

Elliott 1142

## UNIFICATIONISM IS NOT CHRISTIAN

A lecture delivered 19 May 78 at Sun Myung Moon's  
Unification Theological Seminary, Barrytown NY, by  
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New York Theological Seminary — 3 1/2 hours

lecture + discussion

*SISTERS AND BROTHERS*, on this occasion my personal preference for positive titles must be foregone, for the duty I feel, while dual, is first negative and then positive--first, to try to establish that Unificationism, the term I shall use for the doctrine of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, is not Christian; second, to affirm that I am a Christian, and what sort of Christian I am, or to put it in broader context, to witness to my existence, vision, and mission as a religious person.

In traditional terminology, the first aspect of my task this afternoon is "polemic," and I pray to learn from you as you respond to my attack; the second aspect, in which I am far more interested, is "apologetic," and I hope that you will find yourself more interested in drawing me out as the particular human being under and in God that I am, for thus I would be able to learn even more from you, and to leave you with the joy that you have lovingly enabled my witness, more than with the perplexity as to whether I have, in attacking what I consider a fraud in your religion, helped or hindered your spiritual pilgrimage as creatures and children of God.

When we come to the end of this lecture, and you begin to speak to me, you will find me practicing a habit I acquired a half century ago (I am now a few months older than 60), viz. whipping out 3x5s to program data and opinions for retrieval. This habit has produced such an enormous collection of 3x5s as that my wife says that, upon my death, she will warn the garbage company to provide, on the following day, an extra large pickup vehicle. To put it another way, in taking notes on you, I am up to no nefarious purpose, but am only trying to furnish my heart, through the neuromuscularity of my hand, with food for thought. In my aging, nothing fascinates me more, nor gives me more occasion to glorify God, than the fact that the more ORTHODOX, centered, grounded I become in God, the God of the Bible, the more OPEN I become to listening to others, other persons and other times and other faiths.

I, accordingly, a human being and a Christian, plead with you whom I call Unificationists, to hear in me both an enemy and a friend. I am an enemy of all closed orthodoxies, and every Unificationist I have had any depth conversation with I must so classify: I am a friend of that in any human being which is open to the "more light which God has to

break forth from his holy Word" [to quote my predecessor in the Congregational ministry, Pastor Robinson, in his last sermon to that portion of his flock that boarded the Mayflower in 1620].

'Twas not always so. For some years I was narrow, theological, dogmatically closed, open only as is the maw of a shark with the conviction that the digestive juices of my system, after its teeth, were adequate to process anything swimming in my vicinity or any vicinity I might prowl in. On the 9th of March, 1935, I had an *axis mundi* experience such as Sun Moon had ~~year~~ year later--a unification experience, in which the "world axis" [to use a term from my teacher, Mircea Eliade] was driven through my existence and my yearning and at the same moment through all nature and history, to reveal the heart of God. From that moment, I have never had any doubt as to whose I am, a reality in comparison with which the question who I am--other than the truth that I am a child-servant of God [*yeled YHWH*]--has always been, and is now, trivial.

Now, since that experience I have sought to make disciples; and, over the 43-year period, I can count as many disciples as Jesus could from the cross, viz. none. (The number Jesus has claimed since the empty tomb is another matter, but that's unfair competition.) No matter, for face to face with failure my agile brain has psyched itself into the conviction that the making of disciples to oneself is an ignoble business from which God has delivered me, as he has not managed to deliver Sun Moon. [NB: I call him only "Sun Moon," without his middle name, for three reasons: (1) efficiency, shortness; (2) to express disregard for him not as a person but as a religious leader; and (3) because his middle name I can't pronounce.] But God has used me to make some disciples for Jesus Christ; and my church, the United Church of Christ, employed me for nine years in its national Division of Evangelism: I'm not at all against converting folks, or even against sheep-stealing--it being easier to lead sheep than wolves, and easier to convert sheep from one shepherd to another than to convert wolves into sheep in the first place. (When some of my friends asked me if I would not, on this occasion, feel like a sheep among wolves, I replied "Impossible! They, too, are sheep, at least twice-born, conversion-experienced, some of them even conversion-prone. I go not to be eaten alive but to persuade and to learn.")

I come also to scratch an itch. I call Moon followers "Unificationists" except when you do evangelism on me; then, and only then, I call you "Moonies" to express my irritation. To all previous, and always indirect, invitations to teach here and lecture here, I have said no, as I have said also to all come-ons to participate in culture-front, Moon-oriented conferences; to the invitation to speak today I said yes on condition that my subject could be an *apologia pro negativa sua*, an explication of my negativity toward your religion. You will see, as the lecture develops, that negativity does not exhaust my response to your religion, which has features I regard as good and even noble; any more than disregard for him as a religious leader exhausts my response to the leader of your religion, who exhibits beneficent heroic qualities without which our humanity slumps lower than the beasts. As for you student converts to DP [which I shall use in referring to your distinctive holybook], my love and admiration for you is so great that I shall have to steel myself to maintain this lecture's attack on your religion, though my attack will be essentially on only one matter, viz. the fraudulent name your religion goes by.

Now that I am paying your religion indirect compliments, I have another to add, viz. that you are alive. Throughout my life, whenever I've felt the urge for a bit of excitement, I've kicked something live and lively. No point to kicking a corpse, for it can't respond; not much satisfaction in kicking a schmoo when you want dialectical reaction, for it's alive but not lively. But my experience of you Unificationists is that you are worth kicking, and I hope you can feel this as a compliment. Come to think of it, this reason for my presence here today doubles back on the reason previously stated: I am here because you kicked me first!

You'll enjoy, I think, a story that drives home the point that we human beings learn deeply and broadly when we encounter each other on consequential. What gets our attention get us: visions in our eyes, pictures in our heads, stories in our hearts and histories. This story is about Fritz Perls, the Big Daddy of the Human Potential Movement, whom I encountered in his lair at Big Sur California--I having been invited to teach there at Esalen Institute. I passed an open door, and there at the end of a rectangular table was this white-bearded old man, six disciples listening in awe on one side of the table and six more on the other. I was intrigued, wondered who he might be, entered, and sat down at the other end of the table, all eyes on the intruder, who said "Sir, I don't know who you are, but are you worthy of the awe of these your disciples?" He looked at, or rather through, me, and continued his discourse as if I'd said nothing--indeed, as if I hadn't entered the room--indeed, so it felt, as if I had never even existed. When he paused for breath, I pressed my luck. Said I, "Sir, my mama taught me to speak when spoken to." Said he, "Well, it's been a hellava long time since I quit being hung up on my mama, and you look old enough to have learned the freedom not to respond." The disciples burst into loud laughter, and I clapped and left, smiling and thanking God for the lesson he'd--i.e., both God and Fritz--had taught me. I may even practice the lesson this afternoon: you may say something to me and I only stare back at you. But that's not probable. If you knew my mama, you'd know that's not probable. (If you're wondering about the story's sequel, atheist Fritz and Christian Evangelical Willis became fast friends; my wife says I loved him more than any other man I've ever known; and he is the only man who ever, in separating from me, cried so hard that his tears flowed down both the front and the back of my shoulder.)

Another reason I'm here is that God has made me curious. Curious in the passive sense that I'm generally considered a bit weird; but also in the active sense: I am an explorer, nibbling like a bird at the grape of the world and sniffing out like a dog the open and secret places of the earth. And here I pay you another compliment: Unificationism is at least worth nibbles and sniffs. If we are, as we should be, open to the wonderful world and the even more wonderful God before, behind, and within it, we shall be ready and waiting for fresh inbreakings from a Love that is more than we are and that calls us to become more than we have been. Yes, more than ready and waiting: nibbling and sniffing. This word is especially for the most pea-brained, wooden-headed, close-minded dogmatist now within range of my voice (and there's just got to be one here who is the worst case): you, you that person, nibble and sniff at me and my word, and a *fortiori* so will all others who hear me now. So you will, here and now, all honor the God who made birds and dogs, and us.

Still another reason I'm here is fun: I enjoy play on the fields of the mind, as action and celebration of the intellectual love of God. The business we are about this afternoon is more profound, and more consequential, than just intellectuality, the give and take of mental dialectic on a re-

ligious base; but it is not less than our best effort to use a dimension of our existence that is equally God-given with all our other powers, and for this we should be grateful and joyful.

And again, as a human being and citizen, convinced that truth and truth-dealing are essential to the existence and welfare of a society and state, I am set against fraud, and obligated to nail it whether its propaganda takes economic, political, or religious shape.

Finally, as an ordained Christian leader in general, and a biblical theologian in particular, I am set for and obligated to the defense of the Christian Faith against major pollution and distortion--defense in the interest of (1) warning and instructing the faithful; (2) witnessing to the Faith in the world in such wise as that nonChristians have a clearer picture of Christian Faith and thus better protection against conversion to something claiming to be, and not being, Christian; and (3) challenging both the victimizers and the victims of movements and institutions claiming to be Christian but whose commitment is to a version and vision that subverts the Christian Faith and diverts the faithful from Christian praxis.

Now, before this old man of the sea trolls out some lines numbered for you to bite on and refer to, as you may desire after and note during the lecture, ~~who is it who is saying these things?~~ I thumbnail myself pertinently to the subject. I had a revelation from God the Easter before Easter 1936, which was the Easter when Sun Moon had a revelation from God; and, as in the case of Sun Moon, I have sought these subsequent years to live out that vision and vocation. Pursuant thereof, I took degrees in five schools, including two earned doctorates in religion; taught the biblical languages in three graduate schools; headed the religion and philosophy department in a college; pastored one church more than a decade; served on a national church staff almost a decade; and for almost a decade have been with New York Theological Seminary, Manhattan, in various capacities--now, as Dean of Exploratory Programs. I have been active in the Christian ecumenical movement, including presidencies, at various levels; and helped to form a number of ecumenical congregations. In the American state university that understandably is most polyglot in religion, viz. the U. of Hawaii, I have taught "The World's Great Religions" and "Religion and the Meaning of Existence." I have authored a few books and many articles--including, in the past nine years, more than 1,300 "thinksheets" [referred to here by "#"]. As a Christian, I describe myself as "orthodox open" and "evangelical radical." I grew up as what the world might call a privileged WASPM, a WASPM being a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant male. When the Great Depression hit, the intelligence and compassion God had given me reached out for some answer and solution beyond the content, religiously lukewarm capitalism of my parents; and I explored Communists cells, but gave them up because I noticed that while speaking of glory they were full of shit: the fuel they were burning was hate and vengeance--whereas the Gospels I had been reading daily and assiduously since I became 12 in 1930 spoke of something that struck me as morally superior and politically more realistic, viz. love and compassion, and at the same time offered me a Lord to center my life and in forgiveness grant me the grace of returning to the center when I became a wanderer. As a generalist scholar, over the past nine years I have taught 38 different courses; and am now involved in such diversity as courses for black and hispanic storefront ministers, seminars for corporate executives in "Midlife Exploration," a program for the disadvantaged who are seeking a college education majoring in ministry, and doctoral students at NYU.

# on Sun Moon: 37, 489, 656; on Mormonism: 701, 480, 1095, 1097, 4 see also 911, 1109, 1123, 4 2 early, 78 letters to Marianne Lewis.

Now for the troll lines:

1. First, I accuse Unificationism of adventitious and opportunistic

chameleonism--claiming to be a "new" religion in situations where "new" is a codeword for "true" or at least "hopeful"; and claiming to be "Christian" when evangelizing young people of Christian background and when picking the pockets of the public. While I can credit this lexical duplicity with Jacob-and-Odysseus-like cleverness, what am I to make of it in the mouths of those who claim to be offering "new truth"? Is this not self-contradiction, inasmuch as truth has the qualities of simplicity and vulnerability? In this matter, I honor the Jehovah's Witnesses, but the Moonies are a disgrace.

(a) Consider your religion as presenting itself as a new religion. Your four-p. flier reproducing the 30 June 77 WASH. POST ad has your president Neil Salonen saying that Korea is "the Holy Land of our faith, not unlike the way Jews honor Israel." Now, the eastern littoral of the Mediterranean is "Holy Land" for Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; and every land is holy land of some religion, so I can imagine Korea being holy land for some religion--but surely not Christianity! Indeed, *not* Christianity, but Unificationism. On the same flier, "Published by the UC" [NYC], DIVINE PRINCIPLE is described as providing "a new relationship with God"--mind you, not a fresh or renewed relationship, but a truly new one. Even more explicit is the claim that Unificationists "profess a new religion." And on the same flier hear this from Bo Hi Pak, Special Ass't. to Rev. SMMoon: "A number of Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant theologians have testified that in the UC phenomenon we are witnessing the birth of a genuine new religion. These men of faith are able to readily perceive that...the purpose of the UC is the spreading of Rev. Moon's spiritual insight and revelation." Need I adduce more of the same? Is it not shingly clear in DIVINE PRINCIPLE (hereafter just "DP"), in "Master Speaks," in other UC publications, and in the many hundreds of mimeopages purporting to be lectures given at this seminary (and now, after a lawyer obtained them and made me aware of them and I read them, are in the possession of Rev. Wm. O'Byrne [of whom more later])?

(b) So granted that UC is a new religion, should it use in its unofficial but common name the term "church," which is a Scottish corruption of the Greek term meaning "belonging to the Lord [Jesus]"--since what belongs to Jesus is a way of describing, maybe even defining, the Christian religion, and not a new religion? A more honest common name would be, would it not, UA ["Unification Association"], taking the socio-term from your official name, viz. "The Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity"? Further, why is the word "Christianity" in the official title? It cannot be, can it, that your association intends to unify only Christians? Indeed it cannot: as DP.11 reads, "the new truth must bring all mankind into a new world"; and DP.528f reads, "the Lord of the Second Advent...represents the second coming of the founder of every religion." Is, then, the name's inaccuracy accidental; I think not, but rather propagandistic and programmatic: clearly, the first target of Unificationism is Christians. An honest name, in my opinion, would represent not this proximate objective but that ultimate, global goal; e.g., "The Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of the World" or "of the World Religions" ("Holy Spirit" being particular to, but not distinctive of, biblical religion). What's in a name, you ask? The matter is of such moment to me that were it not for your official claim to be Christian, implicit in your official name, I would not have consented to be here today, for I would have nothing to attack. For I certainly do not attack you as a religion, and a new religion: quite the opposite. Yours is a viable religion, and those who would smear and persecute you are besmirching their souls and shaming the American heritage of freedom. As for deprogrammers, I cannot imagine a more dishonorable way of earning a living; and I have made the point publicly on numerous occasions, including on the panel Herb Richardson constituted on 5 Feb 77 at the UN Church Center. (You will, however,

indulge my pointing to the irony that the deprogrammers' served agency is the family, legal action against deprogramming further weakens the family vs. the state, and Unificationism's master paradigm is the family!) I thank God, however, that there were no deprogrammers in 1935, or I might have been seized when converted to evangelical Christianity, an embarrassment to my father. Theologically, my critique of deprogramming is that its orientation is not faith (biblical religion) but fear, not trust in God and one's own offspring but the anxiety of mastery against mystery, instead of letting life's meaning emerge in the dialog between mystery and mastery. I press the matter further: I'm against dirty tricks on both sides, and I hear the complaints of parents that their offspring have been psychomanipulated into conversion and virtual slavery by brainwashing techniques such as forced isolation for attentional control through dissonance deprivation, and a tight social-sanctional system through positive and negative stroking in a dehabituated locus. My U. of Chicago PhD was in motivation research, and I have a thin skin for anybody's dirty tricks. To press in yet another direction, the same nudges me to look with a weaned eye at economic and political attacks on your religion--at what seem to me smears by association. I am especially cold to charges of the U.S. House Internal Relations Committee's subcommittee on international organizations, for I was severely mauled by HUAC, the predecessor committee, during and immediately after the McCarthy Era. I am, however, in spite of Regent Ken. B. Clark's calling your seminary's accreditation-request rejection "discriminatory" [328 XnC 29Mar78], respectful of the action of both houses of the NYS legislature in urging rejection, for my impression of your association as slippery with truth accords with the 22 Feb 78 NYS Ed.Dept.'s NEWS release accusing the seminary of two misrepresentations, viz. unauthorized transcripts and "discrepancies between policies and practices of the Seminary as represented to the Department and its consultants and policies and practices actually in use at the Seminary.")

(c) Wm. L. O'Byrne, Jr., of whose NYU PhD Sponsoring Committee of three I was one, receives his degree this spring for his thesis entitled "A Comparative Study of the Hermeneutics of Sun Myung Moon and Contemporary Evangelicalism as Represented by James Oliver Buswell, Jr." Having studied your literature in extenso, though his exegesis is of DP, he concluded that it exists at three levels. \* Level One is "image" and is nonsectarian; Level Two is for "inquirers" and is Christian; Level Three is for "initiates" and is Unificationist, i.e. new-religion. While I agree, from my far less acquaintance with the material, with these categories, I find the new-religion pitch sometimes at Level One, as in the two-p. 24Sept76 NYT spread proclaiming that "Judaism was God's first central religion, and Christianity was the second. The Unification Church is the third, coming with the new revelation that will fulfill the final chapter of God's Providence. These central religions must unite in America and reach out to unite religions of the world... [Jews provided OT, Xns produced NT, and through UC] "God has given a new revelation, the Completed Testament...." This leads directly to my second assertion:

2. If there were otherwise a doubt as to whether Unificationism is a new religion distinct from all others in general and from Christianity in particular, that doubt would be removed by the status of DP as scripture for UC (yes, I'll use "UC" for short, though, as I've said, I don't like the term). DP is indeed "the Completed Testament," (O'Byrne.85-88) the "Third Testament." One could buttress this proposition either existentially, to show that Sun Moon's spiritualisticism controls his hermeneutics, or phenomenologically, to show how DP functions in your religious community as the primary control-literature (which is a sociological term for what traditionally in religion is called "sacred scripture"). In my book, SANCTIONS IN THE CONTROL LITER-

ATURE OF EARLY CHRISTIAN LEADERS, I have shown how leaders' writings for nurture and for community positive-and-negative definition (i.e., providing parameters of who we are and who we are not and who are not of us) tend to be elevated, through perpetual study and ritual repetition, into the status of "scripture," with all that term implies as to community self-consciousness and both etiological and existential celebration. I have held in my arms the Samaritan Pentateuch, said by the pitifully small band of surviving Israelites to be in the hand of Moses; but once Neviim (the Prophets as scripture) was added to Torah (Moses or the Pentateuch as scripture) [not to speak of the still later addition of Ketuvim (the Writings as scripture)], one must speak of a new religion, viz. Judaism, self-defined in the canonical council of Jamnia in AD90 over against Israelitism (or Samaritanism) with its too few scriptures and Christianity with its too many scriptures. Thinksheet #701 charts this dynamic as canon walls excluding writings a community's leaders believe incorporable into the community's scripture only at the too high price of threatening the purity, integrity, vitality, and even existence of the community. While the canonical process is normally long, and stranded with many other processes, this process of community negative self-definition, i.e. de-limiting the community, de-lineating the community's *limina*, limits or parameters, is optional only in the view of those who don't care if the community survives or not. While it may be overdone, this task is essential and is a commonplace fact of social psychology (on which see, e.g., Peter Berger's THE SACRED CANOPY). I stand here before you at this task, in this instance defining Unificationism out of Christianity, the religion I both profess and defend. As Judaism, if it were to survive as a religion, had to define the NT out, so Christianity has had to define out alien scriptures emergent, as it were, on Christian premises--such as Muhammed's QORAN, Joseph Smith's "gold plates" become THE BOOK OF MORMON and THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE, Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy's SCIENCE AND HEALTH WITH KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES, and now must do the same with Sun Moon's DIVINE PRINCIPLE [written by "we" (p.16), whoever the hell they are]. Now, deutero-graphy--rewriting, revising, even revisioning--is not inherently subversive of a community's heart: within Torah alone we can see an acceptable level of it, e.g. Gen.1 as revisionism of Gen.2f (the sexist version, which DP prefers), and the fifth book's name actually contains the term "deutero-," meaning another go-over of the same ground--in this case, of the four previous books. But the Qoran and DP are revisionisms so radical as to constitute cookie-cutter control over all other literature, including parent literature--such control as is natural and necessary to emergent new religions-in-community, in these cases Islam and Unificationism.

Now, my liberal spirit, and certainly my liberal friends, prefer to think inclusively, in the ambience of Edwin Markham's poem "They drew a circle that shut him out,/ Rebel, heretic, a thing to flout;/ But love and I had the wit to win:/ We drew a circle that took him in." Now, you may think I am enjoying myself up here, and I'm not about to deny that I am having some fun. But my heart would be more comfortable hugging you than it is attacking you; rather should I say attacking not you but your religion; rather still should I say attacking your religion's claim to be Christian (as well as transChristian). I have no problem here with Islam, for Mohammed's Arabic version of biblical religion does not claim to be biblical: I do have a problem with Unificationism, for Sun Moon's Sinic version of biblical religion does claim to be biblical, indeed to be the correct and culminating understanding of the sacred scriptures of my religion--whereas I, forty years a biblical scholar, know it to be an imperialistic cooptation (the smile on Sun Moon being the smile on the tiger after eating the young lady from Niger). A biblical concordance will reveal that the Bible has high concern against deception, against believers'

being "taken in" in a sense other than the expression's use in Markham's poem. "We [Moonies] drew a [Sinic] circle that took them [the Christians] in," i.e. deceived them (though of course what appears deception from the outside, from the inside can accurately be described as incorporation). Well, I for one am not about to be "taken in" by a slick Sinic who whisks away the Judaic foundation of my faith (as I don't need, but welcome, rabbis' pointing out) and replaces it with his idiosyncratic melange of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. (Again I must distinguish inner and outer: I am not judging Sun Moon's motives, for only God knows his heart. What feels to me on the outside to be slickness, doubtless feels on the inside to be articulation and the proper adaptations of love, including the proper preparation for world unification with a Sinic country as centering Holy Land--a particular Sinic country, viz. his native land. [Some parallel nativisms are Mormonism with America as Holy Land, and many of the post-WWII new religions of Japan with Nippon as Holy Land. All nativisms, with their attendant tribalism, are colorful, charming, dangerous, and--in light of Christian Faith--passé.]])

3. Why has a Third Testament, known as DP, emerged? Because at the heart of your religion is a third experience--as at the heart of Judaism is Moses' burning bush (Ex.3) and at the heart of Christianity is Jesus as resurrected, re-present Lord (the end of all the canonical Gospels). Under the biblical paradigm of the Kingdom of God, Jesus took up where Moses failed, then Sun Moon took up where Jesus failed. As Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus (Mt.17), so Jesus appeared (Easter, 1936) to Sun Moon, who alleges that Jesus ["SMM," UC pamphlet] gave him "the responsibility" of being the "someone on earth to take up" the "mission" of "establish"ing God's "Kingdom on Earth....Over the next nine years, he received the revelation which is now presented in the Divine Principle....received progressively through prayer, study of all religious scriptures, meditation, spiritual communication with such persons as Jesus, Moses and Buddha, and direct communication with God. At the end of this time, Rev. Moon had been led by God to solve a vast spiritual puzzle, and was now ready to bring this revelation to the world."

Now, Jews have a right to feel that Christians, reading the Jewish scriptures through the lens of the Jesus Event, "see" what without the Jesus Event would not be exegeteable from the Hebrew Bible; indeed, a right to feel that the Jesus Event controls Christian interpretation of the Old Testament, indeed makes the Hebrew Bible only the *Old* Testament--and that both Jews and Christians, along with any others who may wish to attend to Jewish scripture, have the duty, both moral and intellectual (not to say also spiritual), to let the Hebrew Bible speak for itself, on its own terms and out of the life and world through which the Hebrew Bible came to us (which is only a spelling out of the meaning of "exegesis," as opposed to the "eisegesis" of imposed meaning--the former word meaning "leading out" of the original meaning, and the latter "leading in" of some meaning an ignorant or deceitful person wants to impose in the interest of bogus use of the sanction of antiquity and of scripture authority). I have often taught courses with rabbis, using the Hebrew Bible, and have had many rabbis of all three flavors in my courses; and I differ not at all from Jewish scholars in hermeneutics, the art and science of the interpretation of literature [the subtitle of my first doctorate's thesis being A COMPREHENSIVE INTERPRETIVE METHODOLOGY]. But I go beyond Jewish interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, to "see" there what Jews do not, in that I believe the Jesus Event was and is action-revelation of God to the world. But my Christian interpretation must always be in dialog with Judaism, Jesus' own native faith, and with grammatico-historical hermeneutics.

What, now, is the picture with Unificationist use of the Bible? To begin with, the Moon Event has gobbled up the Jesus Event: the Bible, OT and NT, is seen through the lens of Sun Moon's special revelation and communications.



This going beyond the Jesus Event (1) is less continuous with the Jesus Event than the Jesus Event is with the Moses Event, (2) subverts, as the Jesus Event does not, the Moses Event, supplanting it with the chauvinism of a third nation, viz. Korea, and (3) neglects dialog with Jews, many of whose representatives see Unificationism as a brand new form of antisemitism.

Well, as the early Christians asked *What do you think of Jesus?* our question, in dealing with Sun Moon's confrontation-vocation-mission, must be *What do you think of Moon?* Is he in the position to Jesus that Jesus was to Jn. Baptist, who said "He must increase, and I must decrease"? I think not. While some liberal Jews see Christianity as the gentile-global form of Judaism, Jesus opening an essential tribalism on a just as essential globalism, most Jews feel that Christianity, in its very existence, violates the law of parsimony, for Judaism's vision and ethic need no supplementation by further revelations, and any claims of further revelation only threaten subversion and supplantation of Judaism. Well, *pari passu*, I as a Christian have both feelings about Unificationism: (1) its Sinic base may increase the naming of the name of Jesus in the Sinic world ["Sinic" being an adjective describing the cultures and civilization of China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia]; and (2) its claim of a special revelation from and going beyond Jesus violates the law of parsimony, for I see this going beyond as unnecessary, "Jesus Christ" being for me the adequate and final revelation of God, the title "Christ" to be given to no other. In relation to the Jews, who continue their messianic yearning as they read their Bible, I apply the principle of nonexhaustion: they wrote, and have the right and duty to interpret, Is.53 in relation to their own sufferings and hope, Jesus and my sufferings and hope being historically and thus communally continuous with theirs. But when at the heart of the Christian creeds I observe and celebrate KYRIOS IESOUS ("Jesus is Lord"), I for my part consider blasphemy any ancient, medieval, or modern effort to split that Lordship-Messiahhood for gnostic, neorevelational purposes. For me, of the Advents there is "one Lord" (Eph.4.5). To speak of another Lord with the Christ title, "the Lord of the Second Advent," is to preach a new religion more distant, if it does not have a Jewish base, from Christianity than Christianity is from Judaism. As for the preacher of such a religion, the founding preacher, how s/he is to be viewed from various perspectives I have diagrammed on #1105, "A Note on the Meaning of Heresy"--heretics of three levels to be distinguished from apostates, schismatics, interlopers, excommunicates, and founders (who lead some folks out of a religion to found another: a lead-out, in contrast to stay-ins, drop-outs, push-outs, and drop-ins).

What indeed do I think of Moon? I believe that he is a man with a vision in both senses of the word, viz. an authentic cosmizing (world-and-life centering, reality-ordering) experience which he is living out fulltilt and wholeheartedly. I say the same thing about many other leaders, e.g. Oglala Lakota shaman Black Elk, whose four life-stages were lived according to a fourfold vision God gave him when he was a child, and which he lived straight through life, including the last half-century when he was also a Christian catechist. For him, both Jesus and the White Buffalo Cow Woman would return, and I find that beautiful and profoundly true, as I would not if only the White Buffalo Cow Woman were to return, as--say--the Lady of the Second Advent. I suppose you are thinking up to me: I mean that I as a Christian theologian do not consider BLACK ELK SPEAKS and THE SACRED PIPE heresy, as I do DP. This closes me down to noncomplementary interpretations of Sun Moon's "revelation," interpretations pointless to lay out in this lecture, which requires only that I say that in my view and conviction, the source of Sun Moon's Easter 1936 experience and subsequent revelations-communications is not the God of the Bible, the God of

the Patriarchs and Moses and Jesus and Judaism and Christianity. Put more modestly and accurately, this is my opinion of his revelation as presented and therefore interpreted by him and those I take to be the "we" mentioned in DP, his earliest or first-generational disciples, who (as was true in the cases of Buddha and Jesus and other founders of religions) continue to shape the oral and written tradition.

4. Now, given the essential binocularity of your religion, i.e. a double merging, East/West and Bible/revelation-experience-of-Moon, one would expect, and one gets, a biblical interpretation which from outside that revelation-experience, highhanded, idiosyncratic, disdainful both of traditional Jewish and Christian hermeneutics and of the arts and sciences converging into modern semantics and hermeneutics (or at least of the product, viz. grammatico-historical exegesis)--in spite of DP's adulation and cooptation of science when convenient and corroborative. William O'Byrne's NYU/PhD thesis (a copy of which I have with me) this spring is properly outraged by the cavalier treatment of the Bible in DP--only 5.6% correlation, in interpretive assumptions and methods between DP and J.O. Buswell, an evangelical scholar of the same general historical Christian stream as the one Moon had Christian nurture in. *And results*

*looks eminent*

Now, it's not fair for scholars to carp at charismatics, or expect them to be careful and scholarly. But neither is it fair for charismatics to be disdainful of scholarship and disrespectful of <sup>the</sup> solid funding of fact and theory slowly acquired over generations and centuries. Contradictorily, DP makes much of the evolution of human knowledge in general; but in particular, at points where this tradition embarrasses Moon's so-called revelation and his use--I must say, abuse, too--of Scripture, this heritage is, where not disdained, neglected in favor of fundamentalistic proof-texting (catenas or strings of verses out of context) and of cookie-cutter control of the biblical materials through paradigmatic projection--both, combined with shocking nonsequiturs, sometimes more than a half dozen on a page--e.g., DP.66-73, *a fireworks display of paradigmatic logic (i.e., the conclusion drawn from the necessities of the human mind)*

This shabby eisegetic (in-reading) pretense at exegesis (out-reading of what is actually there) may not at all be conscious; indeed, the result is understood as the true meaning of Scripture once its door has been opened, for the first time, with the key, viz. Divine Principle. But I'm saddened by all the keys folks have come up with through the centuries--Neoplatonists, Rosicrucians, Eddyit's (Christian Science's textbook's title ending with the words KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES), I-Ching-ers (such as Jung Young Lee's PATTERNS OF INNER PROCESS [Citadel/76], a Sinic key paralleling Sun Moon's), and indeed anybody with any simplistic omniscient matrix that can be stated while one stands on one leg. I am saddened because history, humanity, the world suffers even more disunity from these panaceas than unity and hope. But two quick stories to illustrate the seductive temptation to "key" the hell out of everything, as both a spiritual yen and an intellectual game:

(1) Thirty-six years ago, in a debate with Carl Henry, then a seminary-faculty colleague of mine and later founder of CHRISTIANITY TODAY, I proposed that my opponent interpret for me a Shakespeare sonnet I put under his nose. Carl did such a beautiful job that he almost had the audience weeping and clapping. Then I said, "But Carl, that's not a Shakespeare sonnet; that's just a string of Shakespeare lines I put together to fool you--just as you string Bible verses together to fool the folks." Now, ol' Carl's biblical interpretation has matured with the decades, and he's become respectful of context. In contrast, it will not be possible for Moonist interpretation to mature, for a true and scholarly interpretation of the Bible would reveal that Moonist interpretation is not hermeneutics but cookie-cutter cooptation. (One of DP's side-benefits is that it's helping expose this syndrome.)

*conclusion drawn from the necessities of the human mind*

in other groups and traditions. (I hope no one here will pull the in-authentic defense that everybody's doing it and has always done it. This is untrue; and even if it were true, it would be a sin against light, the divine "principle" of truth, to join the smelly club.)

(2) The other story is from 4pm yesterday. One of the newsmagazines phoned to check out an upcoming coverstory on Jimmy's sister Ruth--Stapleton, that is. In the conversation, the editor suggested that I put in "two fat paragraphs" on storefront churches. Now, I said something like this: "Man, how the hell are you going to get from that beautiful Anglo woman on the cover all the way to the beautiful black and brown folks in the storefront churches?" The response went something like this: "O comeon, Willis, you can connect anything with anything." He was right. It's a skill I acquired when, as a fundamentalist between 1934 and 1940, I forced scripture into the two molds of inerrancy (which required skill at outwitting facts) and dispensationalism (which, by slotting scriptures as a postal clerk slots mail, deluded me into imagining that I understood history, humanity, nature, and deity--just as Sun Moon is deluded by the equally seductive paradigm of what he calls "divine principle," a curious melange, from the syncretistic Zeitgeist of 1950s Korea, stewing together Taoist metaphysics and psychology, Confucian ethics and sociology, and Christian vocables with an idiosyncratic dispensationalism cum a Pythagoras-like numerology). It takes one to know one; in Moon, I know myself of the past, and am more sad than angry. We never outgrow our need to interpret, at each new life-stage, all our past stages; that surely is one strand in the motivation that moved me to come here today. Please, then, hear this speech first as praise (Willis talking with God), then as soliloquy or meditation (Willis talking with Willis), and only last as dialog (Willis talking with you).

Buddhist asceticism

5. Now, so that you won't think me too harsh, let me speak of an overlap between Moon's paradigm or world-picture and mine. A philosophy is only a way of seeing the world: a religion is a way of seeing *and living in* the world. I should think that Moon is doing at least as good a job of living what he sees as I am of living what I see; and I know that the overlap in what is seen must be considerable, for it gives me binocular convergent strobizmus (i.e., I get cross-eyed looking at DP). He and I agree in the goal of joy for God and the whole creation. For the past 1/3rd c. it has been my morning custom to read the Bible, while kneeling, in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and one modern language; and this morning this was in the Hebrew passage, Is.12.5: "Sing to the LORD, for he has builded and decorated the world with beauty!" [I have slightly elaborated, from the use of the word in Modern Hebrew.] Another overlap is in eschatology. While I hold it to be odd, and even blasphemous, that "the Lord of the Second Advent" is not "this same Jesus" who was known in the flesh and is now known in the Spirit and will be known in the fullcome kingdom of God as Lord and Christ (Hebrews 13.8)--this discontinuity, in spite of the hermeneutically dubious continuity of the serpent in Gen.3 with the serpent in Rev.12 [DP.70]!--in 1943 a committee held itself up more than an hour, while I was absent from the oral-examination room, trying to decide whether I was too heretical to give me the doctorate, as some were convinced I was teaching a doctrine of a second Jesus, in saying that come the Parousia, unless we have been humble and open to God's fresh light, we might not recognize the Lord. The apocalyptic furnishings of the future are given us in the Bible for encouragement to endure, and rejoice, in the present--not to satisfy itching ears.

(Ordo:11)

יהוה  
יהוה  
יהוה  
יהוה

(Zomeru Yhv'h,  
Lhi na'uth  
(asah)

Which brings me to an epistemological point: DP is, as is all ideological interpretation of the Bible (in contrast to honorable hermeneutics), adventitously literal or symbolic from text to text. In addition to

~~committing~~  
~~and abetting~~ this perversity, again and again DP shows what I call re-  
 DP's  
 ificatory amnesia: a fact become a metaphor is absorbed into the metaphor,  
 which then, being forgotten as metaphor, is treated as fact ("reified")--  
 e.g., the expelling sin becomes, in Gen.3, adultery, then the adultery  
 with serpent-Satan is reified into spiritual adultery (in Eve's case:  
 physical in Adam's) [DP.77], the whole in the interest of the transcen-  
 dentalized sexuality of the four-position foundation.

6. I must draw to a close, though I feel--as doubtless you do not--that  
 I have hardly started. Just a few quick ~~matters~~, not necessarily less  
 important than I have made so far: ~~points~~

(1) One way to identify a gnosticism is to look for the salvific gnosis  
 as the religion's heart. Sometimes it's called a "power," other times  
 a "principle." In literature purporting to come from Moon (MASTER SPEAKS  
 and other talks) and from teachers at this seminary, I have counted 37  
 instances of the notion that DP is such master-control literature that  
 the Bible will gradually fade in Unificationism. I have no doubt of this,  
 for the center of your religion is a Divine Principle of which the bibli-  
 cal God, with necessary adjustments to the Principle, is an instance.  
 Now, what gets your attention gets you, and what holds your attention is  
 your god. Your god, the god of you Unificationists, is named as the title  
 of your Bible, DIVINE PRINCIPLE. So that's your thing, I'm not objecting;  
 I object only when you call it Christianity.

(2) I'm against religious frauds of either kind: those who claim to be  
 of a particular religion and aren't [like you], and those who claim their  
 thing is not religious when it is. The latter type I've had to deal with  
 in depth, as a witness in the federal trial that drove Transcendental  
 Meditation, a crypto-Hinduism, out of America's public schools (so that  
 the Maharishi's base is now Switzerland). For that, I had to master Hin-  
 duism as I have not had to master Sinism for this today. I've dabbled  
 in DP, but am more interested in many other things, so do not expect me  
 to behave as expert in your thing: you'd profit more by drawing me out on  
 my thing, and then making your own comparisons. But I am a little more  
 advanced toward the adept stage of Moonism than my friend the great phil-  
 osopher-theologian James Luther Adams, who never got a doctorate because  
 no one could be found with brain big enough to administer it. When I  
 asked him for a line to use today, he said, "Willis, I'm proud to be able  
 to inform you that I'm too ignorant of ~~that~~ to have an opinion."

Mr. Moon

I've had my turn : now it's our turn.