

Idolatry

1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be

tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

19 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake:

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

33 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

1 Corinthians 10

Hello, dear reader of this article. I want to talk to you about the problem and its solution. This problem applies to our today's Sanctuary Church, and to the world as a whole, and without a solution, this problem will continue to generate wars and conflicts in an increasingly worse and larger scale. By offering a solution, I myself will try my best to keep it; for it is not my own, but given by God.

It turns out that modern people, though our modern technologies require the development of logic and analytical thinking, do not try to think about the meaning of what they has been read. This small problem can be helped if we try to distinguish from text the things that relate to axiomatic truths, then follow the logical chain, and finally note for ourselves some incontrovertible conclusions from what has been said. In the case of religious texts and believers, the truth they encounter can prompt to prayer or deep inner inspiration in the

Holy Spirit. The desired result of truth must be to follow it in our behavior and thinking.

In a person's speech it is always or almost always possible to trace the three mentioned stages of the thought process. Probably such a statement would be more related to the male sex, whose responsibility in marriage, for example, to organize motivating sensitivity of the female heart and bring things to execution, and problem - to resolution.

Let's go to the main topic of the article, our problem. As we read of the apostle Paul, he advises to avoid idolatry in every way, although he considers himself entitled without remorse to eat the idol's sacrifice. What does it mean by idolatry? Let us try, reading the words of Paul, do not think of him as a "holy apostle", whose image in Orthodoxy is so elevated that it seems blasphemous to make any behavioral parallels, much more to think of him putting ourselves in his place. He was a Roman citizen, an educated and responsible man, the persecutor of the first Christians, whose life was drastically reversed by the revelation he received from Jesus on his way to Damascus. And this man of initiative, though he had no acquaintance with the earthly Jesus, becomes his protector and witness for many pagans, and later a figure without whom today's Christianity would be impossible, at least as it is. **{See the sermon "Humility of Paul" to True Mother Kang from 4 May 2017.}** So, Paul supported and praised the Savior Jesus by doing great work. For whom? The Christian Church of that time was in a period of formation and persecution, but still had its own structure. The chief apostle was Peter, to whom Jesus gave the "keys of the kingdom", it was unanimously recognized. Peter stayed in Jerusalem, and Paul went from city to city, creating Christian communities. Don't you think there

was some disagreement between these two people who served the same God? Like: "You think you're in charge here, but I was the first one" or "Don't tell me what to do, I won't recognize your authority". Sure.

We know that fraternity is an easy thing only for ordinary people, who not bound by intellectual dogmas. For example, behind a cup of strong drink. But the higher a person begins to value the word, the more difficult it is for him to tolerate any of his distortions or contradictions in his view. Nevertheless, with the crystal honesty on each part, there is a potential solution to the dispute which consists in finding a logically correct absolute truth capable of eliminating the cause of the dispute. It must be said that in most cases the achievement of this absolute truth is astronomically unattainable. Not so much because of its absence, but because of human's stubbornness. The desire of man to do something himself, to bring to the altar of God something unique and necessary for all.. The human desire is to be great. And it's a good wish. **[1]** In this quote Reverend Moon said not only about the position of the center of the world, which every person strive to achieve. He is giving a ready solution to our problem.

But for us it's too early to make a solution, we haven't fully articulated the problem. Relations between Peter and Paul were formally settled during their meeting in the 49th year, where they were able to reach a reconciliation. Today's Christian historians are lost in conjecture as to what was the subject of their dispute. But, putting himself in the place of Paul as a «simple man» who by himself has fed «three generals», we can imagine that Paul accused Peter of creating a new inert structure, a kind of Christian pharisaism. Is that so?

The problem of creative freedom and subordination, anarchy and hierarchy - is eternal and ubiquitous.

Let's turn the wheel of historical chronology. Separation of orthodoxy - orthodoxy and catholicism, and protestantism. Helen White describes this division at an even earlier stage, in the dispute between Roman Catholicism and the Waldensian movement. Briefly, what was the difference between them:

RCC - Sunday/ W - Saturday;

RCC - Salvation through the following of the statutes of the church, monasticism, indulgences, epithymia, torture of the flesh/ W - Salvation by the mercy of God given through the sacrifice of Christ;

RCC - motivation - fear of hell punishment/ W - motivation - gratitude, based on the grace of forgiveness of sins;

RCC - The Pope, bishops, holy "fathers", the Blessed Virgin Mary, etc./ W - there is no other king but Jesus.

Thus, the Roman Catholicism even in the matter of spirituality defended the vertical power with obedience to superiors, accountability etc. Waldens in their faith were closer to the spirit of freedom. In modern political history the first one had created the states of an authoritarian-dictatorial type; the second - served as a basis for Christian democracy.

What does Paul offer in the considered chapter 10 of the First Epistle to the Corinthians? You may have a different opinion, but I consider his reference to the service of idols in the context of the first five verses of this chapter, where he speaks of Israel which people, though they all were equal in God's mercy to them, was not entirely blessed by God. The people went hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, eating from one plate; but they differed greatly in the eyes of God.

The point of view of God is well spoken by the Reverend Moon [1]. God is in the center equidistant from all points of the circle, this makes Him the real God. Not only the fair God, but God Who is accepted and desired by all. When we believe in the true God, we must also be at the center. If a person has even a tiny bit of selfishness, his opinion is biased. His actions, while remaining the same, begin to be motivated by completely different sources. Does not Paul warn of this when he speaks of idolatry? If we remember the words and deeds of the Savior Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, he, coming to "preach the Kingdom of Heaven and earth as in heaven", could not avoid encountering the power of the world. The power, he intended to take away. How else? And the main battle of Jesus at that time was not with whoremongers and harlots, but with booksellers and Pharisees, ideologues and telepreachers of that time. Why was Jesus so vexed? This is what the apostle Paul said when he warned him against doing idols. In chapter 6 of the gospel of Matthew, Jesus gives clear instructions for those believers who are ready to listen to him: *"When you give alms, let not your left hand know what the right hand is doing."* {**Matthew 6:3**} We see that although the act may be identical in appearance, its significance and consequences are diametrically divided according to the motivation of the person. Jesus never tired of emphasizing the importance of human mind and soul {**Matthew 5:21, 22 and Matthew 5:27,28**}.

To what extent does this and the other teachings of Jesus, which are shown here in the example of chapter 6 of the Gospel of Matthew, correspond to the logic of the functioning of the human pyramid of power? I report to the leader, he reports to the higher leader and so on to the supreme figure of

the king, with whom each member of the organization seeks to establish personal contact. This, ie. personal relations with superiors, people are considered as a sign of their own success and prosperity. If everybody has desire for such a center, the court intrigues are unavoidable. Here is a picture drawn by the Reverend Moon (**Moon Son Myung, book «The Way of God's Will», chapter 1, «God's Will»**): "Imagine if God were visible. Then there would be a battle among men for the possession of Him. The states of the world would not only compete for the attention of such a visible God, they would enter into the bloodiest war for Him. Therefore it is good that God is invisible". Jesus advises, therefore, to do good secretly, even to be ashamed of one's own good, counting on the fact that "*..thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly*" **{Matthew 6:4}**. This is also what Paul says when, for "avoiding the service of idols", he advises us to live not for ourselves but for others **{1 Cor.10:24}** and do everything "in the glory of God" **{1 Cor.10:31}**. Then, according to Paul, our freedom cannot be judged by the opinion of others **{1 Cor.10:29}**. This verse can be called one of the active principles of Christian democracy, along with the words of Jesus that "*whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant*" **{Mathew. 20:25-28}**. Jesus said to serve unselfishly, but unselfishly you can serve only to those who is lesser than yourself, that is, to those who are not able to give you back. There is also a known wisdom that a man shows himself by how he treats those who cannot respond, and those who have nothing for him.

We conclude that by obeying the call of selfishness, ambition, lust.. we move away from the center and our social and religious service becomes a sacrifice for the demons **{1**

Cor.10:19-21}. Sounds scary, and I do not want to try it on myself, but if you say that "there is no righteous one," it means that the disease is widespread: church leaders build plots against other faiths, using all possibilities, including state institutions; "patriots" of nations consider it their duty to elevate their nation and humiliate others, including by military means; we ourselves talk things in the kitchen about people that we would never say to their faces. This disease of hypocrisy is the result of leaving the center, leaving God. As you can see, in contrast to the concepts of pro-government "Besonons" (Russian TV show by Nikita Mikhalkov), this understanding differs in its clarity.

But what will help to combat this disease? To look at freedom, outside the system where "blind guides of the blind", one must stand over it. This is what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: *"For I say to you, if your righteousness does not overcome the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, then you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven"*

{Matthew.5:20}.

Greed itself, as the culprit seems to be, paradoxically can be the key to solving the problem of hypocrisy. For example, when I came to the Unification Church, I openly said that I want to be God. Later I met more such people. Ha, someone thinks what an arrogant guy wrote these lines... But what is wrong with striving to look around from the point of view of God and do as God would have done? With such ambition, I, desiring not to lose my divine dignity, will not abuse the power, will not steal when no one sees, will be sincere in my service to others. In the church I will not stoop to struggle for leadership position or to court intrigues. On a social scale my honesty will be valued. At the national and

international level, I will not defend my own country's interests to the detriment of other countries. A true patriot will not stoop to praise his nation, knowing that in doing so he is only humiliating it. True greatness of a nation comes in its recognition by other nations, especially our enemies. If you can win the enemy's heart by your love for him and by your sincerity, nothing will be greater than such greatness.

You may ask, how can this kind of goodness, which does not advertise itself, rule the world? How can there be a kingdom of God on earth? Reverend Moon said that God and the universe itself are beginning to help a man who gives selflessly. The vacuum is filling. The Kingdom of God must have very different principles of governance, it must be a fundamentally different kingdom, different from the structures of this world. The Second King in his decree number 4 "On Disputes" speaks of decentralization as a basic principle of building the Sanctuary movement. Anyone who supports the basic principles of the Movement and the Royal Family can consider himself a member and participant, can organize his own community, etc.

The True Father, Reverend Moon, declared "a church centered on members rather than leaders" in 2003, and all his words at all times have been words of religious freedom and initiatives from below.

It seems we don't doing that well yet. With today's trends, a rigid hierarchical structure of the kind that already exists in the Federation of Families and any secular institutions may again emerge. Entering Sanctuary, we fled from this structure, but now, despite our renewed principles, we have a chance to repeat the fate of the Federation of Families, the Roman Catholic Church during the Waldenses and the

Israelites who died in the desert. The organizational vertical, for all its apparent efficiency, has one fatal defect: in the absence of a living human initiative, in the absence of a man in the center seeking God, it is completely unviable.

When I give you this message, I'm delighting internally. Wow! How cool it is that all human mind-buildings turns out to be "Colossus on clay feet". Human will, according to Mayakovskiy, "the Party is a million-fingers hand, compressed into one clapping fist," is not capable of ruling the world. The well-established Soviet Union collapsed after 70 years of existence. As much as countries like North Korea, Turkmenistan, and China, which Russia is now seeking to join, try to control the consciousness of their citizens in favor of state ideology, will they be able to keep a human soul in the net? Such attempts are doomed to failure. Controlling or disabling the Internet, digital ruble, brainwashing in schools and on TV, messengers Max, social ratings, etc. - which takes a lot of time and effort, doom to failure, because these efforts go against human nature and against God. The law of God is freedom and responsibility. And in such a law wins the one whose fruit of service is more worthy in the eyes of God and customers. This is the free market system, the economic foundation of democracy.

With regard to the church, the method of reviving its relational and bureaucratic structure is to continually witness to new people. With the coming of the last man to the truth, according to Reverend Moon, the Church will not be needed as an institution. It can be disbanded. This intention was reflected in the idea of the home church, and later in the idea of the tribal messiah.

This was also the subject of a sermon by Regina Hannah "Cain and Abel", dated 31 August 2025. To enliven any church, especially one with a large congregation, there is the practice of small groups in which a person has the opportunity to communicate and have a heartistic connection with other people on an equal basis. In a small group of people one does not hide behind their public mission and position, as bureaucrats in power structures can do. The meaning of small groups is not only in witnessing new members, but also in developing those who have been in the church for a long time, in constant spiritual growth of church members. When we think about our homeland and home, we do not remember many people, but we remember the closest ones. For the church to become a home, we need these close relationships. It is a rescue from the yoke of their own selfishness for those who, being in the vertical structure, are exposed to the danger of becoming modern bookkeepers and Pharisees.

With regard to state power, it is said that "the people must know their chosen ones", so it is better to have such an elected one from the faces of the closest people with whom you constantly encounter in life. The same "small group" for the whole country.

There is a view that the removal of the Second Czar from the public scene in distant Taiwan is due not only to the providence of the world, but also to his desire to release himself from the shackles of the church pyramid, for the movement with free membership, and even according to him "without membership", does not need a control machine. It must be governed and sustained by our respect for the King, our consecration to the one God of mankind and the one Christ, and our knowledge and practice of the Word of God. Receiving

the Blessing of the True Parents, we are already brothers and sisters in Christ for each other.

That's all I planned to say here. Not as a ready answer, but as food for thought. Thank you for your attention.

Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

2 Corinthians 10:15-18

REVEREND SUN MYUNG MOON «WHO AM I?», January 23, 1977

Let us concentrate our thought on the Messiah. Why does the Messiah come? What is the content of his work? First of all, the Messiah tackles the problems of all humanity, not just one group. The Messiah brings to this world the fundamental solution for the problems of all mankind. The Messiah comes not only with the key to solve human problems, but also the key to solve heavenly problems, God's problems.

Since the source of every problem has been the separation between God and man, the Messiah comes for one single purpose: to bring God and man into unity. This will solve both man's and God's problems. Where will this unity between God and man begin? What is the starting point? An American

President might say that this unity must start in the White House here in this country because, after all, America is the greatest nation. Maybe communists would want to possess God themselves, and their unity would probably begin in the Kremlin. But even if there is tranquillity in the White House, if the people of America are suffering and desperately unhappy, then this has not truly solved the problems of the nation. And even if the people in the Kremlin can enjoy a rich life, as long as the people of that nation are suffering, that certainly does not represent happiness.

Unity between God and man does not begin in high places, in the office of the sovereign or head of state. It begins with the individual at the very bottom of human life. Even within the family a father and mother may have reason to be jubilant, but at the same time their happiness may not be shared by their children; the children may be desperately unhappy.

Happiness must begin at the starting point of "I." Then where is this "I" standing? Maybe "I" is at the pinnacle of the entire world, the central point of the world situation. That person might be happy in his position relating to the world, or that person might desire to have nothing to do with his surroundings. These are two manifestations of "I." Which kind of "I" would you want to be?

Everybody has the desire and ambition to become identified with the rest of the world. You do not want to, just be isolated; you want to be someone special, recognized by the world. Why does everyone have that ambition? When you are standing on the pinnacle of the world, the earliest rays of the morning sun

will touch you first. You will be the first recipient of the heavenly blessing. Human nature has the innate desire to be standing on high ground. That position is closer to God, and when the Messiah comes with ultimate hope, the person in that position can identify him first.

Jesus came to Israel 2,000 years ago. Do you think he came to Israel just as the leader of that particular nation, or did he come with a dream and desire for the entire world? No doubt he came with an ideal for the world. Tragically, the chosen people refused to accept this universal leader as the Messiah; they were not ready. But innate human desire has not changed. Everybody is still looking for the pinnacle of the world because they know it is the place closest to the Messiah, closest to God.

How about you? Are you looking for this position? It is a common human desire, regardless of your level of education. You may have just gone through elementary school or you may be a Harvard Ph.D. It does not make any difference. Human nature is always trying to be on higher ground, to be where the ray of hope hits first.

Who am I? You should answer that question, "I am the one striving toward the high point of the world, trying to be on the pinnacle of the world; that is who I am." That one central point is the position where the entire world is concentrated. The person who has arrived at this pinnacle is in a position to say, "Without me this world is empty and in despair. I am the one who relays the blessing from the top. Without me the rest of the world has no point to rally around."

The person who can say, "I am the center of the world," can certainly say, "I am the center of the nation. I am indispensable for the nation; I am indispensable for the society and the family, and finally, I am indispensable for myself. Without me there is no 'I'."

That is the ultimate hope of "I." "I" wants to be the center of the entire world. That is the relationship in which "I" wants to exist. That "I" cannot isolate itself from the rest of the world. When that "I" moves forward then the rest of the world moves too, because that "I" is the center of the entire world and of society. That kind of "I" could not exist without being surrounded by the rest of the world. "I" cannot be the center of the world without a world, but today people are trying to exclude God and the whole world. They want to exist only for themselves. This cannot work. They disregard everything in existence around them, trying to be "I" by themselves; however, one cannot exist by oneself.

When you say "center," your meaning implies the existence of the rest of the world. A center does not come first; the world comes first. If you want to stand on the pinnacle of the world, the important thing is whether you want to become the center of the world. Each one of you must realize and say, "I am responsible for the world." That awakening will bring you to the center.

It is logical that blessing and responsibility come together. Most people say, "I want the honor of being the center of the world, but I do not desire to be responsible for the world." Is that how you are thinking, or do you think, "I am going to be

the center of the world because I want to take up the responsibility of the world"? Which one? Instead of putting themselves in the center of the world, most people are trying to move the world to their center. They stand fast and do not want to budge. They say, "Let the world come to me and make me the center." Is that possible?

In relation to the rest of the world the center is always an equal distance from any edge. You travel the same distance in any direction to reach the edge of the circle. A person might say, "I'm American so I'm close to America, but I'm a little distant from Asians, Europeans and Africans." Then that person is not exactly at the center. That person is somewhat distorted, somewhat off center. The person at the exact center of the circle has an attitude and personality that is completely accommodating and embracing. If a person says, "I'm a white man so I don't care about blacks or yellows or any other race," then he is not perfectly in the center. That person could perhaps become the center of the white race, but certainly not of all the races of the world.

Then what kind of person must the Messiah be? The Messiah is the first person to put himself on the pinnacle of the world, to perfectly position himself at the center. Who can have rapport with the Messiah when he comes to this world? In America some people think only of themselves and are very individualistic. Could these people possibly establish rapport with the coming Messiah? They have an entirely different outlook on life. Is the philosophy of that kind of individualistic and egoistic person parallel with the philosophy of the Messiah?

Because the Messiah is coming with a universal concept and, therefore, universal equality, anyone who pursues individualism is the enemy of the Messiah. When someone says he wants to become the pinnacle of the world, the center of the world, what he means is that he wants to inherit the Messiah's concept, the messianic ideal. The Messiah is looking for people of that philosophy and conviction. Ultimately speaking, such people are striving to become messiahs themselves. Simply said, people just want to follow the Messiah and imitate him, and finally they want to make themselves actual messiahs.

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