

## Being a Temple of God

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*The Divine Principle from a Unification Thought perspective*

Picking up from the previous post: Beyond Restoration – Hope for the New World, I'd like to continue breaking down the First Great Blessing. The paragraph starts:

*“The key to God’s first blessing is the perfection of individual character. ...to perfect his character, he must form a four position foundation within himself whereby his mind and body become one through give and take action with God as their center. Such individuals become the **temples of God**, achieve complete oneness with Him, and acquire a divine nature. ...”*  
*Exposition of the Divine Principle, p. 34*

So far, we've referred to Unification Thought to explore 1) the importance of *individuality* and 2) the core of *mind and body unity*. This time, I'd like to turn its lens on the idea of being a *temple* of God. In the Principle, the phrase is footnoted and the reference is to St. Paul's words in the bible. They read:

*“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ...For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.” I Cor. 3:16*

Paul wanted the recipients of his letter to understand that they were dwelling places for God's Spirit to live within. When we read these words even now, we're earnestly requested to look at ourselves differently — we are to re-imagine ourselves as holy and *sacred* residences of God.



The first thing I'd like to point out is that the stereotypical image of holiness is one of self-denial and self-effacement — think monks and nuns. And not only in Christianity, but in other faiths, Buddhism being one.

But Unification Thought gave me a different perspective on holiness. Rather than the image I'd had, I learned that the *uniqueness* of each personality is key to their holiness:

*“...human individuality is more remarkable than other (creatures) and is far more holy and precious. ...Human beings have been created to pursue the ideal of creation while practicing love through their individualities; therefore, human individualities are very precious and holy.”* *New Essentials of Unification Thought, p. 22*

Hmm... that's a bit different. My individuality isn't an impediment to holiness, and muting it in fact dilutes it? Interesting. So each of us can practice love in our own unique way and through it, we give comfort and delight to our loved ones and ultimately to God? There goes the idea of a monastery, where one tries very hard to *not* stand out from one's community. I'd previously explained how enormously liberating this idea was for me, so I won't repeat that here.

Paul's words also indicate another important key to holiness. If you look at the full context of *I Cor. 3:16*, you'll see that he was addressing the sexual behavior of his readers. Because of that, his words promote a strictness and self-discipline for those who are very earnest and sincere about their relationship with God. For the rest, who cannot manage such a life, Paul accepts marriage as a necessary compromise. He exact words are:

*“It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. ...But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment. ... if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.”* *I Cor. 7:1–9*

Oh boy... clearly then, to be the most sacred temple is to *not* marry. According to Paul the high road to God is to be a celibate monk or a nun: renouncing animal passions, dressing sternly, being solemn and wary of laughter, and being serious, deliberate and saintly in every thought, word and action. Paul thought that to be a holy temple, one must be *sterile* in the sense of being absolutely “clean”. Anything else was

weakness and rather ...unholy. Thankfully, there arose in time efforts to play down Paul's views and raise marriage to more than a concession to human weakness.

Unification Thought's perspective isn't just a reassuring acceptance of marriage. Instead, it extends the idea of what it means to be a temple: it proposes that the married couple is the *most* God-like of existences:

*"...the position of conjugal union is very precious and holy; it is the position wherein human beings most resemble God...children born through such a conjugal love are the fruit of this holy...love." • New Essentials of Unification Thought, p. 539–540*



So while God can reside within a single man or a single woman, they come to most closely resemble God when a man and woman marry together, each representing an essential characteristic of God. This is the holiest of existences and it's the ultimate temple for God to dwell in:

*"People say, 'God is absolute. As the Creator, He is the Holy One, while human beings are profane.' This is an incorrect understanding, however. If God is absolute and holy, then that which He created according to His ideal should also be holy.*

*Long ago, during their course in the wilderness, the Israelites worshipped the Tabernacle, which contained the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Yet, can you compare the Holy of Holies fashioned by human beings with the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place that God created as the original nature of unfallen Adam and Eve? What was the Tabernacle, composed of the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place? It was nothing but a transitory symbol that prefigured the substantial being — the original Temple and the original Holy of Holies. (143-236, 1986.03.19) CSG 2014*

*"...a husband and wife each, originally, represents one of God's dual characteristics of Yang and Yin; accordingly, their conjugal union signifies the manifestation of God. When a husband and wife love each other horizontally, centering on God, His vertical love dwells there, and life is created through the multiplication of love." New Essentials of Unification Thought, p.169*

That's a radically different kind of temple than is presented by mainline tradition. Because it's not a place characterized only by formality, sterility and solemnity, but it can also be a place of affectionate, vibrant and exciting interrelationship. Instead of an imposing, fixed stone edifice, we now have an organic, expanding and dynamic one.

In such a temple, holiness and sacredness take on a different and much wider character; love is expressed and experienced there, most especially between husband and wife. And new life – children, come into existence through this miraculous temple. This great re-envisioning of the sacredness of marriage is at the heart of the FFWPU.