

Unification Thought Seminar

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This past weekend, I was to present a one-day seminar on the Divine Principle in New Hampshire. So during the week running up to it, I'd been assembling and arranging material which I thought would be interesting and relevant, which addressed ideals, realities and grappling with the difference between them. So that by Friday evening, when I arrived in New Hampshire after a long drive, I felt confident with the content I'd prepared. I could retire at a reasonable hour that night, secure in the thought that everything was ready; I anticipated sufficient and peaceful slumber.

Alternate Inspiration

It was indeed peaceful, but sometime before my alarm sounded, I was awakened by a very clear inspiration that I should approach the day's work differently; that rather than aiming to be informative and intriguing, I should instead attempt to simply and clearly represent the heart of God. The clarity of the inspiration was such that I knew I mustn't ignore it. So I rose, fired up my trusty old laptop and purposefully adjusted my visuals to convey this new perspective. Fortunately, there was sufficient time to complete the work.

I should explain that what I'd planned was to present a summary of the Divine Principle, the core teaching of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. In these summaries, it's customary to reduce the Principle to very abbreviated discussions of 1) God's nature and the ideal world God had envisioned, 2) how it was lost, and 3) the efforts to recover it as recounted in scriptural and then secular history.

If that sounds like a lot to cover in a short day, it is of course. In truth, I usually feel regretful that I have to skim over material that is both enormous in scope and sometimes profoundly dramatic.

But the morning's inspiration saved me from having to explain too many factual details and rather bring attention to the broader narrative wherein the principles play out.

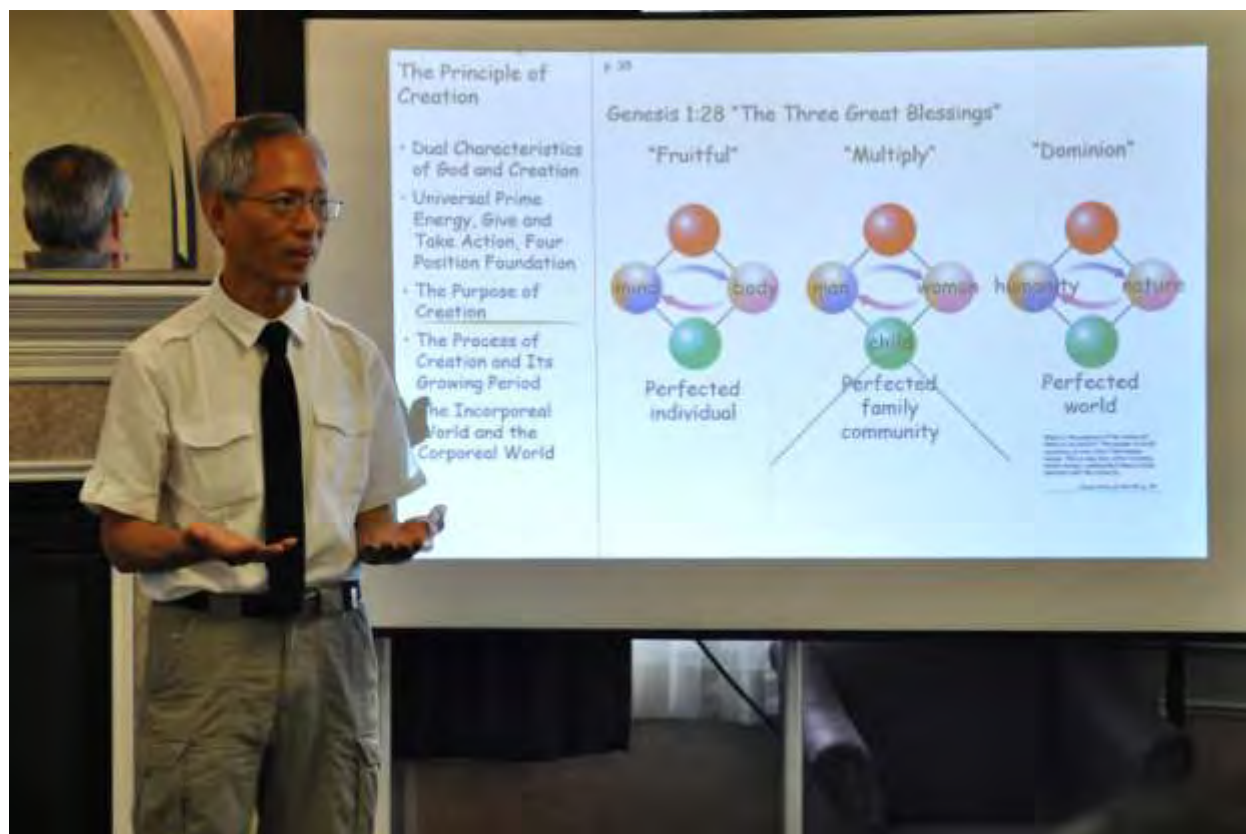
POP July 20, 13 009 In short, this is what made it possible: the Divine Principle brings our attention to what it calls The Three Great Blessings (Gen. 1:28): "God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply ... have dominion over...every living thing.'"

In that single sentence, guidance is given to humanity that is the key to creating happiness. The Divine Principle explains these blessings at some length, and of the first one, it says:

“The key to God’s first blessing is the perfection (completion) of individual character. ... In order for an individual to perfect his character ... his mind and body (should) become one ... with God as their center. Such individuals ... experience the Heart of God as if it were their own.”

• Exposition of the Divine Principle, p. 40

Achieving oneness of mind and body is an ancient human aspiration which accounts for the perennial fascination of zen and yoga. But clearly experiencing the heart of God is a different matter. In my youth, I believed that achieving such an understanding was immeasurably beyond the capacity of the human mind. However, the Principle presented me with the possibility that a correct understanding of revealed scripture shows a God who earnestly seeks to be understood and who sincerely values a mutually gratifying relationship with humanity.



Focus Simply on What Matters Most

Having struggled to achieve mind/body unity through years of yoga and later through the Zen practice embedded in martial arts, I realized that the heart’s power enables people to do what the human will alone cannot do. When one is in love — with a person, an ideal, a nation — one can endure, reach for and attain things that they normally could not. So if one can find the heart of God, then one could find themselves empowered in the most extraordinary way. Hence, the appeal of the idea of “mind and body becoming one... with God as their center.”

How then to access this heart of God? In the later part of my life, perhaps because this understanding had eluded and perplexed me for so long, I finally noticed something in another of the FFWPU’s core books: Unification Thought. In that book’s Theory of Education, it is written:

“...God’s heart has been expressed in three ways during the process of creation and (in history). These three forms of God’s heart are His heart of hope, His heart of sorrow, and His heart of pain.”

• New Essentials of Unification Thought, p. 250

That insight is what has transformed my understanding of the Divine Principle and its interpretation of the Bible. The Principle presents more than a remarkable analysis of laws and principles at work consistently within nature and history, and more than inspired readings of Bible stories. Above and beyond that it reveals the underlying narrative of God’s greatest hope, the tragedy that destroyed it, and God’s unrelenting labor of love to recover that cherished hope. In other words, the “three forms of God’s heart”.

So, in that one short day, we did not examine main ideas of the Divine Principle in too much detail — that can be done later, when there is sufficient time. Rather, within the few hours we shared, we tried to find the outlines of the simple narrative of God’s heart as embodied in the Bible and the Principle. That’s what woke me up early that morning: focus simply on what matters most and leave the details for another time.