

## How do we teach compassion in our youth? Is it even possible?

Yukinori Sato  
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Growing up in this church, I frequently thought about why I do not have enough compassion or motivation to help others. And now I am in a position to think about how to build compassion in our children. I think the compassion deficiency -- or the lack of understanding and consideration for others -- is what fuels the wars, daily mass shootings, and emotional political rhetoric we see today.

Since when I was in STF/CARP 2 decades ago, I have always wondered how to understand God's and True Parents Heart. It was my internal goal to do so. At that time, I thought I found the answer -- "To know one's heart, you must understand his/her situation." Being an 18-year-old, I concluded that the reason I don't understand their hearts is because I do not have enough experience, and therefore I don't understand and feel "their situation." What I needed was experience. So this has been one of my personal golden rules: "To understand others' heart, I must care about and understand their situation."

After 2 decades, I developed a different understanding of how to understand others' hearts. I found that there are people who predominantly live for themselves, and there are people who truly live for others, and others fall between. I found that, my golden rule did not particularly work for the people who truly lived for others. Their heart -- their suffering came from not from their own suffering and situation but came from other's suffering and situation. Their lives revolved around others' situations. This is really how parents are to their children. The parents' greatest suffering come from the suffering of their children, to the point that their own suffering and situation are no longer important. And so I have modified my rule to the following: "In order to understand the heart of someone who is truly altruistic, we must understand the suffering and the situation of the ones that he/she cares for." This applies for God and True Parents. We must understand the worst sufferings and situations of humankind, in order to understand

God and True Parents' hearts.

When we study True Father's autobiography, True Father grew up in a house where they always fed the refugees and the poor. As youth, He traveled across the war-torn Korea to see the sufferings of war and poverty. As an adult, He always spoke about the starving people of the world, and developed ocean providence to feed them. He also developed farms and schools for the poor.

Going back to the first question: How do we teach compassion to our children? I believe the most straightforward way is to recreate the environment where True Father grew up in His house. By becoming a family -- or a federation of families -- who substantially and actively help the poor and the starving.

How did True Father grew up? Even before He was introduced to Christianity at 10 years old, True Father grew up knowing others' sufferings. He touched them, cared for them, and understood humanity's suffering. In His Autobiography Ch. 1, he says:

"The first thing I learned after I learned to walk was how to serve food to others."

This is how he grew to become the most compassionate person with unimaginable sense of motivation, love, and self-sacrifice. And because He understood humanity's suffering... He was able to understand God's Heart. This is how our children should be raised.

Where can we start? Even if we live in cities, there are always shelters and programs where we can volunteer in as a family. There are also countless programs to donate to orphanages and food programs. Perhaps you can find church members in Africa that you can contact and help. There are members who have farms helping people. Connect with them as families and get the children involved. Become families similar to where True Father grew up.

When we can connect our children to the sufferings of humanity, we can give them a chance to develop their compassion, let them learn to be more appreciative of what they have, and maybe understand the parental heart of God and True Parents. This is the theory I am working with at this point.

Let me know what you think are the ways to teach compassion to our youth.