

Alice Fleisher  
Sunday Sermon – 6/15/08 – Denver, CO

“Better to light a candle than to curse the Darkness”  
Old Chinese Proverb

“The Journey of a Thousand miles begins with one step”  
and  
“If you do not change direction, you may end up where you are heading”  
Lao Tzu

“Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, he answered them, ‘The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, ‘Lo, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.’”  
Luke 17:20-21

“Another parable he put before them, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.’”  
Matthew 13:31-32

### **“In the Midst of.....”**

My sermon this morning is about the true method for building the Kingdom of God. I would contend that Jesus and True Father both understood that method; in fact True Father utilized the concept in the motto for the year 1977 - “The Realization of the Kingdom of Heaven through Ideal Families”

And as I recently read from the 10<sup>th</sup> Message of Peace “The Family Rooted in Absolute Sexual Ethics, which is the model for God’s Absoluteness, Peace and Ideal, and the Global Kingdom” delivered on the occasion of the 47<sup>th</sup> True Children’s Day, 11/21/06:

“We should seek out and establish that nation and righteousness – the ultimate destination for all of us-that attends God and the center. What would that nation be? It would be the kingdom of the peaceful, ideal world. It would be a nation that resembles the form of a model true family with three generations living together in harmony, trusting, respecting and supporting one another and becoming one in love. In short, it is the nation that humanity has desired throughout the ages, the Utopia where God is sovereign.”

These many references indicate something quite wise – that a goal encompassing the world and all humanity starts from a core that is quite manageable and indeed quite small. I'm sure your familiar with the concept that the family is the smallest unit of society. From our own Lourdes Zanin (Swarts) – August 2001 in her paper The Role of Parents in Today's Society comes the following quote:

“In Western thought, the individual is seen as the smallest unit of society, but did you know that in many places in the East, the family is considered to be society's smallest unit? Something can be learned from this model. The most natural environment for a child to grow mentally and spiritually from a state of selfishness and selfish behavior to unselfishness is the family setting.”

So all this leads me to the topic of how each of us should be contributing to that huge task of building Chung Il Guk and the extension of that, or the Kingdom of God, especially in the current circumstances we all find ourselves in – i.e. – Denver, CO – Families of Peace, with jobs, families and financial obligations. I would venture to guess that as a movement or at least as a community we are still trying to figure this out – really, since we all landed in our “hometowns”. I remember vividly the themes of many sermons since the Fleisher family arrived here (1995) – expressing how odd it felt to not be on the front line and how we were reeling from the abrupt change that we all had been transported through (Like Dorothy landing in the land of Oz). We were conflicted and disoriented and not quite sure what to do.

Now let me digress a bit to reflect and put in a plug for opportunities afforded us to do frontline, full time missionary work. I did this for approximately 21 years but even a time span of 1 month, 1 year or 2 years can be valuable. I would call it our total immersion experience – the best way to gain our spiritual bearings and learn the language of God's Will and Purpose. It is a time to meet God and inherit His Vision. I perceive it as an opportunity for concentrated spiritual growth and training. But even for us, we found that eventually such an experience must and will end and we must again settle into reality. But we should do so with a different perspective and focus – we are here to not just exist but to thrive and to be a leaven for our society. **So let me ask you – How are you doing? While you may have been a good foot soldier have you progressed to the point where you are personally qualified to be a citizen of and dwell in the Kingdom of God?**

Its not that I am undervaluing the training we all went through. Not at All! To actually accomplish the task of building the Kingdom of God in the Midst of.... (fill in the blank – ask for response from the congregation) we do need to have a strong foundation and root of practice and purity. It is these things that make us uniquely qualified to accomplish the real task of Kingdom Building in the midst of life:

1. We need a vision to understand opportunities and to utilize them:

Lucille Ball – “The more things you do, the more you can do.”

Or my experience with school – there is never enough time but if it’s important to you there is exactly enough time – it is so defined by prioritization, vision and goals.

2. We need a strong moral fiber and compass so that all we do can be for the Glory of God:

Again from the 47<sup>th</sup> Children’s Day Speech:

“Ladies and gentlemen, it was necessary for Adam and Eve to establish a model, peaceful, ideal family. God, the Absolute Being, created human beings as His children in order to instill in them absolute values on the basis of an absolute standard. Thus human beings must follow the way of that absolute standard in keeping with the demands of the heavenly path. This means we must follow our destined life course in order to attend God, the absolute Being, as our Parent. In other words, for people to perfect themselves in resemblance of God and obtain the stature of people of character who can be called sons and daughters of the Absolute Being, they must follow the path based on the absolute standard God had determined. The essence of this path is the standard of absolute sexual purity.

The first stage is maintaining absolute sexual purity prior to getting married. After we are born, we go through a process of growth. We pass through infancy and childhood in a very safe and secure environment embraced in our parents’ love and protection. We then enter the time of adolescence, which signals the start of a new and dynamic life as we forge relationships on a totally new level with those around us, as well as with all things of creation. This is the moment when we begin to travel the path to becoming an absolute human being-internally, through the perfection of our character, and externally, by reaching adulthood.

Yet, at this time there is an absolute requirement that people must meet, no matter who they are. This is the requirement of maintaining their purity. This is the model of absolute sexual morality for human beings. God gave it to His children as their destined responsibility and duty, to be carried out in order to fulfill the ideal of creation. This heavenly path is thus the way toward perfecting the model of absoluteness in conjugal love.

What was the single word, the one and only commandment God gave to Adam and Eve, the first ancestors, upon their creation? It was the commandment and blessing to maintain an absolute standard of sexual purity until God’s approval of their marriage. We find the

basis for this in the Bible passage that indicates that Adam and Eve would surely die on the day they ate of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. If they had refrained from eating and observed Heaven's commandment, they would have perfected their character and, as co-creators, stood with God, the Creator, as His equals. Furthermore, they would have taken dominion over the creation and become the lords of the universe enjoying eternal and ideal happiness.

It was God's blessing that He told them to preserve their purity so that they could marry with His Blessing as His true children, become true husband and wife, become true parents and give birth to true children. This knowledge deepens our understanding of this commandment. It is connected with the principle of absoluteness in conjugal love, which is a principle of God's creation. The profound truth within God's commandment lay hidden throughout history: human beings must inherit and live by a model absolute sexual purity that is intrinsic to God's ideal for creation. This is so that they might perfect their individuality as God's children and establish themselves as lords of creation."

But let me get back to the task I am examining this morning. That task we are set to accomplish or the building of the K of G – that social expression/dimension of human life - starting with the smallest unit of society or the family. Now we can and should reach further back to the individual but I would posit that the family is even responsible to comprehend that aspect or their responsibility includes the task of being the environment within which individuals would find their way to fulfill the first Blessing or Individual Perfection – the launching pad for the next social realm of each of their/our lives or own family. And that realm is in reality a spectrum – family, tribe, clan, nation, world..... Another digression – it is wise for us to remember that the current situation we find ourselves in where this model is rare is due to the fall and providence of restoration. Pretty much all of us establish our families out of sync with the original plan of creation – or prior to fulfilling perfection:

Let me share one section of Linna Rapkins's "Stories of True Parents" describing the blessing of the first 3 couples :

"He talked about many things, but after awhile he started talking about perfection. "If you give up everything you own and work as hard as you can and get hardly any sleep and are absolutely, you MIGHT become perfect in about 70 years," he said. "Furthermore, that could only happen if you had been a good person all your life and if your ancestors were good people, as well."...Father continued, "And you know by now that becoming perfect yourself is the first blessing, and getting married is the second blessing. If you are married before you are perfected as an individual, your marriage will have many problems. Ah-ah-yo? (Do you understand?)...But, we have a problem here," said Father. "If we wait until you are fully perfected, no one will every get married while on earth, at least not until

you're too old to have children. Yet Heavenly Father cannot be happy until he has blessed families all around him." This appeared to be an impossible situation. You have to be perfect to be married, but God can't be happy if you aren't blessed in marriage. Father's eyes focused on one person and then another as he looked around the room to see if they understood. "So," he continued, "Heavenly Father wants a few of you to be blessed now."

So, here is another "In the midst of ..." that we have to contend with – that of accomplishing our individual perfection in the midst of being married, being parents or, for those single people in our congregation, life and an imperfect environment (family or greater society).

Well, all my message this morning has led us to a better grasp of the challenging situation we find ourselves in and again to consider, how do we accomplish that which we need to accomplish "In the Midst of ....."

Let me offer to you some timely advice that I heard from my oldest son, Gelo. As he was completing his STF experience, he prayed and asked what he must be doing to keep up his spiritual life after SFT (1999-2000). He received the following revelation from God:

**Pray Everyday**  
**Study Everyday**  
**Keep the Traditions of Your Parents**  
**Do Something Providential Everyday.**

I have pondered on this guidance over the years and I would like to take a little time this morning to reflect on it again and offer it up to you as an aid or tool in your "In the midst of..." tasks. You see, I see it as relevant to us as well because it was really a question related to how to do God's Will when we're not in a fulltime providential mission or in the midst of life. Lets briefly reflect on the Principles of Spiritual Growth:

From the Divine Principle – Principle of Creation, Exposition of the Principle – page 47-48

"The physical self consists of the dual characteristics of the physical mind (subject partner) and the physical body (object partner). The physical mind directs the physical body to maintain the functions necessary for its survival, protection and reproduction. Instinct, for example, is an aspect of an animal's physical mind. For the physical self to grow in good health, it must have proper nourishment. **It must absorb air and sunlight, which are intangible, yang types of nourishment, and must eat and drink food and water, which are tangible, yin types of nourishment...** Our spirit self consists of the dual characteristics of spirit mind (subject partner) and spirit body (object partner). The spirit

mind is the center of the spirit self, and it is where God dwells. **The spirit grows through give and take action between two types of nourishment; life elements of a yang type that come from God and vitality elements of a yin type that come from the physical self.** The spirit self not only receives vitality elements from the physical self; **it also returns an element to the physical self which we call the living spirit element...** The spirit can grow only while it abides in the flesh. Thus, the relationship between the physical self and the spirit self is similar to that between a tree and its fruit. When the physical mind obeys the spirit mind and the physical self acts according to the good purpose of the spirit mind, the physical self receives living spirit elements from the spirit self and becomes wholesome. In return, the physical self provides good vitality elements to the spirit self, which enable the spirit self to grow properly in the direction of goodness.”

So now lets take a few minutes to delve into each of these points:

### **Pray:**

Why would this be necessary? Connect to the source? Become open to the life elements and the purpose of lives by being connected to the Author? I would suggest that we should progress in our relationship with God aided by our prayers through prayer from servant of servant heart relationship to that of son ship.

### **Study:**

This seems to be connected to the first point. What should we study? I would suggest that the content of our study should be related to our goals – kind of along the lines of those who would aspire to be a doctor must study medicine and the human body. So, if we are to become perfect architect and builders of a Godly society, we should be ingesting words that relate to God, spirituality, becoming perfect, building Godly families. Material that will help us accomplish the greater tasks that we are entrusted with in the midst of....What else? I would also guess that some of the material is for us to develop as pioneers on this road.

### **Keep the Traditions of Your Parents**

This seems to be in harmony with the action part of spiritual growth. What is the purpose of tradition? Think on this. Gelo took it to mean such traditions and practices that Gary

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and I did – witnessing, fundraising (which he then did on STF), tithing, attending church, doing pledge, holy salt, holy days, ...

But the meaning could be expanded – especially for those of us whose parents may not have been members or at least not perfect. What about expanding this to the realm of True Parents – after all, one of their missions is to model true human behavior both in the ideal world and the way of restoration.

### **Do Something Providential Everyday.**

This seems to also be in harmony with the action part of spiritual growth. As we ponder on this point, let me share some wisdom from Sammi. I had the opportunity to ask her why she thought STF was able to have such transformational impact on those participants and support staff connected to it. She thought about this and said that perhaps it was because it allowed them to make good conditions through which they could gain good spiritual world help and support and, since they were doing whole purpose or public type of activities, to more clearly see the world and themselves from God's point of view. Wise words.

I would guess that we can all learn from this insight; remember, we are trying to build Heaven from the within the midst of Hell. Certainly any type of good conditions that we can set to continually have this perspective in our lives is invaluable and I would posit that when we take this component out of our lives, we easily find ourselves in the muddle without a clear sense of anything.

Well, in conclusion – this seems to lead right into the magic trinity of good life practices: Pray, Study and Action & Practice – but with insight and wisdom for the content of each of those three points makes all the difference in the world. Please pray about this revelation and how the application of it can help each of you make progress in your Life and Godly mission/course in the Midst of.....

Let us pray.