
Blessed Marriage and Family Life

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Significance of the Blessing

Father has said that we Unificationists are in the process of crossing the desert. At this time, the Blessing we are given is still a conditional one. What we have received thus far is the church level Blessing, because the foundation for our Blessing is presently recognized only by God and the members of our movement; eventually we desire that the Unification Blessing be recognized on a national and even a worldwide level. To the world, our marriages may presently appear symbolic and conditional, but once the citizens of a nation proclaim their acceptance of the Blessing and view us as their spiritual ancestors, we will inherit the recognition of Blessing on the national level. The third and final level is for the world to recognize the Blessing.

This may happen after this generation lives in spirit world. Yet we still must fulfill our responsibility before we can go to the next stage. The blessed couples must actually create acceptance of the True Parents on the national level. And if *we* do not accomplish this task, the responsibility then will fall upon the shoulders of our children. In turn if they are unable to accomplish this responsibility, it will come to their children.

I think we must ask ourselves if we really want to give this burden to our children. Our generation of blessed couples should work hard for posterity and should do as much as possible so that they will not have such a burden to carry.

Each blessed person has a certain position, and each of us should carry ourselves with pride and dignity. We have a great privilege, but also the burden to become a good example. One thing we should never do is underestimate the value of the Blessing. Billions of spiritual beings envy those of us who have already received the Blessing directly from the Messiah, and in the future, many people on earth will feel likewise. Because of the delicacy of their feelings, we should always have a humble disposition and attitude. Rather than putting ourselves above others, we should always seek to go lower and serve.

After we receive the Blessing, God becomes like our "judge," for if we need to be "punished," it is God who will invoke that punishment through His representatives, the True Parents. That is why they accept the responsibility to educate us, and why they intercede on our behalf. They

proclaim before the whole universe and even Satan that we are now God's children.

True Parents cannot do that arbitrarily. Rather, they had to lay stringent conditions to make a foundation that would allow them that right. They had to earn the title of True Parents. Both God and Satan had to agree that True Parents are the ones who have the power to take away the sins of the world, and are able to forgive people of original sin. It is for this very reason that Father labored for so many years and paid so much indemnity. His main mission as Messiah is to grant the Blessing.

The Blessing is the most supreme gift any person could ever receive. And once we actualize it, we will begin to recognize its value. During the early years, very few members knew what price had been paid by the True Parents in order to give us this greatest of all gifts. As well, very few realized what it accomplishes. Some have even thrown it away, not recognizing its significance.

As far back as twenty years ago I told members, "If you could really comprehend the value of the Blessing, you would rather be blessed to a broomstick than not be blessed at all." I am still convinced of that even today. Many of them thought I was referring to a skinny person, but I wasn't. I meant an actual *broomstick!*

If you comprehend the Principle, you will understand that the Blessing is irrevocable. It is given by God, but fulfillment of the Blessing entails the cooperation of man and woman working together with God. And that is when the challenge begins!

Do you think the Blessing is just a gift from God and True Parents? Is it something you are just given and then can ignore? God expects more than a thank-you. He anticipates that by receiving this gift, you will give your life totally to Him.

The Principle is the best insurance for our lives, and God is the best caretaker and provider. If you withdraw from God just to make sure that your family has enough to eat, you will only rely on your own power and can never be sure what other difficulties you might confront. But if you bring the offering of yourself and your family to God's altar, He will surely care for you.

Heaven has compassion for those who work for God and endure

suffering in their personal and family life. That is the central teaching of Unificationism. The suffering we do for humanity will be our only source of pride once we go to the spirit world. Yet those who never suffered will have nothing to talk about. Truly, we receive far more than we give.

The real essence of "life" begins when you come to the point that you are totally one with God and your partner. The Blessing is a promise which must be enacted, and is effective once there is solid cooperation between God—who grants the Blessing—and us. Before our Blessing, Christel and I received clear education about its significance. We knew it was a divine gift and we were taught to revere the position of other blessed couples. By nature, I am an experimentalist and therefore I did a lot of research to see what differences there were before and after receiving the Blessing. No matter how I examined our life, I found there was a tremendous difference.

The way we see the Blessing is important. If we don't honor it, then the Blessing may have little or no meaning to us. Yet in the eyes of God, the Blessing has supreme significance. Through it, He acknowledges us as His children. He forgives us. He adopts us. He can call us His son or daughter. Yet because He also invests great trust in us, He expects us to act accordingly.

Through the Blessing we inherited a great many things from the True Parents. But we have to cope with our rather precarious position. As we are trying to build the new world, we still have one foot in the old world, and our body still suffers the effects of many generations of sinning and spiritual decay.

Yet through this time of spiritual struggle and transformation, the next generations will become more pure. Even though we have been infused with great spiritual value, our bodies are still connected to the things of this world.

Compared to the world population, which numbers nearly five billion people, there are so few blessed Unificationists—only a few thousand couples. When we consider that God is trying to start a new world with a mere handful of us, we have to recognize how precious we are to Him. We have such a privilege; we should be willing to repay Him with our whole lives. Just the thought of His love for us can make us shed tears and repent for the times we wanted to consider ourselves just as normal as everyone in

the secular world. There is a fundamental difference. It basically stems from the fact that the spirit of God is within us, and He has sanctioned our marriages.

The view you have as a single person is one thing, but as a couple—with a total of four eyes and twenty senses—the world looks different. Someday in the future we will be able to explain to people how we did everything—how we witnessed to and cared for millions of people, how we survived for years as single people, and even as married couples were often separated. It may sound incredible to them; they will only be able to accept it once they see the dawning of this new world. When they taste the Heaven that we helped to erect, they will be immensely grateful. Yet no matter how much they try, they will not be able to totally comprehend the suffering we endured, and what a struggle it was to purify the offerings we gave to God.

When man and wife become one, each brings his or her personal observation of the universe to their union. Consequently, they will be able to project the image of God and be God's representatives. Such a couple must acknowledge the law and order of God and attempt to even harmonize with the universe. God originally purposed man to stand between the spiritual and physical worlds, in the center of this polarity—in total oneness. He desired that we direct and harmonize the whole universe. It may sound very abstract, but it is very simple. And it makes absolute sense to me, only words fail me, because the vision of that is more beautiful than words can express.

Creating a Blessed Family

Anyone who lives a celibate life for his entire life is not able to perceive the love of God in totality. In one very real way, such a person is only half of a whole, for a total "being" is created when a man and woman unite. Even though some Unificationists may sacrifice living married life immediately after receiving the Blessing, it is just a matter of time before each begins to know more about what the other half thinks and how he or she lives.

When you come together with your spouse, a whole new world will open up to you. During this emergency time, on the whole, Unificationists live a very unnatural lifestyle. It is not easy to be of marriageable age, yet wait before living married life.

Once man and woman live together, each will begin to see God with *four* eyes, and perceive Him with all the combination of their *twenty* physical and spiritual senses. It is important that each of us find an even greater oneness with God through life with our mate. Of course we still battle with our own inadequacies and inner conflicts; even after the Blessing we continue to war with Satan internally. And some kind of "combat" will continue in our marriage. If we are not very strong spiritually, we may feel totally rejected by our mate, and our self-confidence could diminish. Yet overcoming Satan and growing in our capacity to love are instrumental in our personal re-creation.

Some partners may not like one another initially. Regardless of their understanding, they still stand on the threshold of Heaven, and still bear the title of "blessed couple." *Nobody* has the right to take away the Blessing, because Father gave it with the approval of God. It is only the partners themselves who can forfeit the Blessing by violating the principle of God's law of love, as explained in the Principle.

Making an ideal marriage and fulfilling the responsibility of the ideal family will take all the spiritual and even muscle power you have—all the effort you can summon from within, as well as your entire reserve of love. But if you are determined to reach the goal of making your blessed marriage "work," you will begin to reject external influences that get in your way. You and your mate must become totally united. Once you do, the law of repulsion is activated and you will be able to automatically reject anything or anyone who tries to intrude in the sphere of the unity the two of you have built with God. Through the years, your harmony as a couple will unfold into an interdependency, and there will come a time when you will not even want to live without your mate.

Those people who have chosen to beg or to live on the streets have lost some essential element of their personal dignity. Regaining that kind of integrity begins within the family unit, for it is the foundation of the Kingdom of Heaven. Children should be educated in secular matters, but one

important point not to be neglected is their spiritual life. They should look to their parents as an example of how morally upright people should act. But today, far too often just the opposite occurs. Parents find it a challenge to educate their children, and many find it next to impossible to discipline them. Since parents are not perfected in their love, they might yell at one another or beat one another, even in front of their children. If a husband and wife do not show respect and love for one another, the children will have a difficult time respecting their parents. And their own personal dignity may suffer as a result. The children may feel subconsciously responsible that their parents argue and yell all the time, and it is suppressing this fear that could stunt the growth of their own self-confidence.

Parents should strive to always behave in a dignified manner in front of their children, so that their children can recognize God's nature within them. This is the kind of tradition which we try to create within the blessed family.

Why do you think a little baby suckles the breast of its mother? Is it only because he finds free food there? No. It is not just milk which flows through the mother's breast. A mother transmits love when she nurses her baby. Of course there may be extenuating circumstances which prevent this, but it is best if a mother is able to breastfeed her baby. It seems quite incongruous to take away the milk that is meant for a calf and give it to a human baby. It seems to me that such substitutes inhibit the flow of love possible between mother and child. I am sure a mother cow transmits love to her calf by feeding it her own milk. Likewise, a human baby needs to be nourished by its mother's milk, not only because he is hungry. There is a dual purpose; the baby also needs love.

A mother does not tire of looking at her baby; her love is alive and vibrant, and whenever she looks at her child, an invisible and inaudible type of communication goes on and her baby responds with love. She needs such love for it is life-giving.

The relationship between husband and wife is so important, even during the time the fetus is in the woman's womb. The father-to-be and the mother-to-be naturally have give and take between themselves; emotions are transmitted to the embryo from both parents, even at the moment of conception. In fact, an exchange of spiritual elements continues during the entire pregnancy, and the quality of the relationship between husband and wife naturally affects the unborn child.

The emotional, intellectual, and physical state of the mother during her pregnancy plays a crucial role in forming a healthy character in her child. It is most ideal if the expectant parents are basically happy people, and not given to mood-swings or depressions. They should strive to build a harmonious relationship between themselves, working together to ensure the child's spiritual and emotional health through the positive thoughts and love which they share with one another as well as any other children they might have.

The environment plays a role, too. Ideally, the woman should be in a beautiful environment—filled with beautiful music, flowers, and things that delight her. But if circumstances do not permit, she can practice the art of visualization—seeing in her mind's eye scenes of nature's majesty, gardens of flowers with a rainbow of hues, snow-capped mountains, or sparkling ocean waters.

Invariably parents will need to educate their children in certain principles and rules. They will have to teach their children manners and set down laws of behavior, outlining where the children are allowed to go, and places they are forbidden to go. A father and mother will both inject such elements, but generally it is the mother who accepts more responsibility to educate the children in social graces.

If parents are wise, they will begin to send one of their older children on errands, such as to a neighbor's house or a local store. A child has to begin to learn a bit of independence, and on the basis of the principles which his parents have taught him, start to experience life outside the protective environment of his home.

North America has especially been hard hit with the phenomenon of kidnapping. Some children have been abducted and raped, even killed. Some small children have been kidnapped and later sold to a childless couple so desperate for a child, they were willing to pay an exorbitant amount of money. To guard against this from happening, the parents should lay down certain laws for their child which are more preventive in nature, but essential nonetheless, such as never to go with a stranger.

It is natural, therefore, that parents are wary about these possibilities, as well as the psychological impact too many restrictions can have on a child. Moral education is crucial, too. Parents must begin to teach children the difference between Satan's world and show them signs of God's pure and unstained world. Parents must show by good example the ways of God, and yet also point out the reality of Satan and how he still maintains control over individuals and society.

The lessons which a child learns early in life are usually the ones that stay with him. As he grows up, he will recognize that they were instrumental in strengthening his own character, and in turn, be able to pass them on to his own children.

It is only natural that a woman becomes attached to the baby she carries for nine months. She and her husband wait in anticipation for their child to be born. On the eighth day of the child's life, Unificationist parents hold a ceremony in which they dedicate their baby to God. This is very meaningful to both God and the parents.

Blessed women especially would do well to reflect deeply upon the fact that their child is a child of God—not only once the baby is born, but even as they try to conceive a child. At the same time a mother receives spiritual elements from God, so does her unborn child.

If the husband is spiritually stronger than the wife, he should consciously pray for God to work through him to raise his wife to the same level. They will then find it easier to meet God together. Perhaps the wife is stronger spiritually. She then is the one who should open herself for God to work through so her husband can ultimately be strengthened in faith.

The partner who is the boldest should diplomatically educate the other to work on getting rid of his or her timidity. Ultimately, the couple should strive to be on the same level, even if this takes the duration of their physical lifetime together.

Your marriage can only be as rich as your relationship with God. If you cultivate a loving relationship with God, that will affect the life you lead with your spouse. And if you have beautiful harmony with your spouse, then the bond you create with your child will be just as strong.

In restoration, one partner is always ahead of the other. Even after the Blessing, the spiritual status of husband and wife is different. This is due primarily to the difference in their backgrounds. If one has a PhD. in theology and the other is a farmer's daughter, both partners have to raise each other. Perhaps he will need to raise her level of knowledge, and she raise him in the world of heart. However, the point of unity is always the same—their mediator, God.

A couple never begins on the same level, yet value is not determined by the ability to talk and educate, but by the quality of heart. The husband may be a business executive and his mate a housewife. Job status or the actual physical work each accomplishes does not matter. Both husband and wife will naturally teach things to one another. It is a question of becoming sensitive to one another's needs as well as cultivating the ability to be open enough to receive advice from their partner. The bottom line is perfecting our heart. That is a big challenge, but surely a part of creating a blessed family.

What is the reality of marriage?—It is coming together and facing the problems and the obstacles as one unit, not just as two individuals.

A "family" is created once a couple has a child to raise. But without establishing a family, you cannot fully experience Heaven. There is both sweetness and pain in learning how to deal with the new challenges presented in the advent of raising a baby. Attention and love then becomes divided between your partner and your child, but due to need, the greatest portion will naturally be given out to the baby. Even before the birth occurs, make sure that both you and your mate can digest that fact.

A family cannot exist and maintain itself long without a system of management. Generally, it is the woman who assumes the responsibility of managing the household. She might take on those duties and inevitably accept the task of counting all their pennies; she therefore must learn to be thrifty and economical, able to spot a bargain as well as adjust her budget for any emergencies that come up.

A husband defends the family from the outside, and in a sense the woman "defends" its assets. Women must also be exemplary in learning to be clean, keeping the house tidy and a place for God to dwell. She has the responsibility to create a warm and welcoming environment within the house, and should do her best to inspire her husband and children to be spiritually prepared to greet any member of the True Family, or any guest who visits. A great part of this is tied up with attitude; her own outlook is instrumental in shaping that kind of atmosphere within the entire household. Perhaps it is rather invisible, but this is also a part of married life.

Each of us has to take responsibility to provide for the future in many ways, not only financially. We need to constantly educate and pre-

pare ourselves for many eventualities. Women must be mindful of staying healthy, because they naturally want to bear healthy children. It is especially important for them to keep strong in mind, body, and spirit.

If you are not yet blessed or have not yet started married life, create the foundation for a good and stable family life by developing emotionally strong and healthy relationships now—with your spouse if you have one, with your friends, and those you work with. Make your connection to God very solid, or your ability to create a joyful marriage may be much more laborious than it need be. This point may seem so obvious or simple that it does not need mention, but often we neglect to work on the simple things, and then find it that much more strenuous to clear the highest hurdles.

We are public people. We belong to God and have responsibility to be our own caretakers. Looking at marriage from that viewpoint, the children you bear must be offered to God.

We are God's temples, and for that reason we should keep ourselves clean and pure, internally and externally. Even if we begin our family life in a very small and humble dwelling, it too should be kept clean and sanctified with tears of longing for God. If we do this, He will feel welcome to live with us.

The fetus has no knowledge of the world outside its mother's womb. Whatever input it receives comes through the nervous system and the emotions of its mother. But before a fetus is born into this world, it has no way to communicate with its mother. Perhaps it tries to tell her something by kicking her from the inside. I often wonder what that really signifies. Perhaps it is *not* merely stretching its legs to prepare for birth, but also is trying to convey its response after receiving certain impulses from its mother. Therefore, the way a husband and wife relate during the pregnancy is very important. Their influence to the child starts long before that child takes its first breath in the physical world.

As parents of the future generation, we Unificationists have to follow the tradition of True Parents and then pass on those elements to our descendants. If love is transmitted from parents to children and there is a relationship of trust created, the children will then adopt the goodness they see exhibited in their parents' example.

That is a difficult point for all of us now because we all came from a mixture of good and evil. All of a sudden we are being pushed into a new tradition. We want to build up something that has everlasting value, but it

is so different from what we lived before. And it is hard to accept and live according to these new expectations.

But if we cannot live by the Principle, how can we teach our children its virtues? If we are just like our own parents and the people of society—permissive and unable to discipline, or actually bad examples—how will our children be able to adopt this new tradition we try to impart? No matter how difficult it is, this is the time for us to develop and move into the new tradition of purity and God-centeredness. It seems as though we go against the mainstream of society just to do this. Yet eventually, the moral direction of this world *will* begin to turn this same way—toward the direction of God. And everybody will exhibit this same desire to be good.

At this time, it is necessary for many blessed children to go to public schools. This poses great danger because based on the influence of their peers, they easily adopt the bad habits prevalent in society, but which are completely opposite from those we try to teach them. Unless we elicit much more assistance from spirit world, and show much more to our children, there is a great risk that they will be tempted by the world. Yet we must guard against this at all costs, and instead draw our children toward the ways of God.

Education in a Blessed Marriage

Love. Marriage. These days neither that state of heart nor that state of being, seems very permanent. Divorce is an all-too easy solution when people throw up their hands and feel that their marriage or relationship of love is just not working out. Most people enter into marriage with great hope and anticipation. Unificationists are no different, but it is our belief that the True Parents pronounce our marriage Blessing on behalf of God. Furthermore, to us, the Blessing is not simply marriage. Of course the financial responsibilities and those of educating and raising children are the same for our families as the families in secular society. In addition, though, we assume a host of obligations for both our spouse and children that are more spiritual in nature. We feel that fulfilling these obligations is central to our life of faith, and definitely one step toward our perfection. Father proclaimed the "motto" for the Blessings held in 1982, "World peace through ideal families." Blessed couples desire to create God-centered families, and in fact to make God an integral part of their lives.

All people—whether they live in affluence or poverty—are looking to

be happier than they are at this moment. Most people feel that they can be happier if they get married rather than stay single. Although some people view marriage with rebuke and eyes of criticism, most people look at it with *hope*—*hope* that even if their parents divorced or separated, their own marriage will work. Hope that theirs will bring fulfillment of even their most heartfelt goals. Hope that in being married, they will ultimately find joy.

The greatest workshop in human society can be found within the family unit. Life really becomes interesting once you start married life. Not only does it present great ordeals and confrontations, it also brings tremendous demands. Although I feel the greatest challenge in life is developing and perfecting a personal relationship to God, I believe that a more wholesome and complete picture of the nature of God can be discovered only once an individual is married.

Some people may have the impression that pure love for God must exclude the expression of physical desires. I believe that the only taboo is *not* to fulfill our partner's needs and desires — spiritual, emotional, *and* physical. Yet the spiritual side—the heart of love we offer to God, True Parents, and one another—must ultimately be the stronger love. Sex life is important and surely an integral part of the blessed marriage, but the bond of spiritual love must be so strong, it will bind us together long after the gray hair and wrinkles appear.

We Unificationists live celibate lives for many years, and make conscious efforts to steer our thoughts more toward God than toward the opposite sex. Because of that, we may have some complexes once we begin our married life. But we should do our best to get away from feeling guilt, and should rid ourselves of inhibitions. Once God gives us His permission to love, we should love our partner as totally as possible—spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

Marriage is a continuing education; so is family life. But if a couple begins married life with a wrong perception of life and marriage and then proceeds down the highway but ignores the speed limit signs, both partners have to be prepared to take the consequences. Marriage partners need to exercise caution when relating with one another. This is nothing to worry about; it just takes some time and practice to consciously bring God

into your midst. Remember that your partner's ego and integrity are important elements for you to consider and must be dealt with sensitively.

Everything grows in stages. Married love is no exception. If at the outset of your married life you cling to the conviction that your love is absolute and true, perhaps you have an unrealistic view of love and how it develops, and may just miss a great deal of the excitement of married love. Much like sunlight and rain open a flower, both women and men have to be coaxed "open" with love. When a flower receives the light and warmth of the sun, its petals begin to unfurl. If you see a rose early in the morning, it looks beautiful and serene in its bath of dew. But if you only saw a rose at dawn, could you say with confidence that you know what a rose looks like? Once you saw a rose in full bloom, you would realize that the flower looks even more radiant and alive once it opens. It takes time and the influence of certain elements for the rosebud to grow and mature to be a flower. Yet if you handle it correctly and tend it well, a magnificent blossom will later unfold. So it is with your mate.

Married life is an entirely new world. But you have to step into that world rather gingerly. If you just walk into a garden without regard for newly planted seedlings, you may unconsciously trample what would have been beautiful flowers or delicious vegetables. So many entities are still invisible to you—hidden beneath the soil. The same is true in your marriage. Step cautiously around that "flowering" mate of yours. And don't grind your heels into the earth; if you aren't careful, you may snuff out something that would be splendid—if it was given the chance to grow. Walk through the garden of your marriage with sensitivity. Start slowly. It takes time to learn how to give as well as how to receive love. Do not expect that the full potential of your marital love will unfold without some investment, and even some pain on your part. Unrealistic expectation will cause you much more disillusionment and disappointment than you need experience.

The personalities of both you and your mate will change through the years. You will not be the same as you were on the day you met, on the day you married, or on the day you die. Yet through your marriage, you have the chance to grow together, sharing life, and even growing old with your partner. What a blissful thought! You have a partner in life, a companion. You need not fear that you will always be alone. But remember that you can never experience all the kinds and degrees of passion and compassion in your very first year of married life. Let your love develop naturally. Your idea of love and respect will change as the years go by. And you will be amazed at how mellowing and comforting love in your later years will be. God has so many surprises in store for you—don't give up before He can unveil them to you.

The strongest motivator for a husband to achieve success is the love of his spouse. Yet she does not always have to vocalize her undying love for him. Actions often speak the loudest. It could be said that men actually have a greater need to be respected than loved. Respected for their work. Respected for their decisions. Respected for their intellect and good qualities. When a wife can sincerely respect her husband, he can be motivated to fulfill his responsibility.

Even if one partner cannot reciprocate love, the one who does feel love should persevere in loving his or her partner until a response can be felt. No matter how hardened someone's heart may be, I believe that ultimately *anyone* can be melted by love.

Keep in mind that even if your husband or wife does not fit your ideal image now, your image will change. Keep in mind that he or she will look different in a few years and perhaps even transform himself or herself into what appeals to you. But regardless, the more years you look at that man or woman, the more you will see him or her change in the brightness of God's love, and the more you will come to forget that old idea of what you *wanted* to love. Some kind of love will stir and develop within you, enabling you to eventually love that person as the son or daughter of God he or she is.

Remember that he or she has many qualities to respect and admire. Look up to your partner as God's representative. When you do, you take the position of God and can uplift your partner in a parental way.

Blessed couples have been assured by True Father that Unificationist marriages will continue once we live in the spirit world. It is a matter of our attitude whether we will live in bliss or in hell for eternity.

Even though for the first few years of your life together you may dislike or even despise certain things about your mate, eventually you may feel absolutely lost without him or her. Learning to love is a process, one that does not happen in an instant. Does it *really* matter that it will take some time to smooth out the rough spots and work things out? Why not look upon it as an adventure rather than an ordeal?

Everyone needs to prepare himself before starting married life. Part of that preparation should entail cultivating a parental heart and the ability to take the position of parent.

It is our obligation to study and learn as much as possible about how to live life, not merely survive. Once you are able to digest what you learn, you will be able to handle many situations. Take those experiences as preparation to be a parent—a messiah—for your spouse, your children, and eventually the rest of the world.

As you enter into marriage and family life, you naturally develop a parental level of heart, not only for your individual family, but the family of man. Life becomes your teacher. When you learn the ideal, you should strive your best to live it. You can teach others the lessons you have learned through your personal experiences in marriage and family life.

A scientist uses a certain formula to produce an experiment. If he deviates by using one gram too many or too little, the chemical formula will not work. The same is true of living a life with God. The formula given by True Parents must be used properly, without compromise.

As single people, Unificationists proclaim that they commit their lives to God. Yet even after we marry, we must totally involve our lives in the service of God's work. As single people we spent our days preparing ourselves for the great challenges we would encounter when we live with God as families. Those of us who are blessed might view married life as "higher education."

Priorities in a Blessed Marriage

To receive spiritual protection, it is essential to connect with God. As you live together, you and your mate may discover that you have little time for private life. Even as you lie together in bed before sleeping, you will probably think and talk about God, about True Parents, and about the mission. You will share your feelings about God, and what you feel you can do for Him—individually and together. When you dream, you will probably dream more about True Parents than your spouse. And you may dream about how to bring people to God so they can understand the mission of True Parents. That is the correct priority in married life: God must come first.

If you make your family your first priority, you may end up losing your connection to God. If that happens, you will lose the stronghold of your life. Those who have received the Blessing have much more of an

obligation to fulfill than those who are still single. The amount of effort that each family makes toward the fulfillment of God's purpose determines the distance between themselves and God. If a couple withdraws from public life, they will have a much more arduous task keeping spiritually buoyant, unless they keep a connection to the spiritual hierarchy. Some blessed couples, although technically and "legally" still connected to True Parents in the spiritual sense, hang by a "thread," living much more in Satan's society than God's. I wonder what level of spiritual education they are able to give their children. I wonder how they feel about their status. I wonder how True Parents feel about their status.

Perfection of heart can be achieved when individuals or families work toward fulfilling the higher purpose. But the family is not the highest purpose—God, the True Parents, the world, the nation, and even the society should come before the family. If we establish correct priorities and put God's work first, our family will be taken care of.

A family can stay on the level of family restoration and still be accepted by God, but the greatest spiritual protection and benefit will flow to each member of the family once there is a concerted effort on the part of all members to work for a higher goal—for example, doing home church work, or working to benefit the national or the worldwide movement.

We are concerned with a lifetime project; the service of God is not something temporary. It is not terminated when you get married or have children. In fact in a sense, that is when life really begins. That is when you need God the most, much more than when you live a single life. To raise a family, you need much more power than when you work on your own. When you live a married life, you are confronted with the "reality" of another human being—good and bad points. Things are much more complicated—finances that were quite simple become quite complicated once you have a mate and children. But if you connect with God, you can cope with this and other avenues of married life. If you set your priorities straight and put God before all else, then even if you have twenty children, no problem in life will be without solution.

Within your marriage be sure to use the phrase, "If God wills..." and make sure you don't hinge everything to what "you will." It is natural and right that you pray for your partner. But if you put your partner before the mission, you will suffer. By fulfilling the higher purpose, the lower purpose will automatically be taken care of. If after you start living togeth-

er, you have the attitude to focus on national and worldwide work, you will definitely make a successful marriage.

You have to make up your mind that you will do everything for God first, even if that means sacrificing your spouse and family for a time. It is hard to acquire that kind of attitude once the pleasure of marriage becomes evident to you, and/or you suddenly have the burdens of a family. I have found that a marriage is blessed in proportion to what each partner gives to God.

Some blessed couples have reversed their priorities. Instead of sacrificing their families for God, they have sacrificed *God* in favor of their families. They withdrew from active service to God to take care of personal interests.

Of course some amount of responsibility for our families' well-being is certainly upon our own shoulders. Yet we must understand that marriage within the Unification movement is not quite the same as marriage in secular society. Externally, one may be quite like the other, but internally each Unificationist couple has a certain cross of love to bear. We marry for the sake of restoration. People in the Old Testament era sacrificed animals. Christians bore the cross of Jesus by sacrificing their own bodies. Yet we are now called to sacrifice our heart and love. And we do that by marrying not primarily for our own pleasure and happiness, but rather to create God-centered families.

Perhaps we may not marry the man or woman of our dreams. But then we must realize that our marriages are for posterity, to literally build the Kingdom of Heaven. Besides, each of us can adopt new dreams—dreams of Heaven, goals of perfection. We believe that our connection to the unstained lineage of the Messiah assures us that our children are born without original sin. It is our contention that eventually they will help govern the physical Kingdom of God on earth.

Marriage becomes a cross not just because two strangers come together and must work at smoothing out their differences. Any marriage has its share of burdens and problems—economic concerns, sicknesses, and the responsibilities of raising children. This is not something unique to Unificationist marriages. Every provider has the obligation to find the way to get enough money to take care of his family.

Married people may be disillusioned once the "honeymoon" is over. Today divorce often stems from that disillusionment. But if people can apply themselves to working out the rough spots, they may end up going through much suffering together, but come out with something substantial

and meaningful. Couples will not automatically live "happily ever after." Even those who are united and connected with God find this a challenge. Many young people have such high ideals for marriage. Even those who knew their own parent's marriage was painful still have the desire to give marriage a try, in hopes that they won't make the same mistakes, and instead they will reach that state of "happily ever after."

But we Unificationists can have a definite advantage when we get our priorities straight. The grace of God can definitely manifest within the blessed marriage; it is basically up to us how we view things.

In order for a table to stand upright it must have more than two legs. Marriage is similar. You need at least three "legs" —God, husband, and wife. That trinity must comprise the foundation, and upon it, the fourth leg—the child—can be created.

Even if husband and wife both have the desire to perfect themselves, for some couples, children come along right away; this makes them face reality as they must do whatever possible to provide for their offspring. They may be confused how much or how little contribution they can or should make. In just such a moment of confusion, Satan may succeed in dividing that family from God. But when a couple lives by the Principle, they naturally climb up and come closer to God. And they are not given to such worries.

Marital love can be an experience of "heavenly bliss" for both man and wife. But those experiences are given by God and not created only from desire. God is able to express His love to us through our partner. Yet both husband and wife must each work to create mind-body unity. The greatest form of love is to be experienced within God Himself. It stands to reason that we should place our greatest trust in Him and make Him our number one priority.

We are the ones who decide whether or not our children will come close to God. If we make unity with God before we get married, He will definitely become the center of our marriage. We should even invite Him to participate in our love-making. When we do that and as a result a child is conceived, we can be guaranteed that the baby receives certain elements of God's joy and enjoys great spiritual privileges.

The genitals are a human being's most holy place." That is why we intuitively feel we should protect them best. Yet through Satan's influence, many people expose those very private areas. But the more divinity a person possesses, the more he desires to protect his sexual organs.

How can God participate in a sexual relationship between husband and wife? It is actually both a physical and spiritual process at the same time, since spirit and body are totally united. The *core* has to be God, yet He can participate in such a relationship if it is one of pure love—refined, restored, not stained and satanic. Satan has no way to gain entry into such a relationship. God must be invited to join and become the center of the union between husband and wife.

The greatest part of your love has to be given to God. If you do that, your marriage is guaranteed success. Do not act as a judge; if your mate is not perfected in six months, extend the time period! It is your obligation to uplift your mate. If your mate lost faith but you kept on loving God more than your spouse, he or she might eventually admire your faith and conviction, and bow before you. By keeping faith and setting the correct priorities, you could succeed in reinstalling faith within him and pulling him right into Heaven with you!

Your marriage will be successful if you give your life to God and others. For thousands of years this world has been in chaos and confusion. Unificationists want to separate from that world and build a new one, and then get ride of this old world.

Most marriages in society begin in happiness—through the wonder of instant love and wedding rituals that shower the participants in hope—but after a short time, some people decide they want to give up trying. In the wake of their resentment and bitterness, they may neglect their children. And this has multiplied. Both the divorce rate and the amount of child abuse has steadily increased. We who have the desire to build a new world can do this only by centering upon God as our first priority. The love of God must govern blessed marriages. If we do not succeed in this, our marriages will be no different from the ones in society.

We Unificationists should never compare the secular world with our world, or vice versa. There is a major difference. We are public people, putting God and the world even before our own mate and family. People in society do not have this consciousness. Never before in history have people attempted something quite so daring for the sake of God. We are the ones chosen—and we *must* make it!

The most important thing to remember is that your life belongs to God and True Parents before it belongs to your family or yourself. Living your life in such a manner will bring forth great fruit. But if you simply live your life for yourself, that seed of hope God planted within you through the Blessing, will stay dormant and never bloom. With the Blessing comes tremendous responsibility.

Blessed Marriage as an Offering

How will you confront life if you do not see it with the eyes of God? Can you discern how you should treat your partner? Do you know how to live in society? If you are not totally united with God or if you lack maturity, you will have the tendency to see things with your own eyes, and consequently see only part of the picture. Then it will be easy for you to make many mistakes.

You may treat your spouse in such a way that your marriage "glue" of love loses all its sticking power. In such a case, your marriage might even fall apart. But if you make your binding element the love of God, you will have much more success. The partners in a blessed couple often have widely different backgrounds, personalities, education, life attitudes, and abilities. There are so many differences with which you must cope. The only way to deal with them is through the love of God. Therefore, if we are not able to see our partner, our children, and even society with the eyes of God, we may come into trouble. We may end up doing the wrong things. We will approach everything with the wrong motivation. But if keeping the vision of God is paramount in our lives, we will both offer and sacrifice our family for Him.

I wish that all blessed families would realize they cannot live without God or without fulfilling their responsibilities. During this emergency time period, that would mean to go to the frontline without complaint, and in a way, putting their families in the background. They need to go out and fight for God, saving other people, other families, and other nations. If they could do that with conviction, God would shower His grace upon them. And they would come to experience heaven in their personal life and within their family.

If your family withdraws from working for God, life will no longer make sense. You may become like all those people in society who are just fighting to survive. But without God, you will never win. You have to suffer as a family anyway. And a Unificationist family may suffer in society—perhaps even be shunned and repudiated by peers, adults, or children. Whether you are inside or outside the movement, confrontations have to be faced. Life is not strawberry shortcake!

But there is tremendous purpose in living with and for God, and in striving to live a life of faith. Think of Jesus' followers. They gave everything they had to bring people to God. They had such a desire that others receive salvation. We are in the same position today. What is *our* hope? If we really understand and accept that we have a lifelong mission, then our life has a purpose. And that aim is beautiful. We have a goal and because it makes sense, *life* makes sense.

It is much more important to create a new world than to create a family. If we have many children, yet the world continues to belong to Satan, we just put them into slavery and misery. I would say that is irresponsible. Sacrificing our families for the good of world salvation is a real challenge, but it is one that rests with us. Let's make our goal to turn this world into a place worth living in.

What would you do if your child came home crying and wondering, "What's a Moonie? Am I one? And why do the kids make fun of me for being one?" Patience is necessary to help a child deal with such a situation. Being a victim of prejudice is difficult. Strong faith and conviction are necessary to get over the hurdle, not only by the child, but also by the parent.

Responsibility of a Blessed Family

Children in this society do not know where to turn. They look to find their own enjoyment and someone who will love them. Few people take the time to guide young people, who consequently might revert to drugs and sex in order to find satisfaction and acceptance. Children hope those substitutes will fill their craving for love. Not all parents are able to

give their children all the love or the protection they need. They are not able to heal the wounds that exist in the hearts of the young people of today. Yet this generation is internally crying out for real love. When children are able to know the heart of God and True Parents, they will be truly fulfilled and finally feel at home.

The blessed couples who have already started family life should be much more loving and giving than those who have not begun married life. The energy created in the dynamism existing between husband and wife will normally be much higher than what a single person can produce. In fact, a great amount of divinity can shine forth in a marital relationship. It should not stay behind the locked doors of their home. A couple should do whatever possible to avoid accusations, even unspoken, to be directed toward them. If their behavior as a couple invites an accusation, it hampers not only their own spiritual lives, but the lives of those around them as well.

If one partner dies prematurely, ideally his or her spouse should assume the responsibility or mission previously shouldered by his or her mate, in addition to their own work. Neither a husband nor a wife should think of themselves as incapable. It is an ideal situation when husband and wife can be totally involved in the same mission so that both will understand the whole picture in the event that only one of them is able to carry on the mission. In the businesses for which I was responsible, I always had a desk in my office for Christel. She observed and listened to everything. She had her eyes and ears open, and kept abreast of all that went on. Then, like today, she is always included in my meetings—whether they revolve around technical data, financial problems, spiritual counseling, etc.

Since husbands and wives are to be helpmates to one another, it is important and even wise for a couple to be united in terms of mission. A wife may do a wonderful job of keeping the house but if she cannot converse with her husband about his work, she will not understand very much about him. Conversation about the mundane is not the best mediator between husband and wife if that is all they talk about. Therefore, a wife should try to understand as much as possible about her husband's profession. She could even get books about her husband's field and read them to get at least a basic understanding of what he thinks about, and even what feelings he might have during the one-third of his life he spends at work. That will build a foundation upon which to converse with him, and will ultimately help support him in whatever he does. A husband too should take

an interest in his wife's pursuits. If neither does that, seeds of discontent could be sown in the heart of their partner; such a marriage could easily disintegrate.

Be involved with one another, and be loving and attentive to your mate.

All blessed families should do their best to think first of the mission. The Blessing entails responsibility. If you make too many compromises, you will never reach your goals—personal, family, or those on an even higher level.

I came into the movement with a wife and child but I thought first of God and worked separate from them for several years. Yet through this sacrifice, I discovered that God stays close to those who give up everything for His sake. Once we do that, the power of God has to be with us and result just has to come.

If blessed couples are involved through only half-hearted sacrifice, they will never be totally involved in living for God. And God will never be totally involved in living for them. If you have been involved in working for our movement for many years already yet have not been totally involved in the mainstream, you may feel a certain internal void. You may not feel happy or satisfied, but inner fulfillment *will* come once you make a leap of faith. It is possible that you might shy away and "drop out," but in order to develop a strong bond with God, you have to "drop in."

If you retire from active service, several years from now you may pay a visit to a church center. You may feel very nostalgic remembering former days, and thoughtful seeing that all those who stayed connected, developed in many ways. You may even become jealous. Yet if you fall in love with God first and not your spouse, you are guaranteed that the grace and blessings of God will come to you.

The Blessing actually only represents the promise of God; that promise is kept if the couple cooperates with God and the Messiah. Once a couple begins married life, they stand before Heaven's gate. But unless they move forward, actively participating in restoration work, they will only continue to stand at the doorway. To go inside, they have to act. The Blessing is a condition, one which each couple must work to fulfill.

A blessed couple does not necessarily have to work on the national or international level, but the very least they must do is work on the family

level. To enter the Heavenly Kingdom, each couple must reach both personal perfection and family level perfection. Father has told us that it is sufficient to create the family foundation to enter Heaven—hut that is strenuous enough! Those who desire can go further, working for the nation or the world. The benefits which can be reaped by those couples are much more far-reaching.

It is unnecessary for any entity to suffer if everything is healthy and functions correctly in the give and take of love. For example, it is inconceivable that a blessed family would suffer a lack of food. Other families—either members of their own trinity or other couples would naturally want to offer help to this family—hut on the other hand, any couple which withdraws and separates itself from this larger body could experience great agony.

Father often chastises and reprimands blessed couples because he has assumed responsibility for us—he is our parent and in that position, he must discipline us. He and Mother have undertaken a tremendous responsibility. They have blessed so many couples, yet take responsibility for any that fail. Each blessed couple then is responsible for all other blessed couples—no matter what their Blessing status. Therefore, we have the role of praying for all blessed people. One effective way to actively care for one another is to use the trinity system.

If a blessed couple forfeits the Blessing, it reflects upon all of us; we may have to pay for their mistakes, but it is ultimately Father's responsibility.

One tremendous obligation we have is that we must live exemplary lives of faith, especially once we begin married life. As we work to erect God's new world, we have to be able to cope with the discrepancies of this world.

Blessed couples must understand their responsibility to serve others. They misunderstand if they feel that serving God is a once-a-week proposition or that sending in a report is sufficient. If a couple actively participates in God's service, others will respect them. Younger members always watch blessed couples. They want to see what it is like to live a married life. They want to have hope for their future! They want to observe what the Principle is doing to those couples, and whether or not they are closer to God. Do you feel the eyes of others are upon you? If so, how does this make you feel?

I found that we step into a new realm immediately after our Blessing—spiritually so different. But it is also clear to me that unless we fulfill certain responsibilities, the ultimate promise of the Blessing will not be realized.

Receiving the Blessing is the point at which you begin to take True Parents' position. It is the point at which we take the load from the shoulders of True Parents. That is the mission of blessed couples. Many couples drifted away from mainstream work after receiving the Blessing, but many are coming back to active service. During their time "away," they did not leave the True Parents in heart or completely abandon their faith in them or the Principle, but just focused on caring for their family. Unfortunately, many felt that this left no time for the mission. But those who are yearning to return to active church work have found how difficult it is to live in this godless society.

Perhaps some of them feel guilty; that is great enough indemnity. None of us should add to that by accusing them. We should instead open our hearts to them; let the love of God flow through you to soothe their hearts; welcome them back with genuine sincerity. Their time away no doubt taught them a lot; ask them to share the lessons of faith which challenged them, and also ask them to share what they learned about the nature of God.

Once you receive the Blessing, your life is no longer your own. It is God's. You have no rightful claim any longer. It is dangerous when the faith of members plummets to such a degree that they ask questions about where the Blessing really gets a person, and who is our judge.

A couple must be careful if they only look at how they can avoid certain responsibilities. We may successfully shield our deepest thoughts from all others, but God is able to look into rooms of the heart where no other eyes can penetrate.

A blessed couple has to stand as one unit before God and True Parents; one partner is responsible for the other. A major difficulty is that at the time we receive the Blessing, we have not yet fully matured. Two people still immature in spirit have to confront a new life that they share together—all the responsibilities, and all the confrontations that are miles beyond their imaginations.

Love and Respect

Do you feel that after you marry and settle into a comfortable routine with your mate, your personal appearance no longer matters? Should you still try to look good—clean, neat, and even fashionable? I feel the answer is an unqualified "yes;" beginning married life is just the *beginning* of a lifetime courtship, not the end. After you start to live a married life, you need to look inspiring to uplift your husband or wife.

If a wife looks pale and worn out, she should wear some makeup. And if she does not know how, she should learn. No husband wants to gaze upon the face of his wife if she continually looks washed out and half-dead. God feels the same way. It need only take a little money to look good. Perhaps a few minutes of vigorous exercise will also help a woman keep or restore a good figure. A man should also dress well and be well-groomed especially for his wife. And he would do well to do a few push-ups, to "roll away" his spare tire if he develops one. Make yourself appealing to your mate. One secret to developing a successful marriage is to look good, even as you age.

When I was in my twenties, I read an extremely thick book entitled, *With the Eyes of a Woman*. Once I started it, I literally could not put it down. I read it day and night until I finished—it was tremendously fascinating. The title may sound simple, but what I discovered on each page gave me amazing insight into the mind and heart of a woman. Each of us should definitely research about the masculine or feminine world in order to better understand our mate.

Unless you make a total unity with your partner, you simply cannot understand what the other half of mankind thinks. But once you begin to research his or her thoughts, you will naturally develop a deeper respect and love for your spouse's viewpoint and understanding of life. And that is when you also begin to perceive and understand the other half of God.

God desires that we create many relationships and friendships. Having a spouse is not enough. Therefore, we cannot just be content to live with our mate for the rest of our lives and not communicate with others. Unless we do, we will not find complete satisfaction, and will probably tire of our mate quickly. Both husband and wife need exposure to the rest of humanity; they need others in order to survive, exist, and blossom in love,

even to foster their mutual love for one another. Don't mistakenly think that you hold the key to a happy life once you live with your spouse. He or she can be a jewel, but no matter how brightly he or she may shine, that brilliance is simply not enough to keep you fulfilled for the rest of your life.

Praise your spouse. When you do, he or she will probably respond with a great deal of love. A woman wants to see her man as a spiritual giant among men, not someone dwarfish in character. Even if he is small in stature, he can be gigantic in integrity and develop qualities others only dream of. Isn't that the kind of man every woman yearns for? Then make yours just that way! You cannot expect Superman overnight; you have to see the superman-like qualities within him, even if no one else can. And you also have to get *him* to recognize that those traits live within his heart.

Everybody needs praise. Acclaim is an expression of love and respect. And in marriage, you can afford to give and even be lavish with it. The key is that it is given with sincerity. Use positive words that will launch your mate to greater heights. Husband and wife together make a couple before God. One cannot run ahead while the other lags behind. Someone once called the blessed marriage a "three-legged race." —We surely *are* tied to one another on our way to Heaven. Whether they experience suffering or joy, a Unificationist couple is destined to stay together forever. We all experience some suffering in our marriage. It is as inevitable as breathing. We cannot naively view marriage as a cocoon or an institution that will magically rescue us from hurt and loneliness. Our character must go through a tremendous transformation in trying to unite with our partner. But who wants to suffer forever? Why not go through the mud quickly? Work at it. *Run*, rather than trudge through life. Becoming compatible is tremendously challenging and arduous, but it *is* possible. Your mate is the one God gives you to love and cherish. Surely, you can find *something* within that complex and intricate individual to respect and love. If you need to do a bit of digging, then why not take the first step now—grab yourself a shovel. And also give one to your mate.

Two individuals grow at quite different rates. But rather than grow apart, why not do your best to share with one another so that you grow together. Even if you suffer for the first couple of years, just surrender yourself in service to your mate. Before long, you will live in harmony and that period of suffering will end. Your partner might respond in such a beautiful way that you even forget what the problems were in the first place.

Love. Service. Obedience. These are some of the qualities crucial to a healthy and spiritually wealthy marriage.

Your future married life depends upon the life you live now—whether you presently live with your mate or not. If you want to have a beautiful partnership and family, do some work to research what elements will create that. Some people are weak and unable to overcome their personal problems. They do a great deal of compromising now, because they feel that they can postpone their personal restoration until later. But that is the worst thing they can do. You are preparing for your future even at this moment. *Now* is the time you "make" that metaphorical bed that you later will have to "sleep in." You will be able to fulfill your future responsibilities as a husband or wife only if you learn to accomplish those duties you have now. But if you put off tackling your problems now, it will be impossible for you to become an expert overnight.

Realize that you will inherit quite a "dowry"—in the form of a whole new person!—once you start married life. You will have to learn how to cope with all the inconsistencies of your mate's character. And added to this challenge is the likelihood that you and your mate will see things differently—and in some respects, diametrically *opposite*—*from* each other.

Unless you become sensitive and spiritual, do not expect your mate to exhibit those same qualities. Not every man or woman is as spiritual as True Father or True Mother. Some men are not very cultured and they need to be educated in some of the finer points of life. Who but a wife can do this? Yet if a woman does not work on overcoming her own personal problems, she will find it much more difficult to be successful in the task of enlightening and raising her husband. It is normal that a woman should develop in that role; Father has indicated that a wife is in the position of the Holy Spirit to her husband.

If your mate is physically dashing and handsome or breathtaking and a ravishing beauty, don't think he or she is magically exempted from personal problems. Despite a great physique and impeccable appearance, he or she may be filled with insecurities and lack self-confidence. He or she may have been successful in masking his or her deficiencies and even fooled many people, but in marriage both the best *and* the worst of our character emerges. And any character inadequacies or flaws will definitely be evidenced in your marriage relationship. We need to ask ourselves if we have enough self-respect and integrity to help our partner develop into a better person.

It takes the length of a long lifetime to meld together, to help reform one another and become one. That is part of the process, but also part of the joy of marriage. Although it will never be accomplished in a few weeks, one can start anytime. Plant seeds of mutual respect; a whole garden can bloom from even a few seeds, especially when you take the time and

patience to root out any weeds that might otherwise strangle the healthy shoots.

A tremendous and rich love can emerge through the give and take between a husband and wife. It comes about when both partners expose their inner feelings—about life, about work, about family, and especially about their relationships with God and True Parents.

If a wife listens to her husband relate details of his work, she can be tremendously fulfilled. She will begin to know a different side of him. Yet it is a mutual proposition; a husband should do the same. One sees with the eyes of a woman, the other, with the eyes of a man. Looking at the same physical object, they probably do not relate to all the same elements. They can transmit their feelings, knowledge, and thoughts to one another. If they become totally united, each one can explain his view and can learn from his partner. This is just as true when they look at God. As they look at God *together*, each may see quite a different side of Him.

Even though we achieve a oneness with our mate, love and respect command some distance. If we respect and are in accord with a person, there is automatically a little distance created. When we love our mate, we naturally want to look up to him or her in respect. That is human nature. Yet if you either *do* or want to emotionally or even physically cringe at something your mate does (or fails to do) try to see or relate to how he or she feels, and instead look up to him or her with the respect you have for God, remembering your mate is His son or daughter!

Before we reach the family level, we must go through the purification process on the personal level. Once we receive the Blessing, we start the same process on the family level. We have to fulfill our responsibility to one another as husband or wife as we create a family. But whatever we do should be done out of pure motivation and love.

Both men and women have a certain purpose in showing love to their mates; and that is the purpose which must be fulfilled. Respect is the first step, the vertical aspect of marriage. Therefore, find something to respect in a person before you try to love him or her. No matter how uncultured your mate may seem to you, refrain from looking down on him or her. Remember that neither of you has a perfected heart, and both of you still have a great deal of growing to do. Realize that your husband or wife is on the road

toward personal perfection. Also, don't forget that no matter how many things you may find "wrong" with him or her, God still saw fit to grant your mate the Blessing. This point alone is reason enough to develop great esteem for him or her.

Five or ten years from now neither you nor your mate will be the same people you are today. Both of you will have changed. The love of God and True Parents does a great deal to transform any person, but in addition to that, your mate will have been exposed to your love. That in itself will change him or her even more. Realize that influences of work as well as other relationships will also change your mate—just as they will change you.

Be pure and selfless in your relationship with your spouse. Don't worry about being deeply in love right away. Father assures us that adoration will develop. Love at first sight is only infatuation and certainly not a guarantee that the "love" you feel will deepen. You will begin to develop a *real* love once you live together with your spouse—and that might take a few years.

Don't be disappointed or bitter if your mate does not immediately respond as you expect. Create a foundation so that you come closer in heart. Even pay indemnity to that end. Prayer and study of Father's words can do a great deal to change your heart about the person. Develop yourself in purity and divinity so that you can cope with marriage. If you bring to marriage your past resentments and grudges about your own family life or other men or women you have dealt with, you will face a mountain of problems. Move your mountain now! —work on overcoming those feelings. Marriage brings you new confrontations. If you have not developed a mature, pure, and solid relationship with God and True Parents, you will have a much harder time making your marriage work. But until you face your own problems, you may refuse someone else's help—consciously or subconsciously. The ball is then totally in your court.

I would advise you to make all efforts possible to come close to God. Cope with any challenge that you meet now; the things that come in the future will be many times more intense and strenuous. Express your deepest feelings to your spouse. You can talk about future plans, your feelings about marriage—there is no limit to what you can share. But always make sure that your discussion is centered upon God, and that you also invite Him to speak.

We have often heard Father speak about how our mate is our second

messiah. Yet it is much more than just a position. By uniting with your partner, you will be able to fulfill the highest state of awareness—as co-creator; with the help of God, you will be able to create a family. If you look at your mate as if you were looking at God, you *will* meet Him. The divinity is definitely there. You would then treat your mate as you treat God. Rather than spewing out any harsh words at each other, you would be sensitive to your partner and never want to hurt him or her. You would discover what makes your mate come alive, and what your rejection or insensitivity does. But if you treat him or her with roughness because you do not particularly like some of his or her character traits, you run the risk of damaging the position of your messiah. You need each other. And neither of you can reach perfection without the other. "Second Messiah" is not merely a position. You will come to know God through your partner. Therefore, you have to respect and love one another. And as the old saying goes, "If at first you don't succeed—try, try again."

If a husband and wife don't like each other and as a result turn away from one another, what kind of give and take will they have? Such action is absolute and unequivocal rejection. They may continue to stay married and even continue to share the same bed, but all the while be sad and depressed. If they do that, they throw away a precious opportunity to know something more of God through the eyes of their partner.

You need a great amount of heat to melt something. But how many degrees of love does it take to amalgamate a husband and wife? Maybe you are like aluminum, but your mate is like steel. You each take a different amount of heat in order to soften. Aluminum may melt at approximately four hundred degrees Celsius, but your spouse won't become warm until the temperature reaches two thousand degrees Celsius. Realize that your partner may need much more love to melt than you do.

You need each other. The man is made for the woman and the woman is created for man. But the total image of God is to be found in the union of the two. You just have to find the proper balance. There are notable differences between you, but it is still possible to meld together. There is a definite reason why Father suggested you for one another. There is great potential for you to blend together and become one solid unit—toughened and resistant to the attacks of Satan.

Co-creatorship begins in marriage. The greatest possibility to be a lord over creation is to be found within a marriage that is built on perfected love, especially when a husband and wife are able to conquer themselves

and the whole universe with love. By mentioning the melting process, I refer to the amount of love that must be expended to make a total unity with your partner, and submit to and fuse with your ideas. But that unity you search for will not simply come by telling—or yelling at—your mate about his or her responsibilities. That is not the way to raise and educate your partner.

You have to discover what your spouse needs. Then you have to make plans and go about thawing his or her heart. Don't waste any time. Even if you have not yet started married life, you can even start now to create the energies that can melt your mate—through prayer, even in letters, or telephone calls. In the process, you may come across some parts of his or her heart that have suffered "freezer burn" because they were not protected and got exposed to the frigid temperatures of this world, so devoid of love. You may need to even help him or her by carefully cutting away those sections—those emotions and fears—that are damaged and no longer usable. A heart is the most sensitive cargo any of us carries. Sometimes we may need spiritual surgery to repair ours if it has become damaged. A mate can offer his or her own hands to perform open-heart surgery. Yet realize that your mate *might* need a triple or even quadruple by-pass operation. For that reason, never be accusative. Never chastise. Never be demanding or preachy. The best way to "be" is loving.

Emphasize and strengthen within your mate the good points you have already found. You will recognize many more in the future. Of course this does not mean that you should ignore the bad points and discrepancies. But rather than keep them in the front of your mind, keep them in the back of your mind. Quietly help him or her work on smoothing them out, and at the same time give your mate confidence, respect, and love. If you list and continually reiterate all of his or her negative points, your mate may give up trying to change even before he or she can start.

If a wife feels that her husband is not strong enough to "tame" her, through her words and actions, she could overpower him by taking the subject position, but simultaneously unconsciously or consciously give him a severe personality complex. Maybe he will begin to feel and then believe that she is superior to him and consequently closer to God. Just thinking about the possibility may cause him to withdraw from her. Therefore, unless she reinforces and emphasizes how much she recognizes and is grateful for all his positive points, he may stop believing in himself and regress spiritually and emotionally.

We Unificationists must realize that we will live a married life for more than just a few days. Rather, we are destined to be together with our spouse

for eternity. If you lose control and say something which cuts your mate deeply, it is likely that he or she will remember those words more than any you use in praise. Therefore, exercise self-control; your tongue can be the cruelest weapon Satan wields.

Before you enter into marriage, you need to make sure that your heart is right with God. Once you live married life, you should be concerned about whether your heart is right with God before you and your spouse make love. Both of you have to prepare the right attitude and then invite God to join you in that experience. If you do, you will see that it can be a powerful and ultimately more satisfying and fulfilling experience than you could ever have imagined!

Each of us has the spiritual capability or potential to understand the good and bad points of our spouse. But every one of us has to do our best to make our marriage work. You may have to initiate things to work out any problems which crept in; don't feel that your mate can read your mind and know all of your emotions. But also don't expect that your mate will proclaim his or her undying love for you day and night. If that happens, you must carefully discern that such words are genuine, not shallow, and neither a time filler nor an "emotion filler."

A wife should never reject her husband, emotionally or spiritually; she should strive to work like the Holy Spirit. A wife actually has great power to help mold her husband into an even more wonderful human being. Make sure that your mate feels that he is the winner, but also realize that your words and actions have the power to shape him into a spiritual giant among men. Be careful about criticizing him or exposing every vulnerability he has—especially in public. If you let him know that you are intent upon seeing him through God's eyes, and he sees that you are continuously loving, then he has no recourse but to eventually capitulate. Bring the example of True Parents' love and marriage into your own. Your husband will probably watch you in silence for a long time. If you waver in your emotions, he will wonder if you mean the words you say. But if you are steady and loving no matter what happens, he will eventually surrender his heart. That kind of transformation will not happen abruptly, but after some time passes, you will discover that you have an altogether new and vibrant relationship.

Unificationists have the opportunity to meet and live with many people of all nationalities, races, and creeds. We have learned something about the behavior of men and women. We have lived together in church communities

and have been exposed to things that we probably never would have learned by living in the secular world. We can profit by learning about human behavior. We have the chance to meet so many people and look into the hearts of people of all five colors of skin as well as those from a great number of cultures and religions.

Perhaps up to this point in your life you have already met and talked with several thousand men and women. If so, why shouldn't you be able to talk to your mate? Use all those experiences and visualize something about the nature of a man or woman. Then go forward on the basis of those things you learned. That should be quite helpful in learning to respect and love the one God gave you.

When a husband and wife unite totally, they transfer their inherent masculine and feminine elements to one another. Prior to that, they may feel as if they are only half alive. Once they unite, they become a "whole" person. They are more able to see with the eyes of God because they see things from both a masculine and feminine viewpoint. Rather than arguing that *their* viewpoint is better, they can more easily see the good points of both.

The eyes of a woman see things both in human nature and in the universe differently from the eyes of a man. Therefore, when husband and wife transmit to one another, those two different worlds become one. Only then is a person able to see God and the universe in their fullest array. Marriage is the starting point.

The most ideal thing would be for both men and women to reach personal maturity before they get married. Even though you are centered upon God, if you have to work to shed the skin of your immaturity after you live a married life, you should expect to struggle to become mature enough to perceive the love of God and the love which is given by your mate. No matter who your partner is, you will have to work hard to become sensitive to his or her needs.

The divinity that can be found in each partner does not come from physical beauty, or intellectual or physical capabilities. What makes the difference is discovering what comprises that divinity, and then respecting it.

It is possible to feel love not just in your heart, but through your

whole body. This process is not automatic, but one that must be learned. If you are not able to perceive the nature of God within the universe, you will probably fail to recognize it manifest in your marriage, even though you live with your partner for years. You are only able to appreciate your partner, or for that matter anyone else in the world, once you start from the bottom. Start by perceiving the love of God and you will feel that love of God expressed by your partner.

When a husband and wife are totally united in harmony, they can become one; that is when they both see with the same vision. When heart and intellect jointly view the world, great things can happen. But in order to achieve success, there has to be unity. If your heart says one thing and your intellect says another, you are torn inside and unable to make a true decision about how to proceed. Unification has to exist on every level, and it has to begin inside of yourself. There must be a unification between heart and intellect, spirit and body. Once that is accomplished, then both husband and wife can look in one direction and both will see the same thing. It has been said that marriage is not looking at each other, but looking in the same direction *together*. When husband and wife are totally united in love and have made God the center of that love, more than likely that will happen. And more than likely, they will make the same decision. They will even come to intuit what response the other will have.

No matter how vastly different their backgrounds and education, when husband and wife become totally one, one will inherit the qualities of the other. It is a matter of learning to harmonize, and it is on the basis of such harmony that God can bestow blessings. A divided body can never create or re-create. But a unified body has the possibility to create something new.

Whether or not you have started married life, my advice is that a woman restrains herself from dominating her husband or telling him what to do, what to think, what to feel. True Father explains that blessed women occupy the role of "mother" figure for a certain time period. However, the most successful and effective "mothering" is not done by lording over a child or spiritually batting him around. "Smothering" is also not a successful "parenting" technique. What you *should* do is humbly explain to him how you feel and what you are doing. *Raise* him, rather than *lower* him. There is quite a big difference between the two.

Be careful not to overdo your "constructive criticism" so that he gets all kinds of complexes or fears of coming together with you. That will only succeed in creating an even greater distance between the two of you, because to him you will then appear to be on a higher level. If he feels that you are on a higher spiritual plane, he may feel inferior to you. You may have greater spiritual knowledge, but you still should come under your husband. According to the Principle that is your rightful position. If you dominate him, God cannot work because you are unable to create harmony since you have no common base.

Be more simple in explaining things to your husband. Help him to change through down-to-earth, practical advice. But never forget to show him that you have strong faith in God, True Parents, in yourself, and *also* in him! Uplift your husband. Even if *you* feel he does not deserve praise today, keep in mind that he will in ten years. But if you do it today, he will more quickly develop into the marvelous man you think will fulfill your dreams. Ultimately, then, the praise you give him is for *you*. The benefit you will receive is of a much greater spiritual caliber, based partially on the personal integrity of your mate you helped to generate. Even if you can't see now how he will change, within a few years he will have changed sufficiently. Be a friendly "banker" and give him some advance credit. Invest in him now; the dividends will be great—and they will ultimately be returned to *you*!

What if you just *can't* speak words of praise to him now—either because you don't feel that he deserves it or because you think he isn't spiritually active or spiritually brave enough to warrant your acclaim. Stop for a moment. To whom are you comparing him? True Father? That comparison isn't fair. Your father or leaders you know and respect? That rating is also not without bias. Other men you may have known—inside or outside the movement? Realize that you know other men in a much different way from the way you know your husband. And try to remember that your husband might be very different and you would have a far different relationship, if he were *working* with you, rather than married to you. He would act in a different way, even laugh at different things. He no doubt wants to make a certain impression on you. He no doubt *prays* that you like him. Also remember that your relationship with your husband is ultimately for the purpose of restoration, yet the relationships which you have with other men—even other leaders—are not of the same kind of restoration you will find within your marriage, even though they may be tied to restorational activities.

Give your husband a chance. If *you* can't praise him, why not allow *God* to do that. Open up your mouth and heart, but permit the voice and

love of God to come through you. Our God may have been waiting to praise that man of yours for years, but never had the vehicle. Our God may have wanted to love that man of yours since the time he was a baby, but perhaps his parents were not the best channels for Him to pour His love through. Perhaps God now hopes that you will be.

If you constantly berate him, you cannot expect him to grow into the man you desire to look up to. Isn't it possible that your opinion of him will start to influence his own self-confidence? Let the spiritual giant hiding within him come out. Once he starts to blossom spiritually, you will be glad you did!

Even if the concept is just in your mind at the moment, you no doubt want to live your life together with your husband. You want to be happy and you want to live in "Heaven" within your family. But don't be disillusioned and think that this will come automatically. Don't create even more confrontation than you would normally have. A husband represents the "plus," and a wife represent the "minus" aspect in a marriage. But if a wife insists on also being a "plus," she and her mate will have a head-on collision. Both of you will suffer miserably, and unnecessarily so.

Remember that your spouse is with you for good. It is up to you how long you want to live in "hell" with him or her, or if you want to go to "heaven" quickly. If a woman is smarter and stronger and of higher spiritual caliber than her man but she lacks sensitivity or spiritual wisdom, she stands a good chance of losing him. A woman who has greater capacity and more qualifications than her husband, should have a humble attitude in front of him. That is her cross of love to bear. Even if she has a Ph.D. and her husband is a laborer, she must willingly come under him. Yet she cannot ignore the fact that he also has a cross—he constantly has to look at her accomplishments and then compare them to his own. He has to fight feelings of inferiority and misgivings that she is too good for him. God's eyes see all of us, and He notices how well or how poorly couples blend together. He observes how actively involved each person is and willing to become involved in the task of personal restoration.

Don't worry about your mate; jump into the mission and keep going. If you have a severe problem, the spirit world will have compassion with your situation. Be sure to pray for your mate, and the spirit world will help to bring him or her through any difficulties. Keep faith. Time ultimately solves many problems.

Blessed Marriage

According to the Principle, the purpose of marriage originally intended by God is not being fulfilled. People marry without the sanction of God and do not create God-centered families, societies, or nations. Most people do not help make this world a place in which God is the center. That is one reason for the rise in the divorce rate. The family unit is disintegrating in almost every nation and culture in the world. The moral fiber of Western society is degenerating. Yet this would never happen if people worked to discover total fulfillment in marriage as God intended. But so many people within the "me" society of today are selfish and don't even *want* to make their marriages work. Far too many people have abdicated the desire to serve and live for their mate, and more than ever, they look out for and take care of "number one"—themselves. If only they could accept the assurance that loving their partner would guarantee that they will also be loved in return. If only they could have the confidence that God was with them. If only they could find the humility to ask, He would personally help them in their struggle to make unity. The Principle explains that we Unificationists have that assurance. There is a problem, however, in that many people do not recognize this as valid. It does take a certain humility to do that. But in the aspiration to be a "somebody," a person often buries his humility. He wants to be a "somebody" apart from God. To find true value, an individual should not separate himself from God, but rather attach himself steadfastly to his Heavenly Father.

Give and take of words in marriage may become subdued but manifest more in actions. Yet language does play a tremendous role. Vibrations and physio-chemical reactions are also involved; there is an interrelationship between the spiritual and the physical.

The relationship which can be cultivated between a single person and God is like a one-way trip. But husband and wife, having experienced their individual love with God, come together and can share a much more total love. Their words and actions contain the love of God—symbolically, or literally as God speaks to them through one another. They can experience the highest forms of give and take, and words will then no longer have the meaning that vibrations, actions, and emotions bring about.

Because the spiritual and physical senses of both husband and wife are activated in marriage, twenty senses are involved in married love. Intuition enters in as well, and all of this encourages them to share their person-

al experiences with God's creation and His inner essence. The exchange of their emotions and love can be generated on many different levels.

I believe the desire to fulfill the position and responsibility of marriage is embedded deep within each human being. No matter what their culture, most women desire to be married amid some sort of pomp and ceremony—such as getting married in white, or riding in a carriage in their wedding procession. And they focus many of their dreams on the beautiful, tremendous, and once-in-a-lifetime event that will take place on their wedding day.

In times gone by, the wedding day was a wonderful celebration for the bride and bridegroom. It was a time for family and close friends to gather, and as the well-wishers, usher the new couple into this important realm of life. It was memorable and something that the new husband and wife could treasure for the rest of their lives. Photos were taken of the "I dos," the cutting of the cake, the rice throwing, the wedding dance—or whatever the local customs dictated appropriate for such a celebration. These were later put in books or on dressing tables and looked upon with fondness. The wedding day was not symbolized just by the beauty of the woman in white ruffles and lace, the floral sprays bedecking the room, the strains of organ music, the solemn moment when wedding bands were exchanged, or even the mystery of the relationship about to unfold. People felt there was something much more to marriage than that.

For many people today marriage still pulls a certain string on the harp of the heart. And those who enter into the state of matrimony hope this "something" will last eternally. This kind of "music" sounds above the din of the actual occasion. The loss of a daughter or son, evokes some tears—of sadness and happiness. It encompasses more emotion than a heart may be able to hold at that time. It sings of the tremendous yearning for many more things to come—the mystery found in the partnership of marriage, a promise that is suggested or detected in building a life together. All of this is due to the universal law. God created man and woman to fulfill one another's needs. Until they come together and make a whole person, one may say each is only a "half person." Living a married life a person has the potential for total fulfillment—spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

It is the same for Unificationists, but we cannot delude ourselves. We have to recognize that the outcome is based upon the attitude and actions of both parties. We enter into our marriages with the belief that the Blessing is for eternity, and is not just temporary. Yet today, up to fifty percent of North American marriages fall apart within two years. People remarry because

they still have hope of finding that perfect mate and ideal love with yet another person.

Whether we are conscious of it or not, all of us look for the presence of God in our lives. Unfortunately, we don't always have the patience to discover the part of God living within another person, and we cease trying to fulfill our own portion of responsibility. Photographs are still taken of those historic wedding days, but often the "I dos" are torn by divorce. People may still look wistfully at those reminders of the happiness they felt that day.

God is trying to bring about the physical Kingdom of Heaven on earth through the Messiah. As those who have been engrafted into that lineage, we Unificationists must be convinced that the marriage Blessing we receive is for eternity, and that our marriages work toward restoration of this sinful world. For this very reason, we must do whatever we can to help God in this venture.

If you don't work on developing a love relationship with God and True Parents, your marriage will have a much more difficult time to flourish. The power of love is not just manifested in the embrace, in feeling good, and being happy with one another. Society endorses that portrait of marriage, but we Unificationists must make our marriages much more. Our love must go beyond this and become creative in nature. We must look upon the gift of children as the grace of God, and realize that the Blessing is God-given—a definite expression of His love.

The process of co-creatorship in marriage begins with absolute spiritual harmony. Eventually the partners come together in a physical union, but conceiving a baby should start by uniting the spirit of both husband and wife.

How can one human being mistreat another? If we believe that we are all God's sons and daughters, we will treat each person as we would God. That is the pattern we must use in marriage. Your husband or wife occupies the position of second messiah to you. If you can come to this realization not only intellectually, but also within your heart, you will be able to create a beautiful life together. But until you consider your mate in the position of God and then attend him or her as such, you might just make your life miserable by virtue of your own attitude. It is up to each couple and ultimately each individual how they will be treated.

You have to be able to detect from eye contact what your partner is trying to convey—what he or she needs or wants. That takes keen observation of and sensitivity to your mate. Watch him or her; see what he or she likes. Notice where his or her eyes rest as he gazes into the display window of a store as you pass by. Shower him or her with little gifts or cards and notes of love. It is not necessary that such things cost a great deal of money. The point is to attend him or her and even bolster his or her ego. Make your spouse feel important—that apart from your love for God and True Parents, your love for him or her is paramount. He or she needs to know that you consider him or her to be important, and a valuable person in your eyes. Remember many things about your partner—what he or she likes, as well as what he or she doesn't like. Service has so many faces; discover and implement a few even today!

Sometimes marriage is as still as a pond in the midst of a forest—her waters clear and deep, almost resembling a mirror—reflecting inner calm, happiness, and serenity. Yet other times marriage makes a person feel as though he is on a boat in the ocean—tossed about by ten foot waves!

What will you do after your first baby is born? Instead of just looking at one another, you must then also focus your attention toward that child. After the birth of each child, I am sure you will find it necessary to renew your relationship with your spouse. Your marital relationship becomes an entirely different one, especially after the birth of your first child. The love you previously reserved only for your spouse must then be shared with another being, and your mate undoubtedly will feel the difference—perhaps feeling somewhat jealous or even resentful. Do your best to continue to love your spouse with the same amount of love as before, but realize that the more children you have, the greater the challenge becomes.

If you feel you want to skip certain challenges of marriage because the climb and the precipices look too steep, realize that if you try and avoid them now, at some point you will have to confront them. Many kinds of fulfillment exist within a marital relationship. Even the depth of your relationship with God changes. The more gratitude you feel toward Him and His endowment of blessings such as children, the broader and deeper it will become. If you can be farsighted in your marriage, you will be able to tackle any emergencies. But if you are impulsive and want to solve the problem immediately in your search to find instant happiness, but don't look at the long-range consequence, you are being shortsighted.

Some couples fall in love "at first sight," but some of those same couples find that huge problems arise after living together for even three months. Yet there are partners who cannot tolerate one another at the beginning, but make God the center of their marriages and work on overcoming their personal feelings of hostility.

Physical attraction does not last. It can grow and deepen and even be rekindled, but it is not the substance upon which to build and solidify your eternal marriage. You may have envisioned the man or woman of your dreams as someone physically bigger or smaller. But physical stature is not the criterion by which to judge. Spiritual stature is what makes the real difference. "Judge" based on how much your partner loves God. If you have been given a person who is devoted to God, consider yourself lucky. Deep faith in God and True Parents is the most effective substance to bind relationships of love. But if your faith is stronger than your partner's, teach him by example and in practical ways. The only way your marriage will survive is by the two of you becoming totally united with God and True Parents. The best mediator and even the best marriage counselor is always God.

Marriage is not only love, love, love. It is *also* responsibility, responsibility, responsibility! Marriage is an education for both partners. At any given time, one partner is invariably educating the other. But the situation does not stay stagnant—it also reverses itself. And both partners naturally participate in educating their children.

If you and your mate are both unstable in your faith, realize that two unstables do not make one stable. It is crucial that both of you receive the necessary education to anchor your faith in God and True Parents.

You may have wrong expectations of the Blessing and be disappointed that you don't feel in ecstasy. Consider that there is a period of growth in learning to love each other, and fulfilling one another's needs. You might think a marriage—and most especially a blessed marriage—automatically guarantees that your daily diet will be all honey and spice. Yet because you have this wrong expectation, you will find a nice surprise—there is sometimes a sprinkling of vinegar thrown in!

After waiting to begin married life the day finally arrives, and for a few weeks you taste that honey and spice. You think, Aahh! How blissful life is! You might have never imagined such sweetness possible in this earthly life. But all of a sudden, you get angry at your mate. He takes too much of the

bed. She squeezes the toothpaste tube at the top instead of the bottom. One complaint can give rise to the next. All of a sudden you discover that after he showers he still leaves a bit of dirt in his ear. And on top of that, you don't think he takes *enough* showers! We all have habits and manners that are irritating to that perfect match of ours, but we don't usually discover them until we start living together. The marriage partners of many Western Unificationists are from the Orient. But *both* find their mate's culture is as opposite to theirs as night is to day.

It is natural that in marriage, we may experience a little bit of love every day, but the rest of the time we have to cope with problems, and put up with our own fallen nature as well as our mate's. You may groan, Why! Look at it in the opposite way: Why not! Marriage partners are two imperfect beings and it will take time for them to straighten out their inconsistencies. It is really a process of learning. But what is wrong with taking some time to work out those discrepancies? Honey and spice is certainly still on the menu. If you want that "dish," choose it. And you can tell the waiter to make sure to hold the vinegar!

Many people in secular society do not know how to cope with life. If they have a fight, who helps mediate between them? Blessed couples have a wonderful advantage—we can always go down on our knees before God and ask His help to straighten out any difficulties we find. We can pray to be given the ability to see our partner with the eyes of God rather than our own.

Love always manifests between marriage partners in various ways and to different degrees. When you enter into marriage, make sure that you reveal yourself totally to your partner. Yet make sure that you share new things and feelings with your partner to ensure that your marriage does not become boring. Don't have secrets from one another; if your partner were to find out you were keeping something from him, the trust he or she has in you would quickly evaporate.

There is a certain law and order in the cosmos, and human beings have to live by that order. If a woman leaves her rightful position and assumes the role of subject, the couple cannot fulfill their purpose. In liberationist thinking, women want to assume the same role as men. But Father wants to bring back the correct relationship between man and woman within the blessed marriage. If a woman really considers deeply what the Principle says about a woman's role, she can find it extremely beautiful and meaningful.

The Principle clarifies that in essence, God wanted to have a partner. He wanted to incarnate into Adam and then share His life with a companion. In this sense then, Eve was created to be the wife of God. He made a creation that would fulfill all His wishes. But this being had to be even better than Him—certainly better *looking* than Him—and someone who would keep Him on His toes for all eternity. Looked at in this light, there is no better position for a woman to occupy than the one God originally intended for women.

God's original intention for women is viewed by various societies and cultures in quite different ways. And views are as varied as the cultures around the globe today—those espoused by feminist organizations are completely opposite from the ways of the Middle East, where women must be robed from head to foot. Some other societies in the world tolerate and even encourage families to be ruled by matriarchs. Yet none of these allow the emergence of the true nature of a woman according to God's chosen role for her. If a woman desires to become the subject in a marriage, she blocks her husband from fulfilling that role. Yet doing that activates the law of repulsion. Two subjects repel each other and at the same time bar the law of attraction from functioning. That law operates only if a plus and minus have give and take.

The emotional makeup of a woman is so different from that of a man. There is a definite "masculine world," and a definite "feminine world." But in order for men and women to comprehend each other's worlds, they must totally unite with each other and exchange experiences and feelings. When a man looks at a flower, different emotions surface than those a woman feels. And when a woman hears music, she is sensitive to vibrations the man is not even aware of. Yet they can share the splendor of flowers by having an arrangement on their dining room table, or learn a different perspective of music by listening to music as they get ready for bed; by sharing their own impressions and experiences, they can encounter these entities a different way.

If you put conditions on your love, saying that you will love a person only if he promises to do certain things or behave in a particular way, you actually squelch love. If the person does not live up to what you expect of him, you might make that person feel a sense of shame. But if your spouse does not live up to your expectations of him, the relationship may end. Through marriage, you come to know your partner and hopefully you succeed in harmonizing. As you grow old together, you may even come to resemble one another.

That does not mean we automatically stop feeling that other people are physically attractive or spiritually charismatic. But if we are connected to God and our spouse, our response of interest and fascination would be short-lived. We would be overpowered by our dedication to the ideal of God, and long to come back to the other "half" of what forms our "self"—our partner.

To understand our multi-dimensional God, a person has to be married. If you stay single for your entire physical life, it is as if you are only half a human being. You can never uncover very much of the other world; the finer aspects and nuances in the masculine or feminine mind would remain quite hidden from you. To gain a more total perspective of the world, then, marriage is very important.

Yet marriage is not the end-all. Each of us should also strive to be married to God, in a spiritual sense. If that happens, we will become totally one with Him. The Blessing with our spouse assures us that we will be together for eternity both with our partner and God.