

EDUCATING MANKIND ON UNIFICATION THOUGHT; AN ANTIDOTE TO HUMAN DISUNITY AND DISHARMONY

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Overview

Perhaps the best way to understand the thesis of unity is first to know its antithesis, which is disunity.

The roots of the disunity of man, according to most Christian theologians, may be traced to the Garden of Eden. God created Adam and Eve, and **the two became one**. More importantly, **the two were one with God**, for they obeyed God without reservations.

This unity, however, was not to last for long. The devil, in the form of a serpent, succeeded in separating Adam and Eve from God, by inducing Eve to disobey God. The devil told her that by eating the prohibited fruit—they say it was apple — she would gain knowledge and be like God, and if she would be like God, she would disunite from God and be master of her own destiny. And Eve succumbed to the temptation. Thus, Adam and Eve broke away from God, and this break-away from God is the reason why peace has always eluded man.

The first to be disunited and disharmonized because of violence was the family of Adam and Eve itself. The first heinous crime — murder — was committed in their family when Cain killed his brother Abel. This murder broke the band of the first family of man, and since then man has never experienced the blessing of unity and harmony. Since then man has been inhuman to brotherman; for as Jacques Ellul, an authority on the psychology of violence, has pointed out. *“Once a man begins to use violence, he will never stop using violence because it is much easier and more practical than any other method.”*

History sustains the thesis of Jacques Ellul, that *violence begets violence*. Years after the First World War had ended, men everywhere asked, *“Will there be no more wars? Will there be long-lasting peace on earth?”*

But peace did not last for long. After a few decades, the Second World War broke out. The casualty in the First World War was approximately 13 million, while the death toll in the Second World War was more than 50 million.

Add to these grim figures another 100 million people who perished in the pogroms and purges from Stalin’s Gulag Archipelago to Pol Pot’s killing fields in Kampuchea.

The world has yet to discover the number of victims of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, Chechnya, and East Timor — and the less publicized wars in Africa.

Indeed, to this day, peace has remained as elusive as ever. Mankind remains divided unto itself. Conflicts and strifes continue to dominate the world scene. The Cold War between the East and the West, or between the Free World and the Communist Camp, may have imploded, not exploded. But its aftermath goes on unabated. Proxy wars are still being manipulated by the world powers, and sales of weapons of mass destruction to shadowy groups — and even to legitimate governments — are still on the rise.

In the Middle East, which is, ironically, the cradle of some of the world's major religions, violence seems to have replaced the religious tenets of love and peace. The first Gulf War broke out after Iraq had annexed Kuwait. A second war in Iraq ensued on the issue of the manufacture by that country of weapons of mass destruction. Afghanistan was equally attacked by the United States on the issue of terrorism. Israel also invaded Lebanon to quash anti-Israel terror.

The war on terrorism, indeed, is a war that knows no borders. It has spilled out to other Muslim countries suspected of harboring terrorists.

I want to add that the various religious, ethnic, and territorial differences, which date back to ages past, among the Middle East countries have apparently ended the age of reason in the region.

A similar scenario of racial hatred is being revived in the Far East, bordering on alleged Japanese atrocities and massacres of soldiers and civilians in Korea, Manchuria, and Taiwan during World War II.

My own country, the Philippines, is in the maelstrom of divisiveness and differences along ethnic, political and religious lines — and, as a consequence thereof, we, as a nation, have not progressed as much as our ASEAN neighbors have done.

An Ineffective United Nations Organization

These differences and age-old biases and prejudices are being exacerbated today by a frantic search for a still greater weapon of mass destruction, the **Atom-Bomb**, and the finger of suspicion is being pointed at North Korea and Iran. Not even the severest threats from the United Nations could dampen the search for destructive technology, which the West believes may be used for global terror. Here, we have the specter of a world-peace-keeping body proving to be a mere debating club, while the world of science is being used for sinister ends.

I am reminded, at this juncture, of a small English poem entitled “Atomic Courtesy,” which goes this way:

To smash the simple atom
All mankind was intent.

Now any day
The atom may
Return the compliment.

Indeed, modern man is fast becoming a Frankenstein!

A More Insidious War

Today, science has embarked on an unthinkable genetic and cellular manipulation affecting all of God's wondrous creations. The specter of cloning, as well as other forms of thorough control through brain implants, or computer chips, comprises a **more insidious war** not only against certain creeds and ideologies, but also against the world itself, with man now wanting to play the role of God.

The Disquieting Question

Today, peace-loving people everywhere ask this disquieting question: **Why do civilized men continue to resort to violence to settle their disputes?** This question suggests the need for a new and innovative approach that would help eliminate religious wars, ideological struggles, national conflicts, ethnic cleansings, and other moral evils.

Points to Consider

To be able to settle our disputes and differences, we have to take certain points into serious consideration, and act accordingly. These points are as follows:

1. If the origin of all religions is God, and if God is one and the same for all religions, then **it is time for us to return to the Godly precepts of love and harmony, of peace and unity; for the very purpose of humanity dictated by God is the universal peace and harmony among His creatures. It is time for men belonging to different religions to shun religious bigotry, fundamentalist extremism, rabid radicalism, and the like; for they are divisive, destructive, if not devilish.**
2. If God created all men and the world in love and gave man the power of logical thought and an innovative mind, which is also the power of Science, then **man must use Science to improve and enrich the world, not destroy it.**
3. If God is the greatest Teacher in the universe, then **men of every country, sect and opinion must strive for the unification of mankind through education.**
4. If God has taught that the quality of life — its depth, its purity, its fortitude, its firmness of spirit and gesture of soul — matters much more than its quantity, then **our schools ought to stress the building of character and the practice of righteousness, the development of**

that moral culture without which man is rudimentary, as well as that spiritual vision without which the intellect is the slave of greed and passion. Our schools ought to emphasize that what really matters in life is to live righteously and justly, and that, therefore, both educators and educands must build, year after year, upon the foundation of faith in God and seek the beauty of virtue — and then live in the light of it. In short, our schools should stress character education and values formation.

All these points are duly stressed by Unification Thought.

What Is Unification Thought?

Unification Thought is more than a concept for ivory-tower intellectuals and thinkers. **Unification Thought** is an active philosophy which seeks not only to promote dialogue and harmony among all religions, but also to actualize the unity of Religion and Science, as well as to concretize the union of humanism and materialism.

Unification Thought is the grounding philosophy of a movement founded by Rev. Dr. Sun Hyung Moon of Korea. The movement is known as the “Inter-religious and International Federation for World Peace” — or IIFWP for short. It defines Unification Thought as “*Godism*” or “*Head-wing Thought*,” which seeks to unify logically and scientifically the fact that God exists, and that God is the Creator of all beings in the universe, the unity of which Science has unveiled with overwhelming emphasis. Unquestionably, the universe is an inexhaustible wonder. Still, it is a wonder, not a contradiction, and we can never find its rhythm except in the truth of **the unity of all things in God.**

Unifying All Religions

What is the root of religious differences worldwide?

Time was when one man framed a dogma and declared it to be the eternal truth. Another man did the same thing, with a different dogma. Then the two began to hate each other with an unholy hatred, each seeking to impose his dogma upon the other — and that is the epitome of some of the blackest pages of history. These old religious sectarians substituted intolerance for charity, persecution for friendliness, and did not love God because they hated their neighbors.

And so it came to pass that sectarian religion has caused many wars, conflicts, and disputes throughout the world. The Inter-religious and International Federation for World Peace, therefore, has come forward, desirous as it is to change this undesirable condition. It wants to see a vast change of heart in the religious world, by **promoting exchange of thought and courtesy and a closer personal touch among the various religions of the world**, which have been estranged for so long. It **encourages the different religious sects to learn to unite upon the things most**

worthwhile and least open to debate. Its principle of Godism may well serve as a unifying factor and thereby promote world peace. This is possible because Godism or Unification Thought provides the much-needed perspective that is capable of **promoting unity and dialogue among the great religions of the world**, based on its view that God is the most fundamental of all truths; the first truth and the last; the sovereign, supreme, and ultimate Reality. Godism or Unification Thought teaches that **there is one God, who is Love; who conceived all men in love; and who requires of all men that they love one another, do justly, keep themselves unspotted by evil, and walk humbly before Him in whose hand they stand.** Godism or Unification Thought holds, moreover, that **we human beings are all members of one great family; that we are all akin — united in origin, duty and destiny; and that we ought to relieve the distressed, put the wanderer into his way, divide our bread with the hungry, and do other acts of charity for our fellowmen, which is but the way of doing good to ourselves, because the hurt of one man is the injury of all.**

These are teachings that are common to all major religions, They should, therefore, be stressed by all these religions, so that, eventually, universal peace and harmony will prevail among God's creatures. **Freedom of faith** must be respected by all religions; for just as **despotism** is the mother of anarchy, so **bigoted dogmatism** is a prolific source of skepticism.

All religious sects must advocate **freedom of thought** and the **liberty of faith**, as well as the **right of all men to stand erect, unfettered, and unafraid, equal before God and the law, each respecting the rights of his fellows.** All religious sects must **respect the right and duty of every soul to seek the light by which no man was ever injured, and that truth which makes man free.**

Godism or Unification Thought pleads not only for that **liberty of faith which permits a man to hold what seems to him true**, but also for **the liberty which faith gives to the soul**, emancipating it from the despotism of doubt and the fetters of fear. Hence, Godism or Unification Thought seeks to keep in the hearts of men a great and simple trust in the goodness of God, in the worth of life, and in the divinity of the human soul.

Yes, Godism or Unification Thought may well serve as a unifying factor among all religions and thereby promote universal peace and harmony.

Unifying the Sciences and Academic Disciplines

Unification Thought also unifies the sciences and academic disciplines because it presents universal principles which are scientifically and academically verifiable. It posits that if the attributes of the Ultimate Being are clarified, and if the method of the design and creation of the universe is sufficiently and logically and even academically clarified, the major teachings of all the religions and the sciences can harmoniously be integrated and unified.

Unification Thought even embraces the other socio-politico-economic sciences of differing right-wing, left-wing, and other ideological leanings, showing their strengths and weaknesses, citing the differences between socialism and the capitalism of the free-market economies, but always from a **culture of heart, love and understanding**, which is at the core of Godism. **Unification Thought offers a positive challenge to the sciences to undertake a common approach to Truth through writing their academic disciplines in the most integrated manner possible.**

Unification Through Education

The crux of Unification Thought lies in the unification of humanity through education. We educators must view our vocation, which is teaching, as a **moral vocation**, a vocation which involves not just the transfer of technical information, however sophisticated, but also the balanced development of the whole person. Thus we will produce not only highly skilled but also broadly educated, self-motivated graduates, who are conscious of their civic obligations, and are ethically responsible in their professional careers, as well as firm believers in the unity of religion and the sciences — a teaching that is at the root of Godism.

Education is Godism's chief instrument for **character development** and **values formation**. There is, therefore, need for good character education because good character consists of understanding, caring about and acting upon core ethical or moral values. Besides, good character influences every aspect of our lives — our attitudes; our response to others; our commitment to personal, family and community relationships. At the same time, good character traits will motivate us to strive for only what is best, what is good, what is true and what is beautiful; for what is excellent is enduring. Good character is in the heart, in the spirit or soul.

Values formation is also inseparable from good character. At no other period in the life of the world has values formation become more important than in the contemporary period. This is because the current or contemporary world continues to witness a decline of civility, mutual respect and tolerance for others. There is also, today, a pre-eminence of self-interest and individual preferences over the concern for the common good.

On the other hand, a strong values education, working under the inspiration of Godism or Unification Thought for the various religions and sciences will seep down into the values layers, or strata, of human societies everywhere, such as business and industry, political governance, culture and the arts, science and technology. Both character education and values formation contribute a great deal to the development of citizens of all ages and all countries who are capable and desirous of leading ethical and purposeful lives, as well as of contributing to a productive, just, caring and humane world.

A Personal Suggestion

Considering all that has been said about Godism or Unification Thought, I think it wise for us to join, and be active in, or at least collaborate with, the Inter-religious and International Federation for World Peace. We can help propagate its philosophy of Unification Thought, by helping our fellowmen, particularly those who come under the pale of our influence, realize that the purpose of humanity dictated by God is the universal peace and harmony among His creatures. We can help the Inter-religious and International Federation for World Peace attain its vision of the unity of religion and science, of humanism and materialism. If that vision is realized, then there will prevail throughout the world a culture of love; — a culture of the heart; — a culture of unity and peace among all men—a culture of unity of man with his Creator. Thus in this world we shall have a foregleam of the world to come; for throughout the earth, the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God will hold sway.

It is time that all of us put our hope in, as well as unite with, God, our Creator. To drive home this point, allow me to recount the story of an old, illiterate, colored woman who survived the great earthquake in California more than two years ago. The story goes this way:

When the earthquake hit the 8th point of the Richter scale, the woman said she felt helplessness, and she had the strange experience of nothing to hold on to, and fear seized her entire consciousness. She looked at solid structures and saw them all toppling down. She rushed out to the open space and saw the once firm earth heaving. She looked at the great forest trees and noticed they were rocking in a raging tumult. She was about to give up hope when her eyes saw the heaven and the stars. She then felt their steadfastness, and she felt the assuring presence of God. There in the midst of the movables was the immovable God, Master-builder of the Universe, Creator of all beings in the world.

Fellow educators and friends, although today we are buffeted by the crisis of violent terrorism and related evils, there is yet hope that our dream for world peace will be realized — perhaps through the wide propagation of Godism or Unification Thought. Let us therefore join, or at least work together with, the IIFWP in educating mankind on Godism or Unification Thought; for, I believe, it is an antidote to human disunity and disharmony.

Thank you, and good day. God always bless and love us all.***