

The Responsibility of True Parents' Successors

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True Parents' successors have the honor and responsibility to own and build *Cheon Il Guk*. As I studied some of True Father's words on the subject, including statements going back to the early 1980s, three points emerged: One, that we all are successors; two, the notion of a central successor; and, three, the central successor's qualifications and responsibilities.

First, God calls us all to be successors. True Parents come to lift us up into a relationship of parent-child with them. God and True Parents, like

all parents, want their children to surpass them. Through the Holy Marriage Blessing, all blessed couples have the position of True Parents' direct children.[1] The True Parents' physical children, the True Children, and the blessed couples in general, are like Jacob and Esau, twins in True Mother's womb, whether physically or sacramentally, in the "realm of the fourth Adam." [2] Thus, both True Children and all blessed families are entitled, by fulfilling certain responsibilities, to stand as owners of *Cheon Il Guk*, successors of True Parents.

I discern four such responsibilities that apply to all successors. Successors are to honor True Parents and True Children, who embody the ideal of God's substantial Word, for it is through the reality of their oneness as a True Family of three generations that Satan's accusations are overcome and all humankind may enter God's direct dominion. On that foundation, all successors are to receive the Blessing, bless others, and work together to restore nations.



Tyler Hendricks

The Central Successor's Responsibilities

Given Unification teachings regarding lineage, and human nature itself, most members have high expectations that the founders' children will model God's ideal. Father Moon supported this through statements such as, "The sons and daughters of Jesus' direct lineage would have become the Popes." [3] And Unification teachings lead us to expect the appointment of a central successor, as a couple, from among the 14 children.

According to Principle, and as illustrated in life and history, appointments are conditional, based upon the fulfillment of responsibilities. The central successor couple has a terribly difficult task, to model messianic responsibility for all to emulate. I would state that in the form of three missions: First, the mission of unity, to sustain the True Family. Second, the mission of leadership, on the foundation of the True Family, to lead heavenly tribal messiahship. Third, the mission of sacrifice — through heavenly tribal messiahship, to restore all nations and substantiate *Cheon Il Guk*. In this article I address conditions related to the first of these: the mission of unity.

Family unity on earth

The model Father set forth is one of living for others and family unity exemplified in shared decision-making in family meetings. "Even in the family of True Parents," he said, "everyone will gather and, based on their discussion, decide who actually lived in accordance with the Principle." He said, "True Mother and our sons and daughters have to continue living for the sake of others with the absolute love of God, even more than the church members. But just in case something goes wrong with our descendants or something goes against the Principle, we will create a system to correct the matter through family meetings." [4]

Family unity with spirit world

Father's model for the family includes earth and heaven. Father Moon called tribal messiahs to center on "the fourteen sons and daughters" in his final recorded prayer, and this includes four in spirit world. And of course, Father is in spirit world. Thus, the True Family is to display the unity of earth and heaven, and the successor's first mission is to build this family unity on earth and in heaven, knowing that "Heaven is a place where the father enters together with his wife and children." [5]

Loyalty and filial piety

Family unity begins with loyalty and filial piety, and so True Father naturally said that these are the first characteristics of the central successor. He stated, “My successor among my sons and daughters will be determined in the same way: the one who sacrifices himself the most for the sake of God’s will, the one who best exemplifies the principles of loyalty and filial piety. Everything is measured against that tradition — in the family or in the church.”[6]

Unanimous acceptance

Father did not espouse that this couple be elected, but that they be put in position by acclamation, based on True Parents’ appointment. “True Father will appoint his successor. That successor must be known to all the Unification Church, all the blessed couples and the True Parents’ family. They must all unanimously accept him.”[7] This calls for unity of the True Family.

Protection of the mainstream

Based on this couple’s unifying leadership, the mainstream of the movement will maintain its integrity, even if different traditions appear. “Even if I die, the tradition of the Unification movement will never be destroyed. A different tradition cannot appear in the movement; even if it did, it would soon rejoin the mainstream.”[8]

Unity with parents

Unity centers on God and parents. With Father Moon in spirit world, Mother Moon represents True Parents, so she is the center of unity. True Father prepared us for this when he said, “Even when I am alone, I represent True Parents. And the same goes for Mother. When she is alone, she represents True Parents.” He said, “This is Mother’s age. Father is even preparing to put Mother in Father’s place,” and “You should not say things like, ‘Now, since Father is over 70, why hasn’t he designated an heir?’ Mother and Father are still alive, and our children are here as well. There is no need to worry. Fundamentally I am the first founder of the church and Mother is the second founder of the church.”[9]

Father Moon established Mother Moon’s co-founder position as an exemplification of a historic achievement of God through his ministry: “Up to this point women have followed men, but from now on they are on a horizontally even footing.” He elaborated on this in another setting in this way:

“In the Israelite nation of the past, the men were the high priests. Then in our age, why have I put the women in the forefront? For the first Israel, Judaism was an archangelic nation-type religion; therefore, they had the responsibility of high priest, centering on men. But today in the Age of Restoration, we have entered the age where Eve has the responsibility of high priest in place of men. Therefore, you must know that in the Unification Church we have placed a woman, representing all women, in a position to fulfill the responsibility of a worldwide high priest, which nobody else could do. This is unprecedented in history.”[10]

He went on to say that his children are to fulfill the “family responsibility of high priest.”

Given True Mother’s position, Father emphasized that all come to him through her, beginning with his sons. He said,

“This is the era of mother-son cooperation. When the era of mother-son cooperation is grafted into the era of father-son cooperation, blessed families can enter the era of father-son cooperation, following True Parents’ family. Sons will be liberated through mother-son and father-son cooperation. Men, in general, have not cooperated with Heaven and even opposed Heaven. Now men can achieve success... We must enter into the era of father-son cooperation on the victorious foundation of mother-son cooperation through Mother.”[11]

Thus, Father Moon made mother-son cooperation the pre-condition for father-son cooperation — as it was in the model course of Jacob, Moses and Jesus. In his later years, he applied this to his own sons, “The responsible person of the Unification Church is not Hyung Jin nor Kook Jin. On the top of Hyung Jin there is Mother, and on the top of her, there is Father. ... An order starts from one.”[12] This is an application of a principle Father explained in 1991: “There is only one parent. You must go through the right process. In order to do this, a father and mother cannot go together at the same time. The father’s heart and mother’s heart, and the father’s body and mother’s body, must be in one line. And then, the son’s heart and the daughter’s heart, the son’s body and the daughter’s body, must be in one line.”[13]

Given this, it is not surprising that, just as Satan’s primary objective was to kill Jesus, his primary objective today is to divide us from True Mother. True Father spoke on this matter in 1994:

“The Fall took place because the children’s mind did not understand the agony of their Parent’s mind.

Because of this, the children became indifferent. In order to re-indemnify this failure, all of us must seek to know what goes on in True Mother's mind, what kind of difficulties, what kind of agony she has to face in order to reach out to us and the rest of the world. That is the commandment that Father has required of Mother also. Mother has to pay attention to everything Father does. Likewise, we must have an absolute experience of what Father and Mother are going through. We must become as one body with our Parents.

“This is the Commandment of Children: to believe absolutely in what Father and Mother are doing and experience our Parents' heart. This applies to all family relationships, including True Children. Whoever does not agree with Father and Mother has no place here. After entering into Canaan, the problem was that the mother and children did not come into complete unity. In Haran, the mother worked so hard in order to provide for the children, but did not have time enough to educate the children correctly. Father is now asking all children to come into complete unity with True Mother, at all levels. All satanic forces, visible and invisible, work toward trying to separate the unity between the True Children and Mother and any kind of unity within True Family. That is what Satan does all the time.”[14]

So this is the central successor couple's first job: to work with Mother Moon for the unity of the True Family, in heaven and on earth.

Conclusion

A successor assumes full authority with the approval of, and finally upon the departure of, the founder. Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, the co-founder of the FFWPU, who alone represents the entirety of True Parents, has not departed. We believe that she with Father Moon appointed Hyung-jin and Yeon-ah Moon as central successors, and is striving to prepare them for their eventual role. That being said, Father gave no assurances that True Parents' authentic heirs would appear immediately. In fact, he said once it could take a very long time, and that “God will continue working, even if it takes an eternity, to find and erect heirs who do not violate His law.”[15]

While it is not the time for the central successor to take full authority, it is time for us all to prepare for that glorious day, to comfort the heart of God and True Parents. Let's keep in mind Father's guidance about succession.

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We have retained the footnote format of this article so readers may better understand Dr. Hendricks' references.

Notes:

[1] As Father Moon put it, “When the Messiah comes, he will bring those in the adopted child's position into the position of direct sons and daughters of God, and then elevate mankind into true parenthood under God.” (*God's Will and the World*, p. 374) In his True God's Day prayer in 2005, Father Moon “proudly called” blessed families on earth “my direct descendants.” (*Cheon Seong Gyeong* [2014], p. 1639).

[2] “Since we were born wrongfully, our birth must be redone — we need to be born again. God participates in this rebirth process by leading the providence of twins. This is the age of twins. We must be born as twins, like Esau and Jacob. We need to go all the way back — all the way to the mother's womb.” (*Chambumo Gyeong*, 5-3-3 6, 1992.02.09) “I have announced the era of the realm of the Fourth Adam, and Mother has completed her responsibility by uniting Cain and Abel. Thus all of my foundation must be engrafted to the blessed members.” (2000.10.16, *Chambumo Gyeong*, 12:4-3-1).

[3] *Blessing and Ideal Family*, p. 110.

[4] *Chambumo Gyeong*, 13-2-4 #18, 1983.06.05; 12-4-3, 1990. 03. 27.

[5] *Blessing and Ideal Family*, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

[6] *God's Will and the World*, pp. 582-4, May 1, 1981; cf. *Chambumo Gyeong*, 13-2-4, June 5, 1983.

[7] *God's Will and the World*, p. 651, June 5, 1983.

[8] *God's Will and the World*, 582-4, May 1, 1981.

[9] *Chambumo Gyeong*, 12-4-3 #3, 1990. 03. 27, "True Mother's Role," Hawaii, Nov. 27, 1991, *Chambumo Gyeong* 13-2-4, June 5, 1983.

[10] *Chambumo Gyeong* 12-4-3 #3, 1990. 03. 27, *Blessing and Ideal Family*, op. cit., p. 354.

[11] *Chambumo Gyeong* 12-4-3, 2000.10.16.

[12] "Mongolia is the origin of Korean ancestors" April 4, 2011.

[13] "The Ceremony of the Declaration of God's Eternal Blessing," July 1, 1991.

[14] "Who Are the Parents of Heaven and Earth and the Unified World?," Belvedere, Nov. 27, 1994.

[15] *Chambumo Gyeong*, 13-2-4, June 5, 1983.