

You Will Know Them by Their Fruits

William H. Luke
January 1974



If there is any one thing that frustrates a would-be newcomer to Christianity, it's the division in Christendom. Which way is Christ? the prospective Christian must justifiably ask. Which way is the church? What is the Church? Beloved, we will bury ourselves with divisive attitudes. Something ought to be done about the crisis confronting Christendom today. The one thing that aggravates this crisis is sowing tactics of discord. The least thing that Christians are obligated to do is to seriously, prayerfully recognize the crucial plight of Christendom today, because of its degeneration to the level of not only carnal division, but, if you please, materialism, politics, flirtation with Communism, hypocrisy, and merely a form of godliness. These are the things that largely contribute toward the crucial condition of Christendom today. And I think that this is fool-proof obvious. Some people see no better way to climb to the heights of human acceptance and public approval than on the backs of those people whose prestige they degrade. This is tragic. This is the sort of thing some Uncle Toms did in the time of American slavery- pursuing special favors of their masters, they brought degradation upon the slave society. If there was one thing that Jesus taught, it was love for God and for our fellow man, love proven with one's life. Jesus also taught faith with works, spiritual fruit borne on the branches that were united with the true vine, which was Jesus Christ. He taught the good news of the Kingdom of God, which means the family of God. This is what the Unification Church is. It teaches, preaches, and tries to exemplify the family of God. The members love one another, serving one another and humbling themselves to the other person. They live highly disciplined lives in the interest of the whole. They share with each other and have all things in common, as was the case of the early church before carnality brought divisions.

"Is Christ divided?"

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, which was plagued by divisions, "... for while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving like ordinary men? For when one says, 'I belong to Paul,' and another, 'I belong to Apollos,' are you not merely men?" (I Cor. 3:3-4). Another time he asked, "Is Christ divided?" (I Cor. 1: 13). Beloved, Satan divides men. Satan has divided God's so-called people in the past and continues to do so. The Bible teaches that whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God (I John 5: 1). Why these Unification Church people believe this. Can you discount the totality of the Unification Church just because you are convinced that there are some things that the church teaches that you don't see or that you don't accept? Why, there are several things that I don't see or accept, but is that essential?

Read Romans 14:10 in the Living Bible:

You have no right to criticize your brother or look down on him. Remember, each one of us will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. So don't criticize each other anymore. Try instead to live in such a way that you will never make your brother stumble by letting him see you are doing something he thinks is wrong.

Beloved, we are told not to criticize each other. That "judge one another" means to appraise one another with a sense of condemnation merely because we don't see everything right about that person. You must be Judgment Day honest. This is what is bringing so many divisions among God's people today- they don't see everything eye to eye. Well, one reason they don't see eye to eye is because they come around snooping like a 20th century Pharisee, looking at the surface and only half listening to what people say, in order to see how many things they can refute. They don't come prayerfully, they don't come lovingly or humbly. They come with a certain set idea, and that's the only thing they hear. Now, once in a while, in spite of a man's set ideas, the truth can penetrate-if that man can just be humble and at least listen, honestly and sincerely listen. Then the truth will penetrate the calloused "set" of some hearts and minds.

"Love is very patient and kind."

I used to be suspicious and skeptical of other Christians. But I must be intellectually honest and love people and be optimistic concerning them. I Corinthians 13 reads,

Love is very patient and kind, never jealous, never haughty nor selfish nor rude. Love does not demand its own way, it is not irritable or touchy, it does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do it wrong. It is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever truth wins out. If you love someone, you will be loyal to him no matter what the cost, you will always believe in him, always expect the best of him, always stand your ground in defending him.

This is what the world needs, know Jesus did not come to judge men. He came to save them. And he was very much given to rebuking any effort of any disciple whom the devil tried to use to sow discord among the brethren. For instance, when the disciples complained about a man who was casting out demons in the name of Jesus, but was not part of their group, Jesus told them, "Do not forbid him; for he that is not against you is for you" (Luke 9:49). Every time the disciples came up with some carnal attitude, such as division or bringing judgment on others who didn't happen to be in their group or see everything as they saw it, Jesus rebuked them for this divisive will of the devil. Now God help us to be Christ-like enough to accept this attitude. "For anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Rom. 8:9). People have come to hear Reverend Moon's Day of Hope talks out of curiosity. Thank God for inquiring minds. Curiosity caused me to become interested in the Unification Church, check their doctrine and even live with them to observe them. Jesus said, "for each tree is known by its own fruit" (Luke 6:44). In Galatians 5:22, Saint Paul said, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." People have been so afraid of false prophets, but Jesus said, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit" (Matt. 7:15-17). Jesus goes on to distinguish the difference between a good tree and a bad tree; a good prophet and a false prophet; a true prophet and a hipster.



Reverend Moon welcomes Pastor William H. Luke to Day of Hope dinner.

The fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, gentleness, meekness, patience, and so on. And once you live with the people of the Unification Church, this is what you see. I dare you to really make a scientific comparison between conventional Christendom and the Unification Church on the basis of their fruit. Beloved, when men demonstrate by their lives godly spiritual fruit such as mentioned earlier, the least you owe them is patience. Now the Unification Church demonstrates Christianity. It tends to do the basic things that God expects of His people. I have made it plain that if there's any one thing that God wants of His people, that is to love Him. That is the first commandment. And the second is like it: Men must love their neighbor as they love themselves. They must love each other. Upon these two commandments rests all the law and the prophets, according to Jesus. Now if you would be Christian, hear that. "A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another even as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another"(John 13:34, 35). Beloved, if you really hope to discern who Christ's disciples are, keep these basic statements of Christ in mind. He didn't say "by their doctrine you shall know them," but "by their fruits you shall know them... by their love." God is concerned about the whole world being saved. Jesus said, "And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd" (John 10: 16). Also, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son... " (John 3: 16). God is so concerned about saving the world. He's concerned about His kingdom embracing the whole world. So when we hear about a One World Crusade, God help us at least to be patient with it. If we don't see how it can be accomplished, let's just make sure that we're not a stumbling block with our criticism and with our judgmental spirit.

Search the scripture together

Christians differ as to what manner Jesus Christ was God, the manifestation of God, or God in the flesh, or whatever. But is this any reason to stop fellowshiping with each other? Should we not come together, if we believe that Christ can save us? Is not this adequate basis for our fellowship? That's the whole point of Romans 14. We have to come together in order to reason together. We have to search the scriptures together in order to conclude together what the scriptures say. We have to love each other in spite of our differences, in spite of our convictions, until we can all come into the unity of the faith. I believe that this is what Paul is saying in his letter to the Ephesians. He begs the believers to live:

With all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. (Eph. 4:2-6)

The Apostle Paul goes on to speak about the various gifts that have been distributed among God's people, gifts that God is using to edify the church, to build up the church (verse 11). There are different approaches that each of the various instruments of God, each with different gifts, are using. Think it not strange, but think that they are basically trying to accomplish the same end, the edification of the saints and the salvation of sinners. Verse 13 says (in the Amplified Bible),

That it might develop (speaking about the church, the body of Christ) until we all obtain oneness in the faith and in the comprehension of the full and accurate knowledge of the son of God. That we might arrive at real mature manhood, the completeness of personality which is nothing less than the standard height of Christ's own perfection, the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ and the completeness found in Him. (Eph. 4: 13)

Beloved, do you see what the unity of the Spirit will produce? What lowliness and meekness will produce? Do you see the fruit of putting up with another's faults and failures and differences, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit with lowliness and meekness, forbearing one another in love? Make allowances because you love one another. It takes that kind of unifying love. Nothing short of this will accomplish the unity of the faith. I have written before,

When I met the Unification Church, I was led by the very Spirit of the living God to examine the fruit that Jesus said would indicate the tree. As Jesus said, you will know the tree by the fruit it bears. Beloved, I have found divine fruit in the personal, 24 hours-a-day observation of these people of God.

I used to be hung up on doctrine, but I feel if God were to choose between people who were to follow doctrine and those who bear divine fruit, I feel convinced that He would choose the fruit-bearing people.



Zed Robinson and Helen Danby attended Pastor Luke's Western Avenue Church of God in Los Angeles.

The Spirit will guide you

Should people think it strange that Reverend Moon claims to have had special conversations with Jesus? Many men claim this- the Apostle Paul, for instance. Even I have had Jesus reveal things to me personally. This is what changed my life from that of an agnostic to a Christian, in a matter of about four hours of meditation, during which Christ talked to me from the cross. The Bible predicts that the Spirit of God will reveal things to God's people, and that the Holy Spirit will guide men into all truth, taking the things of Christ and showing them unto people (John 16:13-16). The tragic question that should grip the church today, however, is that when the Holy Spirit begins to speak to the church, will the church have an

ear with which to hear him? Some people are upset that Reverend Moon is referred to by some as the Lord of the Second Advent. This I have not read. I do not ever remember hearing him make such a statement. I do not believe Reverend Moon is the only manifestation of Jesus to come back to this world in this latter day. I don't believe that Reverend Moon is Jesus returned in the flesh. Some might, I don't-so what? Two thousand years ago, some regarded John the Baptist as a great prophet. Others believed that he was Elijah come back in the flesh. Jesus himself said this. The Unification Church members are accused by some of being replete with patriotism. Well, thanks be to God there are Christians today who are patriotic. The Apostle Paul said, "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.... For rulers are not a terror to good conduct but to bad" (Rom. 13: 1, 3). There is nothing wrong with this attitude. I see nothing wrong with Reverend Moon's effort to unite all political systems into one democratic world. Especially if that world is based on the teachings and life of Christ. I'm sure that's what Christ is going to do when he returns. There will be a world based on the precepts and example of Christ-political systems and all. Now, I must admit that one would sometimes wonder how the American system could be presented as the most nearly Christ-exemplifying nation on earth today. But as you look at the other nations, what other nation would come closer? Despite the difference between America today and the Christian ideal, let's acknowledge that this is a nation that professes to trust in God and believe in God. It was founded by men who actually believed in God, and as long as it continues to give God the glory, it will survive. But we must remember that the same basic things that caused Rome to fall can bury us in America.

Be conscious of world redemption

I also believe that unless we have the goal to rectify all the wrongs in the world in one grand sweep, some facet of the world's ills will unfortunately be overlooked. God help us to be world-redemption conscious. The Unification Church is seeking to see that justice and equality of opportunity prevails, not only here in America, but throughout the world. The Unification Church in America has been accused of being predominantly white middle class. Well, most of the first Christians were Jews. But the church didn't stay that way forever. Eventually, the gentiles had their eyes opened to the fact that a Jew could be their leader. I pray to God that someday all people will stop letting their racial prejudice enter the arena of their honest evaluation of a man's calling and worth. I pray that people will stop allowing a man's race or cultural background becloud their perception and distort their hearing of what he says. When this happens, they fail to get his meaning. I thank God that there are some people who are not on the lower so-called economic strata that are inclined to want to live godly lives. You see, Communism and the devil want people to believe that only poor people resort to God, and only as a matter of desperation. Well, some people are not poor and some people are not illiterate who are resorting to godliness. They are willing to assume poverty if necessary. The early Christians did that. But you don't see much of that today. Some people, however, do assume poverty and give up everything, including their social class, to live a godly life. The Unification people tend to do this. Typical Christians who read about this kind of thing may examine themselves in the mirror of God's word. But then they go away, forgetting what they looked like, as if they thought that God isn't going to judge them by the whole truth.

They said and did not

Now I must admit that many things I have heard Reverend Moon say grieve my soul. So what! I imagine many things he'll hear me say will grieve his soul. There are many things I hear many ministers say that grieve my soul, but there's one thing that tends to grieve my soul more than anything else -- this is the same thing that grieved Christ's soul when he heard religious people expound the teachings of God. They said and did not. They knew the will of God but did not do it. They were white-washed sepulchers. Like Br'er Rabbit fighting the Tar Baby, I had fought Christianity for a long time. But then like Br'er Rabbit fighting the Tar Baby, I got stuck. But at least I had one cardinal principle governing my agnosticism, and that was intellectual honesty. I would listen to any man at least once. This automatically will lead any honest-minded man to God. It takes time for men to investigate anything. Men tend to be conservative. It takes time for people to throw off the old shackles of anything. Men are reluctant to try anything which seems to be new or different. Then too, sometimes it takes people to draw other people. People tend to be more concerned and identified with their own physical kind before they are inclined to be identified with their moral kind or the spiritual kind. Men are still conscious of kind, you know, and they merely go by the external appraisal of the kind in question before they can begin to feel justified and free to investigate the more hidden and internal differences or similarities. I am not a member of the Unification church that God acknowledges. I think that Satan sows discord among brethren by the use of some zealous, 20th century Sauls of Tarsus who ignorantly, naively persecute the church, sowing discord and division for personal aggrandizement. I am a pastor of all who emulate Christ, if they will accept me as such. The Unification Church knew that I preached unity based on purity of moral and spiritual values, unity based on a holy life. They knew that I preached this and aspired to live this, for some of them have been members of my church. They invited me to preach-the same way that I had always preached in my local church-in New York City, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. When I was on the sound truck traveling through D.C. advertising the Day of Hope campaign there, I told Mr. President not only that a house divided against itself cannot stand, but that when Mr. Khrushchev said he was going to bury us, he meant that he could merely watch us bury ourselves with disunity. When I said to the black community in

Washington, "I glory in black unity; I thank God for it, and I have helped to bring it about, though there is still a tragic lack in many areas," I made it plain that there is a higher caliber of unity, a unity of all people based on godliness. I've done my very best in the interest of my black people. For a long time while I had a radio broadcast here in Los Angeles called "Man of Color," I interviewed people such as Ralph Bunch when this was quite rare, showing the Los Angeles com Church organization. I am a member of Christ's holy body, the church. I have Bible reasons for accepting the members of the Unification Church as members of Christ's holy body, the church. I also have reason for justifying my accepting members of the First Baptist Church or the First Methodist Church or the First Lutheran Church or the First any other church as being members of Christ's universal body -- the one and only church that God acknowledges. I think that Satan sows discord among brethren by the use of some zealous, 20th century Sauls of Tarsus who ignorantly, naively persecute the church, sowing discord and division for personal aggrandizement. I am a pastor of all who emulate Christ, if they will accept me as such. The Unification Church knew that I preached unity based on purity of moral and spiritual values, unity based on a holy life. They knew that I preached this and aspired to live this, for some of them have been members of my church. They invited me to preach-the same way that I had always preached in my local church-in New York City, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. When I was on the sound truck traveling through D.C. advertising the Day of Hope campaign there, I told Mr. President not only that a house divided against itself cannot stand, but that when Mr. Khrushchev said he was going to bury us, he meant that he could merely watch us bury ourselves with disunity. When I said to the black community in Washington, "I glory in black unity; I thank God for it, and I have helped to bring it about, though there is still a tragic lack in many areas," I made it plain that there is a higher caliber of unity, a unity of all people based on godliness. I've done my very best in the interest of my black people. For a long time while I had a radio broadcast here in Los Angeles called "Man of Color," I interviewed people such as Ralph Bunch when this was quite rare, showing the Los Angeles community what an outstanding contribution the black man has made to our American society and to the world. I did it gratis, without pay. You would be surprised what I myself have done to clarify the image of the black man. But beloved, the time has come for not only the black man to rise up out of the jungles and stalk through the corridors of Cambridge and Yale and Harvard and the House of Representatives and Parliament, and even the White House, gaining his rightful place; but it's time that people be more concerned about universal unity than black unity-and I say that again. Oh, I realize that as I said before, there are areas of society that definitely need special attention. And the black man is one area, that's for sure. And if there is any one in the world that is conscientiously concerned about improving the lot of the black man, I am. I think my life has indicated this in the past. But I see a higher form of improvement for society as a whole. Unless society as a whole is transformed, the plight of the black man, though it be improved, will only be temporarily assuaged.

Let's be whole-minded

Frankly, it's high time that we stop trying to tailor-make religion so-called to suit any facet of society per se. It should appeal to the totality of society. The sooner we stop thinking about what's in it for my family or for my race and start thinking how it will help society as a whole, the sooner we'll have a Christian approach to the subject. Some people are so possessed with their own fulfillment that they pursue it at the expense of society. But no man is an island unto himself... we are all part of one great continent. What diminishes you diminishes me... what diminishes the black man diminishes the whole, and vice versa. The continent is no stronger than its weakest area. The world is no stronger than its weakest race. I feel that the church must work conscientiously toward the healing of the weaker parts of society and of Christ's holy body. Let's be whole-minded. You see, the nature of a man must be changed-whether he is black or white. In Christ there is neither black nor white, Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, male nor female. All are one. And the sooner we are willing to acknowledge this and approach Christianity from this standpoint, the sooner the world will become one. This is what Christ prayed for. He said, "Father, sanctify them with Thy truth, Thy word is truth... I want them to be one even as we are one." (John 17:17,20)

The word of God, coupled with the Spirit of God, will unite people. God is Spirit, and if there is an aspect of spirituality that God is, the Bible says that God is love. These two attributes of God will unite people. The word of God and the love of God, working together.