



Unity Church of Christianity
The Three Cons
May 29, 2011

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Today I want to talk to you about three cons. I'm not talking about three convicts or bad things. There are three areas or realms in which we live our lives, and we'll discuss their significance and the role they play in the progress of our spiritual evolution. These three cons are content, concept, and context.

In our personal lives, we are dealing with all of them all of the time. They're overlapping. Sometimes we have to understand that we keep each of those in proper perspective and understand the roles they play in our lives as we progress as spiritual beings. It's important to keep a balance between those cons. Sometimes we get too heavily vested in one or the other.

These three cons actually represent our understanding that we are three-fold beings. We are body, mind, and spirit. We are physical, mental, spiritual beings. Content has to do with the body—the physical. Concept has to do with the mental—the mind. The spiritual is the context—coming from the context of knowing the truth of who you really are from that connectedness of life.

Content is usually where we all start out. We're physical beings living in a physical world and we have to find our way around in that realm first. It's the realm in which we weigh and measure

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things in the three-dimensional world. As babies, we have to see, smell, hear, and touch everything. We bring our senses into everything because we're basically into the content of what is around us.

Everyone's content can be different. Each person's personal reality has to do with what we focus on and make important in the realm of content. It has to do with things and with the external. It could be the car you drive, the place you live, the food you love to eat, the vocation you are in, the clothes you like to wear, your body, your relationships, the people who surround you, your hobbies, or your pleasures. All of these things are the content of your life having to do with what is external to you.

Most people expend a great deal of energy on that area of their lives—their content. We've been conditioned in our lives that that's important. It is often the measure of a man or woman how much content they have or the quality of the content they have accumulated.

Content is not bad, it's just understanding where we start in the process of growing and unfolding as a spiritual being. It's a part of life. Content is actually a form of feedback. Our content of what shows up in life is often a reflection of what's going on inside of us internally. What is the internal makeup? Everything from the within moves to the without. The realm of manifestation, creation, and materiality external to us are reflections of what's going on within our own consciousness.

Some people get lost in thinking that all they are is their content and that who they are in the world is their content. That becomes very important for many people. Some people can't get enough content. The work of their whole lives can be invested in the realm of content.. Their self-esteem is totally wrapped up in content.

Surveys have been taken where youth coming out of college are asked what is most important to them as they enter into life and society, having just graduated. There are multiple choices including making a difference in life, having a family, contributing to society, and helping others. Among all of them, the one that wins is becoming rich. So many of them choose that answer because they're about content. A lot of conditioning in their lives has taught them that who they are is their content.

We have to ask ourselves where we stand in relation to that as well. The truth is that we are always more than our content in life. At some point, people find that the content of their lives is simply not enough. It's not lasting and permanent and doesn't maintain an ongoing sense of fulfillment. It alone leaves a person empty—it always will.

Jesus' declaration is important here. He said, "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Many a person has been sucked into a life dominant with content, and they haven't done the necessary work within the soul.

This is simply a stage of life for many, where content dictates and is a motivating factor. When we're young and immature, the first thing that is important is content. We can certainly understand why that becomes important to college graduates at that point in their lives. It's about survival or about being ego-driven. Their egos think that who they are is the content—the external part of one's life.

Eventually we discover that content is not the end-all of life. It's incomplete. We then begin to consider that content can't be the only reason for which we have come into this world. We can't take content with us into the next world. That finally dawns on us, so there has to be something more that we are to be about. We become no longer content with content.

At that point, we begin to hunger and thirst to know what it's all about. Mentally, we want to understand what life is about. We want to understand people and what makes some happy while others aren't. We begin to search our minds for the concepts. Who am I? Where am I going? What am I about? What is my purpose for living? We move into conceptualizing things to figure it out.

That's the second con—concepts. We begin to search for the answers with the mind and intellect as though it's going to be found there, so we read books and find all of the steps to better living. We read *The Seven Steps to Happiness*, *The Five Steps to Piece of Mind*, *The Three Steps to Salvation*, *The Eight Steps to Prosperous Living*, *The Tens Steps to Better Health*, and *The Five Steps to Better Sex*. Everything is a step to a step to something better.

We look to the authorities—the people who are supposed to know—and we want them to tell us. We may become even more religious, and we're looking for the conceptual ideas found in creeds and doctrine and dogma, perhaps. And we even get confused there because different people are saying different things. Who's right? Who has the truth in terms of these conceptual ideas?

Now, it's not just about having it all. We want to know it all. Everyone has been introduced to concepts all through their lives. These things overlap. Consciously and unconsciously, we are living from concepts in which we're really talking about different ideas, beliefs, opinions, judgments, and prejudices. All of these things come to make up our consciousness that we live from. These things find their ways into us through people who have been prominent or significant in our lives, whether they are teachers, parents, or significant figures. They all somehow contribute to our mental make-up and what we're living from.

The framework of our concepts becomes the framework from which our actions and responses to life are. We all have different concepts about God. We have different concepts about life. We have different concepts about ourselves, even. We may have attached ourselves to ideas like, "Life is good" or "The world is going to hell in a hand basket" or "God is love" or "God is a punishing God" or "Man is inherently good" or "Man is inherently evil" "We were born in sin." All of these are concepts that mold and shape us and carry their own energies that cause us to have a particular level of life experience. They are a part of the process that is moving through these things.

Those concepts that we allow to have authority in us—and that we truly identify with—impact the quality of our lives. We know that thought is creative and thoughts held in mind produce after their kind, so we understand that concepts we live from are very important.

Some of us can be lost in our heads and intellects. Everything becomes conceptualized. We don't feel anything because everything has moved to the head, which is why we need balance and need to have it in perspective.

When we live in the mental realm alone, we become dependent on information and facts. Facts are always changing, but we're depending on the five senses as well when we're dealing with conceptual ideas.

This even relates to religious beliefs. Millions have been brought up on the idea that they were created in sin. We don't believe that. It's the idea that you have no power yourself to rise above the evils—you were born in sin and you have that mark upon you. We don't believe that. We're created in love, not sin. It's much healthier to believe that. God is love; therefore we were created in love. The creative process involves the one creator—God. You have to be about love because that's what you are.

The idea that God is to be feared is another concept—to fear the wrath of God. That's just an erroneous concept. God is not to be feared, but revered. There is no wrath in God. God never commands His free-will creatures to obey His universal laws. He only invites you to; it's your decision. Man actually punishes himself through his ignorance or unwillingness to live the universal laws as he understands them.

Another religious concept is that Jesus is the only son of God. That's a concept—the idea of the only begotten. We have another interpretation which says that there is that which is only begotten of God that is in everyone, and there is a son of God emerging in all of all of us and that Jesus called us to that. He modeled it and said, “The things I can do, you can do also—even greater things than these.” You can even look as recently as Paul stating, “All who follow the spirit of God and are led by the spirit of God are sons of God.” Therefore, the truth is that we are all sons of God in the making. We're in no way saying that we have achieved the level of awareness, awakening, God-realization that Jesus did, but he is calling us to that to have that same relationship. If you have a concept that is impossible, you have hit the ceiling in terms of your progress and being open to experiencing greater dimensions of the oneness with God that Jesus was calling us into.

Concepts are very important. We can sway and be swayed energetically. It's important to think about expanding our concepts and our concepts of God, life, and ourselves. It's a must if we are really going to be in a transformative process and not become stale and stuck.

There's a wonderful story in the Book of Genesis, which depicts at least two stages in our development. Abraham was the father of Isaac, whose wife was named Rebecca. Isaac and

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Rebecca had twin sons named Jacob and Esau. Esau was the first born. In the text, you read that he was red and hairy. We are told that for a reason—the physical. When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter and a man of the field, and Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. They were two different types of characters. Esau represents the physical realm, which is also first in our progression. He was the first one out. Jacob represents the mental, inner realm. The word Jacob means supplanter, so the inner must supplant the outer eventually. Although you begin with a focus and a pull to the outer, the inner must supplant that, in terms of what is most important and vital in your life—where you look to first.

Scripture says Jacob and Esau struggled, even in the womb. Rebecca went to inquire of God about this and He said, “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples born of you shall be divided. One shall be stronger than the other, and the elder shall serve the younger.” That was unusual and not the tradition for the elder to serve the younger. It was always the younger serving the older. There is the physical Esau—the outer, directed, content-oriented—and Jacob, who was spiritual and inner-directed.

One day, Esau was out hunting. He came home and was hungry. Jacob had made some pottage and Esau asked if he could have some. Jacob said, “First sell me your birthright.” Esau was so hungry that he sold him his birthright. That was significant because Esau willingly bartered his birthright for a mess of pottage. That’s what the physical does. It sells out on the spiritual and doesn’t have a context for that inner dimension. The birthright meant not only a right to the material goods of the father, but to the spiritual blessings of the Covenant of Abraham.

That was significant. The Covenant of Abraham now descending on Jacob should bless the world through him. Instead of the immortal words of Abraham, Isaac, and Esau, it became Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We could say that Esau sold his soul of birthright for content—the impermanent.

The third con is context, which is constant. The context has to do with the spiritual. It is beyond content and concepts. It is a context from which we are to live our life. It is of a higher order. It is of the purest that is in you. It is one’s relationship with the Divine that is born with experience and having inside of you an authentic feeling of the presence of God. You have felt it, and you want to have more of that feeling. It becomes important, and you must engage the inner-most dimensions of the spirit of you and discover that Christ seed in you.

Jesus said, “The kingdom of God cometh not by observation...” In other words, it’s not going to be in content you can observe with the senses. “Neither shall you say ‘Lo here!’ or ‘Lo there!’” It’s not going to be what you say about what you see and find objectively out there. “For lo behold the kingdom of God is within you.” He meant there is the context from which you must live—the kingdom that is within you.

The word context is from the Latin word *texare*, which means to weave. When you put the prefix con- in front of it, it means to weave together or join. It’s about that joining in consciousness. The greatest experience that can come to us in this life is to discover our relationship with God—

to join our consciousness with God, weaving and blending it together. This discovery cannot be made for us; it must be made by us and within us.

It's not just knowing about God, it's actually knowing God. When you're connected with the spirit within, you feel the currents of God moving within you in every aspect of your life. You experience the grace of God taking place. When you are anchored to this dimension of the Divine at work in you and through you, your world can be shaken with difficulties, but you will still retain this confidence of an inner assurance that you are standing on holy, spiritual ground. You will be okay.

I've noticed in myself and others that something can go wrong in the content of a person's life. It can be the loss of a job or a loved one, an accident, or a relationship breakdown. The content of life is always changing because it is characteristic of the outer realm of life. But if we learn to turn away from the content of how things may appear and turn off our minds which can spin us into a frenzy of fear, we can step in to context—the essence of the one constant—which is that God is there with you, therefore truth is with you. You have more resources than you could ever realize looking externally. You begin internally.

You are never alone in whatever battle you are facing. You have a power greater than all odds against you in this life. It's to have the realization that God is not just found in one place, but He is everywhere. Everywhere you go, God is. God will never desert us. We are the ones who desert God. He is here now—in us, beside us, around us, and always there to the degree that we are willing to call upon Him. If you deeply know this in your mind and heart, even death loses its terror. Nothing can demoralize the spirit when you know the truth internally.

The truth is that you are just as much in eternity now as you will be after death. That's another insight to have. We can be just as close to God now as we will be then. We are here on earth for the purpose of serving, growing, unfolding, and awakening. We are here to make progress, which is very important to be a focus. If you just stop and listen to the spirit within you, it is saying endlessly, continuously, and positively that you are an evolving part of God.

Jesus knew that the development of the soul is man's primary objective. Knowing that, we accept whatever experiences come to us—the good or bad. Thousands are crushed by the same experience that others rise to new heights from.

At some point, we get honest with ourselves. We ask, “Am I developing and improving my soul qualities or am I stuck in some realm of putting my thoughts and energies outside of myself? What qualities, abilities, and values have I developed that I feel may have benefited me as a soul and benefited others?” Ask yourself what value you've added to this world. What is it that exists in your life thus far that is a contribution and is of value in this universe?

Are we learning and growing? Are we developing as souls? What have our lives counted for? What have we done to make a difference? Where have we made a contribution to our own soul and those souls around us? Are we balanced? Where are we in terms of content, concepts, and

context? The final question we might ask ourselves is if we're genuinely desirous of gaining a better understanding of ourselves and an attunement of the God-given power that lives within us.

Man has been drugged by the illusions of the outer word and his senses—the content. He is dependent upon the information and the accumulation of facts—the concepts. But man is like an iceberg. There's a tremendous amount submerged.

In conclusion, I say to you that living from the context of actually being part of God—woven and joined together for eternity—is to live in constant continual contentment. It is to become a conduit for the Divine. It confirms in you a level of consecration. Is it to consecrate the highest that is in you. It is to be in conversation with God. It is to convey the truth wherever you go. It is to conceive goodness of God everywhere. It is to live with confidence. It is to be a contribution to the world in which you live. To be a “con-man” or “con-woman” in the world, you have to go be a light.

God bless you.