

*Building A Principled Family Life*  
A Study in Seven Sessions for Small Groups

The Washington Family Church, Washington, DC  
A Member Church of the FFWPU

*Edited by Henri Schauffler*

# Group Agreement

1. We are a \_\_\_\_\_ group. (*type of group*)
2. The purpose of our group is:  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. We will meet on the following day of the week: \_\_\_\_\_ and we will meet from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, and will start and end on time.
4. We will meet at \_\_\_\_\_.
5. We agree to the following *primary values* for our group.
  - *Priority* – we will give the group meetings priority in our lives
  - *Participation* – we respect one another, and there is no such thing as stupid or uninteresting comments or questions
  - *Confidentiality* –Anything of a personal nature that is said in a meeting is never repeated outside the meeting.
  - *Open/Closed (circle one) meeting* –
6. Group Structure Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_ Host: \_\_\_\_\_  
(if applicable) Apprentice Facilitator \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_



## Forward

In 1999, Henri and Loretta Schaufler made a choice unprecedented in the Unification Church in America. Henri actually decided to serve as a pastor. From a successful career in business, politics, and community action, Henri and Loretta moved into church leadership. Since that day, Henri has been pioneering a process of defining what we are as a community of faith, how we want to be in community, and what we are gifted to offer to the body of Christ and His kingdom-building providence.

Henri also brought his experience in the world of business. In business, one learns to serve people, to discover people's needs and meet them, and to do so with quality at a price people can afford. Business success demands excellence and brings reward based upon value. Similarly, people will attend the church that meets their needs and opens a spiritual and social path toward fulfillment. Henri has set out to build such a church, and small groups are essential to the process.

Another virtue brought from the business world is the habit of research and development. Henri is a learner; he is humble enough to sit as a student of teachers with accomplishments. He is a student of Reverend Sun Myung Moon, first and foremost, but also of other God-sent pastors. One thing he has learned over and over again is the value of small group ministry.

Ever since the early church, the vitality of God's work in the world has manifested in small groups, prayer groups, households, conclaves, monasteries, cells, teams. The Puritans who came to America were the fruit of a small group ministry in England. The lineage of awakenings and revivals in American religion manifested in small group ministries, from the Yale prayer group that launched the second Great Awakening in 1800 to the house church on Asuza Street in Los Angeles that launched Pentecostalism in 1900. Our Unificationist tradition in America has also been house-based more than a religion of church buildings.

Henri and Loretta Schaufler are calling our church in this eternally radical direction. You hold in your hands a result of their work. It represents a great deal of prayer, of tears, of wanting to pack it up, of returning to the path of the cross, and of making a beachhead on a new continent whose sands are yet shifting. In this environment, you have to be simple, useful, practical, universal, eternal, and reasonable. *Building a Principled Family Life* has all that going for it, plus its author's heart that tells us, hey, we're in this together.

Tyler Hendricks, PhD  
President, Unification Theological Seminary  
Vice President for Education, FFWPU America  
Barrytown, New York

## Preface

For several years, I have noted that our Family Federation and Family Church communities have been in need of two important things to sustain family and community life: resources to help us build better families and ways to help build community among our families. To both these ends, I commend this book to you with much gratitude to God and Christ.

As primarily a faith and outreach community, we have used fantastic resources to help other families, communities, and, indeed, the whole world, realize spiritual, political, and economic freedom. While sacrificing together to attain many noble goals, we have often left our own selves and our families out of the work plan. Personal and family growth have been thought to be largely a personal responsibility, and perhaps that is a healthy view.

In Washington, DC, where I pastor the Family Church, we have studied and refined ideas from numerous other churches that, over the last two to three decades, have developed strategies to assist their members and families to grow and flourish in faith, discipleship, and personal and family life. Central among these ideas is *small groups*.

*A small group is a regular gathering of 3 to 12 people who meet on a consistent, planned basis for purposes of fellowship, growth, and service to family, community, and God's Will.*

At this writing, we have over 50 such groups in the Washington, DC, area, and new ones are starting every day. Many of us have found new hope in our spiritual, family, and community life as a result of participating in a group. You may ask, "How do we put together such a group?" You hold in your hands everything you need to begin a group! There are seven sessions, and guidelines for a group facilitator and all the members of the group. All you need is a small number of interested people and one person who is willing to be the facilitator (and that person can be coached from within the booklet). We even have several groups comprised of more spiritually mature people wherein they share the meeting facilitation; a different person leads the meeting each session.

So ... all you need to do is get started! I know you will enjoy the journey as much as reaching the destination: an improved family life and building community among yourselves and your families. All the while you'll be journeying to these destinations in a powerful new way together with the members of your group. With time, you will become a spiritual family.

The core contents of this booklet comprise wisdom on personal growth, marriage, and family life from the Holy Bible, the sermons of Rev. Sun Myung Moon, and several other relevant authors, followed by thought-provoking questions to stimulate discussion, learning, and personal study. This book is appropriate for use by members of the Family Church, members of other churches, and anyone seeking a better understanding of how to live their life and build their family (even if they are presently single). I sincerely hope the contents of this book, as well as helping a small group, contribute to improving family life in our churches and in America.

I especially want to thank Kook Jin Moon for his strong support through a development loan from the Young Jin Moon Charitable Trust, and Dr. Chang Shik Yang, Rev. Michael Jenkins, Dr. Tyler Hendricks, Rev. In Hoi Lee, and Rev. Lorman Lykes for their earnest encouragement, wisdom, and support. I'd like to also thank those whose hands-on support

helped with the finishing of this volume: Jonathan Gullery and Michael Ingles for help with publishing, and Vicki Phelps for editing.

Please let me know how you feel about this material after using it. I can be reached at:

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## **Introduction - How to Best Use This Book**

### **Suggestions for Personal Study**

1. **Study** ONE CHAPTER each week. This study requires ACTION STEPS, and you need TIME to APPLY what you learn in each chapter.
2. **Pray** asking God to help you deeply understand the readings, especially in relationship to the topic of study in the chapter.
3. **Read** and reread the passages in the readings.
4. **Write questions** that come to your mind as you read.
5. **Record your answers** to the discussion points at the end of each chapter **in writing**.
6. **Revisit** the questions you wrote in the margins and probe for understanding.
7. **Commit** to action using the Action Step at the end of each chapter.
8. **Apply** what you've learned in the coming week, especially the action step.

## **Introduction - How to Best Use This Book**

### **Suggestions for a Small Group Meeting**

1. Study the readings with an open mind and a desire for personal growth.
2. Be willing to join in the discussion but beware not to dominate it.
3. Stick to the topic and base your answer on what you have learned from the readings and from your life experience.
4. Try to speak from life experience and your own feelings. Try to avoid theorizing and abstract or purely intellectual answers.
5. Respect other members of the group by encouraging the more hesitant members to participate.
6. Be sensitive to the others in the group. NEVER respond negatively or critically to what another member has said!
7. Keep confidential anything said in the group—*complete and total confidentiality*.

Note: *See the Group Leader's Notes in the back of the book for additional suggestions and ideas.*

# Session 1

## Preparation for Marriage and Family: The Character of Love

### *ICEBREAKERS:*

- If you could liken your mood right now to a ride in an amusement park, which would it be? Why?
- Tell the group one to three things about yourself/your life to help them get to know you. Try to be short and to the point.

### *OPTIONAL GROUP ORGANIZING QUESTIONS:*

- Why did you decide to come to this meeting?
- What would you like to get out of this group?

### *READINGS:*

But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things a man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” (*1 Samuel: 7*)

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If I speak in the tongues of angels and don't have love, I am only a resounding gong. ... If I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all my possessions to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the Truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. (*1 Corinthians 13: 1-8*)

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We should live according to the truth and we should love others. Without the fundamental way of living for the sake of others, we cannot prosper. The person who lives the truth will become the subject, with more power for life. Also, the subject must have the power of love. The responsible leader and central figure must become the embodiment of truth, life and love. All these things can be summed up in one simple phrase: Live for the sake of others. When you practice this way of life, you create harmony. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, July 1, 1984*)

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In our world, selfishness ruins everything. Selfishness in the family causes disharmony, which then erupts into bitterness and strife. Everyone wants to be served instead of serving others. Wives tell their husbands what to do and then seek to be served. Husbands want to be served by their wives. Parents expect service from their children and the children take their parents for granted. This is demonstrated in our families, in our societies, and in our nations. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon*)

~ ~

God wanted Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, to mature in purity, centered on true love. He wanted Adam and Eve to become true people. He created this beautiful and delicate

natural world as the environment for their biological growth. Human beings were to grow and develop within this environment.

God's central concern, however, is with human beings' internal character. By experiencing true love, God intended that we would come to reflect His true love and grow to perfection. God created the power of love to be the strongest of all forces. Through the experience of such power of love within the realm of Heaven's love and law, people are to increasingly resemble God, their Parent. To possess unlimited true love, people first must learn to be responsible.

When human beings come into oneness with God through true love, they resemble Him and become the perfect embodiment of true love, with wholesome character. Thus we can say that God's love is the essence of human happiness, life and ideals. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, August 31, 1996*)

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#### *DISCUSSION:*

- The Bible says that love is patient and kind, that it protects, hopes, trusts, and perseveres. Think of a time you can remember when one of these aspects of love came to you in someone you know.
- The Bible also says that love does not envy, does not boast, is not proud, is not rude, is not easily angered, and is not self-seeking. Think of a time you can remember when one of these aspects of bad character was shown in someone you know.
- Remember a time of love in your family. What conditions led to it?
- Remember a time of difficulty in your family. What conditions led to it?
- What aspects of character are most important for us to become a loving person?
- Rev. Moon states that we should become “true people.” How have you seen this “trueness” in someone you know? Think of specific people and avoid abstract answers.
- ACTION STEP: Think of a specific positive character trait you'd like to develop this week, or a negative one you'd like to get rid of.
  - Describe it here \_\_\_\_\_
  - Use Benjamin Franklin's character development method this coming week: put notes to yourself all over the place (bathroom mirror, refrigerator, car dash, prayer room, etc.). Remind yourself every day, all day for one week that you're working on this trait. See how you've changed at the end of seven days!

## Session 2

### Preparation for Marriage and Family: Becoming the Ideal Spouse

#### ICEBREAKERS:

- Tell the group one to three additional things about yourself/your life to help them get to know you. Try to be brief and to the point.
- Tell the group about your experience with your action step from your last session.

#### READINGS:

*Most people in today's society try to find the "ideal, perfect person," their "true love." Our culture teaches that we keep searching till we find this perfect someone, and then we will "fall in love." In this session, we are going to take a deeper look at these issues, and we are going to challenge several conventional concepts. As you go through the material and discussion, if you are single, think about how you can become a better person to prepare to be the best spouse you can be. If you are married or engaged, be thinking about how to become the best spouse. (ed.)*

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"It is far more important to BE the right kind of person than to FIND the right kind of person."

(Zig Ziglar, Courtship After Marriage)

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A beautiful face is not one whose ears, eyes, mouth and nose are beautiful. The most beautiful person in the world is the one whose mind and body are in perfect harmony with each other. (Rev. Sun Myung Moon)

Which comes first, unity or love? You can love yourself when your mind and body are in harmony with each other. If you love yourself when your desire and actions are going different directions, then your love has little meaning. When your mind and body are united into one, then your love will be eternally protected by God. Unity is the beginning point of love, the point where love can come to abide. (Rev. Sun Myung Moon)

#### DISCUSSION:

- When our body is united with our mind, our deeds follow our words; our actions are the same as our thoughts. *This is called integrity.* Remember a time recently when you felt integrity of thoughts and actions.
  - How did it feel to you?
  - How do you think the people felt who were with you at the time and experienced your integrity?
  - Was there a positive result? What was it?
  - Would you be a better person, spouse, and parent if you could become more like that every day?

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## READINGS:

If anyone is asked whether he wants to receive God's love, he will answer in the affirmative. What should you be doing if you really want God's love? As an individual, your body and mind must be united. That is the basic thing. Then God's love will be with you. With that done, you can proceed on to be united with other people, and then the degree of God's love with you will be deeper and broader. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon*)

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. Dear friends, since God loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear... (*I John: 7-18*)

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Only love transcends all barriers. When you are united with God in true love, you have dominion over all of God's creation, both physical and spiritual. When you live completely for others, you are reaching the very essence of God's own being. God's vibrations become your vibrations. God's feelings are naturally transmitted to you. Living this way, you become a resonant body of God's heart and love. As much as two tuning forks resonate together, you and God always resonate together.

That is the ultimate, original state of the human being. When you achieve that state, the love of God becomes your love, the life of God becomes your life, and the blood lineage of God becomes your blood lineage. The world which God created becomes your world. We are to share the love of God with all things in heaven and earth. We are to be citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven with the heart of parents. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, April 10, 1990*)

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## DISCUSSION:

Most people see LOVE as a noun; something to be attained or to “get” from others. But the deeper level of love is as a VERB: to love. This is “God's love.”

- In the past week, think of a time when you were truly loved by someone.
  - Did you receive it?
  - How did it feel?
  - How do you think the person who loved you felt?
- In the past week, think of when you loved someone fully.
  - Did he or she receive it?
  - How did it feel to you to love someone this way?
  - How do you think the other person felt when you loved them this way?
- ACTION STEP: Think of someone close to you that you want to love with God's love this week. Write their name:
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - Make a plan as to how you will actually love this person.
  - Share it with your group members if you feel free to.

## Session 3

### Getting and Being Married for All the Right Reasons

#### ICEBREAKERS:

- What was the high point of your week last week? Why?
- Describe how your plan to love someone (from the last meeting) went the last two weeks.

#### READINGS:

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage be undefiled.  
(*Hebrews 13:4*)

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Why do we get married? Very simply, we marry in order to resemble God.  
(*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, January 14, 1989*)

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Since God has both male and female characteristics, when men and women come together in love they are presenting the total image of God. Within that “love container” there is always room for two—man and woman. When men and women come together in total unity, they become a unit of minus to God, who is the big plus. There is give and take between that plus and minus. Should Adam and Eve just look at each other or shouldn't they look together toward God? Yes, together the two of them look up at God. That is the reason why we teach that before you love your spouse, you must love God. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, January 30, 1983*)

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What is the purpose of marriage? Is it simply for men and women to live together? The purpose of marriage is the perfection of their mind and heart, the perfection of their love. Through marriage they can achieve that goal. When you declare to the world that you are married, you are actually declaring the initiation of your venture to perfect your mind and heart and love. When you die, you are supposed to have accomplished all of that in your married life and be qualified to go to heaven. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, March 26, 1978*)

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What is marriage? Why is marriage important? Marriage is important because it is the road to finding love. It is the road to creating life. It is the road where the life of a man and a woman unite into one. It is the place where a man's lineage combines with a woman's lineage. History emerges through marriage, and from marriage nations appear and an ideal world begins. Without marriage there is no meaning to the existence of individuals, nations, and an ideal world. This is the formula. Man and woman must become absolutely one. Parents and children must become absolutely one with God, love God, and live and die with God. And when they die and go to the spirit world, that is the place called Heaven. But there has been no individual, family or nation, which has fulfilled that ideal; the world and humankind have not established that ideal. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, August 1, 1996*)

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The man or woman who lives completely for the sake of the world and humankind can have no failure in his marriage. For that person, marriage is a part of loving the world. No matter who the fiancé is, that marriage is bound to be successful, for together the two pursue the same

goal and are absolutely assured of a successful marriage. We must say, “I marry, not for myself alone, but for the sake of God. I want to love God and mankind more. All by myself, I cannot do that well, so I need my eternal partner.” That is a beautiful concept of marriage. You assist each other in loving God more, discussing together the ways to accomplish your goal. What a beautiful couple! (Rev. Sun Myung Moon, November 29, 1981)

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Love in the family should be public-minded and unselfish. Selfish love says, “You must love me. I’m here to receive love.” That kind of love always drags you down like an anchor. Some marry because they want their spouse to love them; they are eager to receive love. That is wrong. You should change your mind now and think, “I want to get married because I want an object to give my fervent love to.”

Any love that is not public-minded is destructive love. Which should be more important to the couple, their savings account or their love? In some homes there are two savings accounts, one for the husband and one for the wife. When they borrow from each other they even write a receipt! If the son asks for some money, he writes a receipt and pays it back with interest. Is love cheaper than money and a piece of paper? When you are truly in love, a husband and wife are one body. Your whole body can become sacrificial, so a bank account is nothing. When the wife needs money, the husband’s money is hers. Likewise, the wife’s money is her husband’s. (Rev. Sun Myung Moon)

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Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands. Husbands, love your wives. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, the two shall become one” ... let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (Ephesians 5:21–32)

#### DISCUSSION:

- Why do a man and woman need one another? Is marriage a natural thing?
- We’ve been taught in our society that marriage is for our own life fulfillment. To what extent do you think this is true? Why?
- The readings point toward a marriage that is for the sake of our spouse and children.
  - If you are *married*, how practical is this ideal? Have you experienced moments like this?
  - If you are *not married*, do you want to have this kind of marriage? Have you seen this ideal at work in other marriages, including your parents’?
  - If you are *married*, what obstacles do you have to get out of the way in order for your marriage to move closer to this ideal?
  - If you are *not married*, have you had a relationship that did or did not work because of factors we have discussed?
- ACTION STEP: If you are *married*, what is one concrete thing you can do this week to improve your marriage? If you are *not married*, what is one concrete thing you can do to improve a significant relationship in your life?

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## Session 4

### Absolute Sexuality

#### ICEBREAKERS:

*Choose One:*

- What is your favorite romantic movie? Why?
- What's one thing you do that makes your spouse/significant other romantic?
- Recall a romantic moment between your parents that you observed as a child
- Report to your fellow group members about how you fulfilled the goal to improve one relationship in your immediate life. Were you successful? Why or why not? How did it feel?

#### READINGS:

The Lord God commanded [Adam and Eve], “You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, but you must not eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, for when you eat of it, you shall surely die. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. The eyes of both of them were opened and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made fig leaves for themselves. (*Genesis 2:15–3:7*)

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They covered their sexual parts, clearly indicating that they were *ashamed of the sexual areas of their bodies because they had sinned through them*. From this we know that they committed sin through the sexual parts of their bodies. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Divine Principle, p. 72*)

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Due to the Fall of Man this entire plan was destroyed. If there is absolute love which God desired, and absolute love which man is seeking, they should become totally one. Without the unity between God's absolute standard, and the absolute standard which man is seeking, there will be no absolute ideal world realized. The Fall can be interpreted as two love pillars. That is why conflict always exists. In your love relationship as husband and wife, do you want two different kinds of love or one absolute love? [You want] one absolute love, with one absolute direction. The direction is one and the purpose is one. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, January 1, 1996*)

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You have heard that it was said, “Do not commit adultery.” But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. (*Matthew 5: 27–29*)

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## DISCUSSION:

- The above readings suggest that the Fall of Man described in the Bible and the “forbidden fruit” was the misuse of sexual love. What evidence do you see of this being true:
  - In the world and history?
  - In your own experience?
- Do you think all lovemaking between men and women is “evil”? When would it be good in God’s eyes?

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## READINGS

Since God has both male and female characteristics, when men and women come together in love they are presenting the total image of God. Within that “love container” there is always room for two—man and woman. When men and women come together in total unity, they become a unit of minus to God, who is the big plus. There is give and take between that plus and minus. Should Adam and Eve just look at each other or shouldn't they look together toward God? Yes, together the two of them look up at God. That is the reason why we teach that before you love your spouse, you must love God. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, January 30, 1983*)

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What is the difference between men and women? Their bodies, including the sexual organs. Then to whom is man’s sexual organ absolutely necessary? Man’s sexual organ exists for the sake of woman. The human sexual organs are shaped as concave and convex. Why are they shaped that way? Both of them could be pointed or both could be flat. Why are they shaped differently? Each is for the sake of the other. Woman absolutely wants what is man’s. And man absolutely wants what is woman’s. Until now, we did not know the fact that, absolutely, woman’s sexual organ is man’s and man’s sexual organ is woman’s. By owning each other’s sexual organs man and woman come to know true love. Only through the experience of two becoming one can we know the highest level of love. No one can absolutely deny these facts. Everyone should recognize this. At the place where husband and wife become completely one, the ideal couple will be created. In that very place, absolute love exists. That place of love, which is absolutely unchanging, is the dwelling place of God. I call this “absolute sex.” Absolute sex is centered on God, and free sex is centered on the Devil. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, June 16, 1997*)

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## DISCUSSION:

- The readings suggest that “absolute sex” between a man and woman in holy marriage is not only good but the ultimate “dwelling place of God” in human life. Do you think this is true and, if so, why?
- The readings also suggest that we must maintain absolute fidelity in marriage and absolute purity before marriage.
  - If you are married, how have you seen this is true?
    - Describe a time when you had to struggle with temptation. How did you overcome?
  - If you are not married, do you see the need for purity before you get married?
    - Describe a time when you struggled with the temptation for “free sex” but knew that your conscience was telling you “not to eat.”

- ACTION STEP: Think of an area of sexuality in your life where you need to improve. Perhaps you need to work on purity. Perhaps you need to come closer to your spouse in true love and “absolute sex.” Write a goal for the next two weeks to improve your life relative to the idea of absolute sex. *No one need know of this except you and God.*

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## Session 5

### My Children: For Me, the World, or God?

#### ICEBREAKERS:

*Choose one:*

- When I think of my children (or of having them in the future) I think of...
- Describe your experience with the goal you set from our last meeting. Did you come closer to God through pursuing it? How?

#### READINGS:

Be fruitful, and multiply and fill the earth, and have dominion over it and subdue it.  
(*Genesis 1:28*)

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Adam and Eve ... should have become husband and wife, forming one unit. They should have multiplied by having children, and established the four position foundation centered on God. When a man and woman have actualized the Second Blessing of God (multiply) this becomes an good object for God's joy and (the husband's and wife's joy).  
(*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Divine Principle, pp. 43–44*)

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Children are the fruit of the love of the mother and father. Children embody their parents' love, life, and lineage. Little children often say "This is mine," but parents are the origin of everything that children refer to as their own. Parents are the root and the trunk.

Parents are the primary source of love for children. The parent-child relationship is vertical, and the husband-wife relationship is horizontal. The lines of these two relationships should cross at right angles. The relationship among siblings forms a third dimension, a front-to-back axis. In the God-centered family, vertical and horizontal loves are united as one.  
(*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, November 20, 1999*)

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Essentially there are four great loves: parents' love, brothers and sisters' love, husband and wife's love, and children's love. True family is the smallest unit where these four great loves can be experienced. This true family is the foundation of true human love and true happiness. It is the place from which true life and true lineage sprout forth. It is the training ground and school of love that prepares people for life in a peaceful, prosperous, and loving society, nation, and world. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, June 11, 1998*)

#### DISCUSSION:

- What do the above readings say about the value of having children?
- What is your experience with the value of children, either by having your own, by being a child in your youth, or by working with children as an adult?
- Describe a time when you saw God in (your or other) children?

#### READINGS:

God is in a parental relationship to His children. As a parent, He invests and forgets. If you want to secure a love relationship between God, yourself, and your spouse, you can offer true love to God. There is only one way to reach God: through the practice of true love. The

practice of true love means investing yourselves over and over again, whole-heartedly. (Rev. Sun Myung Moon, November 19, 1998)

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True parents do not tell their children, “Once you become children of true filial piety, do not become loyal citizens.” True parents should teach children to give their family to the world by following the way of a loyal citizen in service to the nation and in service to the world. Then parents should teach their children to give the world in service to Heaven and Earth, and to even give up Heaven and Earth to God. (Rev. Sun Myung Moon, June 16, 1997)

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Essentially there are four great loves: parents' love, brothers and sisters' love, husband and wife's love, and children's love. True family is the smallest unit where these four great loves can be experienced. This true family is the foundation of true human love and true happiness. It is the place from which true life and true lineage sprout forth. It is the training ground and school of love that prepares people for life in a peaceful, prosperous, and loving society, nation, and world. (The Family and World Peace, June 11, 1998)

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As husband and wife, it is only when we gain the victory with our children, together as a family, that we can say for the first time that we are a family that has realized the ideals and purpose of creation. Unificationism teaches that this purpose is not achieved by an individual alone; it can only be achieved in the family, together with the children. (Rev. Sun Myung Moon)

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When there is oneness in the individual, there will be harmony in the family. When there is harmony in the family, there will be unity in society. When there it unity in society, there will be peace in the world. (Confucius)

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#### DISCUSSION:

- The readings suggest that a good society and world come from good families. Think of a time in your life when you saw that this is true.
- Would you like to see your children existing for a higher purpose than just your own enjoyment or sense of purpose? If so, why?
- How could you see your family benefiting society? You can answer this based on childhood experiences or present ones.
- ACTION STEP: Set a goal for the next week to improve your attitude toward children:
  - *If you are a parent*, toward your own children. *If you are single*, set a goal to move your ideas about marriage and family to a “higher” level.

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## Session 6

### Becoming a 'True Parent'

#### ICEBREAKERS:

*Choose one:*

- If you could have \_\_\_\_\_ (*one of your children*) grow up to become any sort of person, what would you most want them to become? Why?
- Describe your experience with the goal you set from our last meeting. Did you come closer to God through pursuing it? How?

#### READINGS:

Moses said to them: "Lay to heart all the words which I enjoin upon you this day, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law. It is no trifle for you, but it is your life, and thereby you shall live long in the land which you are going over the Jordan to possess."

*(Deuteronomy 32: 44–47)*

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Parents are the primary source of love for children. The parent-child relationship is vertical, and the husband-wife relationship is horizontal. The lines of these two relationships should cross at right angles. The relationship among siblings forms a third dimension, a front-to-back axis. In the God-centered family, vertical and horizontal loves are united as one. *(Rev. Sun Myung Moon, November 20, 1999)*

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Centering on true love, we can reach oneness between parent and child, between husband and wife, and between brothers and sisters. A parent becomes the owner or master of love through his child. A husband becomes the owner of love through his wife. An elder child becomes the owner of love through his younger brothers and sisters.

In order to develop a loving character, we must serve and honor our parents, our brothers and sisters, and our spouse. By doing so, we will attain mind-body unity as individuals, fraternal unity as brother and sister, and conjugal unity as husband and wife. *(Rev. Sun Myung Moon, November 20, 1999)*

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The love of parents is the basis for children's pride and happiness. They would wish to be born through the total and harmonious unity of their parents in true love, and they would wish to be raised in that kind of love. The most precious responsibility of parents is not only to rear their children externally, but also to offer them life elements of true love that can perfect their spirituality. *(Rev. Sun Myung Moon, April 16, 1996)*

God is in a parental relationship to His children. As a parent, He invests and forgets. If you want to secure a love relationship between God, yourself, and your spouse, you can offer

true love to God. There is only one way to reach God: through the practice of true love. The practice of true love means investing yourselves over and over again, whole-heartedly. (Rev. Sun Myung Moon, November 19, 1998)

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In the 1950s in the United States, the average child watched little or no TV, and what he did see on television was stable, two-parent families who generally interacted with respect. Today, the average child watches seven hours of television per day. By the end of grade school, he's seen over eight thousand murders and one hundred thousand acts of violence, as well as ten thousand alluded to sexual acts and hundreds of thousands of discussions and jokes about sexuality. During this time he's spent an average of five minutes a day with his father and twenty minutes with his mother, and most of that time was spent either eating or watching TV!

Just think about it: seven hours of TV a day and five minutes with Dad. Unbelievable! Do you know how a child spells "Love"? T-I-M-E! (Steven Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families*)

#### DISCUSSION:

- Our reading from the Bible says that a child's primary source of values and traditions comes from his parents. In your childhood, or in your family now, how have you seen this to be true?
- In the readings, Rev. Moon says, "God is in a parental relationship with His children." This suggests that one of the key purposes of life might be to have and raise children, in order to resemble God. What do you think of this?
- The readings mention frequently that the harmonious relationship between husband and wife is the necessary foundation for a good relationship with children.
  1. In your childhood, did you grow up in such an environment? Explain.
  2. Remember a time when you saw this dynamic take place in your family, either with your parents or now, with your children. Describe how you have seen this dynamic of parents' unity positively affect children firsthand.
- From the readings, several ideas are suggested as to what a "true parent" is. From the readings, and from your own experience, list some of the attributes of a true parent. Explain.
- Consider the reading from *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families*
  1. What does this say about modern culture's effect on families?
  2. How can we as parents counteract some of these influences?
  3. Remember a time when one of your parents spent quality time with you, or when you spent quality time with one of your children.
- ACTION STEP: Choose one of your children with whom you want to improve your relationship (\_\_\_\_\_). From our study tonight, choose one thing you will do to improve that relationship. \_\_\_\_\_

## Session 7

### My Family Is the Hope of the Future

#### ICEBREAKER:

*Break up into groups of two or three to discuss the following statement:*

- My hopes and dreams for my family are \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Take ten minutes total for this sharing.)
- Tell the group about your experience with your action step from our last session.

#### READINGS:

Be fruitful, and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.” (*Genesis 1:28*)

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Because you have done this [Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice Isaac], I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me. (*Genesis 22: 15–18*)

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God knows that a selfish relationship is self-destructive. Nothing can flourish based on selfishness. Selfishness eventually leads to self-extinction. God knows that an eternal and prospering relationship can never come about through selfish taking. So God built the universe upon the principle of unselfishness. God created everything in this universe to be complementary. Everything is made for others.

The ideal husband and wife live for each other. Their children will live for each others’ sake. The family will live for the society, the society for the nation and the nation for the whole world. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon*)

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When there is oneness in the individual, there is harmony in the home. When there is harmony in the home, there is unity in the village. When there is unity in the village there is stability in the nation. When there is stability in the nation there is peace in the world. (*Confucius*)

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True parents do not tell their children, “Once you become children of true filial piety, do not become loyal citizens.” True parents should teach children of filial piety to sacrifice their family by following the way of a loyal citizen in service to the nation, and to sacrifice the nation to fulfill the way of saints in service to the world. Then parents should teach their children to sacrifice the world in service to Heaven and Earth, and to sacrifice Heaven and Earth to come to God. In short, “Living for the Sake of Others” is the root of the family, society, nation, world and Cosmos. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon, June 16, 1997*)

As it says in Proverbs, “Without vision, the people perish.” All families need a sense of mission. Without this in a family, the opposite will take place—no mental creation, no envisioning for the future. Just to let life happen, to be swept along with the flow of society’s values and trends without having any vision or purpose of our own. (*Steven Covey, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families*)

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Everything that I am speaking of comes down to one simple word: harmony. The ideal world is not a world of uniformity and regimentation, but a world of harmony in which each person plays a distinctive role. Here we are, white people, yellow people, and black people, products of the things that have happened to our ancestors. Though we all started from common ancestors, we have discriminated among ourselves, and divided into many streams.

In the sight of God, there is no such thing as Orientals, whites, and blacks. Just think of the different colors—they are only our various complexions. Underneath, we come from the same God. Be proud of what you are. We are all God’s children; we are brothers and sisters in God’s family. If your hope is that the entire world can be embraced in your arms, then you have the right idea. (*Rev. Sun Myung Moon*)

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#### DISCUSSION:

(*Consider which ones you have time for*)

- Remember a time when you were proud of your family, either in your childhood or presently.
- Have you ever thought that your family is actually responsible for building a better world? What does this mean to you? How will you live by this idea?
- The readings indicate that making a better community, nation, and world actually starts at home. How have you seen this to be true in your life? You may use painful examples as well as hopeful ones.
- In very practical examples, discuss what your family can contribute to making a better community, nation, and world.
- As we conclude this group, write a reflection for a few minutes on what you have learned about yourself, and hone in on one key idea that you can use to improve your life.

• *Reflection: (Use other side if needed)* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• *Key idea:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- **ACTION STEP:** Review the six action steps you committed to during this study. Which one stands out to you as the most important; the one needing your most dedicated attention. As we end this study, commit below to further action in this area:

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## Guidelines for Group Leaders

People join small groups for all sorts of reasons - to know a few people well, to be cared for, to learn, to grow spiritually, to become true parents, to put truth into practice and to multiply our community. Experiencing community through a small group can lay a foundation of solid relationships for your life. By the end of these sessions, you will have developed a sense of community and a sense of self according to your original nature. And you will be ready to apply what you have learned in your day-to-day life.

Consider using the two tools offered at the beginning of the booklet to facilitate building community in your group:

- Group Agreement – a simple way for all of you to agree why you’re meeting, when and where you’ll meet, and basic values for the group.
- Group Directory

### **ELEMENTS OF A SESSION:**

Each session consists of Icebreakers, Readings, and Discussion Questions. You can complete the session in 60 to 90 minutes.

**ICEBREAKERS:** These simple, even lightweight questions are meant to do just what the name implies: break the ice for the meeting.

We come to group meetings with various types of difficulties, preoccupations and self-centered inclinations that keep us from opening up in a group to the readings or to the other members. Use the icebreakers to get everyone a little warmed up before getting in to the central part of the meeting.

**Reading:** This portion of each session includes words from the Bible and the teachings of Rev. Sun Myung Moon on the same biblical themes. Here are three different ways you can read the Readings:

- a. As the group leader, read the sections out loud for the whole group and then move to the questions. This method is often preferred by groups that are somewhat new to each other.
- b. Go around the circle and ask each person to read one section of the reading. This method is often preferred by groups that know each other well.
- c. Ask a group member to volunteer to read the Reading for the group. It is best to ask someone in advance to give them time to read over the passages before the group starts. After someone has read it out loud, move to the questions.
- d. Allow time at the beginning of the session for each person to read the Reading silently. If you use this option, be sure to give everyone enough time to finish.

**Questions:** The first questions are designed to help group members begin discussing the topic easily and with honesty and openness. Most of the discussion questions are to help group

members relate the words of the readings to their daily lives. The last question at the end of each session is very practical and action-oriented. Through this question, please review the action goals and challenge group members to work on one or more of them in the coming week.

**Action Steps:** This section is, in one sense, the most important part of your meeting. This is the point at which your group members will make a *commitment to life change*. This is where the “rubber will hit the road;” whether the group will just be a nice gathering or become a place where lives are impacted. Make sure that each member makes his or her commitment to action during this step *in writing*. The following week, ask each member of the group to describe how his or her life changed as a result of taking action. Those who did not will be motivated by the testimonies of those who did.

### **Ideas for the First Meeting**

The first meeting of any group is often a little stiff or strained, until each member reaches a certain comfort level with the group. This may take from ten minutes to several sessions, depending on the makeup of the group. If the members all know each other, or all have a recognizable affinity (such as belonging to the same congregation), a good comfort level will be reached more quickly.

In order to help the comfort level arrive more quickly, it might be a good idea to go over the purpose of the group and the Group Agreement (if you intend to use it) at the first meeting. This will get everyone talking, as well. Use the “Optional Group Organizing Questions” to get the members of the group talking about their interests for the group; you will be building ownership of the group as well.

Then go to the “Group Agreement” at the front of the book and fill in the blanks with the group. You might ask all members to pass their volumes around and have everyone fill in the “Group Directory” page. *Don’t stay too long here, just ten minutes or less.*

Then, go on to the next part of the session.

### **Preparing to Lead Your Group**

1. As you study each session ahead of time, ask God to help you understand and apply it in your own life. Unless this happens, you will not be prepared to lead others.
2. Carefully work through each question in the session. Spend time in meditation and reflection on both the reading and the questions as you formulate your answers.
3. Pray for the various members of your group.
4. Consider what the session means for your life, what changes you may need to make in your lifestyle, and/or what actions you can take in the church or with people you know.

### **Leading the Group Meeting**

1. Begin the session on time.
2. Make sure the group members understand the readings clearly before moving to the questions.

3. Don't be afraid of silence after you read a question. People are simply thinking about the question!
4. Avoid answering the question yourself until others have responded and the group gets its own "flow" on that question.
5. Encourage more than one answer to each question.
6. Never reject an answer.
7. Avoid letting the group go off track.
8. If, at one point, things get particularly deep or insightful, don't worry so much if you get through to the next questions. "Let the Spirit flow."
9. Conclude your time together with prayer.
10. End on time.
11. Encourage fellowship time together after the session is over. You might want a host to prepare some simple snacks.

***Further study on how to start, develop, and lead small groups***

- *One Anothering*, volumes 1 and 2, by Rev. Richard C. Meyer, Innisfree Press, Philadelphia, PA
- *Nine Keys to Effective Small Group Leadership*, by Carl F. George, Kingdom Publishing, Mansfield, PA
- *Leading Life Changing Small Groups*, by Bill Donahue, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI
- *Interactions Series*, by Bill Hybels, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids MI. An excellent series of six-session small group booklets on topics such as character, love, parenting, marriage, family life, building community, growth, etc. Highly recommended
- *Prayer: Training for Opening Up to God*, by In Hoi Lee, HSA Publications, New York, NY. The first of our Washington Family Church Small Group Series. A logical next step for a group after using this volume.
- An excellent website: [www.smallgroups.com](http://www.smallgroups.com)
- Our Washington Family Church Small Group Website: [www.unification.net/dcsmallgroups](http://www.unification.net/dcsmallgroups)

*All titles are available on Amazon.com and BN.com*