
Human Responsibility

*The Nature of Responsibility
Self-Control*

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How can all of humanity blend as one harmonious family? Will this world ever reach a point when all people love each other? Unificationists know God originally purposed this—a Kingdom of Heaven on earth—yet the world of today is so far from that ideal. Can we in good conscience allow distances to remain between us, and even do things which cause the chasms to widen?

Where does human responsibility begin and end? Responsibility to make unity is far-reaching. If you have the obligation of working together with another person, but in your mind consider that one of you is superior and the other is inferior, discord may result. Living together and loving one another becomes a matter of caring and sharing. People who have a common "rank" have an easier time to embrace one another because they might not feel directly responsible for one another. This aspect of moral obligation, however, has been grossly misunderstood. We always think someone else will take care of "the other guy," or better yet, he will take care of himself. People tend to feel this way about those below them on the social strata, as well as those above. The duty to spiritually embrace a superior—for instance, the leader of a nation—might be awkward and a challenge, but it is also part of our commission. It can be done through both prayer and action.

Unificationists have responsibilities within the unit of their spiritual family as well. In a normal family, parents love their children, but also need to be loved and embraced by their children. We occupy spiritual "parent" and "child" positions, and have similar responsibilities to love and embrace one another. Yet does our responsibility extend even further—all the way to God? Shouldn't we also love and embrace that most powerful of all leaders? Yes, as His children, that is one of our duties. And what a wonderful one it is!

None of us can hide from God. None of us can just float on the river of life and expect that we will somehow magically land on the banks of Heaven. Instead each of us must assume responsibility before God, and move forward another inch every day until we reach the final goal. There is no excuse for running away from our responsibility; none of us is exempted from pushing ourselves forward toward perfection.

There is no place to hide. Wherever we go, our conscience, heart, and personality will accompany us, and we will still be saddled with our human

responsibility. Each of us is one cell in the gigantic body of God. We are responsible for the health and survival of all other cells. Although we may not realize it, we are held liable if any person is deprived the love which is due him. The whole universe is constructed in such a way that all entities are interconnected and interrelated. Each is responsible for the other; one "cell" will not suffer if all others surrounding it are healthy and function correctly through the give and take of love, because that "cell" will also be embraced in love. Likewise, if all families were connected with God, one family would not needlessly suffer; other families would naturally care for it. Yet a family which withdraws and separates itself from the family of man, refusing love and concern from others, could eventually die. The idea of responsibility also incorporates staying connected to God. We may try to hide from each other, but ultimately there really *is* no place to hide—at least not from God.

Human responsibility is crucial. Each of us was created by God, and each of us has the ability and the responsibility to communicate, to make sure that we radiate our unique aspect of God's nature to all those around us. We are obligated to care for both the people and the universe that surround us. That is how the "nervous system" of God works. When someone is in pain, God asks us to act like a needle, and He then "shoots" the antibiotic of His love through us to spiritually heal that person. The nervous system of God works through both the influence of spiritual beings and the hearts of people on earth. But God can only work in that way if each of us becomes serious about fulfilling our duty.

Being in touch with our own nervous system is also important. When we feel pain in certain parts of the "body" of our family or community, we should exercise our obligation to send healing energies and love to them. We need to be attuned to discover what solutions would help. If you spiritually discern that a certain person is in spiritual trouble, realize God is informing you through your "nervous system"—your spiritual senses. The philanthropic solution is to help that person.

Leaders must assume responsibility for those in their care, but the entire realm of responsibility has many sides. Leaders on every level are accountable to their superiors for what goes right and what goes wrong, and for the ultimate result gained. For instance, I have responsibility for you before God. In another way, we are all obligated to "lead" one another back to God, a duty which should neither be neglected nor overlooked.

A spiritually mature person ever deepens his love for God, and as a result, naturally takes more responsibility in His stead. That kind of love demands that he accept a greater obligation to help more people. All of us must take responsibility for nations, mankind, and the world. We shed tears and suffer on behalf of many people whose faces we have never seen and whose names we don't even know. In our hearts, we even come to love the street people, the dope addicts, and those lonely people in the top strata of society. Because we assume certain responsibilities, we shed tears, pray, fast, and live an active life of faith, working ultimately to benefit mankind. Since we know the Principle, we cannot help but work to carry out this point of God's will, one which is very dear to His heart.

When you are ready to take on great responsibility, be sure to let God know. I am confident God Himself will bestow great blessings upon you, His heart moved by your willingness to love.

Each of us must accept the crucial responsibility to unite with our central person for one main reason: it is through him that we are able to inherit what God offers. Sometimes we shirk that responsibility simply because it is hard, and to do so takes overcoming our problems. We elect to make unity on the horizontal rather than vertical level. This is done mostly out of the fear of being hurt, or the desire to cover up certain thoughts or actions. Of course establishing harmony with our peers is important, but if we confuse our priorities of responsibility and unite with our brothers and sisters instead of our central person, we may end up severing ourselves from God.

What responsibility should you take for a person who wants to vent his negative feelings about a certain situation or toward a particular person? If he asks to talk with you about his problem, he must have a certain amount of trust in you and value your opinion, so don't avoid the obligation you have to listen to him as a friend. If he feels he cannot bring this problem to a spiritual elder, perhaps he is looking to you for spiritual wisdom, or at least comfort. That makes your obligation all the more weighty. You must choose your words carefully and be willing to accept both a "moral" and spiritual obligation. How should you respond if he expresses his hate for a person? What if you secretly agree with his complaints? Before speaking, think of how God would deal with this

situation. God would surely be a parent and a true friend. Strive to follow that example. To do that, you should not merely empathize with his complaints; it is your duty to spiritually elevate him. Point out any misunderstandings he may have, or even his misperceptions of that person's character. Share a personal testimony of how you overcame such feelings in the past. Be a mediator, and show him possible solutions from the viewpoint of the Principle.

This is a tender situation, one that involves tremendous responsibility on your part. Nothing can be gained by allowing it to turn into a gripe session in which you both engage in a sort of "mud-slinging" exercise, hurling accusations at a "target" who is not even present. You need to point out the rights and the wrongs in his way of thinking. You need to be parental. But most of all, you need to get God involved, and enlist the use of His eyes to gain the proper perspective. It is really only God who can see the torment in that person's heart, and who can intuit which words can soothe and ease his pain. The bottom line of your responsibility is to become a clear and pure channel for God to use. That will enable Him to spiritually embrace and care for that person—through you.

The scenario may be all too familiar: your leader gives a certain direction, but you feel or have had actual experience that taught you a better way, one that you feel will bring far greater results. What should you do? What is your "responsibility" in this case? Based on past experience, you may be reticent to offer your suggestion because you feel it won't be accepted. Out of spite you might decide to say nothing, but that stance is arrogant. If you don't offer your experience, knowledge, or advice, the lump of resentment inside you may swell, constricting your throat and your heart. What forms within you is a spiritual tumor, one that cannot be dissolved by itself. The best way to "cut it out" is to offer your suggestions. In fact, that is the most responsible attitude you can take. Your central person might just accept what you have to say, but that depends partially upon whether or not you make that suggestion as a pure offering. If you hurl your words at him in an arrogant manner, he may join you in feeling resentful. But what is your responsibility if the central person does not accept your suggestions? Can you accept his decision, or will you hold against him the fact that he rejected yours? The responsibility to make unity is the same—with or without these emotions and sentiments of resentment.

God does not ask the person fulfilling the Cain position to accept responsibility for the outcome of a project or mission. Rather, He places that trust in

the hands of the person occupying the Abel position. Two of the four so-called "fallen" or "human" natures which stemmed from the fall involved Lucifer leaving his proper position and reversing dominion. Basically, he failed to accomplish his responsibility; he wanted to do something out of the realm of his duties. Likewise, whenever we fail to fulfill our responsibility to follow the direction of our central person, and from our perspective feel that either doing something or not doing something would effect a better result, we recommit the same mistakes Lucifer made. Our responsibility includes restoration of those failures, not prolongation.

We need to fulfill responsibility within our church community and nation, yet at the same time not neglect our duty to the world. We have received so many blessings from God, but do we fulfill our responsibility by conveying those gifts to others? Adam and Eve did not fulfill their human responsibility. We must restore their failure and strive not to surrender to our own **human** weakness. Anyone who allows himself to stay spiritually fragile just **prolongs** his own suffering, the misery of mankind, and most especially **the anguish** of God.

Since we have a free will and are not solely governed by the Principle, it is possible for us to make either a right or a wrong decision. We can give in, we can withdraw, or we can go forward. The godliness and the divinity inherent within each person allows him to become a co-creator through exercising his free will. We must therefore align our free will with the truth. Free will and responsibility should go hand-in-hand.

God is organized and disciplined; we should become like Him. When you are on your own, you may tend to slacken in your personal discipline; it is so easy to give in to the desires of the flesh. It is not at all hard to become reluctant or lazy. Laziness is the biggest tool of Satan. If you become lazy, you will probably feel apathetic and hopeless, and lose vision of the goal. As a result, you could become so disillusioned that you give up even trying. How much better it is when we can see our responsibility in terms of something long-lasting and important. How much better it is when we can see our responsibility with the eyes of God.

If we want to take all the responsibilities and worries upon our own shoulders and desire to solve all problems by using our intellect and human capabilities, we will soon realize that by ourselves we do not have the

spiritual resources to "carry" people from spiritual rebirth to perfection. We must call upon God to become involved. He has a tremendous reservoir, nearly brimming over with all that is essential; it is our responsibility to simply tap it.

Instead of working to unearth the inconsistencies you know exist within your central person, why not do your best to understand his responsibility and heart. Come to empathize with the responsibility he feels and undertakes—especially what he does for you. A great deal of his obligation and concern may be invisible, but there are surely some points you can perceive without looking too hard. If you concentrate on making unity with him, then you will naturally inherit and share his responsibility; once you do, you will feel much more motivation to help him accomplish it. You will come to suffer not *because* of him, but along with him, and eventually may even discover how much you like him as a friend.

What about our personal relationship with True Parents? Can we even imagine Father's responsibilities—how heavy his heart is, what a load he carries? Realizing all the pain he endures, each of us should shoulder as much responsibility as possible. If we help him with his responsibility, we can inherit everything he has—intelligence, wisdom, love, compassion. But if we always act like a child, assume no part of his burden, and do not even try to understand him, we will be unable to inherit anything from him now, and will have to live with tremendous regrets later.

We have to work toward the fulfillment of the purpose of creation; we cannot follow blindly forever. Although I follow Father without hesitation, I try to capture the way he thinks and feels. I also try to sense how he would do things. If he gives me a certain responsibility, I do my best to achieve a good result. Sensing the way he would handle a situation, I follow that inspiration and can then feel like a co-creator and even his co-worker.

Although it is not easy or automatic, let us mature in spirit by developing our physical and spiritual senses to such a point that we can discern what God and True Parents would do in a given situation, and then work in the same way.

Father has an amazing responsibility to inform humanity about the will of God. Yet humanity also has an overwhelming duty: we have to *do*

the will of God. As your leader, it is my obligation to tell you what I know about God, True Parents, and the Principle. But you have responsibility, too. The more you understand, the more you are responsible to accomplish. You in turn serve God by putting into action what you receive and comprehend of God's truth. The more truth you hear, the more responsible you become.

We can fulfill our responsibility to console the heart of God only after we connect with it. The prerequisite is to *feel* and experience the heart of God. Father takes full responsibility for this suffering world, and as a son of filial piety, also comforts God. We should follow his example. Unless we put into action what we promise to God in prayer, we will not make much spiritual progress.

Once we accept full responsibility for our words and deeds, we also have to take the consequences if we fail to fulfill our mission. This takes maturity, but if we feel we lack capability, we can pray that God will grant us the competence and wisdom to tackle our assignments. To be responsible enough to work on God's behalf, we must abandon self-centered notions. God is grateful if we can become the kind of children who beseech their Heavenly Father to rest because we are determined to assume the duties of His job.

Twenty-three years ago I battled with accepting the Principle. It was a tough fight and consequently I went through many struggles. I had to discover if it was true or not. I knew that to follow the Principle would require me to make a tremendous change in my life.

One night during that rather tense time I awoke because of some noise, and was completely surprised to see an Oriental man sitting in front of me, holding a baby. I realized later that it was Father. I looked at him intently and knew intuitively that he was a person of goodness, and very parental. That vision seemed incredibly real, and made me feel so close to him in heart. A few days later I was still debating the identity of the True Parents in my mind. Then I had another vision. I saw a group of men in my home arguing with one another. I instinctively felt they were quarreling about *me*, wondering what they had to do before I would finally accept the True Parents as Messiah. I knew immediately that they were my ancestors, and I sensed how desperate they were. Even though generations of my ancestors had been prepared by God, and they were certainly pushing me into making my choice, I knew that it was *my* decision

to follow Father. If I had decided that the Principle was not true and had not followed Father, all those good people would have lost their foundation and would have had to wait many years before they could resurrect to higher realms in the spirit world.

God made preparations for thousands of years to send Jesus, yet had Jesus not accepted his responsibility, God's dispensation of restoration history would have stagnated. Father also had a monumental decision—to either accept or reject his mission. Unificationists are in crucial positions as well. What we do will either contribute to or deny spiritual growth to thousands of spiritual beings. So much depends upon our decision to accept responsibility.

Once a person begins to accept responsibility for his life, he naturally becomes more serious. Once a person gets out on his own, he may start seeing pay checks roll in, but he'll also have bills. The person has to make sure he can make ends meet. That is part of the responsibility of life. There are also numerous *invisible* battles he will need to fight—in his relationships with people, in his work, and in all facets of life. Once his parents no longer take personal care of him, he will have to start to fend for himself. The day will probably come when he too assumes the position of a parent.

Once a person begins to live a spiritual life, he must also assume certain responsibilities. Analyze our present position. Most of us are no longer spiritual infants, but have matured to the point where we accept certain responsibilities, even as parent figures. When problems confront us or when we find ourselves in trouble, we can no longer behave like children and run to a mommy or daddy in hopes they will wipe away our tears and replace our feelings of insecurity with feelings of *security*. Life becomes infinitely more difficult once we accept full responsibility to live with vision and maturity. That is when we become a "messiah" for others. A messiah, fulfilling the position of a leader, is always troubled and weighed down with responsibility. We can see this trait in Father; he is never free from worry for even a moment. Some people compare Christian lifestyle to Unificationist lifestyle. They see the Christian lifestyle as one saturated with love, while the Unificationist lifestyle seems to be drenched with work! I feel it is quite an unfair comparison. Once we Unificationists accepted our commission, we no longer stood in the position to passively receive love and comfort from the Holy Spirit. Rather, we took the parental position, ourselves going out to testify about the will of God and soothe the hearts of others. Of course, people do have to

contend with and battle evil in their lives of faith, but the real fight against Satan begins when a person accepts the responsibility to work, and even to live, on behalf of God and mankind. That is the obligation of a Unificationist.

Each of us has the freedom to choose the attitude with which we live life. We can conquer apathy through action, if we want to. It is too often a question of "having not because we ask not." Instead, we allow our worries to get the best of us, and then we worry about the fact that we worry so much! Responsibility is much more than accomplishing certain chores. It involves developing a healthy attitude toward life, and a loving and respectful attitude toward God.

The realm of responsibility has wide parameters. For instance, we need to accept responsibility in our human relationships, becoming dependable and trustworthy people. We season our personalities by accepting the task of planning and managing our lives, and preparing for eventualities. Accepting responsibility entices us to ready ourselves to prepare for the rest of our physical life, as well as our life in the spirit world. We become mature and responsible by re-creating ourselves, and leading others to do the same. Since we know and accept the Principle as God's truth, life could seem shallow and empty if we aren't responsible enough to put the Principle into action. Yet if we are willing to do anything for God and humanity, He will accept the offering of heart with which we make our commitment. As a result, His trust in us will only grow.

God does not blame Himself for the situation of mankind, but He does take responsibility because He created us with a free will. Although He takes only partial responsibility to restore mankind, it is huge in comparison to our portion of responsibility. His portion of responsibility is to send the Messiah, ours is to accept and follow him.

I urge you to get your spiritual "engines" tuned-up and to run a check on them every so often. Make sure that you are able to run smoothly along both your course of personal restoration, as well as on the path of world restoration. There is no way out; unless we go forward, Satan will overpower us.

Sometimes you may feel depressed or upset. Some days you make

only token efforts toward restoration. How must God feel about that? I honestly don't feel God finds it acceptable if we try to steal a lot of time for ourselves at this very critical juncture of His dispensation. He looks to us to accept our responsibility, for that will hasten accomplishment of His work.

Whether or not they are aware of it, all people are meant to live by spiritual laws, and if a person violates those laws, he suffers. If you resolve within your heart that working for God in this way is not something voluntary but really your duty, you will do your best at all times. If you make the commitment to fulfill your work no matter how you feel, then you *will* advance. Why face the day with a "let's see how I feel today" outlook? Whether you feel good or bad does not matter so much; what matters most is that the job just *has* to get done.

What do you do if you have a terrible toothache? Are you the type of person who goes to the demist immediately, or the type who puts it off? If you are a procrastinator, haven't you noticed that by waiting you actually end up with a much bigger toothache? If you have something to do, make up your mind and then just do it. If your tooth has to come out, it just has to come out. Realize that by virtue of your pain, the decision has already been made for you, and then march bravely forward—straight to your dentist!

I resolve to take care of such matters immediately. Doing that takes an internal conviction, but I find mustering up the courage and the determination to do what has to be done is half the battle. That alone helps decrease the fear. The greatest feelings of anxiety come when you have time to fear. Fear is the kind of emotion that builds up and then snowballs fast. Once your emotions get stirred up, and your adrenaline starts flowing, your intellect parlays by working a double shift. You might work yourself up into such a frenzy that you even become physically sick. Realize that there are certain things you have to do in life, and then just do them. That is accepting responsibility.

A family which gets its strength from God and is bound together with love provides security and protection for every member. But if the family disintegrates because of individualism, lack of love, and the like, the members feel uncared for, and consequently feel abandoned and lonely. The parents may not be very parental. The brothers and sisters might be unloving and show little regard for one another. Such a situation could cause a child to go "haywire." Out of the need for security and

comfort, an adolescent or even a child might become involved in taking drugs, drinking, engaging in illicit sexual relationships, or any number of social evils. The members of a family—both parents and children—have responsibility for one another. Without feeling and accepting that obligation, the family would not bind together, and a disintegration could occur—perhaps both moral and spiritual.

A spiritual family is meant to work in similar fashion. All family members should grow together and learn how to live with one another by practicing the principles of love and respect. Rather than allowing ourselves to become highly secularized and relating to one another through use and/or abuse, we must strive to live by the Principle, having respect for each other and fulfilling our mutual responsibility. If we can successfully do that, we won't be so apt to turn to society's temptations in an attempt to satisfy our emotional and mental needs. Can we recognize how God beckons us to accept our commission from Him to love one another as He desires to love each of us?

How can you take more responsibility? One sure way I know is to get out of your "mousehole" and into circulation. Become active. What purpose would a newspaper have if a hundred thousand copies were printed but not distributed and instead stored away in a basement. You have a good brain, a good heart, and so many things to contribute. Everyday you write a fresh edition of the "newspaper" of your life, but too often you don't hit the newsstand and just store yourself in a "basement" of sorts.

Take responsibility: share yourself with somebody. You experience emotions and think about so many different things all day long. Why keep these jewels of experience and wisdom from others? Realize the obligations you have to the people in your life. One of the biggest responsibilities each of us has is to love. Although they may not express it in so many words, those around you depend upon you to give something of yourself to them.

The Principle does not explain the law of "take and take," or "give and give," rather it speaks about "give and take." If you want to gain anything, you first have to give something. Therefore, if you don't come out of that "mousehole" and give something of yourself, you can expect to take only something small from someone else. But if you *do* give of yourself to another human being, then he is obliged to give something in return—whether directly to you or someone else. That is the Principle in action which can create the flow of love God desires would encircle the whole world.

Some people have difficulty with details. Others have difficulty in attaining a broad vision. Some people may be extroverted and have an easy time talking, yet find it hard to share their hearts. All of us have problems. Just the same, all of us also have responsibility in helping one another overcome them.

Sometimes young people think, "What the heck. We're only young once. Let's really live it up!" But living life solely on the basis of horizontal love or instant gratification is not really living life. What is life without spiritual energy? What is life without God? Life without the essence of love is shallow and superficial. What the world calls love is not the true and unconditional love of God. We can experience the *real* essence of life only when we make God the center of our lives. Anything we try to make work without God *may* function, but what value does it have?

To fulfill the purpose of creation and have a joyful experience with God, we must be sure He is with us at all times. Religious life is not a part-time job. Some people think they can put off living their life of faith until they are old, so they just live with a rather devil-may-care attitude. What they don't realize is that the devil-does-care, and if they suddenly try to change their lifestyle after being tied to him for so long, he may care so much, he will stop at little to win them back.

Experts have discovered that children are "programmed" during their first few years of life. What children learn then directly relates to how they might act when they are older. A child should be treated correctly; his development nurtured with wisdom and tended with love. The right imprint must be made on a child's life so that of his own volition, he will want to live his life in a God-centered way.

A person who did not receive the most positive input as a child and is still filled with negative impressions about life, may be content with wasting his life. Although he might become saved by receiving the Messiah at the end of his life, so much precious time will have been lost. He will have forfeited the chance to live in love. That is why parents have a tremendous responsibility to be exemplary. Children follow and copy many of their parents' ways, as well as adopt their habits and attitudes.

In accepting the responsibility of spiritual parenting, each of us also has to prepare the right spiritual atmosphere for newcomers to our church community. Whether you realize it or not, your example definitely plays a role. If your responsibility precludes you from directly attending your guest or spiritual child, at least you should pray for him. See that someone does take care of him, or he may feel lost and out of place, and then cease

contact. Give him the strength he needs, for once he is encouraged to leave the "nest," his resistance has to be strong enough that he won't become sick and die spiritually.

To be responsible for our brothers and sisters entails protecting them with our lives, and making sure that their needs are taken care of before we attend to our own. Being responsible involves thinking of others first even when you find yourself in difficulty. It means performing little acts of love—smiles and knowing glances, and serving in small ways—generally being conscious of doing everything for others instead of yourself.

Father hopes we will realize how important it is for us to stand up and accomplish our mission at this critical time in history. Each one of us has to accept a portion of responsibility for the nation and the entire world. Whether a person is an introvert or an extrovert does not relieve him of his God-given responsibilities or his duties to mankind.

As soon as God reached us through the Principle and we made a step toward Him, we accepted the greatest responsibility ever undertaken by any people in all of history. When we accepted the Principle as God's new truth and accepted the True Parents as Messiah, we simultaneously accepted the commission to help in restoring the world.

God selected us to be the gates through which people can enter the new Jerusalem. It is our responsibility to prepare ourselves to accomplish that task. It is not a question that our hearts need to be soothed by God's love and attention; that is something secondary. Our primary responsibility is to qualify as the link which can bring all future generations into the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. That is an almost overwhelming responsibility, but it is the very one God called us to do.

When we insist on being individualistic, we cut ourselves off from others and deny our responsibility. Each of us has a role within our church community. Yet God cannot work when even one person negates his duty or rebels against the daily routine and there is discord. If there are no results because of such disharmony, disintegration on all levels will occur. The effects are far-reaching and devastating, but they all stem from abdicating responsibility. Have we considered just how serious ours is?

Miracles don't just come from God; they are made by people who connect with God and receive His power. It is actually man who creates the miracles—by the "miracle" of faith, by the "miracle" of accepting his God-given responsibility. Could it be possible that God has so much compassion with the plight of fallen mankind He would say, "I will take care of everything. Don't worry; I will break every law in the book just to save all of you." No, His laws are steadfast and that is not within the realm of possibility. He does whatever feasible to provide us with the truth, but from that point, so much depends upon us. World restoration begins when God and the Messiah undertake their responsibility, and people respond to the call to help bring salvation to this world.

Those who are stronger have to lead those who are weaker. The one who has something to say before God should speak up. None of us have the right to be selfish and sit on the sidelines forever. Each of us has something to say in response to God's plea, and He awaits our answer. This is the time to ask ourselves if we are ready to proclaim our response. People who are given great blessings from God should inspire everybody else with the vision, and in that way the grace of God can flow through each of us to reach the hearts of many. One person can tap the energy of God enough to pull many others into having experiences with the Eternal. There always has to be a "lead horse" who will guide the way. At this time we Unificationists are assembled in wagon trains, crossing the new spiritual frontier, and consequently, there is a need for many leaders to emerge in all areas. Some people must assume that responsibility. Is this something which *you* are being called to do? Ask yourself if God is calling you to do this in your field of expertise. Are you ready to accept such responsibility? Are you strong enough to lead your people home?

If we accept and work at fulfilling our responsibility, it means that we willingly stand in for Father. That is when we can be assured that God will work through us.

Part of your responsibility is to achieve certain goals within your lifetime. It is the same for all human beings. If we do not take up the challenge and fulfill our obligations, then we hinder the process of healing this decaying world. Everybody has the responsibility to do his best to reach perfection, or other people will be affected. All people are ultimately

dependent upon one another and upon God. Unfortunately, far too few people view life that way because far too few people understand the realm of human responsibility. We have been kept ignorant by the genius of Satan and evil spirits; they have worked hard and long to attach blinders to the eyes of each one of us, and diligently work to re-fasten them should they come loose. Until True Father uncovered the Principle, humanity had been unaware that its responsibility is to fulfill the three blessings which God gave to Adam and Eve; in fact they spell out the purpose for which He created mankind.

Whether people realize it not, they are in some way responsible for the problems of the whole world—from the hunger in Africa, to the corruption in government. This is a collective rather than a *direct* or personal responsibility, but one which is in a sense "built in." If Adam and Eve had not fallen, fulfilling one's responsibility would have been a beautiful and a very natural thing. If all people had fulfilled their personal responsibility, the Kingdom of God would have been established as a matter of course. Human responsibility is meant to be something creative, but since man originally failed to do it, our obligation was twisted and abused by Satan and it became a burden rather than a pleasure.

We continue to make the same mistakes Adam and Eve did. Adam and Eve failed in their primary responsibility to obey God, and then they pointed the accusing finger at one another. Neither of them would accept responsibility for their actions; today we still always want to pass the buck and blame someone else. It takes guts to assume responsibility, and a fight against our "human" fallen nature. Most people shy away from as much responsibility as possible. We hear stories about victims of crime who are assaulted right in front of other people and who cry out for someone to help them. But the vast majority of those onlookers are scared, and even though they witnessed the whole incident, they walk away, unwilling to do anything.

The actions of Adam and Eve started a chain *reaction*. Until True Parents took the responsibility upon their shoulders, no one had been able to totally fulfill the will of God. Instead, all of humanity fulfills their responsibility through payment which Unificationists call "indemnity."

Once God gives us His truth, we are then responsible to carry out what we understand. Responsibility is neither a matter of theatrics, nor welfare, and most certainly is not a time filler.

If you do not pay the required amount of indemnity according to

the position you hold and the knowledge you acquire, you have to face the consequences. You may have already been given the gift of the Blessing, but only later do you realize that a certain payment is expected for it. Fulfillment of your responsibility is "judgment through the word." The light of God's truth shines within our mind and heart and exposes the cobwebs and dirt living there. It shows us clearly where the black spots exist; our responsibility is to cleanse them.

We are accountable for our partner, our children, and many other people. Not just to sustain them physically, or be instrumental in bringing them to realize and then fulfill their purpose as children of God. Ultimately, we want them to feel happy. We have to act as peacemaker and comforter on behalf of God. It is a tremendous responsibility.

When we examine the state of this world, I feel we Unificationists have no other choice but to accept responsibility for it. No longer can we just pray in the name of True Parents and push such duties completely on their shoulders. Father has already paid incredible amounts of indemnity on our behalf. Now it is our turn.

We need to become serious. If we do not win this war against Satan, the next generations will face a future of certain suffering. But if that thought is not enough to sober us into accepting and fulfilling our responsibility, we have to realize that if we do not accomplish, not only will the next generation suffer, but God Himself will be forced to experience even more heartache.

Sometimes we are carried along toward the goal by the work undertaken by others around us, but have a hard time fulfilling our individual responsibility. By ourselves we feel weak and unable to do much; prayer life isn't what it used to be. We wonder if perhaps God has changed. No, He is still the same—the Almighty and Eternal Father of love. The basic problem stems from the fact that we are no longer serious enough about fulfilling our responsibility.

If you ever come to feel that you have been abandoned and even rejected by God, do your best to stay faithful to Him anyway. Trust in God and accept those feelings as indemnity. That is the healthy way to cope with the situation. At all costs, stay alive physically and spiritually. The

concept of "survival of the fittest" also includes spiritual survival. One possible way to do that is to face every trial with a thankful heart; realize that even your tough times are experiences with God, albeit memorable *because* they are difficult.

God knows everything that happens to us. There are times God allows Satan to pursue us, but rest assured: God and legions of angels are watching over us at all times. God does not give us a cross we cannot bear. Sometimes He needs us to learn certain things. Sometimes He tests us to determine our level of faith. If we could consciously realize this even in the most treacherous of times, we would have much greater trust in God. Yet our *response* to the situation is something unpredictable—even by God. With great anticipation God often must observe us, wondering whether or not we will fulfill our responsibility, and how we will react to a given situation.

If you fall off a bridge into fifty feet of water, you have to fight for your life. Bobbing up and down to keep your head above water, arms flailing, you will attempt to cry for help and sputter to catch your breath at the same time. God surely saw you falling off the bridge, yet He is not the one who will physically pull you out of the water, give you artificial respiration, provide you with warm blankets, and chicken soup in hopes that you don't catch pneumonia. Even though God is our parent, those are not among His duties. If you fall into water, *you* have responsibility; you have a decision to make. If you see a ship heading right toward you, and you are pretty certain that the sailor in the crow's nest does not see you, it would take you only a second to realize that unless you do something, you could be caught in the powerful undertow of that boat. It would dawn on you that you could be killed, and you would not hesitate to swim with all your might. That voice telling you what to do is none other than God's. God warns you, and even if you are almost "frozen" in disbelief and fear, He can give you strength enough to move your muscles. Then again, God could inspire a person who was standing on shore and who watched it happen, to jump into the water and rescue you. The person may not even know what prompted him to risk his own life to save yours, and at the moment could be completely unaware of his act of bravery. He just felt something within him move his body to jump into the water and propel his arms to swim over to you. If by some chance a journalist or television crew covered the "story," the reporter might claim it was a miracle! Was it? Or was it a portrayal of God-inspired responsibility? Did God Himself come down and pull you out? No, not exactly. Superman is a wonderful legendary hero who rescues people in very tight spots, yet He does not exist but in our imagination and in the worlds of comics and movies. God Himself does not don a multi-colored cape to save people from impossible

situations. Yet people *do* experience God in far more subtle ways. They experience the working of God within their hearts. He commands our spirit, or the spirit of another person. He tells us what to do, and helps us accomplish it. That is God's portion of responsibility. Ours is to listen to Him and do as He instructs. All it takes is a click, a command to the spirit, and a desire to fulfill that responsibility in order to set the wheels in motion.

Take life step by step, building up from the bottom. Movement toward perfection begins with a single step. As you work toward that goal, also work to widen both your horizon of responsibility and sea of influence, but make sure that you do not underestimate yourself in the process. Have the confidence that you can accomplish what you set out to do.

As we come closer to God, our will becomes one with His. After we are perfected every decision we make will be in accord with the will of God. Once you are confronted with a choice, you have a decision to make. If you come to the end of a street, you have to decide whether to go to the left or the right. God is not necessarily going to tell you. That is the time you use your decision-making ability to fulfill your responsibility. You should make any decision based upon your understanding of the Principle, and on the basis of your relationship with God and True Parents.

When we realize the urgency of God and yet waste, what to Him is precious time, we will suffer certain consequences. Each of us has a responsibility. We have such a wonderful opportunity to fulfill our obligation to God and mankind. On the other hand, thousands of saints suffered and even gave their physical lives for the purpose of God, yet received little compared to the abundant blessings He bestows upon us. If we fail to fulfill our responsibility, we will later be accused by our ancestors and descendants.

If we died tonight, we would surely feel remorse once we got to the spirit world. We would see clearly the opportunity that we had to reach perfection and to restore the failures in history. But we would be filled with regret that we foolishly did not realize it, and consequently did not work hard enough to fulfill our responsibility. What we are doing now is the very minimum to reimburse even a fraction of the blessings we and our ances-

tors have received from God. Among the billions of people in the world, we have the privilege of being called to attend the living Christ. As one of the few special, central people at this time of history, each of us should fulfill our personal responsibility to carry the burden of all humanity—past, present, and future. It is more than serious. If the full impact of this hits you, your heart might just break realizing how shallow life is to most people, and how little even we have understood our true responsibility before God and humanity.

Education has eternal value. The Bible implies that teachers will shine like stars in Heaven. If we consider ourselves as teachers of the will of God, then we most certainly have an obligation to fulfill. A person who knows a great deal about God and has had many experiences with Him, has the duty to convey it to others.

If a person comes close to God, at a certain point he will come to the realization that he should take responsibility for whatever failures and mistakes have already happened or will happen in the future, even if he is not personally responsible. That is when he will feel the heart of God—and out of his own will be full of eagerness to recompensate for any mistakes.

The way to begin developing a parental heart is by taking responsibility. If you feel that you are responsible for everything that goes on in this movement, or even within the whole world and then act accordingly, the parental heart of God will manifest through you as a result. We grow by accepting and fulfilling responsibility. Whether or not it is our actual job, we have to take responsibility for everything.

A wheel turns around its axle. We are each a "cog" in the machinery of the universe. Although each of us is like a single spoke of a wheel, sometimes we feel as though we have tremendous responsibility—more than we can bear. Actually, each of us carries only a portion of the total load. Do you sometimes feel as if you are part of the rim, and that the load of everyone else weighs heavy upon your shoulders? It is only occasionally that you have that kind of pressure—when you as a "spoke" rest along the road. At any given time, the spokes of the wheel supporting the

part of the rim which touches the road, experience all the pressure until the wheel moves forward again. When the wheel makes a complete revolution, you will feel the pressure once again, yet keep in mind that the axle carries pressure at all times. We each have great responsibility to make sure that the wheel does not drag along the road because our spoke somehow got dislodged from the rim.

Each "spoke" in the wheel of our spiritual family is made from different wood. Some woods are naturally more resistant to pressure, and some are less resistant because they are of a softer substance. That is why various parts of the "wheel" give different performances. Not all of us can take the same pressure. Some of us tense up and take the weight without a problem, but some of us buckle under, and have a hard time sustaining pressure. But when we have problems sustaining the load, the other spokes can help balance the wheel and make sure it is stable enough to remain upright. It is the central person, represented by the axle, who assumes the greatest responsibility.

Each of us has a beautiful spiritual light glowing inside our hearts, but the problem is, we tend to hide it. Jesus said, "You are the light of the world," yet why are we so resistant to light up this dark world? Why do we so often hide ours? It is very important that we allow our spiritual luminescence to radiate forth. It can shine and glow in the electromagnetic belt we have around ourselves. Some people might be able to see and feel that "aura," which might seem to be physical, but actually is our spiritual light emanating from within us. It is the light of God's love, the quality that helps make people attractive, loving, and *lovable*. If you keep your light covered by bushels of disbelief and doubt, nobody will benefit from that special essence that is uniquely yours. I believe that by our will, by our *responsibility*, we must intentionally allow our light to shine forth. But responsibility does not end there. We should be beacons which light up the road leading home to God. Naturally, we will meet others on that road, and our responsibility then extends to loving one another. If we don't, we deprive our neighbor of part of our love that should be awarded him. The intensity of our light reflects positivism, optimism, and love. That radiance shines through our eyes, our personality, our body language, and our appearance. But if we veil it with fears and insecurities, it is dimmed and becomes difficult to see. It is our obligation to manifest the light, the godliness inside ourselves.

It is fine to have a wonderfully soft and loving heart, but how much good can it do unless you express the beautiful thoughts and emotions living within it? A good heart is not to benefit yourself, but rather for the

good of others. God projects Himself into this universe and into mankind; He assumes the duty to serve His creation, and certainly never hides His light. At times we may not be able to see it, but that is because we have limited vision and perception, not because God fails to make it shine. We have the same obligation as our Eternal: the living God should radiate through our appearance, as well as our words and deeds.

Self Control

Your body and spirit cooperate to stave off physical illness and keep you healthy. You influence your psyche through your spiritual power and determination, and that has a direct relationship to your physical body. There must be an exchange of positive elements between your spirit, mind, and body. Yet some people do not understand how to exercise self-control, and consequently are often sick physically or depressed emotionally. As we come to understand more about the spiritual and physical energies around us, I am sure that in the future we will heal ourselves not only with medicines or herbs, but "remedies" such as self-confidence and self-esteem. Even today, we can overcome many physical maladies through positive thinking and action. Our psyche can influence our somatic system. It is a matter of desire, and a matter of self-control. But on an even more basic level, it is a matter of accepting the responsibility to do so.

You reveal the grace of God in many ways, and even display it in your voice. When you talk about beautiful things, the tone of your voice can already manifest and display that beauty and the emotions behind it. The sound of your voice conveys a great deal about the amount and depth of love you possess. If you want to express deep and heartfelt feelings, but you rattle off words as if you were firing rounds of a machine gun, your tone of voice will not properly communicate what you want to say. What you need to use is the transformer of heart. If your heart is working properly, and is full of love and emotion, then your voice and body will convey the same.

We need to control our faculties; everything has to work in cooperative effort for God to be able to speak through us—our heart, mind, language, tone of voice, and even our body language. You are a unique expression of God. All of those things express something of the God within you as much as the way you stand, how you walk, your facial expressions, how you

wear your clothes, your grooming—every aspect that makes you, you! Therefore, if you really want to share your message from God with others, allow Him to speak through you by setting the conditions to create a conducive atmosphere. Loudness, brashness, and crassness are most inappropriate: God displays none of those things. While He may be aggressive, He does not manifest that in a belligerent or hostile way. Those are the means of Satan, so attune yourself to God. Set the tone; pray to know what to do and what to say. Realize that even your timing plays a role, and should be in harmony with the content of what you speak.

The responsibility you are willing to take for yourself determines in large part what God is able to convey through you. If your character obtrusions jut out, or your deficiencies leave too many gaps, God may not have the easiest time to express Himself through you. But the more self-esteem you develop and the greater the amount of responsibility you willingly accept, the more those holes will be filled in, and the rough edges smoothed. Your vulnerabilities will become much less of a problem because you will feel less self-conscious about them.

Controlling spiritual influences is a matter of responsibility. If "you" get out of control, you have to realize that possibly some other being takes over within you. If your heart is centered upon truth, a spiritual being will have a much harder time running away with your emotions and controlling your actions and thoughts. When things seem upside down, stop and think why you are depressed. And, is it *really* you?

Even if you feel sad and depressed inside, fight against showing it. If someone hurts you, smile anyway. If you become angry, you have give and take with Satan, which causes you to lose spiritual energy. So what is the point of getting angry? If he has half a chance, Satan could subjugate you in such a moment of weakness. Yet if you remain calm, God can stay with you and your defense against evil spirits will be strong.

God cannot enter or stay within an unstable heart. If you are unstable spiritually, use your intellect to create a balance within yourself. Rationalize the way you have been acting, and think logically about the way you *should* act. That takes self-discipline and a great sense of responsibility. When you can do that successfully, you will naturally think of others around you, and how you affect them by your words and deeds. If you can climb out of your shell of egoism, and rather than try to control others, be charitable and generous in giving of *yourself*, God will come to trust you and consider you a much more responsible person.

Honor both other people and yourself by not opening your mouth in rage. If you do, you could regret what you say. Weeks and months might be wasted by a few words that you cast out without thinking. If you are in a rage, restrain yourself from speaking. A few wrong words could destroy another person or a situation. Instead act responsibly by controlling your temper.

We recognize that day and night exist in the physical world, and yet we may not realize that "day and night" also exist in our spiritual life. Sometimes you are a little quiet and do not perceive so much of what is going on around you, while other times you are more outgoing and dynamic and your perception is much keener. Spiritual life moves almost in waves, like day and night. We must not automatically think that a person is negative or completely self-absorbed if he is more quiet than usual. On occasion, it becomes necessary to give your spirit a little rest. Yet when you take that time, be sure the very next day you work at your normal capacity again. This should not be a base for self-accusation. Control Satan or evil spirits who begin to accuse you or even tell you things which drive you away from God. Working to control our fears and guilt is part of our human responsibility.

What should you do if you are bothered by evil spirits? If you are absolutely serious about working for God, then you have to be really strong and practice self-control. Even if someone else would exorcise them, it is only *you* who can prevent their return. But you can also be the one to "exorcise" them. Do something to activate the good spiritual world, such as a prayer condition, to dispel those evil spirits. Show them who is boss. They probably aren't too good at taking direction, and may express their anger by making you feel ill or even trying to harm you in some way. But the way to fight fire is *with* fire. Be just as strong as they are, and fulfill your responsibility. Make a promise to God and give those troublesome spirits an ultimatum. It is not easy. You need strength and willpower to control them, as well as a keen sense of responsibility.

By applying the Principle, you will be able to discern how human beings are meant to function, how they should act and react. Yet each human being on his own must develop the determination to live according to the will of God. Each human being must then live his life as a true child of God.

Reread the first chapter of the Principle, but this time, do it in front of the mirror. You will read that all things exist in polarity. Then look at your face. You can see that it is a true statement: you have two eyes, an upper and a lower lip, even upper and lower teeth. You will notice that the two nostrils of your nose balance out your face. When you read about the purpose of creation, practice smiling and laughing. It will become clear to you that God really *did* create humanity to experience joy!

Read all those long and seemingly dry statements in the first chapter of the Principle, but bring them to life! Look at yourself in light of the principles of creation. Each of those principles concerns *you*, not just the plant and animal kingdoms. You are the highest form of God's creation. Nothing in the universe is as sensitive and designed as delicately as you are. Just look at yourself. Walk back and forth in front of the mirror. See your body as a holy body. Rather than see either the few lumps you have acquired or your too-skinny frame, look at your body with the viewpoint of God. Research things about yourself. Look at the way you walk. Notice how you dress. Particularly observe your facial expressions and your smile. Watch how your eyes move, and sense what someone might read from them.

Come to know yourself. Ask yourself a question that makes you blush. See how you react—how red does your face become? We are all a bit different. Yet by doing these things, you will have a better idea of how other people see you. If you make such a self-study, you will definitely see the Principle in action. You will become much more keen and attuned to yourself and others as you learn the difference between self-defense mechanisms and genuine reactions. You will come to know what energy you pour forth, and something more about what effect your words have and the vibrations you convey.

All of this is helpful in learning and practicing control. Once you come to know yourself, you can practice greater self-discipline. Know yourself in every way—physically, spiritually, and mentally. There will always be adjustments to make, but they will come with time and patience. Learn what kind of words and sentences, as well as what emotions and behavior impress people, and which "unimpress" them. A great deal of your fear will subside once you know how to crystallize your vision, your thinking, and your behavior. Command all your faculties, rather than allow yourself to become wishy-washy or sloppy. See yourself as a creator. If you see the things which are uneven and disharmonious about yourself, you can change them, and finally your mind and body will come into total harmony. And then you *will* be in control!