us in the happy and sad times. He is in the small and big things. That is what God is all about. Meeting God is something personal, and as we work on it, and acquire experiences, this is going to be the most precious thing in our life of faith.

There is no right or wrong answer. You need to build your unique relationship with God. This relationship will change over time. It's about putting in the effort. So who is God to you?

What If God Was One Of Us?



Imagine you see a man walking down the street toward you—not looking too happy despite the pleasant weather. Unbeknownst to you, he’s just been scolded at work, where he feels misunderstood and undervalued by his boss and colleagues. He’s worried he won’t get the raise he’d been hoping for, which could’ve made it easier for his daughter to take the art lessons she wanted. So now on top of everything, he feels concerned for his children’s happiness. If we knew all this about a simple stranger on the street, wouldn’t our hearts instantly go out to him?

If we can’t get inside the head of a stranger on the street, imagine how much harder it is to know God—an invisible being who has the whole world’s sorrows to concern Him. Doesn’t God have all the same thoughts, feelings, concerns, and hopes as the man on the street? Perhaps not about the raise, but surely the parental concern for the happiness of His children? Or the universal desire to feel understood by someone else? As Joan Osborne sings: What if God was one of us?

Sometimes trying to get to know God is like fathoming the magnitude of the universe and the origin of time—there’s a part of us that simply can’t grasp it, and then we turn on the TV before we go mad. But, what if God was closer than we think? Not a being that speaks words of unattainable wisdom or holds impossibly high standards for us, but a parent, experiencing the exact same things we are, going through the rough and dry times as well as the celebrations? What if He can understand us better than anyone else on earth because His heart feels the same as ours?

If God is like us, could we simply look in the mirror to know God’s heart? Father Moon asked: “Where does God exist? He is not in heaven, but in our heart, the

MOON asked. "Where does God exist? He is not in heaven, but in our heart—the center of our heart."

If God is like us, then maybe we can come to know Him by looking at the journey we ourselves take in coming to a greater level of empathy for others. Perhaps we can even understand our fellow people better as a result.

Does God Have a Personality?

One of the first things that stands out when we meet someone is their personality. If we could get to know God, what might we discover His innate personality to be? Now, everyone has their own personal journey to get to know God—to speculate if there is a God. On the basis that our relationship with God is what makes God alive and real, we can base our thoughts on God much like we think about our relationships with other people—our friends, our family, that stranger on the street. In that light, Father Moon describes God as personal, driven and filled with love for us:

"If God exists, He has to be a personal God; He has to be like a person. As a personal God, He must possess intellect, emotion and will. Based on these attributes, all His feelings and desires, and all of the goals He sets according to His will must become concrete."

What do you think? Can you imagine a personal God who's with us every moment of the day? One that brushes our teeth with us, cooks dinner with us and feels every emotion with us? Just like the stranger on the street, He could have a diverse background, a wide array of hopes, dreams, and concerns...He could want the same things we want. What if, throughout history, God even grows and matures, like we do throughout life as we develop our personality and mature as people?

What's God Really Like?

If God's personality is the combination of His intellect, emotion, and will, what about His overall nature: What defines Him? What is His true essence? Father Moon dedicated his life to understanding this aspect of God, and he came to the interesting but logical conclusion that God (and all of His creation) has dual characteristics—that is, male and female traits:

"Externally, God resembles men and internally He resembles women. While God is strong, all-knowing, and omnipotent, He also has a merciful heart that can embroider flowers on Buddha's smile. He should also have a heart like that

of the most feminine woman. Only then will these two sides have life.”

It's true—the world is very yin and yang, and the more you think about it, the more you realize how “dual” everything really is: the positive and negative attractions in molecules, the stamen and pistil in flowers, males and females. Just like everything else in nature, we might further realize just how different yet complementary men and women can be.

If everything in the universe, which reflects God, has dual nature, wouldn't understanding the importance of a healthy relationship between men and women be at the heart of substantiating God's very nature and expressing the core of who He is in our day-to-day relationships? Think about it: if men and women are outward expressions of God's essence (male and female) then the unity of them would be like making God visible in His whole form on the earth. How can we substantiate God in all areas of our lives? How is our life journey a reflection of God's journey?

What are His Desires?

If God is just like us, then what is He passionate about? What are His fiery desires? Most people possess an innate desire to have children—to become a parent. Assuming that God is our creator and we are His beloved children, the parent-child relationship (having a family built on true love) would be the very pinnacle of His desire and the purpose of creating the world:

“A child is the fruit, the manifestation of the parents' love, an extension of their life and the embodiment of the parents' ideals. Children are born on the basis of the parents' love, life and ideals; thus, the more the parents see them, the more lovable they become, the more they become ideal people to relate to and the more vibrant life becomes.”

What are our own desires? Maybe there's something we truly want, like starting a business or becoming a chef or writing a book, and we didn't realize how much God might be able to relate to it.

Bottom line: if God is a personal God who, at His and Her core, is our Heavenly Parent, then maybe He wants to have a relationship with us and not only be involved in our lives, but be deeply affected by them.

Who is God to you? Is He a “stranger” you want to get to know? Take Him out

for a stroll in the park and have a chat.

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The Omnipresence of God



The omnipresence of God is something that has fascinated us since the beginning of human history. When we think about the vastness of God's nature while trying to build a personal relationship with our Heavenly Parent, we are confronted with many questions: How can a being be infinite and everywhere, but also uniquely involved with each individual in the present? How does my relationship to God, and to others, factor in to all of this?

We are told in Matthew 5:48, that we should be perfect as our Heavenly Parent is perfect. If we are supposed to resemble the omnipresent God, does that mean we should try to be everywhere at once, in everybody's business, and literally be perfect? That's a tall order, and it might make us pretty unpopular.

In various speeches throughout his life, Father Moon described God's eternal characteristics and offered some enlightening thoughts on the concept of God as an omnipresent and omniscient being. He also gave us some practical steps on how we can emulate these traits.

God's Heart Can Be Found Everywhere

"God's heart is found not only in God's word but also in all things He created. In heaven and earth, God's heart is everywhere," (Divine Principle, 79). It's no surprise that people often say they feel God in nature. Because God created the entire world, His [and Her](#) essence can be seen in all of Creation. Just like a painting is indelibly connected to its artist, the whole natural universe is a reflection of God's character. In this way, God is always present.

Shouldn't we, then, have the opportunity to connect to God wherever we are? As Father Moon says, "The one whose heart sings eternally even at the sight of a flying bird or a fragrant flower does not dwell among all things of Creation but, rather, within God's heart."

The Heart of a Parent

Who is God to human beings? If God were simply a creator and ruler, His and Her all-knowing, all-seeing powers would seem harder to grasp. However, if we think of God as a parent, we can begin to understand this ability to cut across time and space."

It is the parent's heart of love toward their children that makes omnipresence reasonable and possible. "It is a heart that reaches beyond ultimate extremes," (79) says Father Moon.

As parents, our love does not exist only when our children are present. It exists no matter how far away they may be. It goes beyond years, beyond distance, beyond even death. We love our children infinitely and intimately. Parents have an all-encompassing love for all their children, but also a unique relationship and love for each child individually.

Alive in the Natural World

The three traits that were arguably most used by Father Moon to describe God are "unique," "unchanging" and "eternal." These are qualities that, when exhibited in nature, make a substance precious. If we find God in nature, can't we learn from God through nature? Father Moon often discusses the nature of diamonds, pearls, and gold, and asks us to reflect on why we value them so much.

"A diamond is so hard that nothing can corrupt it; thus it has the special nature of being unchanging," he says. "A pearl's elegant sheen never changes for thousands or tens of thousands of years; nothing can compare to it. Why is gold so great? Its golden luster never changes, even for thousands of years. Nothing can surpass that color."

According to Father Moon, we can learn through the qualities of gold, diamonds, and pearls. He asks us when we wear diamonds and pearls, do we feel like we deserve to wear them? Do we think of them as our teachers? The true value of a person, he says, is their inner self and heart—so how can we

imitate these precious metals?

Diamond-like Purity

The incorruptible nature of the diamond is what draws people to it. No matter what it is put through, its essence stays the same. The lesson here is to strive to keep a childlike sense of wonder in the world and trust in people. No matter how much we are hurt, our commitment to love others should not waver.

Harmony of Pearls

Pearls are beautiful because they match with everything. Father Moon encourages us to learn from pearls, to harmonize with our surroundings, our neighbors, and so forth. The person who is harmonious like a pearl can embrace the world and bring peace.

Golden Truth

Gold is genuine; it has absolutely no falseness, Father Moon says. Inside and out, its quality is the same, and its color does not change. We can emulate this by sticking to our values and beliefs and by making sure that our words and our actions match. When we say that we are going to wash the dishes, we really mean it—and we follow through on our declaration.

The Unique, Unchanging, Eternal YOU

"If you were confident of possessing the qualities of jewels, you could sit quietly on a dark mountain top and shine, just as a diamond shines at night as well as by day."

Father Moon's timeless words remind us that there are ways to emulate God's heart and unchanging nature by looking at the world around us, elusively vast and infinite like our Heavenly Parent. We see God's nature in the beauty around us: in the heart of our parents, the sight of a bird or the sparkle of a raindrop.

Take a second to breathe in the infinitely beautiful qualities in the objects and people around you. If God is all around us, just like nature, then reconciling our personal relationship with God is not so complicated. It's pretty similar to being awestruck by an incredible view, or turning our attention to a flower at our feet and really appreciating its delicate details. Both are beautiful, and both

are part of our experience of nature and our experience with God.

< What If God Was One Of Us?

Why Conflict is Good for You >

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How Nature Is Closer to God Than We Are (And How to Change That)



“Let the rain kiss you. Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops. Let the rain sing you a lullaby.”

– Langston Hughes

Don't we often feel nature to be mystifyingly comforting? A reassuringly unchanging yet refreshingly ever-changing aspect of this world? Sometimes it might even feel like nature is the closest to God we can get. Why might that be?

As Unificationists, we often explore the [divinity within ourselves](#) – but what about the rest of God's creation? When Adam and Eve fell away from God, the rest of humanity became “deceitful above all things” (Jeremiah 17:9). The [Divine Principle](#) explains how they lost their position beside God, and only through created things could they come back to God.

That probably would explain the biblical offerings humans have made throughout history, but for most of us who don't regularly make ceremonial offerings of lambs and doves, perhaps we can find nature's divinity in a different way: as our natural teacher that can help bring us back in touch with God.

Lesson 1: Be YOU-nique

Father Moon taught that, as a result of the Human Fall, we amazing human beings began to see ourselves as worthless – constantly comparing ourselves

or being jealous of each other's physical qualities or talents.

But what about nature? Flowers don't compare themselves with each other. If they were human, they'd appreciate their unique beauty. Wouldn't this way of life be way more uplifting?

Perhaps such a love and appreciation for each unique thing in the world is an aspect of God that we lost long ago – and it's something we can relearn from nature.

Lesson 2: We Are One

We need to remind ourselves what nature is to us – that it's not just a pretty backdrop for a profile pic, but an integral participant in our lives. After all, it's what sustains us. Father Moon spoke of this interconnected existence:

"Spending time in the forest cleanses the mind. The sound of leaves rustling in the wind, the sound of the wind blowing through the reeds, the sound of frogs croaking in the ponds: All you can hear are the sounds of nature; no extraneous thoughts enter the mind. If you empty your mind and receive nature into your entire being, there is no separation between you and nature. Nature comes into you, and you become completely one with nature. In the moment that the boundary between you and nature disappears, you feel a profound sense of joy. Then nature becomes you, and you become nature." ([As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen](#), 22-23)

How can we grow our sense of respect, awe, wonder, care, and gratitude for nature? It's pretty simple: be in it. Try just lying in the grass, hugging the earth, staring into swishing leaves, and feeling one with your natural surroundings.

Lesson 3: It Takes Care of Us – Let's Take Care of It

By taking care of our environment – cleaning our home or trimming the hedge – we become co-owners with our Heavenly Parent. That feeling of ownership eventually can expand from our personal sphere to include a concern for places like the local park. If there were trash in the trees or even a dying plant, our hearts would go out to these suffering shrubs and we'd want to help them. There are countless other [ways to help](#). We can liberate nature by taking care of it, and just maybe come in touch with God's deepest love for His creation – and for us.

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Did God Give Up on Us?



A lot of people feel like God has given up on humankind because of all the problems we see in today's society: crime, hunger, war. It's understandable. Unificationists, however, believe that God has always loved us as a parent, but that humans have made that relationship more complicated.

We think we know the story of the Fall from the Bible: Adam and Eve did something wrong and because of that, humans are now suffering. But that's not the whole story.

Unificationists believe that what made Adam and Eve fall was not an apple or some other fruit that God forbade them to eat. According to [The Divine Principle](#), the apple is a metaphor for the sexual act between a man and woman. The fall of humankind from God was the sexual relationship Adam and Eve had before they were mature and ready to have that relationship sanctified by God, their Heavenly Parent. What's more, both Adam and Eve decided to hide what happened to God and the rest is, well, our unfortunate history.

No, God did not give up on us.

He has been trying his best to reach out to us throughout all of human history, but because of the mistakes of the first human family, our relationship with God was broken. God wants to express his wishes to us and help us directly, but because of the Fall, things got a lot more tricky.

Humans have dreamt of a utopian world where everyone is good and nobody suffers. The Italian philosopher Tommaso Campanella described a perfect city called the "City of the Sun," where the city is based on equality and community. French philosopher Charles Fourier proposed communities with houses called phalansteries, where people would live in harmony as equals, sharing

everything.

We can feel in our hearts that the society we are living in today is not what was originally planned, and, hopefully, it won't remain like this forever.

God wants humans to be happy. He did not give up on us. He is suffering more than any of us can imagine, seeing such horrible things happening to his precious children.

If we are willing to reconnect with God and open our hearts and minds to him, he will surely guide us.

But we need to take the first step. We believe that the [Marriage Blessing](#) is that first step. It allows us to restore our connection to God's lineage and to build families that follow God's original blueprint. By creating supportive and loving families, our community and society will naturally grow closer to God.

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