

Building Cheon Il Guk

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Good morning, everyone. It's a pleasure to be here with all of you. How many were able to participate in the Parents Matching Convocation? Awesome. Let's give a round of applause for all the parents participating in the PMC. That's the main reason that I'm here in Washington. I was doing the Matching Advisor Training and the PMC last weekend, but also I have the pleasure this morning to be able to give a message for the adult Sunday school. For those of you who don't know me, I'm Leighton's wife. That's my daughter, Rose, there. She's almost 15 months now, and we couldn't be happier as parents. It's an awesome, exciting and very challenging thing to be parents. It's really been a joy.

This morning I wanted to take the opportunity to talk about some reflections that I have on True Mother and also on Cheon Il Guk. What does it take to substantially build Cheon Il Guk? I'm hoping to make this a bit interactive, so don't be surprised when I ask you to do something; just want to give you a bit of warning. For me, personally, I've been on a journey in my relationship with True Mother, in particular for the last three years since True Father's passing. I'm sure that many of you also have been on that same journey of trying to understand and make a relationship—a deeper relationship—with True Mother. Now we have True Father in the spirit world and True Mother still with us on earth, and she has totally stepped up and is leading the entire movement, even with True Father being in the spirit world. It's an incredible thing that True Mother is doing.

Probably for many of us, especially for myself, after True Father passed, I realized that I thought I had a relationship with True Parents, but I realized that more so I had a relationship with True Father and a little bit with True Mother. Being honest, did anybody else find themselves in that situation after True Father passed? Okay. You realized, "Okay, I understand True Father, I have a strong connection, but I'm not as strong in my connection with True Mother." Realizing that, I wanted very much to build up my relationship with True Mother and to try to understand her and make a personal connection with her.

I started by taking the opportunity to go to True Father's Seonghwa ceremony in Korea. Leighton and I were very fortunate that both sets of parents wanted to have our families represented at the Seonghwa, so they made it possible for us to go to Korea to be there for that very special ceremony. I'm going to be really honest with you this morning. I know for me during the Seonghwa, and for Leighton, we were a bit surprised because it felt pretty sad and pretty heavy. Our concept of the Seonghwa was that it was meant to be very joyful and a heavenly exciting celebration of the person's life. We did experience that definitely, especially in Korea. They had the most amazing pictorial exhibition of True Father and True Mother's life. It was just amazing, and they had a wall where people could sign a message to True Parents. They had so many flowers that came from all over the world, and it actually was a celebratory element to that Seonghwa. But I think all of us could see that it was difficult for True Mother during the service; so difficult for her and very heavy. She was very emotionally overcome by the moment.

In that moment, I think a part of me wanted True Mother to just be happy and be able to celebrate the life of True Father and his ascension. Also I realized that that wasn't very fair of me to expect that of True Mother, who had been with True Father since the age of 16 or 17. That was when True Mother married

True Father and began a life of complete public devotion standing by True Father's side. That's incredible. Think about yourself at 16 or 17 years of age; what were you like? At that age our True Mother accepted her role as the bride of the Messiah and then, even not even realizing she would come in to be in that position to be the Messiah, True Mother and True Father, as she would grow.

It occurred to me, as I was watching True Mother on stage, just how much she loves and how difficult it is when you deeply love your husband to lose your husband; no matter when that happens or how much time you had with your husband. When you lose your husband, it hurts; when that husband's no longer there with you physically. I realized that True Mother needed time to grieve the loss—the physical loss. Of course, she has True Father in the spirit world and she's been communicating with him all the time, but to not have that husband that you love so dearly, and that you've dedicated your whole life to the Providence with, was a big loss for True Mother; and she was dealing with that at the time of the ceremony. Since then, there's been a time period of three years of mourning.

I didn't understand this until later, but in the Korean tradition there's a certain period of time mourning the loss of someone who passes. Usually the eldest son takes particular care to mourn the loss of the parent who's passed on. But in the case of the True Family, the eldest son was not able to take that position, so True Mother took that position of extreme detailed care of mourning the loss of True Father. For the last three years since True Father's passed, we've been experiencing True Mother who's been honoring, in every way, the life of True Father and also taking the time to mourn his loss.

I think that as a community of Unificationists we maybe don't take as much time to grieve as we need when we experience loss. Because we want to celebrate the life—which is a wonderful thing to celebrate—but also, the reality is that when you lose someone who's so dear to you, you have to grieve, and you have to let that person go from your physical realm, and be able to come to a place of peace in your heart with them being in the spiritual world and that takes time. That takes a process, and all of us, actually, have been grieving the loss of our True Father. Our True Mother, more than anyone, has needed the time to grieve his loss. These are my reflections on what's been happening. When I was able to look at True Mother through that lens, I realized, here's an incredible woman who's being asked to continue God's Providence, to save the entire world, to bring every single person, every son and every daughter, back to God, into God's embrace, into God's love, into God's potential. That's the role of our True Parents as the Messiah of Heaven, Earth and Humankind: to completely bring the greatest joy and the greatest comfort to our Heavenly Parent.

Imagine being on a path together with your spouse, doing this mission together, and that spouse passes on, and now this comes to you, this mantle of responsibility. I am honestly incredibly awed by what True Mother is doing. It is amazing what she's doing. It is incredible. When I think about it, when in all of human history have we had a woman Messiah? When in all of human history have we ever had a husband and a wife as a Messiah? We've never had that. We don't even know what that looks like. Only through True Parents are we getting an example of what it looks like to have a husband and a wife, a mother and a father, bring salvation. They're setting a new paradigm. True Mother is a woman. I know this is not a surprise, but I think sometimes we just need to come back to that simplest fact that, "Hey, she's a woman. She's a mother. She's a wife." In history, women, and mothers, and wives have not had an easy time in their roles as women, and mothers, and wives and being honored, and cherished, and respected in those roles. Sometimes in human history we've done it well. Other times it's been difficult.

I've been reflecting on this because also, as you know, I'm serving in the role of the director of the Blessing and Family Ministry at the National Headquarters. I have the honor and the pleasure to serve in that role because of True Mother, actually. True Mother, through a series of events, came to know that I wanted to work at Headquarters with the Blessing and Family Ministry, and that this was a passion of mine, and then she gave me the opportunity to do it, at a time when I had let it go, actually. I had said, "Okay, if it's not meant to be, then it's okay. I'll do something else." True Mother found out and said, "Do this. You can do this." Since then, for 2½ years, I've been serving in this position of the director of the BFM. It, for me, is by no means easy. It's definitely challenging and it's definitely a big undertaking and responsibility, but it's also an incredible opportunity to serve God and to serve True Parents and to serve our families and to create something substantial toward building Cheon Il Guk, and to be able to love people and care for people in a way that I might not otherwise get to have. I'm so grateful to True Mother for giving me this opportunity, especially because she is the one who's leading our Providence right now, and she's the one directing the Unification movement. She's the reason, along with True Father, that we're all here. We're all here because of True Mother and True Father.

I've been investing and trying to understand: Who is this woman? What matters to her? What does she like to do? Also, as you know, there's a lot confusion surrounding True Mother and her role. What's her responsibility and is she taking her responsibility? I've sometimes been hesitant to speak boldly about what I believe, but God's been telling me that it's not the time for me to sit down and be quiet but rather the time for me to stand up and speak boldly and with love and care in my heart, so I'm doing that this morning. I know without a shred of doubt in my heart, in my whole being, and my whole soul that True Mother is the True Mother of all Heaven, Earth and Humankind, and that she loves us so much more than

we can understand and cares for each one of us and our families and wants us to be so happy and so fulfilled. I don't think I could truly understand, and I'm still in the process of understanding motherhood.

We have many mothers here, and I think it's time to give the mothers a big round of applause. Mothers can't help but unconditionally love their children, no matter what happens. I don't want to neglect the fathers either. I know fathers. I see and I talk to many fathers. Fathers, you can't help but unconditionally love your children, no matter what happens. You love your children so much. Let's take a moment and think about the fact that True Mother is the True Mother of all humankind, and how much you desperately love your own children. How much more does True Mother desperately love all of this world? I want to share a few personal experiences that I've recently had with True Mother, but before I do that, I need everybody to close your eyes and kind of relax into your seat. Let your arms be loose at your side. Lean your back into the chair. Take a deep breath in, deep breath out. Deep breath in and out. I want you to take a moment to reflect on True Parents, True Father, True Mother, and what they mean to you. Just let any thoughts and any emotions come, and just feel them. If any memories come, explore the details of that memory. Let's just take a few moments with our True Parents this morning.

Turn to your neighbor on your left, or your right, and tell them a highlight of something that came to you during that reflection. If you're in an odd seat, you can turn around to the person behind or in front of you. Okay, if one person hasn't spoken yet, make sure they get the chance to do so now. You can take one more minute to wrap up the sharing. Make sure to thank your partner. How was that? Great? Good? Did you learn something new about the person next to you? Hear something new? Good. I think, as I relate my own experiences with True Mother, I encourage you to reflect on yours as well, and our experiences with our True Parents. Let's hold those close to our hearts and draw back on them: the special moments that we've had in person, or during a program, or a moment with our families, or in prayer, or in studying the words. Whatever it may be, I think, we have a lot of moments that we can draw on, especially maybe in the more challenging times, or the more difficult situations that arise.

For me, I've been on this journey with my relationship with True Mother. I've been studying a lot. Basically, from the time of the Seonghwa I've determined that I wanted to better understand her. I've been reading testimonies that were written about True Mother, experiences with True Mother, reading True Mother's words, and watching videos of her speaking or others speaking about her, so I could build up my relationship with her. Also, just investing into this mission that I have, and my role with the Blessing and Family Ministry. As I've been doing this, I've been gaining a lot more confidence in myself, and my identity as a Unificationist-born young adult, and my role in building the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, and that I can do it, that I am a part of making this Kingdom come about, just as you are.

Each one of us, we are the Kingdom builders. In December the national leaders of the United States and Japan and Korea were invited to come to Las Vegas for a very special meeting with True Mother. True Mother also spoke in Las Vegas at that time to all the members and all guests. It was a wonderful event. True Mother spoke with such encouragement and was very empowering to everyone. In addition, being a part of this meeting of leaders, I got to have a personal experience with her. One thing surprised me. When preparing to go to this gathering with True Mother, I had a certain expectation of what it might be. In particular, I thought, "Okay, there'll probably be a lot of reporting, and we'll receive a lot of guidance and it will probably be quite serious," and that was what I was kind of preparing for. I was blown away by what I experienced, because it was so much fun, and so joyful, and so familial. That's really what I experienced with True Mother.

She took us hiking in the Red Rock Mountains in Las Vegas. She wanted us to experience the beautiful creation and the nature. Then she took us to a Brazilian steakhouse to eat delicious food together. Then, later that weekend, especially because there were so many older men and leaders there, she took everyone to the new James Bond movie. This was an eye-opening moment for me. "Aha ... this is Mother's heart," I thought: just to take care of us and for us to have fun and to get to know each other and to have authentic relationships with one another. We had a very short time of reporting. She did receive those reports, but it was a much shorter time than I was expecting. Also, she had us play a yut game together, and there were prizes. For me, the most incredible moment was right after the yut game. Also, I just want to mention about the yut game, it was a great cultural experience—because we were in teams by country. There was the Japanese team, the Korean team and the American team. It might have been better if we were mixed up, but anyway, it was good that we were on these teams because it was great to see the different characters of the different cultures.

Particularly, I enjoyed seeing the Japanese group because they had a lot of chants and they had a lot of energy. I never have seen Japanese men so expressive. It was so awesome to see this, and the Korean team. Just the energy and the smiling and the shouting. True Mother wasn't actually in the room at the time, but I could feel True Mother smiling, just knowing that this was taking place; just her children having a good time with each other. Right after the yut game, she invited us into her home in Las Vegas. The room where we gathered was on the small side, and we had just played yut, so we were a little smelly from all the investment into the game, and everyone was wearing suits. We all gathered in like brothers

and sisters, right next to each other, and we were able to sit close together in front of True Mother, and then True Mother asked each of the groups to sing.

I think the Japanese group, as the winners, sang first. They sang one of True Mother's favorite songs, which is a very energetic song. I think she asked the Korean group to sing and then the American group. We had been preparing "Generation of Righteousness" to sing for True Mother, knowing this is one of her favorite American songs. When we started, I was in the back somewhere. In the room were mostly men, older 1st generation men, and then a few sisters, myself and Mari Curry and a few others. I was in the back, and when "Generation of Righteousness" started I was very excited. I don't know, I guess I got overcome by the Holy Spirit, but I pushed my way right up into the front, right in front of True Mother, sandwiched in between Dr. Kim and Dr. Balcomb. I was so excited over this song for True Mother. Then I began singing, "As the day ..." and so on.

I was so excited. I wanted to make an offering to True Mother, so I continued on and True Mother enjoyed it, but she asked us afterward, "Do you know any Korean songs?" We kind of said, "We're working on it. We're working on it, True Mother." Actually, very soon after that, we started learning her favorite Korean song. After the singing part ended, we all sat down and there I was, seated right in front of True Mother. Literally, she was just one arm's length away, which I had never had the opportunity to experience before. There I was, seated in front of her. As she was speaking, I was looking right at her and she just has a beautiful presence, such a peaceful presence, such a loving presence. I was looking at her and I was just expressing in my heart, "Mother, I love you so much and I'm so grateful for you. Thank you so much." And then True Mother started looking right at me, looking right at me, right into my eyes. She started speaking and she was speaking to me, even though there was a whole group there, I know she was speaking right to me.

As she spoke, I experienced something of True Mother's heart that I had never experienced before. She was expressing her desperate heart to bring America back to God, and to bring up a generation of righteousness in America. She was talking about the political situation in America and that even though there are all these leaders, where's the true leadership? Where are the people who can serve with a humble heart and care not just for America but also for the world? Honestly, as she was speaking I was trying to hear the words, but more than anything I wanted to just be an object for True Mother, because I realized that she was expressing something special because I was there. That was pretty overwhelming. I felt that this is my grandmother and I am her granddaughter and she wants to give everything to me. She wants me to inherit everything from her as her granddaughter.

I also felt that she needs me to be her partner in building this Kingdom and doing this mission. I felt her plea to me to please stand up. Please be part of the generation of righteousness. Please have confidence. Please have strength. Believe in yourself. Know that you can make a difference. Know that this world needs you; that America needs you. I was so touched and I felt True Mother's tender heart. I felt her passion and her absolute confidence and belief in me, in us who were seated there in that room. I also felt that we were just a representation of many, many more. Especially me sitting there as a young woman, I felt I was representing young people, and particularly young women. A whole demographic that True Mother doesn't get to interact with that much. I just took that moment in, and I determined, more than ever before, that I'm going to give myself to this incredible woman. This incredible woman who just loves God so much and loves this world so much.

People can say whatever they want. They don't know who she really is. She loves God more than anyone. She loves this world more than anyone. She wants to see everybody happy, truly, truly happy. She wants people to play yut and chant and eat delicious food, enjoy the beautiful creation, and sit down and talk together as brothers and sisters, as aunts and uncles, and be there for one another as brothers and sisters. That's our True Parents' heart. That's our True Mother's heart. She's so desperate. She's so serious. When we hear True Mother speak, sometimes it's hard to take it because she's so serious and clear and cutting. Be Tribal Messiahs. Give the Blessing. Change this world. I know she says those things because she believes in us so much. She knows that we can do it. She knows that if we step up, if we manifest the divine nature that is in us, if we maximize our potential, even a little bit—I'm not talking about running for mayor tomorrow. I'm just talking about being in the grocery store and saying "hello" to the person next to you and striking up a conversation and complimenting them on something. Or being in your workplace and asking a question, "Hey, what do you think about God?" or "What inspires you?" or "What are you passionate about?" or "What makes you really happy in life?" and seeing where it goes from there. Or talking to a friend, or a neighbor. Even more challenging sometimes, and maybe more important, is sitting down, going out to coffee with your son or your daughter, and asking them, "How's it going?" "How's that class?" "How's your job?" "Have you talked to your best friend lately? How is she doing?" Or going on a date with our spouse and just having an intimate moment with him or her.

For me, my reflection on Cheon Il Guk is that our True Parents have given us so much, it's almost overwhelming how much we've been given. We can literally feel overwhelmed by it, but we don't have to do it all. True Mother can't do it all. True Father can't do it all. True Family can't do it all. If each of us takes a part of it, if each of us is a part of building the Kingdom in our homes, in our families, with our

friends, in our workplaces, in our schools, we can build the Kingdom. In fact, we are building the Kingdom right now being here. We are incredible people. Sometimes we don't feel that way, because a lot of voices try to tell us otherwise, but we are incredible people doing incredible things for the sake of God and the world. You have infinite power, spiritual power, to tap into at any time. Can you feel it? I'm going to send it over there to you guys. Whoosh!

Let's draw on it and let's support each other and lift each other up and go forward together into the Kingdom because it's right at our fingertips. Foundation Day happened. Maybe the ceremony itself didn't do it for you, but that was just a ceremony. It was just meant to remind you: Hey! The Kingdom is at your fingertips. Two thousand years ago Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where's the Kingdom?" The Pharisees asked, "When will the Kingdom of God come?" and Jesus answered (in Luke 14:20-21), "The Kingdom of God does not come with observation, nor will they say, 'Here it is,' or 'there it is,' for remember the Kingdom of God is within you." With that, I thank you.