
The True Parents

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The Identity of the True Parents

Our True Parents are precious! More than words can express. More than tear-filled eyes can reveal. They are our beacon of hope, radiating the love of God to the corners of what could be an intolerably bleak world. Were it not for them, our scope and vision would be clouded by the restraints clamped on our hearts by Satan. But they have brought a renaissance of spirit, a revival of the true values of God. They are our guides who help us along the pathway back home to God.

Who are the True Parents? Were you to ask the world, you would no doubt be handed quite a mixed bag of responses. Yet a Unificationist has a very different perspective. Although each one of us may have unique personal experiences with the True Parents, I think True Parents generally represent the soul of God to Unificationists, and are our example. They bring the lifeblood that can pump through our spiritual bodies, and bring us to life. And they are the ones who apply the balm effective in healing the lesions left in our torn and bruised spirits, caused by Satan's handiwork. Satan has been instrumental in sequestering us from our God, but Father has come to weave our lives into the lineage of God, and to carry us home to Him.

Conjuring up such vivid word images can perhaps disclose something of the identity of True Parents and what they are doing, but to those of us who have become their disciples and followers, there is so much more substance to the nature of True Parents than expressions, idioms, or even similes can evidence. Thinking about True Parents can start a reverie of sights and sounds of God, of the dawning of the new world, and of the banishing of the old world.

We Unificationists should always keep the identity of True Parents in mind. We must recognize them as our mediators, our way to reach God. Without studying them, it becomes difficult to understand the heart of God and successfully mirror His image. They are the medium which can connect us to the reality of God. No longer does it become necessary to study about an abstract and mystical God who lives somewhere between the clouds. No longer do we need to think of the apparition of God as spooky or scary. We believe True Parents reflect God, and in that sense, He is as tangible as we are!

When we Unificationists look at True Parents, we see two wonderful

people, people who mean a great deal to us. If we think about them in relationship to the history of our God, we will intuit that their appearance on earth is the result of myriads of tears cried by billions of people yearning for God and salvation. We can also understand that they are the manifestation of God, and that all of history is culminated within them. Spiritual beings understand who Father is, but fallen man cannot understand much of his nature. Even though we are now a mere handful of believers compared to the population of the world, the day will come when humanity knows with assurance that he is the son of God!

How did Christians know that Jesus was the Messiah and by what authority did they proclaim his messiahship? For years, Father never proclaimed himself as the Messiah; it was his disciples who asserted that claim. By what authority do I say that he is the Messiah? I know from personal experience, and by verifying it with God. I *know* that my redeemer lives, and that he is alive on earth now. To me, one who brings the highest truth and leads me closer to my Heavenly Father is most definitely a man of God.

I am sure every Unificationist has prayed to discover the identity of the True Parents, and perhaps even challenged God to prove their finding. Yet I am also sure you could tell the difference in your own life of faith once you began to live by the Principle: doing so no doubt brought you closer to God and verified both His existence and the identity of True Parents.

Why not bring such authority of God into your witnessing work and encourage people to determine the identity of Sun Myung Moon. You could tell them, "No matter what you think or how much you have been influenced by the media and what other people say, if there is even a one percent possibility that Sun Myung Moon *is* the returned Christ, don't you owe it to yourself to find out whether it is true or not? This time in history is unlike any other for mankind. You have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity; don't just let it pass by." That is definitely a provocative challenge, but if it sticks in their mind, they may continue to be preoccupied with the possibility it is true. That is actually my personal experience. I kept thinking that if Sun Myung Moon *is* the Messiah, I am so privileged to be among the first people in the world to discover it. I could hardly believe how much God did in my life to pull back my curtain of doubt and reveal to me the identity of His true son and daughter!

Christ has returned; although he comes as a man, he is sent by God. He comes to bring salvation to all mankind and the whole universe. He

comes to take away poverty—both physical and spiritual—to fulfill all longing, and to finally bring peace on earth. He is not just a man who soothes our hearts and helps reunite us with God spiritually. He also aims to stabilize the ideological, political, social, and economic foundations of this world. He comes both to "normalize" and "Godize" human society. That is the essence of Christ's mission. He serves mankind by bringing the laws of God, and he clarifies so many of the unsolved mysteries surrounding the nature of God. He explains the heart of God, and the longing He has to embrace His children. He tells us why God created in the first place. But he also explains that we are not free of responsibility, rather we must give him a hand in restoring this world back to God. He shares with us the need to unite with him and to intensify our life of faith. He incites us to search more, to find more, to work more, and to sacrifice more. The Messiah also urges us to become more obedient, more loving, and more pure.

As it was two thousand years ago, so it is today. The high priests, the Pharisees and the Saducees persecuted Jesus. Those in a similar position today persecute Father. Not only religious leaders, but also politicians, the media, and the whole of public opinion has come against the living Christ and his followers, just as it did two thousand years ago. Will that painful part of history be repeated? Will people succeed in killing the incarnation of God as He was "killed" through the body of Jesus, and "murdered" by Satan in the form of Adam and Eve. God agonized throughout these thousands of years and worked hard to send the Messiah once again. But He had the foresight to forestall another execution—another crucifixion—by creating a democratic environment in which Christ could work. It is a safeguard that God created to ensure that *this* time mankind will not be able to kill His son. Yet what do people do? They are still "murderous." They still reject. They still disbelieve. All because they know so little about God. Anybody who really knows the heart of God would never pursue His son with the intention of killing him. The problem is that people do not recognize him as the Messiah. They do not see the light of love shining from our Father's eyes. They do not perceive that he is the one all of humanity awaits. If only they knew his true identity they would be much more ready to go after him, not in the spirit of vengeance or revenge, but with the desire to bow before him in respect and offer their lives to God through him.

You may hope to see the face of God when you get to spirit world. You probably have great curiosity about what He looks like. Is it possible to see the totality of God? No. Surprised? There will always be some part of Him that the human eye is unable to catch. The reason is simple. There are billions of spiritual beings and physical beings; each one of them contains

an essence of God. In order to see the total God, it would be necessary to become acquainted with each person—from the past, present, as well as those who will live in the future. Although this is impossible to do, a day need not go by without discovering something more of God through other people.

You may use your hand to shield your eyes from the brightness of the sun while you attempt a glimpse at His face by looking into the heavens, but you will soon discover that the face of God does not appear in the sun. What part of Him can someone see? It is possible to see part of Him in His son and daughter. A reflection of God can be seen in the True Father and True Mother, because our God manifests Himself through perfected Adam and Eve.

God had to wait a long time for the appearance of His perfect object. When True Father accepted his mission, God could finally begin to give everything He had—all His love, all His power, and all His authority. God held nothing back from His true son. He had lost His child so long ago, but finally found and reclaimed him. God felt tremendous happiness, something Satan could not help but notice. Satan wants to snuff out the person who could potentially bring back the control of this world into the hands of God. But True Parents cannot help but notice what Satan tries to do, and therefore do everything to work against him. How grateful God is to the True Parents for going through all the terrible hardships and sacrifices necessary to become His perfect objects and to fulfill His heartfelt desire of someday sharing His love with all mankind.

Today editorials and articles through the various forms of media express the possibility that Father might just be the Messiah. Even many Christians wonder if it could be true. Re-awaken that thought for people as you witness to them. Let them ask God for validation.

God can speak to their conscience, but your words will also continue to penetrate into their heart. They may think deeply, "What if he really *is* the Messiah? The whole world is waiting to be redeemed and yet it is possible mankind might reject Christ again."

Share with them the tragedy of Jesus' life and God's viewpoint of it. Ask the person you are witnessing to if he believes that Jesus is the Messiah, but ask him why he thinks *everybody* did not realize it when he was alive. Ask him why people chased Jesus to the cross. But burn into his heart the challenge to pray about the identity of Christ, and reiterate that at all costs

he must not miss his chance. All he might remember is that one sentence, but it is enough of a base for the spirit world to work with him.

Before Father could step into the position of Messiah, he had to battle certain spiritual forces to gain God's approval and authority. Before he could bring the tenets of the Principle to humanity, he had to double and triple check if what he uncovered was true or not. He had to study hard to find the Principle, and had to research the reality of the spirit world. He also had to learn if Satan was real and then contend with him. All kinds of confrontations took place, including ones that Father has not yet disclosed publicly. Once he gained victory in these spiritual battles, Satan acknowledged him as the victor. That is when he was able to begin restoring the physical world.

The person in the position of the Messiah represents God. He becomes the literal center of the cosmos. Anyone who unites with him inherits that same position and takes on a new identity as a son or daughter of God and the Messiah. The Messiah is the central figure, or harmonizer, between the spiritual world and the physical world. There is a seemingly infinite reservoir of authority given to our Christ today; he is the main tributary flowing from the unlimited reservoir.

In order for Father to discover the fine points of the Principle, he had to peel back layer after layer of history, read the words of the Bible and other holy books, and keep an open heart to discover the actual will of God. He even had to argue with God to determine if the revelations were true. Father studied Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, etc. and discovered that each existing religion had certain fragments of the truth which God revealed. He had to lift out all those elements and piece them together. He had to disclose Satan's sin, and the fiendish plot the Evil One has kept secret all these years, by which he tries to suppress man's relationship with God. Father realized that despite the spiritual salvation brought through Jesus' resurrection, Satan did not worry about losing control over mankind until someone solved the problem of *physical* redemption. He kept all of God's sons and daughters under his sovereignty, partly by playing upon man's burgeoning need to satisfy personal desires. But now Father has exposed this very devious plan of Satan, and entreats us to recognize it.

How can we Unificationists say True Father is the Messiah? To us, his identity is clear. He is the one through whom we learn about the nature of God and the nature of Satan. He is the one who found the stream of faith humanity can ford to be able to leave the shoreline of Satan and reach the shoreline of God. Why is Father the Messiah?—because he is the one who uncovered the original sin and solved it!

Since the Messiah has returned, it is possible for fallen man to reach perfection during his physical lifetime, and to live in the realm of Heaven in the spirit world, not just the realm of Paradise. Jesus became the mediator between God and man. Although Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius and other holy men were great persons, they could not mediate between God and fallen man in the position of Messiah. Today, the Messiah has returned. God sends him to lead people away from Satan. In this sense, the Messiah is like God. The Messiah is certainly the center of the physical and spiritual worlds, and mediates between God and the universe. The Messiah is God's mouthpiece, the one He speaks through.

For two thousand years God spiritually cared for those who believed in Jesus. This spiritual revival caused many followers of Christ to cry tears and sing songs, longing for his return. Yet now that the Messiah has finally come, a great many people are suspicious of his identity. They do not recognize Sun Myung Moon. During the Pentecost described in the Bible, it seems people were intoxicated, heady with spiritual "drink." What about *our* "Pentecost" in this day and age. Few are "drunk" with jubilation and excitement. People are sobered and numb by the difficulty of life in Satan's world.

Who are the children of God?—those who are driven by His spirit. Whenever Jesus was glorified during these past two thousand years, it was as if all of heaven came down. Such tremendous, powerful, and spiritual movements emerged. At different times throughout the history of Christianity, many Christians have surely been "on fire for the Lord." Was it all for nothing? What about now? Don't you think that when the time is right, God will find the chance and the circumstances to bring humanity to the point where they can see Father for who he really is? Once they realize his identity, I am confident that people will recognize and praise him.

I was only twenty-one years old when I returned from spending almost four years in a prisoner of war camp. Even though I was raised in a

household where Jesus was much loved and respected, it was then that I attended my first Christian revival meeting. What I heard about Jesus turned me inside out! It was a definite rebirth experience. I was deeply touched because I felt his presence. I told Jesus that I offered my life, my heart, and my love to him forever. And I meant it. That began my earnest search to hear more about him. I looked for people who were like me, connected with Jesus, but who also wanted to fill their hearts and minds with more knowledge, and do something for God.

Consequently, I applied for scholarships at three different seminaries; I had a burning zeal to become a missionary. My father was a minister and even though he had great influence, not one of those seminaries accepted me. Every space was already filled. That was the time when many millions of people moved from East to West Germany fleeing from the Russians. *Everything* was overcrowded and although I had no chance to get in, I was not so easily deterred. I questioned God, "Heavenly Father, why did You let me have this experience in the first place if You don't want me to be a missionary?" I kept on going to church, and did whatever I could to serve Him and Jesus. Nearly every night I was involved in something—Bible study, choir practice, or evangelizing. I couldn't get enough, and my longing for Jesus became ever greater. I did not know so much about God, but I was very connected to Jesus. I wanted to come closer and closer to him, and as a result, my prayer life intensified each day. I had such a deep longing for Heaven, for Jesus and for something that I could not really put my finger on, but which was so mysterious and hidden inside my heart. In a spiritual sense, I wanted to do nothing more than live for God and Jesus.

I did not find many people who possessed the same desire and longing, and after a few months, my feeling of enthusiasm decreased a little. After a few years, my religious life lost even more focus and vigor. By that time, I was married and my wife and I already had a child. We had to consider how to survive under difficult conditions in post-war Germany, and it was at that time we decided to emigrate to Canada. But all the while I wondered, "God, what have You done with me? First You let me experience such an amazing feeling with Jesus, but then You sent me away. Don't You want me? I was full of fire to become a missionary for You—I wanted to go to Guatemala, or *anywhere*. Why didn't it work out?"

We lived in Canada about four and a half years and then emigrated to the United States. I became a self-made businessman and well off. Despite my position I still prayed to Jesus every day. When we were introduced to the Unification movement, I owned a factory in Cleveland, Ohio, was a real estate broker and investor, and owned a construction company. But when Christel and I heard that Christ has returned, my spirit was reignited

again. I felt, "Aha. God left me alone for a few years and let me sweat it out, but He wants me after all!" It was not so easy to suddenly accept that Christ had a new name, but I fought my way through such spiritual battles and became a disciple of True Parents.

When I connected with God through True Parents, I received so many confirmations from spirit world that Father is the Messiah. Yet like the majority of Christians, I had expected Jesus to return to earth on the clouds. I believed in the Bible—word for word, dot for dot. I did not question anything at all. When I heard the Principle, I discovered that Jesus had to come back because he had not been able to complete his mission, having been rejected by his people. I learned that Sun Myung Moon and Jesus are one in mission, and that the spirit of God guides them and lives within them. It was really hard for me to accept True Parents, but I prayed with desperation. I studied both the Bible and the Principle. I did not know what to expect; I did not know which was correct, but after consistent prayer, I finally received confirmation that the Principle is true.

I met with God in prayer. Hour after hour I knelt by the edge of the Sacramento River. My knees were bruised because the stones dug into them, but I did not mind the pain too much. I had heard that Father sat on a rock and prayed to God in tears. I thought if I did something similar, God would answer me. I prayed this way more than once, but I remember one time most vividly. I stayed by the riverside for six hours. The sky was cloudy and the river seemed to pay no heed to my desperation; it just kept flowing by. I yelled for God to answer, but I heard only echoes reverberate my anguished screams. I said in a demanding voice, "You've got to tell me. Is this it? Is this the truth or not? I don't want to go to hell. I don't want to follow the anti-christ, but if this is Your truth, I want to be a good disciple. I want to do as much as I can to restore this world back to You."

I was like anybody else; I expected signs. I wanted God Himself to come down from Heaven and through the door of my home. In fact, I demanded signs. I wanted God to say, "Oh, My dear son, Paul! You served Me so well in the past and since you love Me so much, I want you to know that Sun Myung Moon is indeed My son." But He did not do that. I heard only silence from the heavens. After six hours of intense prayer, I felt totally exhausted and nearly had to crawl back into my car. I went home and headed straight for the couch. I felt completely drained and wanted nothing more than to rest. All of a sudden, tears started streaming down my face. My whole body shook and no matter how much I tried, I could not stop crying. This experience went on for three days! I heard a voice say, "This is how God feels when He looks at humanity. This is your answer."

This is your sign. This is the confirmation you wanted." I felt so miserable; I felt as if every cell in my body would burst. Even though my Christian heritage had brought me to a certain point, and even though I had such an ardent love for Jesus, I could not deny the beauty and the reality of this direct experience with God. I had my answer.

Unificationists claim that Sun Myung Moon is the Messiah. If that *is* his identity, we could say that he is actually the result of the six thousand biblical years of human history. People glorified Jesus for the last two thousand years, and often in tears sang the most beautiful songs of love to him. People put their lives on the line; some went to the jungles to proclaim to the native people about the salvation available through Jesus. Those people were driven by the Holy Spirit, but what about us? What kind of songs are we singing? True Parents are the highest manifestation of God that mankind has ever seen. Whether or not people believe it at this time actually does not matter. When Jesus walked on earth, very few really believed that he was the son of God. Nevertheless, that was and still *is* his position. It does not matter what *people* believe, what matters is what *God* believes. Do we realize that in all of human history, the highest manifestations of God are the True Parents, and that we have the amazing advantage of being connected with them?

We will never again see a clearer picture of the face and the nature of God. That is why it is important for us to discover who True Parents are, and who we are in relation to them. Father and Mother are desperate to bequeath to us many points of God's will and especially His tradition. We must do everything possible to inherit them!

True Parents as Our Example

All of us consciously or unconsciously look for a hero. Someone we want to be like. Someone we can look up to. A little girl may emulate her mother who is a nurse, and then decide to become a nurse herself. A little boy whose father is an airplane pilot may want to follow in his father's footsteps. When a child gets older he may change his mind about what he wants to become, but no matter what our age, all of us need to respect someone who is an example, an inspiration, or a hero to us. It seems to me that intuitively man knows what difficulty there is in living a life of virtue.

Throughout the ages, people searched for answers to help them cope with the complexities of life. They wanted to discover how to become good human beings. There is even more searching done today; in this cold and lonely world, each one of us longs for and needs acceptance and recognition. God realizes man's longing and need to know Him. That is precisely why He has been so anxious to send the Messiah. It is the Messiah who provides us with an example, showing us what a true child of God is like.

As we grow in faith and purity, we take the position of spiritual elders and sometimes even "heroes" to those who may have just begun their adventure of a life of faith. Just as we Unificationists revere True Parents and those in a spiritual elder's position to us, others may also look up to us. That is why we should strive to be exemplary, to be paragons and prototypes. And the models we ourselves must learn from are none other than the True Parents.

In the future, millions of people will wonder how they can become like True Parents. This is something we Unificationists wonder today. After receiving the Blessing, it is the responsibility of every Unificationist to become a true child of God and True Parents. Because we have become engrafted into the True Parents' lineage, we are of one "flesh and blood" and one spirit.

How can we become a man like Father or a woman like Mother? Father has poured out his heart to Unificationists for years and years. He has given literally thousands of speeches about God's creation in which he outlines the qualities of a true man and true woman. Whereas we scratch our heads and wonder how he comes forth with so much knowledge and so many intricate insights into the nature of God and the nature of man, he actually speaks from personal life experiences. When he talks about perfection, he recounts what he personally experienced to reach it. He tells us that to follow his example and reach perfection, we have to be willing to suffer. The idea of suffering does not generally appeal to us, so we often let our mind wander and then focus on other things. How frustrating that must be to both God and True Parents.

The Messiah has to bring us the true example of heart, teaching us how to love, how to sacrifice, how to obey. Even though Jesus hung on the cross, he still proclaimed love for those who killed him, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Those words are an expression of perfect love. To be able to sacrifice in such a way, he had to be totally obedient to God. Even today, humanity views Jesus' love as a paradigm.

Although Father does not need to pay indemnity for himself or his family, he is still actively involved in doing so to further restoration. He is the supreme example of how to live the Principle. He puts himself in the lowest position, even though rightfully he should occupy the highest one. He works the most and sleeps the least. He willingly pays more indemnity than anyone else because he knows that restoration can be accomplished only through the offering of indemnity. That particular quality of love should be a source of inspiration and an illustration that we ourselves should pattern.

The main difference between the Messiah and us, apart from position and authority, is in character. Father's temperament is so different from our own. He has strength of character like a diamond. Just as brilliant. Just as tough. He makes no compromises, but burrows straight ahead, even plowing through seemingly impenetrable "walls." He is our example and we would do well to follow his ways.

The representative couples and members who directly serve and attend True Parents should extend the blessing they receive to the rest of mankind. Through them, the grace of God should pass through the spiritual hierarchy to everybody else. In fact, anyone who has had personal experiences with True Parents should testify about them to others. Leaders especially should transfer to their members the same quality of love they receive from True Parents. They become the mediators, ideally setting a prototype of True Parents' standard to the members for whom they are responsible. Those leaders who neglect that important part of their obligation, commit grave sins of omission.

Meeting True Parents personally is a gift and a blessing. Whoever comes close to them should convey the heart of True Parents to brothers and sisters who are not afforded such chances. That is one way of extending True Parents' love, but it is also a way to follow the model of True Parents who radiate the love of God.

Father asks each of us to become a second Reverend Moon. What a monumental task! We can accomplish this only by listening to him, researching his way of thinking and feeling, and following his example. We can watch his actions and study what he did in the past as a way of figuring out what he might do in the future. If we really want to be their child, our

thinking should revolve around True Parents continuously. We should think of and pray for them every day. Humanity has never seen such a clear manifestation of the presence of God on earth as the True Parents. They are the paragons of God's love we should respect and exemplify.

If we want to build a true and vibrant relationship to God, we must first cultivate that kind of relationship with True Parents. Jesus said that there is no way to reach God except by going through him; he was the example humanity was to follow. Now the world has been given the True Parents as examples. We learn from them as individuals, as spouses, and as parents. If we are curious enough, we can learn from them about prayer, about life, and the way to live the Principle. We need to listen not only with our ears, and observe not only with our eyes. We need to absorb the words of Father with our hearts, for when he talks about Heaven, he brings it down to earth.

The Authority of True Parents

We must consider the magnitude of the Messiah's work, realizing that he does not come just to soothe our hearts and point us in the direction of the road that will lead us to perfection. He also comes to restore the mistakes of the past, and to take the spiritual and the physical worlds from the jurisdiction of Satan back to the sovereignty of God. After they successfully reached the position of True Parents, the Messiah and his bride were able to redeem mankind spiritually *and* physically. They now work to bring the entire world back to God and in the process, cleanse the evils of society *in* all fields—religion, politics, economics, science, etc. God has given them the command to build a new society, in fact a new civilization, which is to be centered upon Hitn. To do so, they must battle with Satan and oust him from his position as ruler of the world. God is very aware that it is impossible to accomplish everything from a church pulpit. He knows the Messiah must exert the authority of God and literally turn all levels of society "upside down" to ensure that ultimately all people become conscious of the workings of God.

If we observe him with a keen sense of perception, we can see how the Messiah uses the Principle to accomplish certain aspects of the will of God he alone can do. Years ago, True Father started working in various directions and continues expanding even today. He worked in far different ways from the way Jesus did; but then again society is also far more advanced and

complex now. Many people have a certain concept of the way the Messiah might return to this world; we Unificationists know he is already here. The kind of character he has, the color of his skin, and the shape of his eyes might provide some surprises for people. But then the concepts held by fallen man do not necessarily match those of God. Unification members and leaders alike might have wondered what Father, as a religious leader, was doing when he inspired the creation of certain businesses, founded newspapers, and the like. Many people might still expect Christ to ride on the back of a donkey through a present-day "Jerusalem." But today's Messiah is quite a different person, just as this world is quite a different world from the one of two thousand years ago. We cannot fail to remember that with the authority of heaven, the Messiah is to begin the *new* world. That is part of his commission from God.

The Messiah is the mediator between God and man, hence tremendous spiritual power and authority is granted him. The power of God is focused through the True Parents, but at the same time God expects Father and Mother to live according to the universal laws. Father's way often seems so unusual to us, but that is because he fulfills the laws of God, and we do not. That is why he often makes such absolute statements and lives under rigorous self-discipline. As each of us grows spiritually, relating to Father and broadening our understanding of the Principle, we will also become more absolute in living according to its tenets. This kind of resolve is rewarded with certain authority; the more faith we demonstrate, the more spiritual power God will bestow upon us.

Those who worked according to the will of God in Jesus' time found that whatever they did in Jesus' name would be fulfilled. That is the basis of Christian faith and that principle still holds true. Today, anything Unificationists do in the name of True Parents has both the authority and involvement of God and the spirit world.

The power of God is channeled through our mediators, the True Parents. A great deal of spiritual phenomena manifested at the time of Jesus. Since the time of the resurrection, millions of people have changed their lives, and even surrendered their lives to God. Based on their faith in Jesus as Lord, Christians receive spiritual salvation. Today, mankind has the potential to receive both spiritual and physical salvation. Because True Parents reached a different level, so much more authority is given them.

Because God endowed the power of mediatorship to Father, we pray in the name of True Parents. The spirit world is directly affected by the thoughts, words, and actions of True Father, and the good forces in spirit world are activated to move and assist him. That is the authority which accompanies his position.

Salvation is available to a person once the Messiah has forgiven his sins. The savior comes to redeem, to forgive sins, and to take people away from Satan and bring them back to God. The main authority endowed the Messiah is that of liberating mankind from Satan.

Through years of painstaking work and study, Father not only disclosed what the original sin was, he was also able to liquidate it by gaining victory over it. The centerpiece of messiahship is the ability to forgive sin. Father has the authority of God to grant forgiveness of the *original sin*. This is accomplished through the various ceremonies of the Blessing. He is the one who sets up the conditions that qualify us to receive the Blessing. Because he has total jurisdiction, he could even bless those who have not fulfilled those conditions. When he forgives people of their original sin, Father then assumes responsibility for them.

Both husband and wife are forgiven of original sin once they complete all ceremonies associated with the Blessing. The original sin came about through the unlawful union of a couple, therefore it must be restored through the union of what, in God's viewpoint, constitutes a *lawful couple*. That is why a *couple*—representing Adam and Eve—must restore the mistake made in the Garden of Eden. Because the True Parents were triumphant in this task, God granted them the power and prerogative to exonerate a person of his sins. Adam and Eve were originally to establish a God-centered family, and had the privilege of being the parents of all mankind. They are still considered the ancestors of humanity; unfortunately, they centered upon Satan, and the concept of the God-centered family was lost until such a family was established by the True Parents. Based on the conditions the True Parents set up to love God and fulfill His providence, simply put, they are able to "adopt" those of us who exhibit faith in their position as Messiah, as well as absolve us of our sins. The rebirth process is not simple, but one with tremendous benefits; it allows us to leave Satan's lineage and be grafted into God's lineage.

The Messiah is ultimately shaping a new generation of people, a new family of mankind. We should consider the plight of the Messiah. Jesus

was unable to achieve the family foundation, and was rejected by his people. The Messiah is chosen by God, but he cannot automatically step into the position of True Parents. Jesus, as Messiah, had the authority to perform miracles, to heal, and to forgive sins. Yet without coming into the position of True Parents by taking a bride who together with him reaches perfection and creates a God-centered family, even a person in the position of Messiah is unable to restore the *original sin*.

The process of salvation can only be achieved through the process of rebirth, by becoming the "flesh and blood" of the True Parents. Part of the procedure involves the Matching Ceremony and Engagement Prayer. A further step of engrafting into the True Parents' lineage is accomplished through the Holy Wine Ceremony. The purification process continues during the actual Blessing ceremony itself, and culminates in the Three Day Ceremony. It is actually after fulfilling all of these ceremonies that the original sin is forgiven and cleansed, and will not be passed on to our descendants.

The True Parents have the power to give us new life. Through the guidance and direction of the True Parents, we Unificationists are being taken away from the surrogate parent of mankind—Satan—and brought back to the true parent of mankind—God. Throughout history, fallen man has acknowledged, although unknowingly, that Satan is his father, his god. The Messiah comes to remedy that situation; that is why we refer to Father and Mother as our *True Parents*. As their disciples, we are adopted and engrafted into their lineage, and ultimately will become the true children of God. It is then up to us to mature to the point of fulfilling the role of "true parents" to our own children.

Today's world is in big trouble, spinning and turning on a path to possible destruction. But God has made efforts to send the Messiah to us. The Messiah works under the command of God to regain proper sovereignty of this world. He must work to influence people the world over, and unite them with the will of God. His task to create and build harmony is laborious and demanding. But we also have a role. We must obey the command and authority of God and True Parents. There is more to it than learning the Principle, changing our lifestyle, praying, and working to perfect our heart and love. We have to understand who the Messiah is, and discover the parameters of the will of God. We must delve into the mysteries of God, discovering how He wants to solve problems, and what formula to follow to return home to Him. We need to recognize that the Messiah comes forth with the absolute truth which can be used to solve all problems in the world. He has spiritual dominion over the world, but to obtain a

victory for God in the physical world, each of us must cooperate by responding to the authority of God manifested through the Messiah. As followers of the True Parents, we can also speak with the authority of God and True Parents, but the words and will of God are certainly contradictory to what the world considers "normal." For that reason, we must realize that people may respond in quite different ways from what we expect. Nevertheless, we can never lose sight that the power of God is with the True Parents and with each of us as we strive to fulfill the will of God.

Adam and Eve began the history of sin. Because of certain failures on the part of some of the central figures in history, God had to wait thousands of years before He could send the Messiah. Jesus, as Messiah, had power from God to forgive people of their transgressions. A person who seeks forgiveness of sin will never receive it without some payment. Repentance is one aspect of this retribution. A person must recognize that he has done something wrong, and seek to clear his conscience before God. He has to come before God and ask forgiveness. He then could be pardoned on the condition of unity with the mediator, Christ, and from that point on, sin no more but instead pursue goodness. The Bible indicates that when Jesus forgave someone, often the person was healed of a physical malady at the same time.

Christ has returned and has that same authority. If we receive forgiveness of sin, we must consider that another kind of healing might be going on within our heart or spirit at the same time. We all come from the same heritage, the same sinful first ancestors. Because of this, we must repent and seek forgiveness of our original sin, as well as all other sins which have been committed by the many generations of our ancestors.

The greatest shield and protection we have is our True Parents. In order to inherit the same kind of authority granted them, we must solidify our faith and conviction, and work on nurturing our sincerity and attitude. We must become like the True Parents. Father's vision is much broader than our own. We should stand beside Father in support and carry out his directions. Following the example of True Parents is the greatest protection we have, as it also allows us the greatest possible authority to combat the work of Satan in our own life.

Attendance to True Parents

Because they are ignorant of the parameters of their responsibility, most people have neglected to do God's will. We Unificationists should fulfill certain responsibilities to do the will of God, especially after we receive the Blessing. We must realize that the Blessing is not for ourselves, but rather is the invitation to take responsibility on a higher level and alleviate more of Father's burden. We are to become his extensions. Formerly, he was by himself and had to carry the full load of restoration. As sons and daughters of the True Parents, we have begun to mature and should willingly take upon our own shoulders some of the tasks he used to do alone. That is the normal way a family functions. Parents can begin to delegate some of their work to their offspring once those children are mature enough to accept the obligation. If a child does this willingly, the parent is no longer saddled with as much burden. When we help Father fulfill his responsibility, he gains more confidence that we will help him in other kinds of work in the future. Any parent—even our Heavenly Parent—needs encouragement. True Father is no exception. He also needs to be inspired, and we Unificationists are the very ones who must tend to this task.

We should consciously work to fill True Parents with hope. We surely comfort them when we actively pursue the goals of our mission, not simply out of obedience, but because we understand and accept our responsibility. That can create tremendous spiritual energy to assist Father in fulfilling his entire mission of worldwide restoration, and is one very real way we can attend or minister to them.

After I experienced my rebirth through Jesus, I loved him even more deeply than before, and I wanted to attend him in any way possible. I was involved in some kind of church activity every evening of the week. I went to choir practice, prayer meetings, Bible classes, etc. I was actually disappointed on a day there was no scheduled activity. I felt empty and internally restless when I couldn't be with others who also loved Jesus. I longed to meet people and share about my Savior. I loved the times I prayed to him together with others. The whole focus of my life became Jesus and the Bible. I read the Bible through and through, and memorized countless verses and chapters. I fell head over heels in love with Jesus, and came to the point that I wanted to do anything for him.

Do we love True Parents *with* that same kind of ardor? How does it manifest itself? Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my command-

ments." As Unificationists, we accept the Principle as the word of God, but we should *live* the Principle, even those points which are implied but not directly stated. Father has given us so many speeches in which he provided a great deal of information about how to live according to the Principle. We must ask ourselves if we are willing to follow his direction and do the will of God.

Once a person loves God and the Messiah and has made Christ the center of his life, at the same time he has also learned something about love, communication, and prayer. The question is, does he realize that whatever he eventually becomes is due to God's attendance to *him*? Even after I became a successful businessman, my wife and I still got down on our knees and prayed together. I knew my prosperity was directly attributed to the grace of God, and that insight filled me with the desire to attend my Lord.

Unificationists are to become the extended arm of the Messiah, a second Reverend Moon. When we pray for another person and beseech God to forgive him of his sins and wrongdoings, we act as a spiritual benefactor to the person. When we visualize faces of people who hunger and thirst for food and drink, we then become their intermediary and implore God to take care of those people whose names we do not even know. God hears those prayers of intercession, and the sincere words of humility sound sweet to Him. Because we minister to these people, God can make something happen. They need to be cared for, which is part of our responsibility. In that way, by the example we show of Christian love, our discipleship should give proof of our love for God and True Parents. Prayer and other conditions of indemnity given willingly for all of God's precious children, are ways to tend His "sheep," in much the same way that the shepherd, Jesus, asked of Peter.

Our ability to attend the True Parents and act as their extensions can make the difference as to whether a person spiritually lives or dies. I feel most of us do not realize our mission is so important. We are witnesses and testifiers to the truth, and yet often people reject our witness. They turn and walk away, leaving us with a heart replete with longing to share the will of God and the identity of True Parents. How often do people walk away *because* of us, and without understanding the message we want to bring? We must be so careful. The deeds we perform today could accuse us in the future. Someday it will be obvious to the world that Father is the Messiah.

You have already talked to many people about your faith. When people realize his identity, they might remember you, yet it could be with disdain. They will realize that they too could have been one of the Messiah's disciples, but neglected the call of God. They may anguish at how much time they wasted. Was it because you did not take your attendance seriously enough and failed to stress the importance of the message contained within the Principle? They might well remember what you said and what you did not say. They could also recall if you accused them in some way, thereby diminishing their desire to hear the message.

Discipleship is serious business, and for that reason, our attitude when witnessing is crucial. What will we do? Block the road, or open the gate and bid entry to many? We must actively testify to the True Parents. That is our commission, and an essential part of our ministry in attending mankind.

Parents are the backbone of a family. They should be the central focus, and ideally every member of the family should relate to them with love and respect. A house becomes a home when parents fill it with love, and extend themselves to create harmony and nurture unity between themselves and their children. It is the bond of heart and love which makes the difference. If children feel loved and respected by their parents, they will *want* to relate to their parents, ask their advice, and even discuss their problems and possible solutions.

We should feel that our spiritual family is much the same, and consider that God and True Parents are its center. Ideally, we should live in the same house with True Parents. Since that is impossible, we at least grow as close as possible by connecting with them spiritually. Perhaps the cardinal rule in living our life of faith is to live the way we would if we lived with them in the same house.

We can pray for them and connect with them by "reporting" to or "asking" them things. We can have that kind of give and take through an interplay within our mind and heart, always feeling as though they are with us. For example, we should offer to share our meals with them. We do that when we prepare a plate for True Parents, giving the first portion of the main meal to them—to God—even symbolically. It is a small gesture, but nevertheless, one which shows that God and True Parents are the center of our family.

Although the moral fiber of today's society has been torn apart and in many Western societies the family unit has lost a great deal of meaning, people in the past used to consider their parents as representatives of God. Consequently, they looked up to their parents with great reverence. Father

has assured us that in the future this tradition will be reestablished, for once a person perfects his heart and love, he will represent God to his own children. When children love their parents and are loved in return, a real family atmosphere is created. Even now, we should try to envision the presence of True Parents in our lives. We can keep our home clean and strive to create a pure and holy atmosphere in which True Parents would feel comfortable, were they to visit. We can imagine them living in our midst. There are many ways of inviting them to partake in our lives, and many ways to attend them.

Once the world recognizes the Messiah, people everywhere will glorify our True Parents. Can you imagine the spiritual boost each of us will feel? People everywhere will vocalize their admiration through song, testimony, and the like, showing their respect and love for True Parents.

We should be aware of inviting the True Parents into our lives, and relate through them even the smallest details of our work. To make this a habit will take conscious effort. Have you ever tried to offer Heavenly Father and True Parents both the good *and* the bad emotions and thoughts within your heart? If we were conscious of living with True Parents, we would surely live our lives differently. The question we must ask of ourselves is whether or not we take our discipleship seriously.

Although Father always strives to do even more than God requires of him, he has already accomplished his mission on earth. How much do we perceive what True Parents represent? How much does the world know about Sun Myung Moon? The answers to these questions will comprise the record of history. People may misunderstand you, underestimate you, or not trust you for any number of reasons. According to Satan's laws, it seems that we are all guilty until proven innocent. But even with such odds stacked against us, we can become trustworthy people to others when we earn that respect.

When we notice what a difference attending the Messiah makes to the quality of our life, we will come to trust him all the more. Eventually, we will obey in heart and minister to him as true disciples.

When we talk about attendance, we must also be concerned about

attending each other. Mutual caring and sharing is the highest form of the fulfillment of love. Of course we attend God and the Messiah, but to really live the Principle, we must also minister to one another. Father encourages us to love the world more than we love him, and challenges us to even love people in our Home Church area more than we love him. This is the kind of sacrificial and unconditional love that we need to develop in our marriages and families. When we think about it deeply, the word "attendance" has meaning on various levels.

The book of Acts mentions that at Pentecost, about three thousand people accepted Christ. Three thousand people in one day! It further goes on to say that a little later that group had grown to five thousand. How come? It seems witnessing was so easy for Peter and the other disciples, but today we Unificationists have to shed literal blood, sweat, and tears to win even one soul for God.

No doubt that among those people, many were awaiting the Messiah, anxious for the coming of their King. They were under oppression by the Roman Empire and in need of liberation, even a spiritual one. Actually, very little was demanded of them. All they had to do was believe in Jesus and the crucifixion. They had to accept as fact that he died for them, and that he ascended into Heaven and was seated at the right hand of God. They also had to believe in God and the Holy Spirit. But conversion at that time was relatively simple and uncomplicated. Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself." That was a creed by which Christians were supposed to live, but who among those thousands of converts or the many millions of Christians today has strong enough faith to follow it? Even though those were the words of Jesus, and it sounds like quite a simple task, most people have not committed themselves to seriously live according to them.

The difference in conversion experiences then and now is connected to the practice of attending the Messiah. Today when a person hears and accepts that the Messiah has returned, he generally desires to abandon his former lifestyle in favor of walking the very narrow road home to God. Most people in this situation even go so far as giving up their dreams, and going out on the "frontline" to serve humanity, working to discipline themselves in accordance with the new truth they have learned. Unificationists know it is crucial that they develop a very strong prayer life, and also work to overcome their personal problems. We do this by ministering to the will of God, attending the True Parents, and by caring for our fellow man. We know that for restoration to occur, our "attendance" must take the form of paying indemnity.

Father's whole life has consisted of little more than sacrifice and suffering. People who hear that being a Unificationist inevitably entails suffering may quickly withdraw from making a commitment. But I believe that many people prepared by God feel a deep love for Him, and have a quiet and even unspoken longing to suffer on behalf of mankind. They feel the zeal to serve and attend humanity, and want to ensure that everyone is saved.

What kind of a disciple are we?—One who is willing to find the lost children of God? One who is willing to care for the living Christ? Or one who is merely concerned with our own personal salvation? What is able to show us our level of commitment? Father has outlined the providence of Home Church, therefore, we should discover whether we are active in helping the people living in our Home Church area, or whether we are just satisfied with receiving the Blessing and living primarily for our own family. The bottom line is whether we are doing the will of God or not. These are weighty questions. We have to see that there is heavy responsibility attached to the attendance we Unificationists should give to God, True Parents, and all mankind.

Jesus and his disciples sat around the same table, conversed with each other, and shared wine and bread together. Although Jesus was grateful for his disciples' companionship and the comradery they shared, he must have been very lonely. He had neither spouse nor children to share his life with. He could give only part of himself to his disciples; the breaking of bread he did with them understandably could not satisfy his lonely heart completely.

In this, the Completed Testament Age, the Messiah has taken a bride and created a God-centered family. True Parents can give spiritual and "physical" rebirth to their disciples. As children of the True Parents, we no longer only share a meal with our Lord. We do not merely sit around the table with our Messiah as individuals. Instead, as families we attend the True Family.

This time of attendance is very different from the way 'it was in Jesus' age. From various cultures and backgrounds, we "marry" humanity through unity with our living Christ and our "brothers and sisters" throughout the world. That kind of "attendance" was never before witnessed by humanity. But the hope that there could be one worldwide family of man has been alive within the heart of God since the creation. And at last the universe is unfolding as it should.

T rue Father is burdened with so many things; sometimes we can even see in his eyes how troubled he is. As their children, we Unificationists want to make the True Parents happy as well as share their cross. Of course our True Parents are strong in faith and perseverance, but they are neither super-human nor supernatural beings. They need consolation and solace just as we do. How do we view our relationship to them? How do we view our own integrity as their children; how great is our ability to love them? Even though they are on such a different level from us, it is easy to attend our True Parents with love.

When you are really active and do your best to fulfill your mission, you certainly come into my consciousness; as your central person, I feel responsible for you, yet in comparison to True Father, I am but a little man. Therefore, if we really pray and are active, Father will be drawn to think of us. His prayers for us will give us strength, and conversely, our love for Father and Mother will give them energy. If we pledge our loyalty to them, affirming that we will persevere no matter what, we will surely ease their minds. Father and Mother need that assurance, too; they are just as human as you or I.

I am sure that the times when our growth as a movement stagnates Father feels frustrated and even more burdened. We can best attend True Parents and share the weight of that millstone by actively working to fulfill our own responsibility.

Inheriting from the True Parents

Reflect for a moment about God. What comes to mind? Thoughts of His sorrow? His serenity? His benevolence? The emotions that even the *thought* of God stirs, are like waves that crest and then curl onto the shoreline of our heart. What are we able to perceive of God? And what is it that we can inherit from Him?

Perfected man is indelibly connected with the entire universe and with the entirety of God. His emotional perception is extraordinarily keen and sensitive. If we come to the point where we really live for God, for mankind, and the world, then although initially it may seem as though we have to live life according to a science, later this lifestyle will evolve into habit and become our real way of life. We will not just meet people superficially. Even though our exchange of words may be down to earth and perhaps seem quite ordinary, our feelings for other people will be deep and genuine.

Such qualities as compassion and forgiveness will automatically enter our hearts, and both words and deeds surrounding the practice of judgment will take on far less importance. These are the kinds of virtues it is possible to inherit from True Parents.

How can we become just like True Parents if we strive to live a different life from them? When Father reached a certain goal he did not stop and say, "Now I've got it made." Until his last breath, he will still share with us about the will of God. The question is, will we be ready to embody what he says and carry out what he asks?

If a child really connects to his parents by watching what they do and tries to be a good example by following them, there is a good chance that eventually he will inherit the qualities of his parents. Yet if he goes his own way, refusing to accept what his parents tell him and instead criticizes them, he will receive neither the direction nor protection possible from his parent figures. Such a child may become an emotional orphan, and will need to fend for himself to discover answers about life.

Are we spiritual orphans? How do we go about finding solutions to our challenges in living a spiritual life? Since we are children of the True Parents, we should do as much as possible to adopt their example. The first step is to acquire an understanding of the Principle. If we study and digest those words plus the words of Father, we will more easily be able to act upon what he teaches. The reason he teaches us about spiritual laws and emphasizes such a high standard, is that he wants us to follow in his footsteps and perfect our hearts. He talks so much about becoming a true person, building a true family, and a true world. And he always mentions true love. He underscores reaching the standard of "true" for one simple reason: it is the standard of God. Ultimately, God wants us to become true parents to our children.

As we copy True Parents' methods of living and loving, the greater and keener our perception becomes. What I share with you is often closer to the vision of True Parents than the way you view things. That is why we sometimes differ in outlook. Yet if I express a vision which more nearly resembles True Parents' and you are humble enough to accept and adopt it, you automatically grow closer to them.

Do you feel comfortable being with God? If you are near God and become aware of His presence and that of True Parents in your life, any vibration of fear that previously enshrouded your heart will vanish. It may

cause you to even discard certain behavior that makes your relationship with God stilted, because it is left over from following Satan's laws. When we inherit from True Parents, we will become much more natural people, and our relationship with them and with God will become stabilized and normalized.

Both mankind and the universe lost their original value through the fall. Yet the son of God instills value once again. He does this by reconnecting us to the true Creator of the universe. As a result we become the true heirs of God. By totally uniting with Him and True Parents, we receive merit; anything we do on behalf of God and His purpose has tremendous significance.

Father wants us to inherit the entire foundation he has built. What he does, he does not do for himself. If all Unificationists totally unite with him, they will inherit what he has to offer. He willingly bestows his heart and intellect to us. To assimilate these gifts, we need to listen to him intently, follow His direction, unite with his heart, and then share our mutual love. But there is more to it. As God's representative, Father has the key to unleash tremendous forces of spiritual power. In other words, just as Jesus said, "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." Whatever the Messiah blesses on earth shall be blessed forever in the spirit world. All the forces of God are at His disposal. We desire to remain close to True Parents for eternity, as well as to develop an intimate relationship with God. Whatever qualities of love and heart we inherit here on earth will naturally become a part of us. We will take them when we go to live in the spirit world. Becoming a son or daughter of True Parents is definitely an important goal, because that position enables us to become their heirs.

How do we come close to True Parents and inherit all their love, their way of thinking, feeling, and acting? Even the thought of it may sound a little abstract, nevertheless, it is the key to living a meaningful life of faith. How can we better understand True Parents? One way to begin is by reading and comprehending Father's words. It is natural that he is the example which all Unificationist men emulate. Likewise, the women of our movement desire to become like True Mother. We are still spiritually young children who want to become like their parents, and the more we get to know about them, the more we will discover that we have a great deal to inherit from them.

All of history up to this point has been a period of preparation for the return of Christ. Now he is on the earth. What we do in relationship to the Messiah must be different from what the disciples did to attend Jesus when he was on earth. Father comes with the authority and power from God and the Holy Spirit. He comes bearing the sword of love and the rod of truth. But what if he is rejected as Jesus was? What do people expect of Christ? Do they envision that he will fit into given laws and their concept of what the Messiah should be? Mankind must examine the purpose of his coming. Most people who believe in the Messiah feel he is supposed to cleanse the world of evil and sin. Therefore, how can he do anything *but* slice through the spiritual fog in which Satan shrouds us? We must consider that up to this point, so many historical events were used by God to prepare for the Messiah's coming. Actually, all of .history has been leading up to this culmination point. But now that it has come, what will happen? Humanity cannot continue in this same chaotic way as before. A revolution of spirit is definitely necessary. Therefore from this point on, everything has to be different. We have to reverse popular trend; from this point on, people must listen to the Messiah. Those of us who have accepted him should do our best to explain to many people that he brings salvation for the whole world and has answers for all problems relating to world restoration. Forty years ago, the conditions existed for world restoration to be accomplished within a few years. The problem was that the people who were key in influencing others did not listen or respond correctly, and forty years of suffering in the "wilderness" resulted.

Now we are nearing the border of Canaan. What happened when the Canaanites were to enter Canaan? Initially, one spy from each of the twelve tribes was sent out. Only two of those twelve brought good news and spread confidence that it would be possible to enter Canaan. Based on their reports, God instructed the Israelites to begin the trek across the border of Canaan. They were given the order to fight seven tribes, and according to God's directions, were to drive out all the tribes they met. Instead, they intermingled with those people and thus went against the will of God.

What is our role today? We are walking through the wilderness and are soon to stand in front of our "land of Canaan." Will we make the same kind of mistake that the Israelites did and give up just before we enter? Will we intermingle in society instead of keeping focused on the will of God? Will we follow the direction of God? Will we inherit the lessons learned during that age? We have to realize that the worst is yet to come, that battles are still ahead of us. However, we also have to know that our True Parents have the strength and courage to make it through. Will we inherit

their ways and follow them with our lives, or get stuck crossing the border and instead perish in the wilderness?

I want so much that each of you connects in heart to the True Parents. When Father speaks about the true man, he talks about how he himself reached perfection of heart. He knows God intimately and shares his knowledge and insight about God with us. If we want to inherit something of God's nature, we must do our best to search out the True Parents and follow their direction and advice, as well as inherit their knowledge. Father speaks extensively about the way God views things. In order to inherit the viewpoint of God, we should read True Father's speeches, digest the essence of that material, and then strive to become the incarnation of the truth.

We should respect all things that come from Father. Since photos of True Parents are symbolic of them, displaying their pictures is one way we keep True Parents close to us. We should be conscious of True Parents' presence in all that we do. We are children of True Parents, but since it is impossible for us to live with them physically, we should at least imagine them to be near. In that way, we would strive to behave according to the laws of God at all times, and acknowledge they really *are* our parents, the center of our lives and our families.

The creation of the new world commences with True Parents. The spirit of God is manifested in perfected Adam and Eve—True Father and True Mother. Although the True Children are their direct descendants, Unificationists who have been given the Blessing are in the position of "Cain" children in Father's family. Through the Holy Wine Ceremony we are connected to the lineage of True Parents, and thus with God.

The sons and daughters of True Parents—the True Children or those of us who are restored to that position—have become part of the True Parents' lineage. And God can manifest Himself through us according to the degree we restore ourselves. Even though our original sin is forgiven through the Blessing, we do not automatically become perfected people as a result. As the Principle explains, we must enter the third stage of growth as a couple, not as individuals. Within that realm, we should grow spiritually and perfect our hearts, becoming the absolute image of God. That is the position we inherit from the True Parents.

Ultimately the only way fallen man can come to God is through True Parents. True Parents should become our greatest concern. The future of this is contingent upon them. The first Adam fell. He made a difference to this world. His position was crucial but unfortunately, he created a fallen history. Jesus also created a new history which made all the difference to the world. Now, True Parents make the greatest impact. The way God shows Himself and works with people is through His mediator, the Messiah. Therefore, our greatest responsibility and desire must be to understand and become one with True Parents, to inherit their quality of love and then share it with other people.

Go toward True Parents with all your heart. Communicate with them spiritually. Discover new things about them. Remember that they brought you truth and insight you never knew before. Truth that allows you to feel more love and live in greater harmony with people. Truth that shows you much more about the true image of God than you could imagine. You have undoubtedly changed since coming in contact with the truth. You understand so many more things about the universe and human interrelationships than you ever did before. Granted, it is hard to be a Unificationist, but if you were to write down all the pluses and all the minuses and then compare the two sides, you would find that the advantages far outweigh any disadvantages. There are so many things that constitute "pluses" which you have inherited and received from living a life of faith and from living as a child of True Parents. These good points stem from the qualities of love expressed by Father and Mother. Since every Unificationist has already inherited so much from True Parents, why shouldn't we recompensate, honor, and respect them? If we have admiration for their position and understand even more by studying the Principle and the words of Father, then we will constantly uncover new points of their greatness.

We have talked so much about God, so much about heart and love. We have uncovered things about repentance and forgiveness. Yet all of those inspirations serve to explain something about how to come closer to God and nearer to True Parents, and how to inherit those very qualities from them.

True Parents as Messiah

God waved His hand throughout the heavens and after the gestation of years and centuries of necessary growing time, a glorious universe formed. The idea had been living within His heart and mind but finally the creation He purposed came awake, came alive! From forest thickets to mountains and oceans, God could see some reflection of Himself imbued throughout the majestic world He had created. Yet there was one special entity He still had to create, one He took great pains to "sculpt" from the elements within His own heart. He envisioned this being to act as caretaker of the cosmos He had created. Best of all, this was an entity with whom He could share love. This special part of creation was unsurpassed by any of the painted deserts, island-dotted waterways, or towering mountain minarets. Whereas the world was beautiful, it could not respond to Him. Yet He knew this being could cause tears of happiness to stream down His cheeks. And He was anxiously awaiting that experience.

Once Adam and Eve began to grow, He did taste love with them, but that love was not full, and unfortunately it also did not last. Through the years Adam and Eve discovered so many things about God's world; after some time they also uncovered one thing He hoped would remain unknown to them for a while longer. But Adam and Eve "ate of the fruit" before it was "ripe." And that is when the "serpent," Lucifer, kidnapped God's children.

Adam and Eve were supposed to be the true parents for mankind and the ancestors of humanity. Unfortunately, they fell away from God. Adam and Eve were in tears when they left God. And God's eyes overflowed with tears of sorrow as well. His misery was almost more than He could bear. Adam was ashamed of what they did and could not face his Heavenly Father. Eve herself must have shed more tears of anguish than we can imagine. Can you visualize the situation? When God's children departed from the Garden, everyone was racked with terrible spiritual pain.

How could He bring them back?—just hoping would not do it. God had to send an intermediary, but He knew it would be awhile before that was possible. The whole incident was tragic to Him; He was sorrowful, even remorseful. When we feel the anguish of God, we cannot help but shed tears, yet as we come closer to Him, we also experience tears of relief and joy. Sorrow and joy are so intermixed at this time in history because both of these emotions are within God. The sorrow God feels at the loss of His children and all creation has to finally be overcome. That is one job for the Messiah. Yet due to the devastating results of the fall, we shed tears on

behalf of God, to help relieve His grief. We also have to shed tears for Adam and Eve; such tremendous suffering has existed in the parent/child relationship, especially the one between God and His children. Now is the time to restore it.

The closer we come to God and the more we understand the mission of True Parents, the more tears we might shed. We may not be able to really pinpoint every emotion we feel or understand the reason behind them, but in perceiving the mission of True Parents, we can finally open up the curtain surrounding our hearts, and allow the love of God to flood our souls. We feel His presence, and at the moment, tears spill from our eyes. By relating to the True Parents as the true son and daughter of God and as our Messiah, we tap the reservoir of God's love because we touch the heart of God!

NO matter what it takes, Father *must* fulfill the providence of God. It is inevitable that the will of God be done; there is no way around it. He has to use tremendous insight and patience, diplomacy, and whatever else is necessary to subjugate Satan. As our emancipator, Father must use great wisdom to lead Unificationists into our present day "Canaan." In a sense, he almost has to saddle and bridle us, to calm us down from our days of running wild in Satan's world. For over forty years, he has been laboring to turn the whole world around. He has worked with the vision of God and created many foundations, but most people simply do not realize what he has been doing.

According to God's direction, years ago Father formulated plans to achieve world restoration, and despite *our* inadequacies, he never gave up trying to fulfill the will of God. He could not quite predict in which direction history would go, and if there was an opening somewhere, he jumped in and used it to God's advantage and to bring further development. That is also the game plan of God; He works with whatever opportunities open up.

Father intercedes for mankind. With tears, he begs Heavenly Father to postpone judgment and implores Him to continue being patient with fallen man. Yet at the same time, Father intercedes for God, and it is in tears that he prays for us to maintain the faith necessary to walk all the way to Heaven. Father willingly pays indemnity that *we* should actually pay to be freed from Satan. He does this to obtain release for individuals, families, societies, nations, and this world. He has no other recourse; he feels as God feels. No matter what, he just has to love people. He knows better than anyone that love is the essence of life. As Messiah, Father loves God and also shares the love of God with us. He is responsible to bring all humanity back to God and to save this world from being destroyed by Satan.

The Messiah comes as the bridge, and by stretching himself over the precipices of life, he allows people to cross from Satan's realm into God's. This is the essence of the mission of the Messiah. He teaches us how to glorify God and how to find home again. He teaches us that we must do the will of God, and assures us that when we no longer have give and take with Satan, we decrease his power. Father is aware that Satan becomes smaller and weaker as more people are released from his jurisdiction, and that eventually, he will be sapped of all power. Father knows that as long as people continue relating with Satan, he will retain control. That is why he is so diligent in showing us how Satan works in our lives, and gives us the confidence that we *can* overcome him!

It is most important to know who your enemy is. Before you can plan out your strategy and engage in battle, you need to know what strength he has, how he is situated, and what kind of maneuvers he uses. The Messiah has researched both the plans of God and those of Satan. He can explain to us about evil, and reveal how the Evil One works.

God never accuses anybody. Each of us is judged according to the law, but as fallen people we do not measure up to that standard and thus need the Messiah to defend us. Because we are born with original sin, until and unless we are absolved of it, we continue to sin against God. Satan looks for any small thing that he can accuse us of, but at the same time, the Messiah tries to help us out. Yet no matter how good our defender is, we still must offer some conditions to God. God cannot take sides; this battle is something that goes on between Satan and the Messiah. God has to uphold the law, but human beings are not strong enough to argue in their own defense. God has been longing to defend His innocent children in front of Satan, but until the appearance of the Messiah, He could not do that simply based on desire or because He loves them. Since that is the mission of the Messiah, God endowed the power and authority for him to do just that. Previously, all God could do was inspire people to walk in the right direction. Now the Messiah is able to defend us as we stand trial in the big, universal court of life.

The Messiah comes as a parent, a friend, a bridegroom—everything we have been hoping and praying for. He is the one who supports us. He is the one who represents us before both God and Satan. When Jesus came, many people did not know much about his mission. Actually, he came not only to free the nation of Israel, but also to emancipate the heart of God and

the heart of man. He came to lead people toward perfection. Unfortunately, the people misunderstood him and his mission. We must learn from past errors; mankind must not make that same mistake at this time of the Second Advent!

Throughout these years of restoration history, revelations from God given through the prophets clarified the identity of fallen mankind as the sons and daughters of God. Once this truth was revealed, the desire to take that original position stirred within the hearts of many people. Humanity began to realize that the Messiah is the only one who can help restore us to our rightful position. He tells us so much about our Heavenly Father and our true home. He tells us about how to reach God's palace, and offers us comfort by letting us know that certain rooms there are built especially for us. He unravels what the ideal relationships should be between God and man, and man and the universe. He enlightens us on how to gain experiences of "Heaven" within a God-centered family. He explains how to fight against Satan. But he also talks about the importance of making our home with God, letting us know we are meant to do certain things here on earth, not only once we live in the spirit world.

Our living Christ has the mission to restore all people from spiritual slavery to freedom, by taking each person away from Satan and bringing him back to God. Whenever one person is taken away from Satan and crosses over to the side of God, Satan's power is diminished. Satan can only exist and exercise power by having give and take with his objects. If nobody listens to him, or people refuse to be lured by him, his power decreases. Humanity is actually the reservoir of power that Satan taps. He may think it is unlimited, but actually he is wrong. As more people learn about him and how he stole this world away from God, they will begin to refuse him "refueling" privileges. More and more people will close off their supply to him, and his sources of energy will be drastically curtailed. Satan only has power because fallen man still has give and take with him.

Sometimes we are able to realize how he works, but often we are blind to his influence in our lives. However, even as Satan works hard to manipulate mankind, the Messiah shows us how to live under the sovereignty of God's love. His aim is to weaken Satan's position and at the same time, strengthen God's foothold. Although this surely gives God more power on earth and in spirit world, we cannot underestimate the struggle that still goes on. We cannot ignore what the Messiah is doing, nor can we neglect

the contribution we make as his assistants. The Messiah is our benefactor and our teacher. By following the True Parents, we increase the power of God; I believe it is only a matter of time before God will become quite "visible" to people throughout the world.

The greatest gift given to humanity is the love of God which can be experienced and shared through True Parents. If we learn to love God, at the same time we also automatically learn to love the True Parents; the reverse is also true. Without the True Parents, we are not able to feel the love of God so intensely. The Messiah is a mediator between God and man, and thus transmits the love of God to all of us.

The whole universe is centered upon the ideal of love. Everyone needs it. Everyone desires it, and everyone goes after it. More theories, truths, systems and organizations in every field—from medicine to industry—are formulated and expounded upon every day. While all of these have value and can do a great deal to help raise the standard of life for people throughout the world, the real element that should be "discovered" by each man is how to perfect his heart and love. The old standards of love are obsolete, and simply do not fit into the concept of love brought by the Messiah. The old concept of love was based on self-centeredness, yet God's way of loving is characteristic of selflessness and self-sacrifice. That tenet of faith is something that True Parents not only share with us, but in their position as Messiah, also show us.

If we fail to offer our experiences to God through True Parents, those experiences will not have the value they could. Anything Christians do in the name of Jesus has much more value to God; whatever they do without him, has much less significance. Jesus is their mediator and it is through him they make purified offerings.

Today, we Unificationists must approach God in the name of our mediators—the True Parents. They are our key to communicating with Him, which is one reason we must pray in their names.

If people would understand that Christ has returned, could they feel anything is more valuable than following him? Millions of people have been martyred for the sake of Jesus. Millions more have prayed and yearned to see God; they desperately hoped to live at the time of the coming of the Messiah, yet we are the fortunate ones. When Jesus walked on earth, people did not recognize his greatness or glorify him. He was not consid-

ered then as he is today. Externally, he lived like all the other people of that time. His feet got dirty just like anybody else who walked the desert. Nevertheless, he was the incarnation of the spirit of God. Jesus was a perfected man, but he had to eat and go to the toilet like everyone else. The people of his time were short-sighted; they did not recognize the elements of God within him that seem so obvious to us, and they killed him.

Today some people are trying to squelch Father's efforts to bring God back into this world. Nevertheless, whether people recognize him or not, Father *is* the Messiah, and we as his followers must do our best to safeguard his position.

We Unificationists know from the Principle that the nucleus of human society is the family unit; through further study we know that the struggle of good and evil existing within the heart of each man is also reflected throughout society. So much evil and crime are apparent everywhere we look. We Unificationists are also aware that because of the Messiah, fallen man is now able to reconcile his relationship with God, and experience liberation from sin enabling him to reflect God. The Messiah has come to save us. He represents God to us and asks that we follow his example. Think about it! If every human being really represented God, what kind of Heaven could we bring down to earth?

As we climb up the pyramid and grow closer to God, we need advice on spiritual etiquette. We need to know how a child of God behaves properly, or we may end up wasting a lot of time and not get very far. If we go mountain climbing with an experienced guide, we have a good chance of eventually reaching the summit. But if we are unaware of the difficulties and start on our own personal mountain climbing expedition without the help of an expert, we may not make it. We could do one of two things: either we could try to make it back down the mountain, or die. The guide we must follow as we climb our spiritual mountain of faith is the Messiah. He is certainly an expert, and is ready and very willing to assist us in reaching the peak.

The Messiah comes to restore the whole world, not just the heart of man. In fact, God has commissioned him to bring about a new world. The world as it is cannot survive; the moral degradation humanity has come to accept as normal is completely opposite from God's standard. It could be

only a question of time before the world blows up, but God is frantic and doing everything possible to stop this from happening. He has to come forth with a new formula, restructuring, and re-centering this world upon God, no longer upon Satan. *Everything* has to be changed; He has commissioned that job to His son. The Messiah truly has a tremendous task!

Since accepting his mission, Father has had one master plan, one goal: to bring the world back to God. By following instructions he received from God, he knew exactly how to proceed. As if assembling a mosaic, he chose many "stones" to quicken worldwide restoration by working in many areas—conferences, relief programs, businesses, publications, so many things—and he placed them in a pattern according to God's direction. Finally, we could begin to see how these pieces fit together. All the "stones" gathered by the work we did years ago formed the border of the picture. Today, the smaller, more intricate pieces are being glued into place, and much more of the portrait is revealed.

We Unificationists still have a great deal to do to complete this task. What we have accomplished thus far was just preparation. We should not give in to fatigue, but be even more determined to carry every project to its completion. There are three stages necessary to accomplish anything: preparation, execution, and aftercare. For example, when communism is finally overcome, the struggle will not miraculously end. Communists themselves must be brought to an awareness of God and be encouraged to develop their personal relationship with Him—that is the work of aftercare. There are millions and billions of people longing for God such as those behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains. Once they hear that the Messiah has come, the likes of a spiritual tornado will spin throughout communities and nations, and there will be a tremendous awakening. The entire world will come to know there is no alternative than to turn back to God. Eventually people will concede that Reverend Moon and his movement are the major influence in the unfolding of God's new civilization.

Father is not merely a religious leader in the traditional sense. He has a vision no one else possesses. He sees which way we need to proceed in order to gain the greatest effect. Yet he needs our cooperation, and thus no matter how long it takes, we must work until the job is completed. If the people who are spiritually weak don't become strong, they will just drop along the wayside. No matter what, the Messiah will forge forward; we have to be strong and dedicated enough to follow him.

The Messiah has the mission to restore the world. Most essential is

that man himself becomes perfected, but ultimately the whole world has to be cleansed of evil and wrongdoing. One way Father does that is by explaining how necessary it is that we revitalize our hearts. He teaches us to become centered upon God, and how to visualize and strive to fulfill His will.

With that kind of inner concept and attitude we can go forth and work toward the restoration of the whole world. Following Father's direction, we must learn how to revive and purify every facet of life—religion, politics, industry, business, science, the arts, and so forth. Our textbook is the Principle. Yet to restore this world we must also work to take Satan out of the central position and reinstate God in His rightful place. As we survey the situation of the world, it becomes clear that we still have many things to do.

Father is the Messiah who, with the vision of God, conies forth with the plan for worldwide restoration. He teaches us to live and work in a god-like way. He is concerned that all creation fulfills its purpose because he knows that God created everything to experience joy. However, he is keenly aware that this world is still filled with tragedy and torture.

God has called certain people to begin this restoration process led by the Messiah. He knows that they will undergo suffering to lay the foundation able to ensure that in the future all people will have an easier time to fulfill their purpose of creation and become a joyful child of God.

If we do not use our spiritual senses, we could become very closed and limited. Once we are able to see with the eyes of God, we will more easily discern the divine value in each person. We will perceive what Father is doing and why.

The mission of the Messiah is to take a bride and together with her, fulfill the role of True Parents. Together they are to lead us to God, and to show us how to establish the ideal of a God-centered family. It is by following their example that we can become perfected images of God. The Messiah is the instigator of the new world. He brings salvation through **building** a true family unit and shows us how to become "saved" by doing **the** same, and working toward individual perfection.

The Messiah teaches us that the centerpiece of a person's life is his faith and love for God. He cannot close his eyes to the fact that fallen man struggles to survive. He cannot overlook the fact that man attempts to do this without God because Satan still retains such a grip on this world.

Although Jesus came to bring salvation to the world, Christianity was not able to put into practice what Jesus taught. Many Christians kept his teaching in their heart, but found it most difficult to apply in daily life. Satan denounced their desire and then lorded over their weaknesses and inabilities to be true Christians. Many people became backsliders; they just did not know what to do with the gospel. Today, Father brings the Principle as our guidebook and instructs us on how to fulfill the will of God. He shows us how to apply the Principle in our daily life. That is part of his role as Messiah.

The time will definitely come when everyone will understand the position of True Parents. The time will come when the hearts of people will be restored. Sometimes Father must think of this, and surely even the thought of it must comfort him. Yet I am sure he does not allow himself to think only of the ideal; he is also geared toward fulfilling indemnity conditions to speed up the process of restoration. Indemnity paid by the Messiah has far greater value and impact than indemnity paid by anyone else.

The Messiah is in the position to save this entire world from impending disaster and redeem people back to God. He is the one spearheading the task of placing God back into the center of this world. He has to begin through revealing religious tenets, explaining how people should relate with one another, how they can exist in peace and freedom, how crucial communication is, and how important it is to use the cement of love in constructing both their friendships and relationships. He also has to give them detailed instructions about how to survive during this time of great struggle between good and evil. God took such pains to prepare this world even before the second advent of Christ, but Satan has worked especially hard during Father's lifetime to tighten his hold on humanity. Today, we find ourselves in the heat of battle. What will Satan do? Who can really predict? But it is just as hard to anticipate what God and the Messiah will do!

People who pray about the identity of We Messiah with great earnest *will* receive an answer. In the future, when Father is openly proclaimed as the Messiah, we Unificationists no doubt will be somewhat ashamed that we have been so small-minded and unable to see True Parents for who they really are. Intellectually we know that God has finally

been able to manifest Himself in the True Parents. Intellectually we realize that lightning, thunder, earthquakes, breezes, rains, and sunshine are just a few of the ways God shares something about His own existence with us. And we realize that only True Parents have perfected their own hearts and show us replicas of God's own.

Even though intellectually we know that the Messiah is on earth, it is our heart which must grasp this truth. It is our heart which needs to be infused with hope. We look to True Parents and pray for the work they accomplish toward worldwide restoration. God stands behind Father in support and endows him with great spiritual power. Our tomorrow is bright with promise. The Messiah is alive and constantly charging this world with the energy of God. History goes on, and God keeps moving forward. The Goliath of this day will soon be conquered!