


**A Providence for Post-Blessing Blessed Couple's  
Spiritual Maturity and Discipleship:  
Colorado Family Church –  
Blessing and Family Ministry**

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# INTRODUCTION

- ▶ My Ministry: Unification Church –Colorado Family Church Blessing and Family Ministry Coordinator.
  - ▶ Scope: All Blessed couples within the Colorado Family Church Congregation.
  - ▶ My Vision: To facilitate the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on this earth beginning with the cornerstone social unit - the Blessed Family.
  - ▶ Mission: To foster the discipleship of Blessed families through the transition from an autocratic style of Blessing and marriage education program to a democratic approach owned by each Blessed couple. To nurture a proactive lifestyle of consistent study and inspired practice rooted in the insights and model imparted by the Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon.
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# Discipleship

- ▶ In my efforts to arrive at a definition of discipleship I was led to Romans 12:2: “Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect”. I was also inspired by Rick Warren’s (1995) insights on the need for spiritual maturity and ministry in follower’s of Christ.
- ▶ Combining these two elements, I would suggest that a religiously based discipleship refers to a commitment to the realization of a victorious spiritual walk, relationship, the common good, and ultimately God’s Will. Such a commitment will result in a transformational spiritual maturity that is seeped in the Word and Spirit of God and which will bear much fruitfulness for God’s Will, purpose, and providence.

# Why?

- ▶ Why is it important to develop a pro-active ministry, nurturing strategy, and even a curriculum that targets families after they are Blessed and is designed to cultivate spiritual growth on the family and tribe level? Warren (1995) argues that spiritual growth for individuals is not automatic and I would further that argument by applying the same reasoning to Blessed couples. Following is Warren's response to the misconception that spiritual growth is automatic. Now, just replace the word people with couples, families, and tribes, to arrive at a clear answer to the question of why.
- ▶ “Spiritual growth does not just happen once you are saved, even if you attend services regularly. Churches are filled with people who have attended services for their entire lives, yet are still spiritual babies. An assimilated member is not the same as a mature member . . . Spiritual growth is not automatic with the passing of time, either . . . *The truth is this; Spiritual growth is intentional.* It requires commitment and effort to grow. A person must want to grow, decide to grow, and make an effort to grow. Discipleship begins with a decision—it doesn't have to be a complex decision, but it does have to be sincere . . . Without a commitment to grow, any growth that occurs will be circumstantial, rather than intentional. Spiritual growth is too important to be left to circumstances. Spiritual growth that leads to maturity begins with the kind of commitment described in Romans 6:13 (LB): “Give yourselves completely to God—every part of you—for you are back from death and you want to be tools in the hands of God, to be used for his good purposes”. (Warren, 1995:332—333)

# Spiritual Maturity for Blessed Couples

- ▶ The following quotes from Rick Warren (1995), while intended for individuals, also applies to Blessed Couples and it is the intent of my ministry to do just that:
- ▶ “Saddleback’s strategy for developing disciples is based on the six truths I identified in contrast to each myth. We believe that spiritual growth begins with commitment, is a gradual process, involves developing habits, is measured by five factors, is stimulated by relationships, and requires participation in all five purposes of the church” (Warren, 1995:343).
- ▶ Five Factors: “ I mentioned earlier that I believe there are five measurements of spiritual growth: knowledge, perspective, conviction, skills, and character. These five levels of learning are the building blocks of spiritual maturity” (Warren, 1995:350). “Knowledge is learning what God has said and done. Perspective is understanding why God said it or did it. It answers the “why” question of life” (Warren, 1995:352). Knowing what to do (knowledge), why to do it (perspective), and how to do it (skill) is all worthless if you don’t have the conviction to motivate you to do it” (Warren, 1995:355)!

# Spiritual Maturity for Blessed Couples

- ▶ “There is a logical order to building knowledge, perspective, conviction, skills, and character. You must start with a foundation of knowledge . . . On top of knowledge of the Word, you add perspective. The better you know God’s Word, the more you’ll begin to see life from God’s viewpoint. Conviction naturally grows out of perspective . . . An understanding of God’s purpose and plan changes your motivations. Conviction then gives you the motivation to maintain spiritual habits. Eventually, through repetition, these habits become skills. . . . When you put knowledge of the Word, perspective, conviction, and the corresponding skills together, the resulting product is character! First you know it; then you understand it; then you believe it with your whole heart; then you do it. The result of these four is character” (Warren, 1995:361—362).
- ▶ Spiritual Growth Habits: “Class 201, “Discovering Spiritual Maturity,” focuses on how to establish four basic habits of a disciple: the habit of time with God’s Word, the habit of prayer, the habit of tithing, and the habit of fellowship” (Warren, 1995:349). I would suggest that effort should be made to discern and discover other basic habits that would enhance the spiritual maturity of Blessed couples.

## True Parents: On the Word

- ▶ 19. The critical issue is to establish the tradition that brings us into oneness with the Word. You should not be separate from the Word. You should be people who cultivate yourselves based on the Word and move forward based on the Word. You have to establish a tradition based on the Word by taking it as the absolute standard. For this, you need to be tuned to my mind and heart as it was when I introduced the Word. You study the Word so that you can believe in the Word, yet your standard of understanding is not yet perfect. There is a time-honored standard in background to the Word, and you have to meet that standard. For this, you need to establish a tradition of deeply penetrating the Word. (21-327, 1969.01.01) (Cheon Seong Gyeong. Book 2, Chapter 5: #19, pg 255)

# Spiritual Maturity for Blessed Couples

- ▶ Benefits of knowing God's perspective: "First, perspective causes us to love God more; Second, perspective helps us resist temptation; Third, perspective helps us handle trials; Fourth, perspective protects us from error" (Warren: 1995: 353).
- ▶ Conviction: "Conviction helps us be diligent in continuing to grow spiritually. Growth requires time and effort. Without conviction about growth, people become discouraged and give up. No one stays with a difficult task unless they are convinced there is a good reason for doing so . . . The people who have made the greatest impact on this world, for good or evil, have not been necessarily the smartest, wealthiest, or best-educated people; they have been the people with the strongest, deepest convictions. Marx, Gandhi, Buddha, Columbus, and Luther are just a few of the people who changed the face of the world because of their conviction" (Warren, 1995:357)! Commitment: "But people do not resent being asked for a great commitment if there is a great purpose behind it. An important distinction to remember is that people respond to passionate vision, not need" (Warren, 1995:345).



# Spiritual Maturity for Blessed Couples

- ▶ Skills: “If you want your church to produce effective Christians, you must teach the necessary skills for Christian living and ministry” (Warren, 1995:359). I would also suggest that the same applies to producing effective and successful Blessed Couples.
- ▶ Christ like character: “If you want to know what *Christlike* character looks like, a good place to start is the list of nine character qualities Paul enumerates in Galatians 5:22-23: ‘The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control’. . . God is far more concerned with our character than he is with our comfort. His plan is to perfect us, not to pamper us. For this reason he allows all kinds of character-building circumstances: conflict, disappointment, difficulty, temptation, times of dryness, and delays. A major responsibility of your church’s Christian education program is to prepare your people with the knowledge, perspective, convictions, and skills needed to handle these situation. If you do, people will develop character” (Warren, 1995:361). Again, apply this to Blessed couples.

# Spiritual Maturity for Blessed Couples

- ▶ On the process of moving Blessed Couples toward ministry, whether it involves bringing others to the Blessing, or the development each couple's/person's unique calling from God for the building of His Kingdom:
- ▶ “This is a distinctive of Saddleback's teaching on ministry. SHAPE is an acronym I developed years ago to explain the five elements (spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality, and experiences) that determine what a person's ministry should be” (Warren, 1995:369).

# Spiritual Maturity for Blessed Couples

- ❖ The preceding quotes from Rick Warren (1995) sum up the steps (or mission) I believe an effective post-Blessing providence concerned with the spiritual maturity of Blessed Couples must have if it is to help all Blessed couples become those cornerstones of the Heavenly Kingdom on this earth: Couples should steep themselves in the words and guidance on the Blessing that have been given by Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon and, based on that knowledge, build up the perspective, conviction, habits, skills, and character that would personify a Blessed couple, allowing them to fulfill the purpose intended for that sacred organism. Further, it is crucial that the church invest in and contribute to the development of such a process and providence..
- ❖ To accomplish this, I believe a systematized curriculum must be developed, a type of Talmud for Blessed Families. If we are to incorporate the five factors outlined by Rick Warren, the foundational component of knowledge (based on True Parent's words about the Blessing and Way of Life for Blessed Families) needs to be constructed: “ I mentioned earlier that I believe there are five measurements of spiritual growth: knowledge, perspective, conviction, skills, and character. These five levels of learning are the building blocks of spiritual maturity” (Warren, 1995:350).

# Towards a Talmud for Blessed Families

- ▶ From a sermon given by Ken Doo, 3/23/14, Las Vegas, NV: “We have a very important mission as a Unificationists. We have a responsibility, left from True Parents as a word from the heavens, to establish a tradition. Though Jews are scattered around the world, they established their tradition living their separate ways and teaching the Torah and Talmud in their families – and we must do that too.
- ▶ We need to establish a tradition of True Parents centered on family.
- ▶ As we read True Parents’ words and practice it, we must make OUR tradition, Just by reading his words and receiving grace is not going to establish our tradition. Even if True Parents made the tradition for us, if we don’t practice it, it will not continue to be a tradition. And when we practice the words, we put its content in our behavior pattern and way of life and that becomes a tradition.”
- ▶ From my husband, Gary J. Fleisher: The Talmud became necessary after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. Before that time, the way of faith and life for the Jewish people was tied to their devotion to the Temple. After its destruction it became necessary to codify and document the practices and way of life for the Jewish people. This documentation became known as the Talmud.


# Towards a Talmud for Blessed Families

In the early days of our movement, we were justified by our attendance to the True Parents. Now, I believe it is time to begin the process of codifying and documenting, based on the words of the True Parents, the lifestyle, practices, attitudes, and culture for Blessed Central Families. If any of you are thinking: Why Denver, Colorado? – My answer is why not! Bottom line is that God has inspired me to do it and my answer is YES, I WILL! Perhaps HQ or others will also work on a project such as this in the future but I don't believe we should wait for that help before we begin our endeavors. I believe that it is better to respond to an obvious need than bemoan the fact that no one else is doing it.

- ▶ In September 1965 Charles M. Schulz published a “Peanuts” comic strip in which Linus told Charlie Brown about the saying: “Better to light a single candle than to curse the darkness”. The final two panels of the four panel strip revealed that Lucy resisted the guidance of the adage. Retrieved from <http://quoteinvestigator.com/2017/03/19/candle/> on 5/18/2017



# The Vision

- ▶ **The Progression of this Project:**
  - ▶ 1. Collection of relevant quotes done through the modality of Hoon Duk Hae . These quotes will be drawn and gleaned from The Divine Principle, the Holy Scriptures, and True Parent's speeches. The task will be to identify and then isolate contents that touch on the topic of Blessed Central Family practices, attitudes, traditions, and behaviors – pretty much anything remotely related to the way of life of a Blessed Central Family after the Blessing Ceremony.
  - ▶ 2. Systematize, Meta-analyze, and organize collected quotes.
  - ▶ 3. Build the Curriculum on this foundation.
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# How To:

- ▶ Create Word File: File name will consist of:
  - Your Name
  - The resource you are working with,
  - The date started

IE:

alicefleisherCheonSeongGyeong-2014- 7-17-17

or

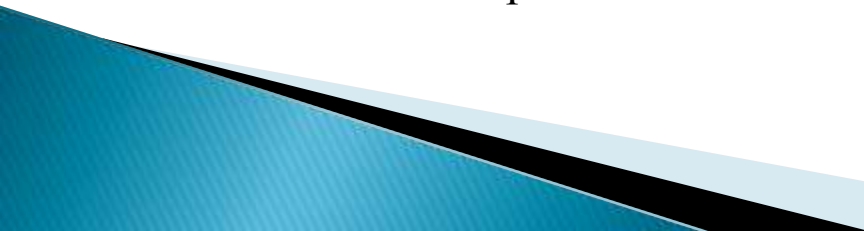
alicefleisher-1982 Speeches from tparents.org – 7-17-17

**Example – Use Times New Roman Type, 12 point. In this case, all the content is relevant. If only a section is relevant, just copy that section.**

- ▶ Text from the Speech, or quote:
  - ▶ In a family there are parents, husband and wife, sons and daughters; and there are surely other relatives living around you. Family members include grandfather and grandmother, mother and father, husband and wife and sons and daughters. It is not mere words that unite them. It is not money that draws them together, nor the necessity of living and eating together. Sharing the same house does not guarantee that family members will get along well. It is mutual affection, no matter who is older and who is younger, that allows them to overcome the difficult challenges of life together, in unity. Vertical and horizontal, left and right, front and back; within a family all these relationships are harmonized through the love not only of mother and father, of husband and wife, of brothers and sisters, but also of grandparents and grandchildren. The family with love as its core is the foundation upon which each of its members bonds with others, moves and acts. A family is based on love. (210-313, 1990.12.27)
- ▶ This is the material that will appear in your Word Document:
  - ▶ Book 5 True Family CHAPTER 1. True Families from the Viewpoint of God's Will Section 1. What Is a Family? #2
  - ▶ In a family there are parents, husband and wife, sons and daughters; and there are surely other relatives living around you. Family members include grandfather and grandmother, mother and father, husband and wife and sons and daughters. It is not mere words that unite them. It is not money that draws them together, nor the necessity of living and eating together. Sharing the same house does not guarantee that family members will get along well. It is mutual affection, no matter who is older and who is younger, that allows them to overcome the difficult challenges of life together, in unity. Vertical and horizontal, left and right, front and back; within a family all these relationships are harmonized through the love not only of mother and father, of husband and wife, of brothers and sisters, but also of grandparents and grandchildren. The family with love as its core is the foundation upon which each of its members bonds with others, moves and acts. A family is based on love. (210-313, 1990.12.27)



# The Source Material we will be collecting from and that your assignment will be drawn from.

- ▶ You can access this material electronically from:
    - ❖ [bcf-ed.org](http://bcf-ed.org)
    - ❖ [tparents.org](http://tparents.org)
  
  - ▶ Cheong Seong Gyeong (2014) – Assigned by Book
  - ▶ Pyeong Hwa Gyeong – (2014) – Assigned by Book
  - ▶ Chambumo Gyeong – (2016) – Assigned by Book
  - ▶ Blessing and Ideal Family – Assigned by Section
  - ▶ ALL of True Parent’s Speeches (English version) to be found, by year, on [tparents.org](http://tparents.org) website. Whoever works on this source material will be assigned speeches by year.
  - ▶ Divine Principle – Exposition of the Divine Principle – 2006 Version
  - ▶ True Mother’s Speeches and Anthology
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# CONCLUSION

- ▶ From where I stand today, it seems to me that the providence concerned with helping Blessed Couples achieve spiritual maturity during their post-Blessing phase is taking a very long time to develop. I am, however, confident that the vision and purpose Heaven has called me to facilitate is true and absolutely needed.
- ▶ In closing, I would like to share a quote from Rick Warren which both inspires and encourages me. It assures me that if I sculpt my ministry on a strong and true foundation and I am true to God's calling and guidance, His Will will prevail:
- ▶ “Of all the growth patterns I've observed as a gardener, the growth of the Chinese bamboo tree is the most amazing to me. Plant a bamboo sprout in the ground, and for four or five years (sometimes much longer) nothing happens! You water and fertilize, water and fertilize, water and fertilize — but you see no visible evidence that anything is happening. Nothing! But about the fifth year things change rather dramatically. In a six-week period the Chinese Bamboo tree grows to be a staggering ninety feet tall! . . . Don't worry about the growth of your church. Focus on fulfilling the purpose of your church. Keep watering and fertilizing and cultivating and weeding and pruning. God will grow his church to the size he wants it, at the rate that's best for your situation . . . If you are building a ministry on God's eternal purpose, you cannot fail. It will prevail” (Warren, 1995:393—394).
- ▶ Those interested in contributing to this project, please contact Alice Fleisher at the following email address: Blessing to all!!!
  - ▶ [bfcriculum2017@gmail.com](mailto:bfcriculum2017@gmail.com)

# REFERENCES

- ▶ Ahlen, J. Timothy and J.V. Thomas. 1999. *One Church, Many Congregations: The Key Church Strategy*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- ▶ Aldrich, Joe. 1993. *Lifestyle Evangelism: Learning to Open Your Life to Those Around You*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books.
- ▶ Carolina, Sr., Demetrius S. 2012. *Let There Be Light: Creating a Life Worth Living*. Jacksonville: Fortis.
- ▶ Mittelberg, Mark: 2000. *Building a Contagious Church: Revolutionizing the Way We View and Do Evangelism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- ▶ Moon, Sun Myung. 2014. *Cheong Seong Gyeong*. Family Federation for World Peace and Unification.
- ▶ Warren, Rick. 1995. *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message & Mission*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.