



THE UNITY OF CULTURES AND ABSOLUTE VALUES:
A UNIFICATIONIST APPROACH

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The prospect for the unification of cultures is quite connected with the question of absolute values, which has been the enduring theme of these ICUS meetings. Absolute values are, by definition, values that are universal and unchanging. They apply to everyone in all times and places, regardless of the circumstances. Ethicists, particularly of the deontological school, have put forth various formulations of universal moral principles, such as Kant's famous dictum to treat persons as ends and not as means. Nevertheless, the values instantiated in human societies have remained relative. As a result, social conflict, which are rooted in differing standards of value, have plagued humankind. *Divine Principle* puts it this way:

Any standard of goodness set during the course of the providence of restoration is not absolute but relative. In any particular period of history, obedient compliance with the authoritative doctrines is considered good while actions in opposition to them are considered evil. But the change of the era ushers in new prevailing authorities and doctrines, with new goals and new standards of good and evil. For the adherents of any religious tradition or school of thought, complying with the precepts of its doctrine or philosophy is good, while opposing them is evil. But whenever a doctrine or philosophy undergoes a change, its goals and standards of good and evil will also change. Similarly, if an adherent converts to a different religion or school of thought, then naturally his goals and standard of good and evil will change accordingly. Conflicts and revolutions constantly plague human society mainly because of the continual changes in the standards of good and evil, as people seek to fulfill varying purposes.¹

The values of a society do not spring forth fully formed out of the untrammelled heart, as if it were a tabula rasa. They are formed by the authority of tradition, upheld by the teaching of religion, and articulated by a society's religious and ideological leadership. Religions and philosophies have claimed to set forth absolute values and have made claims to be binding universally on all humankind. Christianity and Islam, for example, each attempted to establish a universal realm: the *oecumene* or the *'ummah*. Nevertheless, these attempts at universal culture could only hold sway over a limited territory and for a limited time. Not only could these universal religions not convince all the world's peoples of the rightness of their cause, but internally each culture experienced value conflicts and changes. America today is seeking to establish liberal democracy world-wide, but this project is also floundering. Given the diversity and relativity of religions and philosophical schools, we can hardly expect the values of human society to be anything but relative.

Nevertheless, *Divine Principle* is optimistic that the world will one day adopt a unified value system. In particular, it views the present days, when the Lord of the Second Advent appears, as initiating the transition to a world in which the standards of good and evil will be universal and hence absolute.

¹ *Divine Principle*, Fall 4.3. (unpublished translation).

Goodness can remain only relative as long as the course of restoration continues. But once the sovereignty of Satan is expelled from the earth, then God, the eternal and absolute Being transcendent of time and space, will establish His sovereignty and His truth. In that day, God's truth will be absolute, and hence the purpose which it pursues and the standard of goodness which it sets will both be absolute. This cosmic, all-encompassing ideal will be realized by the Lord of the Second Advent.

How will this be possible? How will the Lord of the Second Advent avoid merely becoming one more religious authority among many, whose values would only add to the cacophany of relative values in the present world? Although some might invoke the conventional paradigm of the conquering religion converting the masses, such methods have been attempted before by Christianity and Islam without success. Some believers might put aside such lessons from the past because they take it as a matter of faith that the Lord of the Second Advent will vanquish Satan and expunge the original sin from the human heart. But in fact, even a cursory examination of the activities promoted by Rev. Moon shows that his methods are not conventional.

The passage continues, providing us with a clue:

In truth, throughout the endless cycles of conflict and revolution in human history, people have been seeking the absolute goodness which their original mind desires. Conflicts and revolutions in fallen human society will inevitably continue, as people pursue this absolute goal, until the final accomplishment of the world of goodness.

Here is expressed a fundamental confidence in human nature to seek after absolute goodness. People of every religion and culture have the desire to go beyond the conventional wisdom, which has so patently failed to realize a good world. Rev. Moon provides opportunities for people of every religion and culture to participate in activities which transcend their culture; he is not in the business of judging and condemning their existing religions and cultures. He affirms that there is a natural connection between the values of existing religions and cultures and the absolute values which he seeks to establish.

For more than twenty years, Rev. Moon has supported ecumenical activities such as IRFWP, Religious Youth Service and Interdenominational Conferences for Clergy; interdisciplinary activities such as ICUS and PWPA; and international exchanges such as the International Leadership Seminars between with the former communist world and the Interreligious Leadership Seminars for people from Islamic, Jewish, and other faiths. He has promoted through the Women's Federation for World Peace sisterhood ceremonies between Japan and Korea and Japan and America which have created bonds of friendship between more than one-half million women of these countries, former enemies. None of these activities have as their purpose the conversion to the faith of Unification. Yet they are promoted at considerable expense. At the very least, these activities must be recognized as integral to the project of the unification of cultures and the establishment of an absolute view of values.

Furthermore, there is the Blessing. With invitations going out to people of all religions, the Blessing is no longer to be seen as primarily a sacrament of the Unification Church. Rather, it has become a dramatic demonstration of the unity of the human family.

Therefore, we need a more careful investigation of the Unificationist project to unify the cultures, races, and religions of the world. We shall begin with the writings of Dr. Sang Hun Lee, whose pronouncements on the question of absolute vs. relative values are the most extensive in the Unificationist literature. His exposition of absolute values in the context of Unification

Thought's theory of Axiology provide valuable insights into the theoretical issues involved in the unification of cultures.

1. Three Grounds for Universal Values

Dr. Lee begins by recognizing the relativity of existing values and calls for the establishment of an absolute standard of value. By 'absolute' he means "a standard of value judgments common to all people and transcending differences in culture, thought, nationality."¹ That is, it should transcend the local differences in culture and law which currently divide people, such as the Hindu prohibition of eating beef versus the Islamic prohibition of pork, without denying their individual values to the communities concerned. To do this, Lee asserts that the absolute standard of value must be grounded in the absolute Being, God. Lee argues on analogy with creation, whose multiplicity masks a commonality and regularity grounded in its one divine Source. The same God gave rise to the multiplicity of religions, hence they must have commonalities which can be the basis for recognizing the universal values within them.

The things in the universe exist in innumerable different ways, but they move in a specific order, and there are commonalities among them. The reason is that all things in the universe were created in resemblance to [the one] causal being, or God. Likewise, though there are many religions, cultures, philosophies, and peoples—all of them different from one another—if there is one fundamental being that gave rise to all of them, then there must be commonalities among them originating from that causal being, or fundamental source.²

Dr. Lee goes on to examine the values in each of the traditional religions and ideologies: Christianity, Islam, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Humanism. While appreciating the good points in each one, he observes that each has been vulnerable to challenge both without and within. Thus Marxists have mounted the serious challenge to Christians, asking why, given the endemic poverty, inequality, and racism of Christian society, they have not been able to put the values of the Sermon on the Mount into practice. Islam, though it preaches the unity of the faith through submission to the one God, is riven by sectarian and nationalistic conflicts. Humanism, despite its excellent ethics, is unable to provide the strong pillars for right conduct in the midst of contemporary decadence.

As these traditions fall prey to the vicissitudes of the modern world, people are searching for a new view of value which can overcome these weaknesses. Modernity poses a particular challenge to religious particularism, as we come to know the goodness and worth of people of other cultures who share our global village. How can a Christian, whose foundation of value is the saving work of Jesus Christ, cope with the evident goodness of a saintly Buddhist? Pluralism has become a fact of life. Yet reveling in pluralism is no answer either. The human intellect inevitably seeks for truth that is universal and absolute. I have argued in other contexts³ that the intellectual unity of the scientific worldview is one of its most attractive features, which puts the diverse and pluralistic phenomena of religion and culture at a severe disadvantage. The scientific

² Sung Han Lee, *Essentials of Unification Thought, the Head-wing Thought* (Tokyo: Unification Thought Institute, 1992), 141.

³ Andrew Wilson, "One Culture Centered Upon God," *Dialogue & Alliance* V/4 (Winter 1991-92), 110-20.

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materialist has argued to good effect that the very plurality of religions condemns their teachings to the status of mere opinions, which cannot stand on an equal footing with the 'truths' of science which are universal regardless of nation or culture.

Today, the smug confidence of materialism to universal validity has been shattered. The fall of Communism has demonstrated that a society founded on materialistic premises is not economically or socially viable. Many in the West are arguing that its social decay is likewise attributable to a secular worldview which has systematically discounted the value of society's moral and religious foundations. Thus, we live in a time of values confusion, when people are unsure which religious tradition or way of life they ought to follow. What is needed is a new view of value that is universal and yet gives due respect to the religious and philosophical traditions that have contributed to the attainment of the level of civilization which we now enjoy.

In his discussion of Axiology, Dr. Lee proposes three grounds for a new view of absolute, or universal, value. He identifies them as theological, philosophical, and historical. The theological ground for absolute values begins with recognition of the existence of God, the Absolute Reality, who is the source of all human religions and value systems. The philosophical ground is basically a natural law philosophy: the laws which describe the regularities and order of nature make no exception for human beings. As philosophers from the Stoics to the Confucian sages have recognized, there is a corresponding moral law which governs human life. The historical ground refers to both the view of history and the demonstration in history that the new view of value is correct. As a view of history, it claims that history is not aimless, but evinces a goal and purpose. Furthermore, just as the Marxist theory of historical materialism claimed, though falsely, to give accurate confirmation of dialectical materialism, the new view of value should in truth be demonstrable from history.

Let us examine how these three factors can be developed into a practical program for the unification of culture.

2. The Unity of Religious Truth

All the major religions and philosophies which have arisen since the axial period have been universal religions. That is, they do not base their values on a particular culture or tribal tradition, as did the older religions such as Judaism, Shinto or Hinduism. As universal religions, each has claimed to offer the one, absolute view of value to which all people on earth should adhere. Each claims that there is only one Reality, and that it has its exclusive revelation. Contemporary pluralism flies in the face of these claims. In attempting to cope with pluralism, religions have commonly offered two approaches, which may be called the Christian imperialistic view and the Vedantic view. In the former, one religion is absolute and the others are valued against that standard. Thus, in the Christian view, God only reveals Himself fully in Jesus Christ; while other religions are true only inasmuch as they, despite their ignorance, lead people to Christ. In the Vedantic view, the one Reality is found in all religions, and It can be found most clearly in the esoteric traditions which go beneath the dogmas and institution which define religions as different. In relativizing the exoteric differences among religions, even some that are central—the saving work of Christ, for example—this approach has the same effect of absolutizing one particular

religion, in this case Vedanta, and relativizing all others. Both these views have been thoroughly critiqued in the literature of interreligious discussion.

The proposal of a “Mosaic of life” put forward by Kane⁴ is a more fruitful approach towards ascertaining the universality of religious truth. As in a mosaic built up with many different pieces of colored glass and stones, the spiritual journey of humankind are a variety of ways of life through which people have sought to connect themselves with Absolute Reality. This Reality, the spiritual center, has been described in various ways. Yet each of them in its own unique way has made a valuable contribution to the spiritual ascent of humankind. It is like a mosaic, no particular color of stone is privileged and where the net effect is only seen when viewed as a whole. Likewise, the truths of the various religions, even those particular to only one faith, all contribute valuable insights into the Divine. This is a good description of the approach which I have taken in *World Scripture*.⁵

World Scripture is conceived precisely as a mosaic. Each religion’s scriptures are quoted as they apply to one hundred and fifty themes that concern human existence—the nature of God, the moral law, the ideals of life, the cause of evil, and the ethics of the good life. There is no attempt to imply some uniform synthesis where none exists, for unanimity among religions is not at issue. Any particular theme will not include quotations from all religions: for example, Buddhism has nothing on God as Creator. The overall effect of the book is to put forth a many-faceted mosaic, which displays for all to see the reality of God and the unity of religious truth. The mosaic preserves the particularity and uniqueness of religions while at the same time showing their coherence. If, however, we try to define that truth in a set of propositions, we risk losing the mosaic.

As was said, since the Axial period all religious teachings have claimed to be universal. This universality allows the mosaic to be affirmed, in various degrees, by all religions. The unity of God naturally promotes a view toward the unity of truth, and the convergence of truth is evidence for the unity of God. In fact, one chapter of *World Scripture* gathers passages from the scriptures of religions which affirm the divine origin of other faiths.

But doctrinal convergence by itself is incomplete. How do we really know that the various views of the Divine are really talking about the same Being? Here we can bring in another of Kane’s insights on the absolute values of religion. Religion is not only grounded in the divine; it conjoins the divine with the practice of the good life. All religions regard the divine as Good, and connect theology with ethics. And all religions propose universal ethical principles as the path to reach the Divine. Therefore, the convergence of ethical principles is additional evidence for the objective universality of religious truth.⁶ Hence we move to:

3. The Unity of Ethical Truth

World Scripture is at its most successful in demonstrating the unity of ethics in all religions. Ethical principles are universal by nature: they claim to be applicable to all people regardless of their beliefs. This is true for philosophical ethics, e.g. Pragmatism and

⁴ Robert Kane. *Through the Moral Maze*, (New York: Paragon House, 1994). 171.

⁵ Andrew Wilson. *World Scripture: A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts*, (New York: Paragon House, 1991).

⁶ Kane. 158-59.

Utilitarianism. It is equally true of the ethical principles enunciated by the world's religions. Thus we find versions of the Golden Rule taught by every religion.⁷ People have been striving for the higher Good in all cultures, hence their ethical insights bear much in common, being in some ways more universal than religious teachings conventional to a particular place or time.

The positing of universal moral principles will be a necessary component for absolute values. We must be able to overcome the relativism that would set culture above ethics. It is easy enough for relativists to trot out some example of a primitive society which sanctions some behavior that is conventionally immoral. This has been part and parcel of the materialist approach, in which values are culturally determined and therefore inferior to the truth of the scientist, who stands outside of culture. For example, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* writes of adultery:

The attitude towards adultery within different cultures varies widely. Whereas the traditional Senufo and Bambara of West Africa, for instance, tacitly condone the honor crime of killing the adulterous female spouse and her companion, among the Kaka in Cameroon a man may have sexual relations with the wives of certain relatives with impunity. Wife lending is part of Eskimo hospitality.⁸

Despite these voyeuristic anthropological curiosities, as soon as one moves to the higher cultures one finds that attitudes towards adultery are uniformly negative. This leads one to reflect on the fact that moral standards have been elevated over the course of human history due to the positive influence of religion.

Do universal ethical principles have an ontological ground? If they do not, why should they be universal? Because they have been decreed by God? Belief that ethical laws are what they are because of God's decree is limited to only a few religions, while belief in the absoluteness of ethical laws is widespread. Here Lee lifts up the notion of natural law as providing the ontological grounding for a universal ethics. The physical laws of the outer universe are paralleled by natural laws of the inner, moral universe. In the Abrahamic religions, this correspondence is guaranteed by virtue of the Word through which God created humankind and the natural world. In Buddhism and Confucianism, investigation of the Dharma or Tao by which the world operates is foundational for understanding the human condition.⁹ Science also is becoming aware of the consequences of violating moral laws which have measureable effects on human psychology, health and well-being. These consequences are not only determined by social and educational factors, but may stem from the genetic constitution of the human organism. The ontological basis of ethics

The Conscience is the ethical organ. It is human being's inherent moral compass. Being in the recesses of our minds, it is in a position to know more clearly than anyone when we have been acting contrary to the good. The power of conscience has been a driving force in the development of religions and civilization.

However evil a person may be, the force of his conscience, which strives toward a good end, is always active within his inner self. This is true of all people of all ages and places. No one can quell the force of conscience, which is powerfully at work even without one's conscious awareness. The minute a person commits an evil act, he immediately feels pangs of conscience.

⁷ *World Scripture*, 114-15.

⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 15th edition, 1986, p. 111

⁹ *World Scripture*, 99-103.

If the function of conscience were absent in fallen man. God's providence of restoration would be impossible. How is the force of conscience generated?... The conscience can produce a force only when it forms a common base with some subject and engage in give and take action with it. The subject of our conscience is God.¹⁰

Yet the conscience operates only based on a person's opinion of what is good and what is evil. Because the standards of good and evil have varied depending on time and place, even conscientious people have come into conflict. Yet human beings are able to go beyond the limitations of culture-bound morality through the workings of the deepest part of the conscience, which Divine Principle calls the 'Original Mind.' The Original Mind is connected with God, and through its influence people can transcend conventional moral standards in their search for the higher good. In the modern world, our expanded awareness of our global responsibilities is spurring the conscience to seek after universal values despite the limitation of traditional religions.

Ethics can lead the way for religion. It provides an objective standard through which people of different religions and cultures can meet and compare their teachings. Universal standards are arising, for example the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Furthermore, historically, man's ethical sense has operated within religion as a basis for self-criticism and improvement: e.g. the Buddhist and Sikh rejection of caste and the Christian movements for racial justice. Ethical praxis grounds religion in reality and can be a force for reform.

But ethics by itself is too shallow, to be a pillar for unity by itself. This is because, as was mentioned, the conscience is always grounded in a particular worldview. Hence ethical unity needs to be supported and strengthened by religious and ideological unity.

4. History: Roots and Goals

The historical ground for universal values begins with the question of the meaning of history. Our search for the meaning of history begins with its role as a context for the unification of cultures. If the end of history is cultural unification and the establishment of a world of absolute values, then the *telos* of history can be recognized. For Lee, the goal of history is inherent from the beginning of humankind, like the plan of life inherent in the seed:

In living beings, there is an idea already inherent within a seed or an egg, imprinted in the genetic structure: the seed or egg grows according to that idea. Likewise, in human history, there was an ideal at the outset, and history has been developing toward that ideal. That is to say, at the starting point of history, there was a goal to which history was to develop. That was the ideal of a nation, the founding ideal of a country recorded in mythology and other forms, and the ideal of humankind recorded in holy scriptures of religions.... God, by making use of symbols and figures in mythology and in scriptures, has presented the image of the ideal world as envisioned in the original ideal of creation, the ideal world that was lost and should be restored in human history. The ideal pursued by humankind is the world of goodness, peace and happiness. It is the world that exists according to the Way of Heaven.¹¹

In the Divine Principle, the goal of history is grounded in the theology of creation. Adam and Eve, the first human ancestors, were God's good creation who fell and plunged humanity into

¹⁰ *Divine Principle*, Creation 2.

¹¹ Lcc. 156-57.

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a primitive state, out of which they have been climbing through a long, painful course of restoration. However, it gives other reasons to affirm that history has a goal. One is to recognize humankind's deep longing for the ideal as a driving force of history; it is expressed in the continuing struggle for freedom, equality, and the good life, as well as in various messianic and utopian movements. Another way is to find meaning in history through its two poles: our backgrounds as separate communities and peoples with deep group loyalties and sense of place, and our striving for universality in the "global village."

All the major cultures and religions of the world put forward visions of world peace and unity. Jews, Christians and Muslims hope for a Kingdom of God. The Chinese look to a restoration of the legendary age of "Great Unity" where simplicity and heartfelt love will replace the scheming of ambitious rulers. Marxism and other secular ideologies of progress also put forward their visions of secular utopia. Are these hopes reconcilable? Certainly they are all expressions of humanity's deepest longings. Are they possible, or only empty dreams? The question of whether human beings are capable of overcoming the condition of inveterate evil is a theological issue beyond the scope of this discussion. There are thinkers in each religion and ideology who have given plausible accounts of what must change in human society and in the human heart for such a society to be realized.

Yet perhaps the more important question is whether history is necessarily destined to reach such a goal. Given the power which modern science has bestowed upon man to literally alter the face of our planet, we are forced to answer in the affirmative. As long as nations, religions and races continue to follow the ways of violence to settle their grievances, it will only be a matter of time before an armed conflict turns nuclear. Even though the end of communism and the East-West conflict has given the world a breathing-space, there are other unresolved conflicts on the horizon. For example, tensions between Christianity and Islam have grown to the point where the NATO countries are reportedly developing an anti-missile defense system aimed at countering an anticipated attack from North Africa. This could mushroom into a global conflict as terrible as anything which we have witnessed in the 20th century. Unless the warring tribes of humankind can join together and establish world peace, the world will inevitably end in self-destruction.

As long as people put their self-interest or the interest of their community over the purpose of the whole, there will be no way to prevent new wars from breaking out. Neither will there be the will to make the concerted efforts required to prevent future environmental disasters. Consequently, the destiny of the human race is either to join in a global village or perish in self-destruction. The forces of global integration cannot be turned back. The solutions to human problems must encompass the entire world.

At the same time, no program of historical unification can succeed unless it pays due regard to rootedness, heritage, and culture. These give meaning and a sense of identity to human life. Where the goal of history is conceived in such universalistic terms that all rootedness and group identities are ignored, it has proved to be unworkable. The secular Marxist utopia failed in part because it suppressed people's spiritual roots. With the downfall of communism, these long-repressed roots have re-emerged with a vengeance in places like Bosnia. On the other hand, Jewish messianism can be critiqued as a tribalistic vision which only engenders hostility from other, less favored groups.

The model of the world as a cultural and religious mosaic suggests a way of reconciling particularity and universalism. The former is appreciated, yet it must be subordinated to the latter. Without particularity and cultural roots, the stones and tiles making up the mosaic would lose their beauty. Yet unless they contribute to the universal good, there would be no overall picture and the mosaic would not be a work of art. In *Divine Principle*, the model of the family suggests something similar: variety among the siblings adds beauty and excitement to the family, yet unity with the parents is above all. Without a universal center that harmonizes and focuses the diverse peoples, society cannot hold together against the centripetal forces of group loyalty.

Divine Principle takes great pains to reify and deal with the rootedness of the human condition. Indeed, the human being is defined as an historical being who bears in his person the inheritance of his ancestors. His mentality and inclinations are molded by the heritage of his family, tribe, nation, race, and culture. Thus, he cannot become a peaceful soul and contribute to a peaceful world by entering a new world and escaping his past; he inevitably brings the past with him.

Unificationism identifies the source of group friction in historical resentments over past wrongs. Unless restitution is made for the wrongs of the past, no wholeness can be achieved in the present. For this reason, the Unification movement has conducted numerous programs to make restitution for historical wrongs. For example, the history of Korean-Japanese relations has been bitter. From centuries of deprivations of Japanese pirates to the brutal forty-year occupation by Japanese army during the first half of this century, Koreans have built up a large store of hatred against Japan. On Japan's part, there is an abiding sense of racial superiority over the Koreans, whom they have treated as slaves and menial laborers. But in the past two years, over 300,000 Japanese and Korean women have attended sisterhood ceremonies and have been "matched" as sisters through a series of conferences sponsored by the Women's Federation for World Peace [WFWP]. Both the Korean and Japanese women who participated in these events had to overcome their own historical animosities, as well as deal with aspersions from relatives and neighbors.

Likewise, the long-standing problems in Jewish-Christian and Christian-Muslim relations will not be solved by theology or by political agreements. There must be programs which face up to their historical resentments and lead people on both sides to overcome them. The praxis of interreligious cooperation is displayed in such projects as the Religious Youth Service [RYS]. The participants in these activities gain the spiritual resources to transcend the parochial viewpoints of their communities and become future world leaders.

The Blessing is a potent symbol of global unity. In a joint ceremony attended by people of every race, religion and culture, the Blessing proclaims that all humankind are one great family. Furthermore, those who choose to join in an international or interracial marriage take on the joys and burdens of dealing with a partner who will carry his or her distinctive heritage. They will have to deal with their differences on the most intimate level. The children of such marriages will be in a position to embrace all races and cultures.

This insight and praxis distinguishes Unificationism from other universalistic and utopian movements, such as Communism or Baha'i, which conceive of a world built anew by people who put their particularistic pasts behind them. The Christian millennial vision likewise assumes that God will supernaturally elevate believers into God's Kingdom by virtue of their faith in Christ and

without regard to the animosities which they bring with them as Germans or Russians or Serbs or Black Americans. In contrast to these, Unificationism takes realistic account of particularity and rootedness as intrinsic to the human condition.

Particularity and rootedness will always remain. Human beings are by nature people who situate themselves in family, home, place, and culture. No program of unification can succeed unless it gives room for people to express their individuality and group identity. The Unification program of building world peace recognizes that unity and diversity are to exist together in the global village.

The underlying source of Unificationism's approach to unity stems from its philosophy of creation. As Rev. Moon always says at these conferences, the ground of absolute values is true love. The most fundamental goal of creation is the unfolding of Love rather than the expression of Reason. Reason and Law are means on the way to the realization of Love; they are not the goal itself. In a world founded on Reason as the ultimate measure of the good, uniformity of belief necessarily follows. Rational assent to a single expression of truth becomes the standard of goodness. But in a world grounded in divine love, variety and diversity is even desirable. Love even requires difference, as two different and distinct entities, lover and beloved, find stimulating joy in finding oneness through relationship. Likewise, in a society founded on love, individual differences add spice and interest to all its members. The definition of unification is grounded in love is modeled on the family, where each child brings his or her own distinctive talents to enrich the whole.

The final component to the Unification view of history is the question of the source of history's direction and forward movement. History is neither driven by impersonal forces, nor is historical progress inevitable. Human beings have responsibility for their own destiny, in the context of God's guiding providence. God's goal of history, the Kingdom of God on earth, will only be realized when human beings respond to his will in obedience, faith, and love. Whether the future will see the establishment of an ideal society or the flames of a global holocaust depends on whether people meet God's providential call.

Because God is at work in history, we can expect that conditions in contemporary society will develop in directions conducive to the birth of a new age. For example, the contemporary world is rife with confusion and turmoil. Young people are questioning the traditional religion; they recognize its hypocrisy and refuse to accept answers based only on faith and tradition. People are discarding the old ways; yet in the absence of any alternative many are sucked into the maelstrom of loose living and immorality that characterizes today's secular society. The chimeral attraction of communism has come and gone, leaving idealistic people even more at a loss. Religious and political sects proliferate as they search for some way forward. These phenomena do not occur in all ages. They are characteristic only of those transition points, chirotic moments, when a new age is in the process of being born.

At such times, a chosen person appears who is entrusted with responsibility for God's will. He will be gather those who are lost in confusion and proclaim to the world the way forward towards the goal of God's providence. At the end of the 20th century, the True Parents have appeared on earth to take responsibility to constitute the human family. Whether or not people of other religions accept all the particular teachings and messianic claims ascribed to the True Parents, they should be able to recognize their central role in the history of humankind as they

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begin the new millennium. They should be open to participate with the True Parents in building the new millennium. The True Parents have the position and responsibility to embrace all the races, religions, and nations of humankind and bring them into unification. This requires that they treat every religion and culture with respect and love, criticizing only where their limited understanding gets in the way of the development of their global outlook.

5. The Basis for Hope in an Enduring Ideal

Suppose we live to see the actual unfolding of this global millennial vision? What is to prevent it from decaying into another babble of warring states, as the Pax Romana and other universal civilizations have had their day and then declined? What is to keep the new universal worldview with its absolute values from becoming superceded at some future date by yet another religion, another set of values? How can we have confidence that this millennial society and its worldview will be absolute and remain for eternity?

To address this, we must turn to the most radical portion of the Divine Principle, which prophesies the end of religion. The purpose of religion, according to Divine Principle, is educational. God has furthered religions for the education of ignorant humankind, who had fallen away from God and had lost their original way to perfection. The goal of religion, therefore, is to attain perfection. In perfection, people would no longer need religion.

What will people be like, once they have been restored as those who realize the purpose of creation and have become perfect as Heavenly Father is perfect? Such people are fully attuned to God and experience God's Heart within their own bosom. They possess a divine nature and live their life in God, inseparable from Him. Moreover, they do not have original sin, and hence are not in need of redemption or a savior. They do not need to make effort at prayer or practice a faith, both of which are necessary for fallen people to seek God.¹²

When God is abiding in people's hearts, they will not need the doctrines, authorities, rituals, prayers, and customs that give religions their diversity. Everyone will be able to feel God's Heart in themselves, and within their families they will be naturally educated to love unselfishly and purely, in resemblance to God's love. Therefore, once they have accomplished their purpose, religions will naturally fade away. With the end of religion—and ideology—one of the chief causes of the conflict of values will have been eliminated.

Furthermore, people who live with God will naturally live together in a unified, harmonious world. The Principle regards the vertical connection to God as the basis for horizontal harmony among people. In the family it is natural to be sensitive to the sufferings and joys of other family members and to want to act on their behalf. But how can one have similar sensitivity to the sufferings and joys of strangers? In the ideal world, no one will be a stranger only by virtue to the Parenthood of God. Therefore, social relationships will be founded upon a vertical spiritual connection to one center. The ideal world can thus be compared to a single organism:

The Kingdom of Heaven is in the form of an individual who has achieved perfection of character. All the members of the human body are coordinated in horizontal relationships with each other

¹² *Divine Principle*, Messiah 1.1.

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and move as one in response to the vertical commands of the brain. Similarly, in this society people will form cooperative horizontal relationships with each other and live together in tune with the vertical directions emanating from God. No one will harm his neighbor, since if one person were to suffer pain, everyone in this society would experience the Heart of God who shares in that person's grief.¹³

In such a world, the question of one's religion or culture will be of no importance to its abiding harmony. As it is the same God who abides in the hearts of every person, the values which they share will be universal and self-evidently so. Upon such a foundation of social unity, we can expect an unparalleled burst of creativity as humankind works together to clean up the earth's environment and reach for the stars.

¹³ *Divine Principle*, Consummation 1.1

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