

## The Royal Road to Original Design: Divine Principle Post-Foundation Day and the Questions to be Asking

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The 2013 advent of Foundation Day for the Unification Movement was the pinnacle of achievement of Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Hak Ja Han Moon, known as the True Parents, accompanied by True Mother's instructions in January 2013 to pray to our Heavenly Parent. A plethora of questions arise with this declaration.

Heavenly Parent means the recognition of Heavenly Mother as well as Heavenly Father. How do we develop a relationship with Her? How is Her essence different from that of Heavenly Father?

How do we expand our understanding of God's dual characteristics in light of "Our Heavenly Parent"?

These ontological questions clearly point to a serious contemplation of a veritable cosmic paradigm shift in our understanding of the Godhead in the Unification Movement as we begin our journey of discovery toward God's true essence of both femininity and masculinity. This "*Royal Road*" explores the need for a gender-balanced view of God and Divine Principle coupled with an equally important understanding of the more fundamental aspects of God's internal nature and external form and how they are manifest in harmony with the gender-balanced concept of "Heavenly Parent." This is the process of getting to the Ideal. The journey on this royal road of inquiry and discussion requires asking questions and waiting and listening for Heavenly Parent's reply.



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True Parents' Foundation Day victory has ushered in an era where long-awaited events, the foundation for which the Unification Movement founders and membership labored tirelessly, were achieved. Unificationists believe Lucifer surrendered in 1999, and both the end of indemnity and end of the restoration providence were declared. These events, culminating in the advent of Foundation Day itself, establish a turning point for the study of Divine Principle. It pivots the providence from a linear restoration understanding, beginning with the Human Fall and quest for salvation through restoration history, toward what could be termed "The Royal Road": a pursuit of God's original design as discussed in Chapter One, "The Principles of Creation."

To undertake even a preliminary review of the Principles of Creation in light of Foundation Day requires not necessarily a search for answers as much as a quest for asking the right questions. This venture of inquiry is the fruit of Foundation Day's advent. It opens the way to freedom in exploration devoid of fear of failure. God's love can flow freely without providential prolongations or personal trepidation of an indemnity debt to be paid. We are faced with a new ontological reality. Our exploration of God's nature and experience of it may also flow freely as the Unification Movement leadership, UTS alumni and membership at large usher in this cosmic paradigm shift placing the emphasis on *asking* rather than on defining our Heavenly Parent.

Our new era is exciting and inspirational, as it should be. This is "Applied Unificationism." Open discussion and collective exploration are the ramifications of these cosmic realities moving toward the ideal of the Principles of Creation. Unificationists and non-Unificationists alike will witness the process as consultation with God reflects newfound understandings of the Godhead. The Original Design outlined in the Principles of Creation begins to take center stage. The Royal Road opens through inquiry, process and consultation with God and one another.

### Gender Balance in the Godhead

To approach Divine Principle with the freedoms afforded by Foundation Day — namely liberation from the indemnity-bound restoration format based on the constant struggle to gain God's providential advantage — is to begin to pose the questions we should be asking rather than searching to define God. Trying to define God risks a boxing in of sorts that leaves our Heavenly Parent in the position of theological commentary on our own ontological ideas when much is realistically a mere "outline" of the Principles of Creation (hence the name of the "Level 4" edition of the Divine Principle text, the "Green Book"). It is important to ponder what this era of *Cheong Il Guk* (CIG) needs from a vantage point beyond the former spiritual realities of indemnity and restoration without filling the vacuum with concepts from a former era. This presents an example of a question we should be asking: "What are

God's needs at this time?"

As stated earlier, the focus must begin with what True Mother gave us in the new terminology of *Heavenly Parent*. This presents an opportunity to begin at the beginning of Divine Principle in Chapter One. Our movement can be liberated from the primacy of restoration history dominating more than three-quarters of Divine Principle itself and begin focusing on the Principles of Creation so often given a cursory, albeit profoundly respectful, presentation.

We were a movement in a hurry. Not unlike Christianity in a sense, both faiths are linear in mindset and vigilant in avoidance of providential errors that could result in unnecessary prolongations of the establishment of the Ideal.

It stands to reason that our emphasis in restoration history on Heavenly Father would have to evolve into an understanding more commensurate with the new era and with the gender-balanced view of the Godhead in the Principles of Creation. This point is elucidated in the first book of the six-volume *Divine Principle Home Study Course* (1979-80):

“Since — beyond the polarity of inner and outer — God also must possess both masculine and feminine characteristics, the metaphorical image of God as an old man with a long white beard can be only half the picture. If we try to symbolize God in this way, an accompanying grey-haired matron would also be necessary. God, an infinite spirit, is not just Heavenly Father, but Heavenly Mother also.”

(*The Divine Principle Home Study Course*, Vol. 1, “The Nature of God and Man, and the Purpose of Life”)

The image, essence and heart of God, explained as possessing the primary characteristics of internal character and external form, but also the attributes of masculinity and femininity, can begin to expand as our focus on Chapter One takes primacy over our emphasis on restoration.



*Dr. Kathleen Burton spoke on “Gender Balance and the Divine Principle” at the UTS Alumni Conference in May 2015. Other speakers at this session were Jeanne Carroll and Alison Wakelin (see video links).*

Furthermore, in the final section of Chapter One of Divine Principle, when speaking of the interaction between the spiritual self and physical self, the life elements coming from God received by the spirit self would be characterized by feminine elements and masculine elements reflective of God's essence of gender balance. This offers another avenue of the Royal Road to be explored together with God using the Divine Principle as a guide to deeper and more profound realities on the road ahead. Exploration of these elements, their differences and commonalities is a topic par excellence of a post-Foundation Day era and mindset, hence, another example of questions we should be asking.

However, the available Unificationist resources are few and far between for the attributes of the feminine

nature of God. Our Movement's main resources are the Bible and Divine Principle, yet only in the Principles of Creation is God's femininity mentioned. The female voice of God in Unificationism is yet to be explored. How do we address the language problems involved? We should render Divine Principle in a more balanced way as a reflection of our advanced understanding of the Godhead. Here is an area of study worthy of the process of building CIG.

One obvious resource, if actively pursued, would be evidence from members themselves as the result of choosing to cultivate a personal internal connection of heart with our Heavenly Mother. This venture, perhaps more than any other, could represent the understanding True Mother longs to see in the Unification Movement – the dawning of the true essence of the divine feminine in harmony with the divine masculine made manifest throughout our membership. This establishes another avenue to be queried, particularly perhaps by our female scholars.

We may explore this journey of discovery as only the precursor of a more complete view of the Godhead. The more fundamental aspects of God – internal character and external form — are most certainly inextricably linked to the other set of dual characteristics and by consequence a more profound revealing and understanding of God's essence in ontology will certainly appear both intellectually and emotionally as well. The realm of emotion has its place in the creation of the Original Design. It is the work of today's scholars in Unificationism to begin this exploration.

Other paths to explore of God's original design in this post-Foundation Day era include discussion of direct dominion in the periods of growth, the subject and object reciprocity in the Three Blessings, and the interaction of spirit world and physical world, to only name a few. What are the questions to be asking our gender-balanced God individually as well as collectively? It would be limiting to think that answers to these questions would come from God only through the prism of a Unificationist mindset. Exploring the application of Unificationism to the wider world is a worthy goal. Reaping the consultative fruits of this wider world for a more colorful journey on the Royal Road could only make our Heavenly Parent a very inspired guide. Yet the path of inquiry is not to be replaced by the commentary of existing theological ideas in the wider world as such, but we should bring Unificationism to contemplate its own ontology in this new era of CIG.

A small group of UTS alumni, motivated by conversations at UTS alumni reunions, decided to begin to work together to pioneer this new Royal Road. Using the format of a forum, these collaborative efforts culminated in a one-day forum in Boston in March 2016 titled: "Living the Vision: Divine Principle Post-Foundation Day."



*A promotional video for "Living the Vision: Divine Principle Post-Foundation Day," a one-day forum held in Boston in March 2016.*

The format of the forum was unique and different from traditional workshop style. Each presenter briefly spoke on his or her topic at which time groups were formed among attendees to share their ideas on the proposed topic. In other words, many of the 15 different presentations throughout the day did not seek to teach but to *ask questions*. Topics for discussion were numerous including: "What are the ramifications in

our lives of Lucifer's surrender in 1999? What does the end of restoration history mean to me? The end of the age of indemnity for Unificationists opens up what opportunities for individual perfection? How do we see individual perfection in God's Original Design?

As scholars and participants in this extraordinary time of a world post-Foundation Day, the opportunities to work with our Heavenly Parent in consultation and collaboration to realize substantially the Principles of Creation are awe-inspiring. True Mother is opening the way by revitalizing long-established Unification Movement organizations such as the International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS), Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA), and the Unification Thought Institute, and in doing so, she facilitates and encourages exploration of the substance of the inheritance True Parents bequeathed to us when they declared the advent of Foundation Day.

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