

## Faith

Bruce Sutchar  
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The eleventh chapter of the book of Hebrews begins, *“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”* It then proceeds to travel through biblical history mentioning how Abel, Noah, Abraham, Sara, Abraham and Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses all found the victories in their lives through faith. Finally, in verse 40 the chapter ends by proclaiming that, *“God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”*



*Sutchar Family*

Thus, like Vincent Van Gogh, who never sold even one painting in his entire lifetime, these great men and women of faith never received all that was promised to them in their actual lifetimes. Most Unificationists joined the movement in the 1970s after years of protesting, searching and experimenting with ways to discover love, peace and harmony. When none of these attempts were able to deliver their promise, they turned to the ideas that were presented by the Rev Sun Myung Moon. The 1960s were ripe with treatises that explained what was wrong; with our government, with our businesses, with our colleges and universities and with our family

lifestyles. Yet the real problem was that Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, Tom Hayden, Eugene McCarthy, George McGovern and the various leaders of the new left offered no solutions. Even Bob Dylan could only state that, *“the answer my friend is blowing in the wind.”*

Many college students would sip coffee until the wee hours of the morning trying to solve the world’s problems. Yet upon graduation, they abandoned these ideals in lieu of well-paying employment. Others strapped on back packs and traveled the world over in search of the Holy Grail or the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow to find their answers. The spiritual mecca for many was San Francisco, California. Here they met members of a thriving community that had been inspired by the ideas of Rev. Moon. What they found however was not just people sipping coffee till all hours of the night, but responsible people who were willing to do whatever it would take to make the world a little better—one step at a time. Rather than just talking about changing the world, they began sandwich companies, carpet cleaning companies, flower companies and even a Jewish Delicatessen in order to support their real work. This real work was teaching the ideas which they believed would change people’s behaviors and then bring their diverse world into communion and unity.

They taught that there was really no difference between people just because of their skin color, ethnicity, religious belief, gender, language or culture. They believed that there was truly one God, the Creator of the Universe. Therefore, we were all brothers and sisters, regardless of any external differences. They taught that *“perfect love casts out all fear.”* Realizing that the seed of most prejudice and bigotry is in fact that said same word fear—as people fear, *“that which they do not know.”*

The major difference from this mode of behavior and the all night coffee discussions was time. These ideas were not about to transform the world overnight. Businesses do not succeed overnight. They take days, months and years of long hard effort. So these people began to get up every morning at five am. They started by cleaning the dirty streets in their neighborhoods. Then they worked all day and invited every soul that they met to an evening program at their home every night. If the person was inspired they would be invited the ideas guiding the community at greater depth for a couple of days during the week or on the weekend.

Tens of thousands of people were met, thousands attended an introductory program, many continued to study, but percentage wise, few felt the responsibility to committing their lives to making the effort necessary to make the world a better place to live.

When the rich man asked Jesus what he needed to do, Jesus told him to go and sell his goods and give the money to the poor and to follow Jesus. The bible goes on to say that the rich man couldn't do that and walked away despondently. This is why Jesus stated, that "it is harder for a rich man to get into heaven than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

You don't build the Kingdom of Heaven overnight. Thus every day, the members of the Unification Movement worked at jobs, witnessed, fund-raised, taught lectures and held workshops. On a national and international level they began to hold conferences all over the world reaching out to religious leaders, scientists, educators, theologians, businessmen and women. They responded to every victory with a celebration and every set back with a determined fervor to pray more, fast more and become more determined to dig in and succeed.

Some interpreted Rev Moon's words as predicting that the "kingdom of heaven was at hand." Yet after several years, our membership seemed to stop growing and in fact many members began to abandon ship. Many felt that even after several years, the kingdom seemed no closer than before they joined the movement. Many ran away due to the extreme persecution and others were literally physically kidnapped by their parents and friends. When Rev Moon was sent to prison in 1984 many more left the movement.

The bottom line here is faith. Rev Moon made many promises, but the bible once again defines faith as, "the assurance of things hoped for, and the conviction of things not seen." It never promises that things will be accomplished overnight. After all God promised a 100 year old childless man with a 90 year old wife, that his descendants would "number more than the stars in the sky and the sands on the beach."

Many in the Unification Movement have continued to build the kingdom for the past forty plus years in America. In the midst of what seems at times to be a crumbling society we have seen a national newspaper, incredible international conferences, service projects in Israel and around the world, and a slew of successful business following in line with Rev Moon's vision for world peace growing steadily and successfully.

Just as it takes a seven pound baby about twenty two years to attain a college degree, the Unification Movement is moving ever closer to fulfilling rev Moon's dreams. Those dreams are being realized through faith and works as James implored us to recognize. Every piece of trash that we picked up, every person that we spoke to, and every person that was introduced to God's ideals and principles has sprouted roots of some sort.

Faith need no longer be "unseen and just hoped for". The challenge from today until the year 2020 is to build on that faith and "to know for a surety that it is coming to fruition."

It's Christmas. Everyone is wishing their fellow man "peace and good will." So it is possible. Let's just extend it through "faith and works" to the remaining 364 days in the calendar.