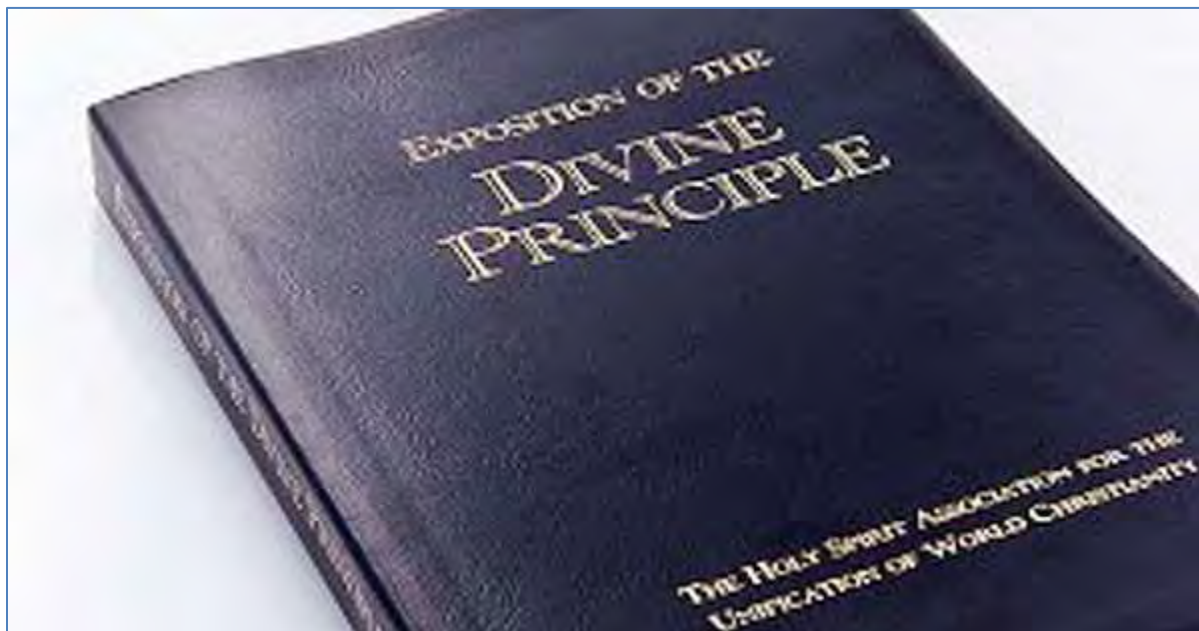


Applying the Divine Principle to Real Life

Bruce Sutchar
July 29, 2013



Remember those kids who could tell you the 66 books of the Bible in chronological order? I always wondered if they knew how to apply those 66 books in their lives.

I became close friends with former Congressman Phil Crane's sister, Judy. She was like the only real fundamentalist that I have ever known. She is married to a Hungarian Jew (an army buddy of Congressman Crane's) and has a "Jews for Jesus" daughter. She raised her children by always referring to the Bible (rather than Dr. Spock) for guidance. When she needed to discipline one of her children she would always find the appropriate Bible verse.



I have often wondered the same thing about the application of the Divine Principle (which, incidentally, was the title of Dr. Young Oon Kim's first book). Many of our members have been excellent Divine Principle lecturers, but I wonder why we still have had so much in-fighting among our members, between leaders and members, and in our movement as a whole.

For me the most challenging part of the Principle comes from the chapter on returning resurrection where it says that sometimes God will allow an evil spirit to attack you through another person. And if you can receive this persecution with a grateful heart, then both the spirit and yourself will advance.

I once gave a sermon on "loving your enemy" at an ACLC church and said that there are three words that everyone knows from the Bible, but almost no one lives. In fact, other than Jesus and True Parents, I don't know anyone that is even trying to live this credo. The minister thought it was an excellent sermon, but as we drove home, my wife wanted to see how I would react in case another driver cut me off or some such maneuver.

Father often accused us of being a "pick and choose" movement—in other words, we personally decided which of his directions we would choose to obey and which we would ignore. Ones like "learn Korean" or "don't snack between meals" are two that come quickly to mind.

To apply the Principle to real life situations is to me, the real value of the Principle. It is really meant to be a principle for guiding your life, sent directly from God—rather than a mere theological treatise. I remember the first time I ever gave a Divine Principle lecture, I was amazed at how much of the Principle I knew. Likewise, it never ceases to amaze me when I read the Principle and discover a new part that I never realized was there. I remember reading the section on “The Mission of the Messiah” where it says that Jesus would rather have one man who could lead a thousand than a thousand followers.

So much of the Principle could be applied to our daily life, if we really tried. Whether it’s positive or negative, how we treat our fellow human beings is guided by the Principle in every possible situation. Applying “to err is human; to forgive, divine” would solve so many of our daily woes.

I recently read a Christian book called *The Shack*. When I went to borrow it from the library, there were a year and a half of holds on it. So I bought it at the store. It was like a modern-day version of John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*. The essence of the book is about forgiveness (something not easily found in the Hebrew Bible that I grew up with). It makes it perfectly clear that resentment really hurts the resenter and not the person whom he or she resents or holds a grudge against. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, in her studies of terminally ill cancer patients, found that the one underlying trait that each of them had was a deep-seated resentment. And when we get really mad about something, we say that it’s “eating me up,” which is exactly what those little cancer cells are doing.

I firmly believe that the real challenge of the Principle and Father’s words is not memorizing them in perfect chapter, verse, date, and order, but rather, learning how to apply them to our daily lives.

Currently we are trying to unite with True Mother’s direction to witness, witness, witness. Many members ask, “What does that mean?” In Oakland in 1978, it meant walking to highly populated areas, starting a conversation and inviting the person to dinner to hear the introductory lecture. Then we invited them to a two-day workshop, and eventually 7-day, 21-day, and 40-day workshops (my own course). Afterwards, they were invited to join the “actionizers” in Oakland. There they studied the Principle, began to witness themselves, went fund-raising and continued to attend weekend workshops. That was 35 years ago, when everyone was coming to San Francisco, wearing a backpack and searching for the meaning of life.

The world of 2013 is different in many ways. Sheri Reuter calls the new way to witness “natural witnessing.” That means you talk to whomever you come in contact with—albeit, the person parked next to you at the library, the person standing next to you in the line at the Department of Motor Vehicles or the post office, or the person you meet in the park while walking your dog. I always thought, “if you had a diamond, you wouldn’t keep it in your pocket.” How much more valuable is the Principle than a diamond? The easiest way to overcome your fear of talking to someone is to do it in a natural way.

In the last few weeks, I have witnessed to a teller at the bank, the customer service person at Kinkos, the saleslady at a women’s clothing store (while shopping for a gift for my daughter), and the manager of an OfficeMax. Over the July 4th weekend, my wife and I drove 12 hours down to Arkansas to spend the weekend with our spiritual son. We met him while walking our dog. It naturally led to spending two hours at Starbucks sharing about my life and Father’s life. There are not many workshops going on in the country anymore (Heather Thalheimer did come to Chicago and taught him one lecture), but after 36 years in the Church, my wife and I should be able to teach him the Principle ourselves.

Most important however, he has to see us living the Principle. If we are living the Principle, then our behavior will stand out like shining glory compared to other people in their life.

Bruce Sutchar is the Midwest Director of the Universal Peace Federation, USA.