

Thoughts on Godism and the Future

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Why this topic?

Due to some conversations, some assertions maintaining that the Unification Principle[1] (and Godism in general) is hard to read or even relate to anymore - especially for young adults[2] - plus one nation's dissolution of its Holy Community and its effect on the blessed children there, thoughts arise concerning how True Parents' teachings will affect the future. Acknowledging the wide variances of perspectives within a family - let alone in a global community - there's at least one important factor to consider. This article focuses narrowly on just that one factor.

The transformative power of God's Word

One thing that human history documents is that there's a spiritual thirst within many peoples that seeks a better way of life. God has responded to that thirst by providing special individuals who receive revelations of God's Word and who then devote their lives to sharing these revelations. Even if those people are not flawless, and when they eventually die, the teaching can often live on and can transform the behavior of at least some segment of humanity for hundreds and even thousands of years, across the globe. Those expressions of God's Word can even become the basis for the worldviews and actual governments of societies.

For the purpose of this article, we will refer to the sum of True Parents' teachings using a term that Father Moon coined, which can express the scope of all his teachings. That term is "Godism". And regarding it, this is the scholarly assessment of Dr. Sebastian Matczak[3], who was the first professor whom Father Moon selected to teach philosophy at the founding of the Unification Theological Seminary:

"... Unification philosophy is ... a mixture of Taoism and Confucianism. Taoist influence is seen in the conception of the constitution of being (ontology); Confucianism in the concept of ethics. Both these influences are mingled with Christian ideas, brought to Korea by missionaries. As the result, the Unification philosophy somewhat resembles Platonism and to some extent Aristotelianism. ... All these influences, however, are united in one organic philosophical body, bringing new valuable elements to Western philosophy, and possibly offering solutions to the problems which have tortured Christian theology for centuries. ... The novelty of the Unification philosophy and its application to Christian teaching lies first of all in its new ontology resulting from the concept of man. For Unificationists, man becomes the starting point for our knowledge of the whole of reality. He becomes also a creature of supreme dignity, second only to God, and the relative center of the whole of reality, God being its absolute center. The Unification understanding of man, therefore, leads to understanding of the whole or reality, even of God, and therefore of all Christian teaching." - Unificationism, a New Philosophy and Worldview, pp. 39-40

Though you may not agree with every point of Dr. Matczak's assessment, the points he made about the significance of Father Moon's teaching in the history of thought are not to be taken lightly. In short, Godism is not just another inspired perspective that God has given to the world; to this scholar who has devoted himself to the study of world theology and thought, it is rather singular in importance. He saw that it was capable of changing humanity's understanding of itself and of God. Whenever that has happened in history and souls were illuminated, societies could be influenced to strive for something higher. There are many records of a "golden age" in the world's societies. One remarkable example is the [Axial Age](#) that Karl Jaspers identified as a worldwide occurrence between 800 and 200 BCE.

Spiritual nurture

The next connected idea about Godism and the future is an old familiar one that goes back to the Principle of Creation in the Exposition of the Divine Principle. It's one that elder members have heard hundreds of times and that young members might recall hearing in weekend or summer workshops.

Briefly put, the idea explains that our inner health and well-being is nurtured by elements of a yang type and elements of a yin type. The one passage that mentions this states:

"The spirit grows through give and take action between two types of nourishment: life elements of a yang type that come from God, and vitality elements of a yin type that come from the physical self." - Exposition of the Divine Principle, p. 48 (or online [here](#); use the browser's search function to locate "life elements")

There's no further explanation of the life element in the book, but there is a little more in the Outline of

the Principle, Level 4 book. There, it states simply:

"The Life Element from God is the basic element that develops Heart within a person and develops him as a being of truth." - Outline of the Principle, Level 4, p.34 (online [here](#); use the browser's search function to locate "life elements")

Thankfully, a more definitive explanation of the life element came from Rev. Ken Sudo during the 120-day trainings that Father Moon created for America back in the mid-1970s. The exact passage is this one:

"... in order for the spirit man to grow, it ... needs positive and negative nutriments. The positive nutriments are God's truth and love. ... When this life element is given from the spirit body to the physical body, the physical body will work very hard and do good deeds. These good deeds will be given to the spiritual body as objective nourishment - this is called the vitality element. ... (it is the negative element." - [Principle of Creation, Part 2](#) (online [here](#); use the browser's search function to locate "life element")

So the nature and content of the life element is "God's truth and love." And the most direct expression we have of this divine truth - and the love within it - is in the Words that God has given to us in our scriptures. And so it has been the faithful practice of religious people throughout history to study with filial devotion the scriptures they were given.

This is the reasoning behind Father Moon's insistence on our study of the Unification Principle. And since the book concludes with events up to its publication in the 1960s, Mother Moon completed Father Moon's plan to publish the three Holy Books, which contain much new material that True Parents taught in the 50 or so years after the Exposition of the Divine Principle was published. As the Introduction to the Divine Principle states:

"The words proclaimed on these pages are only a portion of this truth. This volume is merely a compilation of what his disciples have hitherto heard and seen. We believe and hope that when the time is ripe, more profound portions of the truth will be published." - Exposition of the Divine Principle, p. 12

Consistent with those words written in the late 1960s, Mother Moon said in 2013:

"It is good to educate ambassadors for peace. We need to give them Divine Principle education. Actually, teaching Divine Principle is not enough now. We need to teach them Father's words. They need to do Hoon Dok. Don't you think so? Divine Principle was revealed in the 1960's. After that, we need to study Father's words, don't we?"

We need to publish (Cham Bumo Gyeong: Teaching of True Parents), and together with Peace Messages and Cheon Seong Gyeong, we need to educate them." - Message on Parents' Day, May 8, 2013

Essences of a movement's long-term power

We are now to the next point: One key observation about a spiritual movement is that its driving power - its fire - directly reflects the strength of its members' connection with its founder's heart. Thorough grasp of a movement's source documents is very important, but for many members, that by itself may not bring passion and fervent devotion to a faith. And realistically, regular in-depth scripture study isn't something many people do, especially when the movement's writings are voluminous. Many good people are busy grappling with life's challenges and so it's common practice for them to rely on learning largely from the sermons of their pastors, who do the deep studying and interpretation for them. Experience or research suggests that's an interrelationship that's common to congregations of many faiths. In the histories of many faiths, there's frequently been a core of specially focused people. In Judaism, there was the tribe of Levi^[4], who was specially anointed and entrusted to maintain the faith. In Christianity, the 12 apostles weren't deep students of the scripture; it wasn't they who wrote the gospels. Other, later followers wrote them, and still later were monks who created the illuminated manuscripts, as well as a few Church Fathers^[5] who were scholars. So, as long as at least some part of the community studies, values and is committed to the preservation and transmission of its scriptures, that community can survive the trials of the ages.

And most importantly, if one meets fervent believers - sincerely religious Christians, for example - one trait is evident: they love The Lord. Their hearts have somehow been touched, moved and broken open to feel that Jesus took on the weight of their sins - indeed of all humanity's sins - so that they would not be condemned but instead could be reconciled to God and have a miraculously graceful second chance to do their best in this life. Such people are fully aware of their profound indebtedness to this supreme love of Someone who was fully, unreservedly willing to endure the most public humiliation and horrific torture, and then to "lay down his life for his friends" ([John 15:13](#)). It's that kind of "fire" that's kept the purest forms of Christianity strong for over two millennia, even despite the repeated missteps and serious mistakes that mar its history.

An important way this pure fire is kindled occurs when a sincere and open-minded seeker devotes him- or

herself to studying the words of Jesus in the Bible record with a prayerful heart. The words aren't read speedily in order to cover a large number of pages or finish quickly. And if the language is a bit archaic - as in the King James version, for example - the content isn't dismissed as too difficult to read or understand. Instead, the earnest searcher persists, in faith and in trust; he or she patiently and earnestly reaches deeper to extract the meanings and the heart behind the words.

Judging from the Christian record, that condition of sincerity and effort has apparently helped bring about epiphanies and transformations for people the world over, for the past two millennia. And, given that track record, there's no indication that such a condition of sincere study and prayer will ever run out of transformative power.

How True Parents' heart will be known by future generations

Then, if that works for folks who've studied God's inspired Word in the Bible, and if that's one apparent way for them to connect to the heart of one Singularly Remarkable Young Man who lived on earth two thousand years before them, it stands to reason that sincere and earnest study of God's Word as given to True Parents could connect people of this and future centuries to Their hearts.

And if that happens on as widespread a level - just as it clearly had for Jesus - then it's reasonable to expect that the spiritual movement that True Parents initiated will continue into even the distant future. The fact that Jesus was killed so young, clearly hasn't dimmed the transformative effect of God's Word and God's Love through him. That's the evident power of God's Word: it is demonstrably undiminished by time, especially as long as there are those who love, study, and preserve it faithfully for future generations to discover and also cherish. One only needs to look at the [World Scripture: A Comparative Anthology](#) or the three volumes of World Religions[6].

Conclusion

This article began with the question of how True Parents' teachings will affect the future. And it ended with the critical role that a movement's scriptures plays in connecting the heart of its members to the heart of its founders. Also, the article was the outcome of many months of thought about comments and opinions that seemed to diminish the value of scripture study. While admitting the difficulties of language and also the sheer volume of available material, this article suggests that the power of God's Word can touch the souls of sincere searchers for centuries and even millennia after the earthly lives of a movement's founders have ended.

When True Parents created the ideas of Home Church, Tribal Messiahship, Hook Dok Hae, or when they published the Holy Books, they clearly didn't want only seminarians and pastors to have direct access to the Word. Rather, they hoped that all their children - including their descendants and even distant generations - would have direct access to God's life-giving love and truth therein.

It's the nature of the human soul to search for deeper understanding. So, even though that need comes to different people at different times, the historical record shows that it persists through the ages, as does the transformative power of God's Word.

[1]Dr. Lee explained that Tongil Wolli is most accurately translated as the Unification Principle.

[2]See the thought-provoking [Patient Love is More Important Than Doctrine](#).

[3]Dr. Matczak was a Polish Jesuit who taught philosophy at St. John's University in New York He authored [many philosophical treatises](#).

[4] Learn about the identity and special function of the Levites - [online here](#).

[5] These historical individuals are the intellectual leaders of the church; [learn about them - here](#).

[6] This is a remarkable trilogy written by Dr. Young Oon Kim, who was the very first missionary whom Father Moon sent to the U.S. She could speak, think and write in fluent English and she made the very first English translations of the Divine Principle. When UTS was founded in Barrytown, she was its professor of Theology and also Comparative Religions. Her love of the voice of God in great scriptures of the world empowered her to train seminarians to dialog with sincere understanding and respect with people of many different faiths. Her World Religions trilogy is available [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).