

STAND IN HUMILITY

Week #4 of a New 5-Week Series, "The Unlimited Me"

May 26, 2021

Rev. Richard Rogers

OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Richard Rogers: Hello; I'm Richard Rogers, and this is Unity of Phoenix Spiritual Center's Wednesday night service. I'm so glad you're here! We have two more Wednesday night video versions, and then we go LIVE! And, of course, we will always provide a video service, but we will go LIVE on June 9th. I am so excited! June 6th for Sunday. We want to invite you to come and be a part of this exciting time of rejuvenation, of recapturing the spirit and the life of this ministry. So come and be a part of that!

And I'd love for you to volunteer, either on the Wednesday night service or the Sunday service. Because the more people that we have, really, to make this a fabulous experience. So consider that!

We've got lots of classes and things going on. Go to our website – unityphx.org – to see all the things that are going on at Unity today.

Alright! Tonight I'm going to continue the series that I'm doing on "The Unlimited Me." I'm going to talk about your unlimited nature. Right? So let's take a deep breath; let's open with prayer. And then we have great music from Todd.

OPENING PRAYER

So take a deep breath. I want you to feel the presence of God that is within you and all around you. That there is only one presence and one power. I want you to really feel that! There is only one presence and one power at work in your life: God the Good. There is only one presence and one power at work in your life: God the Good. So in the name and through the power of the Living Christ, we give thanks. And so it is. Amen.

SOLO

Guest artist Todd Herzog sings, "When Will I Ever Learn to Live in God?"

The sun was setting over Avalon
The last time we stood in the west
Suffering long-time angels enraptured by Blake
Burn out the dross
Innocence captured again

Standing on the beach at sunset
And all the boats keep moving slow
In the glory of the flashing light
In the evening's glow

When will I ever learn
To live in God?
When will I ever learn?
He gives me everything I need and more
When will I ever learn?

You brought it to my attention
That everything was made in God

Down through centuries of great writings and paintings
Everything was in God
Seen through architecture of great cathedrals
Down through the history of time
Is and was at the beginning
And evermore
Shall ever be

When will I ever learn
To live in God?
When will I ever learn?
He gives me everything I need and more
When will I ever learn?

Whatever it takes to fulfill His mission
That is the way we must go
But you've got to do it your own way
Tear down the old
Bring up the new

And up on the hillside it's quiet
Where the shepherd is tending the sheep
And over the mountains and the valleys
And the countryside is so green
Standing on the highest hill with a sense of wonder
You can see everything is made in God
Head back down the roadside
And give thanks for it all

When will I ever learn
To live in God?
When will I ever learn?
He gives me everything I need and more
When will I ever learn?

When will I ever learn
To live in God?
When will I ever learn?
He gives me everything I need and more
When will I ever learn?

MESSAGE

Rev. Richard Rogers: Okay! So my question for you tonight is ... are you ready for this? *[Laughs]* How often are you wrong? Like, would you say that you're wrong most of the time? Would you say that you're wrong *[laughs]* never? Would you say that it's kind of maybe in somewhere in between? Would you say that you're one of the people that ... that you're wrong, but you don't like it if anybody ever finds out you're wrong? *[Laughs]* Where are you with being wrong?

Because I'm doing this series on "The Unlimited Me." And you would think if you were unlimited, that you would never be wrong. But yet, it's interesting: it's actually the opposite. That you're an unlimited spiritual being who, in a human form, occasionally – and sometimes more than occasionally – is absolutely wrong! And I believe it's actually designed that way!

You know, there's so much research on being wrong. [Laughs] The research shows us that, when we can admit that we're wrong, it leads to better friendships, stronger relationships. It leads to happier people. And you're actually a better advocate for your point of view if you can say that, "*I may be wrong.*" Right?

So let's say this together, right? "*I may be wrong.*" [Laughs] Now, what's interesting about that is: How many of you are having a really difficult time saying, "*I may be wrong*"? Right? For some of us, we would rather chop off a finger than admit that we're wrong. Like, it is our least favorite thing. In the family that I grew up in, you never admitted you were wrong! In fact, when you were afraid you were wrong, you just turned up the volume. Because volume meant right! Right? [Laughs]

So what I want us to look at today is this idea of intellectual humility. Right? And intellectual humility says, "*I could be wrong. What I know may be incomplete.*" Right? And what we find is those people that can admit that they may be wrong – that their information may be incomplete – actually [laughs] score higher in so many things! So why is it so hard for us to admit when we're wrong?

You know, our minds are made up based on our beliefs, our perceptions, our ideas, our assumptions all weaved together to create this view of our world. And what the research shows is: when we feel like our beliefs – our perceptions – are wrong, it can be as painful as if we are being punched. Psychologically, it can be as painful as physical pain! When we have to admit that we're wrong, some of us believe that our actual reality is falling apart. Studies show that, if somebody attacks our beliefs, that we feel like they are personally attacking us. That we are so aligned with what we believe.

And we see that going on around our world right now! We are arguing about this, and we're arguing about that. And the reason that we're arguing is because we are so committed to an ideology – to a belief system, to a perception, to an understanding – that we would rather a knock-down, drag-out fight with somebody we absolutely love than ever have to admit that we were wrong or incomplete.

Our tendency is to avoid threats. You know, we listen to the news that agrees with us. We read books and articles that agree with us. We hang out with people who agree with us. And what I want you to see is that we're creating more and more an isolated world, where the people that agree with us hang out with us. The people who don't, we push them over there. We don't talk to them. We don't want to hang out with them.

And what I want you to see today is: I want you to get comfortable admitting, "*I may be wrong.*" Let's say that one more time: "*I may be wrong.*" For the key to intellectual humility is the willingness to accept and admit that we may be wrong. People who practice intellectual humility actually make more thoughtful decisions. They have stronger connections and relationships with others. They are more tolerant. They are happier. They can recognize more persuasive arguments. And they're actually better advocates for their beliefs.

You know, the opposite of intellectual humility is intellectual arrogance. Now, intellectual arrogance is: "*I'm right all the time. Deal with it.*" Right? And, you know, if we had to raise our hand how many times where we say, "*I'm right all the time; deal with it,*" we might be kind of surprised.

There were two psychologists – Kruger and Dunning. And they wanted to find ... They began to study sense of humor. And that was their thesis. They wanted to understand sense of humor. So they took college students, and they gave them a survey on how funny they thought they were: how good was their sense of humor. Right? So they got the study group, and then they took 10 professional comedians and gave them 50 jokes, and each comedian had to rate the joke from, like, a 1 through 5. Right? And then they gave this survey to all these college students. And what they found was: the people [laughs] who thought they were the funniest actually had no sense of humor. Right? [Laughs] What happened was: they discovered that the people that thought they were the funniest actually weren't funny! Right?

Then they switched, and they did it based on grammar. And the same thing: they took a group of people. Surveyed them how good they were with grammar and analyzing grammar. And what they found out was: the people who scored the highest on thinking that they were good with grammar actually weren't! That they were actually ignorant of their ignorance! Right? [Laughs]

And I want you to see that as a theme! That in our world today – as we isolate more and more – some of us ... Not all of us ... But some of us who think we're good at something actually don't know that we're not! That we actually think we're better because of our arrogance than we actually are! These two individuals – Kruger and Dunning.

Then their finally test was on ... was with hunters. And they took a group of hunters, and they wanted to see how they would rate. And, again, the people who thought they were the best when it came to gun safety, gun knowledge, actually weren't the best. And what they found is: the people who had a degree of willingness, of humility, of knowing they may not have all the answers actually were better than the group of people that think they knew everything about everything. Right?

So what we've come to know – and they call it the Dunning-Kruger effect – is an example of what psychologists call “meta-cognition.” [Laughs] And it sounds better than it is, right? Meta-cognition is thinking about thinking. It is something that gives us pause for thought. The effect is that many people don't know that they don't know, and tend to be the loudest in affirming that they know! That's intellectual arrogance! Right? [Laughs]

What I want you to see today is: I want us to own our intellectual arrogance. And I want us to be willing to move into a higher level of intellectual humility. To say, “*This is what I believe now.*” Charles Fillmore, the co-founder of Unity, said, “*This is my present understanding.*” He said, “*I reserve the right to change my mind. If I get a better understanding, I reserve the right to change my mind.*”

And what they found with people with this degree of humility actually were happier. They actually moved forward in their life. Everything in their life was easier when they weren't fighting and dying for any particular set of beliefs. Because the way that we grow and change is to be willing to evolve. And we can't evolve if we get stuck that we always have the right answer.

Three hundred years ago, the scientific method was created to test our ideas. To question our theories. It was created based on this idea that we would make an assumption – we would come to an understanding ... We would take a guess, and then we would test it to see if it would actually work. Right? And over the last 300 years, because of the scientific method, our technology has gone through the roof. The things that they could not imagine 300 years ago are now a regular part of our life!

But intellectually, right now, it seems – as a world – that we have plateaued on intellectual curiosity. We now just assume that we know! And when we know – when we believe that we know; when we think that we've already got it worked out – we don't continue to try to grow, to learn, to question. It now becomes a state of our ego to keep us in this place. Right?

And so what I want you to see is: Why do you fear – why do we fear – to be wrong? Like, most of the time nobody dies from being wrong! Why do we care? Right? For many of us, it's an ego need. Like I said, in the home I grew up with, you had to be right. And the underlying reason is there was this fear: if we weren't right, we weren't lovable. I don't know if you were raised in a home like that, or been in a situation where, if you weren't right – if it wasn't absolutely perfect in every way – that somehow you were “less than.” You weren't lovable. It wasn't acceptable. Right?

And today what I want you to see is that we get to change we do this. We get to change the way we do life. We actually get to show up in a brand new way.

So last week Jill and I were going to a dog park. And it was a dog park we'd never been to; we'd heard about it, and we wanted to go. So we're driving to this dog park. Doo, duh doo, duh doo ... [Simulates

driving with a steering wheel] And there's road construction, right? Now, I don't know if you and your partner have ever had a disagreement based on driving ... Right? I know that it doesn't happen very often, so you might not have experienced this. But as we're driving to the dog park, with the road construction I wasn't exactly sure where to turn left into this dog park. And so Jill says to me, "*Turn here! Turn here! Turn here!*" Now, I did not hear that in a loving, gentle, kind way. I heard it as kind of snarky, as kind of mean. And I might have said something in response to that that was less than enlightened. Right? *[Laughs]*

So we get to the dog park and we have a little discussion. And we talk about things. And we talk about the way she said it. *[Laughs]* Talked about the way that I said it. And we came to the understanding – and this was a game changer for me: "*I may be wrong; love me anyway.*" Right? I want you to hear that. Those words. Right? Because, for many of us, this sentence – this affirmation – would literally change almost every area of our life. Right? If we can – in our heart of hearts – feel that I could be wrong and be lovable at the same time, we actually unleash ourselves from the control of our ego! We actually unleash ourselves from the need to be perfect or the need to be right.

And so we're going to say this together: "*I may be wrong; love me anyway.*" Right? Let's say it out loud: "*I may be wrong; love me anyway.*" And maybe for the first time in my life, I felt an incredible joy at being wrong! Right? That I could be wrong – really wrong! That I could say it wrong, do it wrong, think it wrong. That I could be wrong, and love me anyway! Because in that request – "*Please love me anyway*" or "*Love me anyway*" – "*Thank you for loving me anyway*" – was this acknowledgement that she loved me, even when I felt like she was barking directions at me! Right? And I loved her, even though I responded to those barking directions in a bark of my own! Right? And it was, like, "*Please love me anyway! When I'm scared, please love me anyway. When I'm wrong, please love me anyway. When I don't do it right, please love me anyway.*"

And what I want you to see today is that your unlimited me ... You are an unlimited expression of God! And you're still going to be wrong! And you still might be wrong often and regular! Right? You might be wrong more often than you want to admit! But the bottom line is that you are 100% lovable! And you're actually easier to love when you can admit that you may be wrong! And it actually aids the people around you in loving you when you can admit that you may be wrong!

Whatever is going on in your life today, what if your information is not complete? What if you haven't fully realized all of the spiritual? All the political? All the economic? What if you don't know everything? What if you're literally a work in progress, even though you're an "unlimited me"?

"*I may be wrong; love me anyway.*" And from the deepest place in your soul, that's what we've always just wanted! I don't need to be right; I just need to be loved. I don't need to have all the answers; I just need to be loved!

You know, sometimes in ministry – because some of the biggest spiritual and intellectual arrogances come out of the church, come out of religion. You know, we told people that this was the only way; this was the right way. This is the path; this is the only path. And so sometimes people have actually quit coming to church because of the intellectual arrogance of the church. One of the things that I love about Unity is that open-endedness. That we don't say that we have the only answer; we say that we have a answer. And if that answer serves you, and serves your soul – and makes a spiritual difference in your life – then use it. Try it. And if it doesn't work – because Unity wants to be practical in our understanding ... If it doesn't work for you, then don't use it! You don't have to!

But when we try spiritual principles – when we practice spiritual principles and they work – then we get the full benefit of them. But you don't have to be right. Like, life is a laboratory! Church is a laboratory where we get to practice things! But part of practicing – part of being in this laboratory – is that you're

going to do it wrong! Let's say it together: *"I sometimes do it wrong."* Together: *"I sometimes do it wrong!"* [Laughs]

And I want you to feel that! I want you to feel the power of that! That you don't have to get it right! Like, do you have to get it right 50% of the time? No! Is it helpful? [Laughs] Sometimes, yes! [Laughs] But that intellectual activity of being able to suspend our need to be arrogant and to be teachable. And teachable requires that we may have incomplete information. We may not have it all figured out.

So as we go into this time of prayer and meditation, I want you to take a deep breath. And I want you to feel the activity of God that desires to reveal your next level of good. And, even if you get everything wrong – even if, from the first thing to the last thing in this life, you get it wrong, wrong, wrong – what I want you to know is that you're completely lovable, just the way you are. That God loves you just the way you are. And that you never have to get it right to be lovable; that you are lovable no matter what.

Let's take that into our time of prayer and meditation.

MEDITATION

Take a deep breath. And I want you to feel that inner acceptance. I want you to feel the unconditional love of God. That, even when you're wrong, you're loved. Even when you don't know. Even when you're not sure, you're loved. Even when you make a mistake, you're loved. Even when you blow something up, you're loved. That, no matter what's going on in your life, you're loved! The people that love you, LOVE you! That you no longer need to work so hard to be so perfect. You get to be loved right where you are. With exactly who you are. That you are an unlimited expression of God. You are an unlimited expression of God, whose going to make mistake after mistake after mistake. And it doesn't mean anything! It doesn't keep you from being adorable!

Today we just allow the love of God: *"I may be wrong; love me anyway. I may be wrong; love me anyway!"* No matter what they're saying on the news or what you're reading in the paper: *"I may be wrong; love me anyway. I may not have this all figured out; love me anyway."*

So I want you to take a moment now just to allow the love of God into all the places in your soul where you feel incomplete. Where you feel "not enough." Where you feel inadequate.

SILENCE

"I may be wrong; love me anyway." In the name and through the power of the Living Christ, we give thanks. And so it is. Amen.

COLLECTION/CLOSING

Alright; this is the time of giving of our gifts and tithes. I invite you to hold them in your hand; I want to thank you all for your generous support of this ministry during this time. When you're sending in checks or electronically, I want to thank you for your generous support in making this ministry continue to move and serve people in greater and greater ways.

Our love offering blessing is: *"Divine love, through me, blesses and multiplies all that I have, all that I give, and all that I receive."* So in the name and through the power of the Living Christ, we give thanks. We give thanks for every gift and every giver. We say thank you, God; thank you, God; thank you, God! And so it is. Amen.

Alright; we're going to close with the Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us;
The love of God enfolds us;

The power of God protects us;
And the presence of God watches over us.

God bless you, friend! I see you having a great week! And I know that – even when you’re wrong – you are completely loved! God bless you, friend! The choir’s going to sing us out!

Unity of Phoenix Choir sings the “Peace Song”:

Let there be peace on earth
and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth;
the peace that was meant to be.

With God as Creator,
family all are we.
Let us walk with each other
in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me;
let this be the moment now.
With every step I take,
Let this be my joyous vow:

To take each moment
and live each moment
in peace eternally!

Let there be peace on earth
and let it begin with me!

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