

## Our Responsibility as Leaders

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As leaders, the first point you have to be concerned about is the situation of the blessed couples, both those who are already living together and those who are still waiting to start their family life.

In dealing with couples who are already living together, you might find the advice I'm about to give you has come too late. I'm talking specifically about those couples who live outside of the center, pursue their own jobs, and are not very connected to our church. As center leaders, you have the task of not only taking care of members inside your center; you also must be concerned about brothers and sisters who live elsewhere.

Those brothers and sisters who live in the center and who lead a serious religious life, really investing themselves in the mission and sacrificing for the benefit of the whole, will certainly appreciate your sincere efforts to encourage and guide them. Blessed brothers and sisters who live in the center and work on the front line should be the main core of the blessed members.



### Give your couples a vision

How can you help blessed couples who don't live in the center but on their own in another city? If there is no center in their city, you have to give them a vision of their mission there; encourage them to take responsibility for that particular city. That couple could start doing home church, working with 360 households. With their home church area as their center, one couple can be responsible for that city. You can consider the couple as leaders of a satellite center. Blessed couples in this situation should develop a strong consciousness of their mission.

Once a husband and wife have set themselves up as leaders of a satellite center, you must continually inform them about everything that is going on. Be in constant communication with them. When you know they have vacation time, encourage them to participate in witnessing activities or in a workshop.

As a leader, it is also very important for you to know which couples are ready to start their families and which are still waiting. You will probably be confronted with many questions. When a couple wants to begin family life, they have to carefully evaluate each particular situation. For instance, you must consider: Do they have enough financial resources? Will they be able to find an apartment?

Let's suppose there is a brother in your center whose wife just arrived from another place and both of them want to live together in your center. Will you have a room for them? If you have nothing to offer them, you must make another place available where they can live as a married couple.

Practically speaking, none of our center leaders at this time is prepared to say to a couple, "Please live in our center now and continue to participate in church activities. I will support you financially. Unfortunately, in our present situation, we can usually only tell them, "Please find a place to live somewhere else. We don't know how we can support you." The only way for a couple to survive in this case is to find a job. A German citizen might possibly find a job in Germany, but for foreigners, there is almost no chance.

If the husband gets a job, he has to work very hard to become respected and acknowledged in his field, and he has hardly any time left to remain involved in church activities. If his wife becomes pregnant, she too cannot help very much with church work. Now this husband and wife have no possibility to invest themselves fully in the church. They may start to feel lonely and cut off. It is only natural, then, that they might develop resentments toward their leader, saying, "Why didn't he take care of us and our family?"

### **The need for continual guidance**

If a husband and wife want to start their family and move into their own apartment, you could say, "Go ahead." But if you simply permit them without considering their spiritual lives, you are in a certain sense extremely irresponsible insofar as you may be condemning both husband and wife to be unable to work with our church. If you look at some of our couples today, don't you think there is some truth to this?

Another point to consider is that spouses who are living separately naturally have a strong desire to be able to live together as a couple. Many couples think that somehow a miracle will happen and that there will be no problems to worry about after they start their family. Few members who decide to live together ever consider that if they don't make the right conditions, their faith could be weakened step by step and they could gradually drift away from the church.

Therefore, if you hear of a husband and wife who are planning to start their family within half a year or a year, you must give them clear internal guidance beforehand. In addition, you should make it possible for them to create their own foundation in their area.

I would like to ask you one thing: If a couple under you is to start their family, try to provide for at least the brother to be able to work in a public mission. Please give this some serious thought; it is a very important matter. It is our responsibility as center and church leaders to be deeply concerned about the future spiritual lives of our members.

Capable brothers and sisters would not need to work for an outside company if we had a solid foundation in our own business. If they could work for a church-owned or related company, they could be spiritually connected to the church and at the same time earn a living. Brothers and sisters are protected spiritually in a church-related company. What protection do they have if they distance themselves from the church? If there is no work for them in a church-owned or related business, we should make a great effort to maintain a deep, constant relationship with them.

Many couples in this country will soon be living together—brothers and sisters who work fulltime for the church as well as those who work in businesses. We should think about how we can take care of our couples once they start living together. That is our responsibility as leaders.

### **Being supported by your members**

I would like to mention something else. As a leader, you are being supported in your position by your brothers and sisters. Certainly, you have received your mission from God, the True Parents, and the national leader, but you are relying on your brothers and sisters around you for support. Look at my situation. It is obvious that my mission was given to me and that I am being supported by you. However, you would never support me if I did not help you and guide you in the way of God and the True Parents. Isn't this true?

If a member feels his leader has no qualifications to be a leader, he can either complain or, if he is developed spiritually, he can think, "Even though my leader is not qualified, I feel sympathy with our True Parents who had to choose such a person to fulfill God's will; therefore, I will support him." In other words, because he knows God's pain, the urgency of His providence, and the heart of the True Parents he

will want to support his leader.

However, if no one respects you as a leader, if the brothers and sisters working with you say, "We don't want to work together with you;" you will lose your foundation completely. In this sense, you can say that your position is being maintained by your brothers and sisters. You cannot remain a leader if your brothers and sisters don't support you, even though you might keep on insisting that you are the leader. If you are not supported, your position will automatically be transferred to someone else.

To fulfill our responsibility as representatives of the True Parents, we first need support from our brothers and sisters; we should always be concerned about them. In this sense, I must take care of you. So, as leaders, please take care of the brothers and sisters working with you.

What is the main theme of our church? Father advised us clearly that we should have the heart of a parent and the attitude of a servant and be willing to shed our tears, sweat, and blood for the sake of others. This means that the one who is the leader must serve more than anyone else. If we possess such a heart, we will certainly be able to fulfill our missions.

But what does it mean to take care of others? We have only a vague idea. Being in a leadership position doesn't mean we are always Abel. I should regard someone who devotes himself to the sake of Germany as my Abel, my leader. If you have a brother or sister in your center who does more for your city or more for Germany than you, please think to yourself, "Today he/she is my Abel. Only through him/her can I come to God." Please don't think, "I am always Abel." If, upon reflecting on the day, you feel that you haven't worked as hard as usual, and if you see someone who has worked much harder than you that day, please regard that person as your leader, your Abel.

### **Serve one another**

When you are chosen as a center leader, you stand in the Abel position. However, for God's providence to be realized, members have to fulfill a variety of responsibilities; for example, one sister must work in the kitchen. When you compare that sister with the center leader, who is Abel? In terms of leading the center, the leader stands in the Abel position, but who is Abel with regards to cooking? If that sister invests all her heart into cooking to take care of brothers and sisters, and if she is sincerely concerned about their health, then with regards to nutrition she is definitely your Abel. You should therefore serve her, support her, and take care of her.

Look at the fundraisers; they do their best to provide the finances for the activities of the center. Since you are not able to work every day to earn money for the center, from that standpoint your fundraisers are your Abels. Therefore, you should take care of them well. Do you understand what I am trying to say? If you change your viewpoint step by step, you will be able to see each of your members as your Abel. Since everyone is your Abel, you should take care of each one of them.

As long as you have this motivation in serving your members, they will think, "I may be Abel in the kitchen (or in fundraising), but I cannot take care of everything; therefore, I can respect my leader, who is responsible for the whole, as my Abel."

When I think of Munich, for example, and of the brothers and sisters working there who are constantly worrying about Munich, who go to sleep and wake up thinking about Munich, then in a certain sense they are my Abel. When the leader of Munich sees the leader of the region, he thinks, "He is in charge of my region, and with regards to the entire region he is my Abel." And when the leader of the region sees the leader of Munich he thinks, "He is responsible for Munich, and with regards to Munich he is my Abel." In this way, we can mutually respect each other. We need this kind of heart, this kind of attitude, don't you think?

I'm sure you have heard Father say, "If you love me, please love your brothers and sisters in the same way you love me." He also said, "If you get yourself something to eat, please share your food with the other brothers and sisters; serve one another."

Let me add this, though: Please don't serve others merely out of a sense of duty. Serve someone when you really want to serve him or her. Only when we respect our brothers and sisters as our Abel can we genuinely take care of each other.