



Preston Moon and the Family Peace Association

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«True Family»

- ▶ The Unification movement maintains that the establishment of a «True Family» is what is ultimately meant by the fulfillment of God's will, «completing the ideal of creation» and establishing the «four-position foundation». The Unification movement considers its founder, Reverend Sun Myung Moon (1920-2012, left), the «Third Adam» who came to establish the «True Family» on earth

Reverend Moon's Children



- ▶ Reverend Moon had 14 sons and daughters from his 1960 marriage with Hak Ja Han (above). This family is referred to as the «True Family» and is central to the faith of the Unification movement

Moon's First Wife

- ▶ Moon had previously been married from 1945 to 1957 to Sun-Kil Choi (1925-2008, right). She is relevant for subsequent controversies, as speeches by Moon implied that, had certain circumstances being different, she might have become the True Mother



A Role Destined for Sun-Kil Choi?

- ▶ «If the Allied nations had united with me after World War II, Mother [Hak-Ja Han] and the True Children would not exist today. They are sons and daughters who were not supposed to be. If Korea had unified centering on Christian culture, without any persecution, the Moon clan and the Choi clan would have been the center, establishing the position of parents starting from sons and daughters. A peaceful world centered on one true family and one blood lineage would have been realized. However, I lost every foundation because of Christianity's failure»*

*Rev. Moon, True God's Day, 1-1-1997, Brazil, <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/SunMyungMoon97/970101a.htm>



Moon's First Son



- ▶ Choi and Moon had a son, Sung Jin Moon, in 1946 (with his father, left). He later joined the Unification movement. Today, some of the smaller schismatic groups look at him as a possible leader, although he does not seem interested

... And Another Son

- ▶ In order to complete the family tree, it should be mentioned that Moon also had a son, Hee Jin Moon (1954-1969, with his father, right), from a relationship with a woman called Myung-Hee Kim. The boy died in an accident during a train journey at age 14. The possible existence of other illegitimate children is a matter of controversy



True Children



- ▶ In the Unification movement, the sons and daughters from the «holy marriage» with Hak Ja Han have the crucial role and title of «True Children». They include seven sons and seven daughters, of which one died shortly after birth in 1964

The Problems of Hyo Jin Moon



- ▶ The first True Child is a daughter born in 1960, Ye Jin Moon (Nina). The eldest male True Child was Hyo Jin Moon (Stephen, 1962-2008, left). Well before 1998, when a sensational book by his ex-wife Nansook Hong seriously damaged the Unification movement, it became clear that Hyo Jin Moon had serious personal problems and was not a potential successor to his father

The Saintly Heung Jin Moon

- ▶ The second eldest True Child was Heung Jin Moon (1966-1984), widely revered in the Unification Movement as a young man with a high-level spiritual inclination. Unfortunately, Heung Jin Moon was killed in a car accident at age 17



The Afterlife of Heung Jin Moon



- ▶ According to Unification theology, Heung Jin Moon performs a crucial role in the spiritual world*. In 1988, a Unification Church member from Zimbabwe, Cleophas Kundiona (left), claimed to be an incarnation of Heung Jin Moon and was accepted as such by the leaders for a while, before becoming controversial for his violent and unpredictable behavior

* See discussion by George Chryssides, *The Advent of Sun Myung Moon*, Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1991, 124-130

Preston Moon

- ▶ The death of Heung Jin Moon and the problems of Hyo Jin Moon left Hyun Jin (Preston) Moon (right) as the eldest male True Child available to succeed his father in a leadership position. Preston was born on April 10, 1969, and as a teenager started being prepared by his father to become a future leader in the Unification movement



Engagement and Wedding



- ▶ On Christmas 1986, at age 17, Preston became engaged to Jun Sook Kwak, who turned 19 that day (left). The two married on March 31, 1987 and eventually had nine children. Jun Sook was the daughter of Reverend Chung Hwan Kwack, then one of the most prominent leaders of the Unification movement

Olympics

- ▶ Preparation for leadership included Reverend Moon's indication that Preston, a promising high school football player, should switch his sport activities to horse riding (right). He did this successfully, and was part of the Korean national team at both the Seoul (1988) and Barcelona (1992) Olympics



Harvard Graduate



- ▶ In 1998, Preston earned a MBA degree from Harvard Business School. He also has a BA in History from Columbia University and a MRE from Unification Theological Seminary (right). Confident in his son, Reverend Moon bestowed institutional responsibilities upon him in various areas of the Unification movement. He also decided in 2000 that Preston should become the first person on earth to inherit from him and his wife the right to bestow the marriage Blessing, the central sacrament of the Unification movement

From the Unification Church to FFWPU



- ▶ In 1994, Reverend Moon proclaimed the end of the time of the Unification Church and in 1996 launched the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), with Reverend Kwak (above) as president. In 1998, Preston was appointed vice-president of FFWPU

A Crucial Change



1996

❖ Inauguration of the Family Federation for World Peace International

► The move from the Unification Church to the Family Federation shook the organization to its core and was a seminal reason for the various schisms that followed within the Unification movement*

*See my paper «From the Unification Church to the Unification movement, 1994-1999: Five Years of Dramatic Changes»

(http://www.cesnur.org/testi/moon_1199.htm)

A Leader in the Unification Movement

- Between 2000 and 2001, Preston became president of Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) and the Youth Federation for World Peace. In 2001, he founded Service for Peace. In 2006, he became chairman of Unification Church International, which controls most of the movement's assets in the USA. In 2007, he became co-chairman of the Universal Peace Federation and started organizing the spectacular Global Peace Festivals



Reform, Resistance, and Tension



- ▶ All these appointments were part of an effort by Reverend Moon to transfer core positions in the Unification movement to the «1.5 generation», young leaders in their forties. Moon believed that Preston, being himself part of this generation, would manage more easily the younger leaders. In fact, they resisted Preston's authority and reforms, denounced him to Reverend Moon as unorthodox, and eventually poisoned Preston's relationship with his parents

A Father and a Son



- ▶ UC scholar Mike Mickler believes that Preston took at face value Reverend Moon's statements that his was «not a church but an association», while in fact the elder Moon's intention was to maintain a «creative tension» between the religious and nonsectarian models. When, Mickler argues, with the establishment of the Chung Pyung shrine and the coronations of himself and his wife as King and Queen of Peace, Reverend Moon emphasized again the religious theme, breaking up with Preston became unavoidable. Preston continues to maintain that his father never intended to found a religion and that the coronation ceremonies were intended to be a coronation of God through representatives on Earth rather than a shift back to a sectarian perspective

* See M. L. Mickler, «The Post-Sung Myung Moon Unification Church», in Eileen Barker (ed.), *Revisionism and Diversification in New Religious Movements*, Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013, 47-63 (48-50)

Dismissed as Leader

- ▶ Until 2004, Preston was widely recognized as Reverend Moon's future successor. From 2008, he was replaced in most of his positions by his younger brother Hyung Jin Moon (left, with wife and children in 2007). Hyung Jin became known as Pastor Moon and was inaugurated as international president of FFWPU. Other positions were given to yet another brother, Kook Jin Moon



Back to the Family Tree



- ▶ Kook Jin Moon (Justin) was born in 1970, 14 months after Preston. He was followed by Kwon Jin Moon (1975), who for several years worked as an actor in popular TV series under the name of Nathaniel Moon, and did not take until recently a special interest in the Unification movement, and by Young Jin Moon (Philip, 1978-1999 – at age 5, left). He was also not a player in the succession struggle and in 1999 died by either committing suicide or accidentally falling from the 17th floor of a Las Vegas hotel. Hyung Jin Moon (Sean, later Pastor) was born in 1979 and was the last male child of Reverend Moon

Chun Pyung Phenomena



- ▶ Reverend Moon became inaccessible to Preston and other leaders after he moved in 2006 from Seoul to the Holy Ground of Chung Pyung, the theater of the mediumistic phenomena of Hyo Nam Kim (left), a woman who channeled the spirit of Mrs. Moon's deceased mother, Soon-Ae Hong (1914-1989), and believed Mrs. Moon's family to have a spiritual significance in its own right. Preston repeatedly warned of the possibility of the medium's failure. Eventually, the medium and Mrs. Moon parted company in 2015

Return to the Unification Church

- ▶ With the public endorsement of his mother as heir apparent, Hyung Jin (Pastor) Moon (right) immediately decided to return from the FFWPU to the Unification Church (or «Unificationism»), presenting again the Unification movement in religious and sectarian terms that Preston opposed. Preston claimed that, with the end of the era of the Unification Church in 1994, it should have become clear to all, including his brothers, that Reverend Moon did not want to establish a new denomination but rather a larger universal movement of families



Trouble in the U.S.



- Based on Mrs. Moon's instructions, Kook Jin Moon (left) was put in charge of the finances of the movement. An elder sister, In Jin Moon (Tatiana, born in 1965), was dispatched to the U.S. in order to further marginalize the role of Preston, who resided there. Campaigns criticizing Preston and litigations for the control of U.S. and other assets of the Unification movement followed, and are not resolved to this day

More Leadership Trouble

- ▶ In 2012, however, Tatiana had to resign from her positions in the Unification movement after the public disclosure that, despite being married with Jin Sun Pak, she had a relationship with Family Federation musician Ben Lorentzen and he was the father of her sixth son, Erik. Later, Tatiana divorced her husband and married Lorentzen, who had in turn divorced his wife Patricia, in 2013 (right), in a non-UC ceremony. She has now somewhat reconciled with her mother
- ▶ Mrs. Moon removed Pastor and Kook Jin from various positions in 2012 and 2013, and they created their own schismatic group called Sanctuary Church



Global Peace Foundation

- In 2009, Preston decided to launch in Manila the Global Peace Foundation(GPF) as an alternative to the Unification Church's Universal Peace Federation, claiming that the latter was no longer maintaining the original nonsectarian intention. GPF has developed an impressive range of initiatives throughout the world, with programs in 24 nations. GPF welcomes people of all faiths, and Preston insists that it is separated from his personal spiritual activities





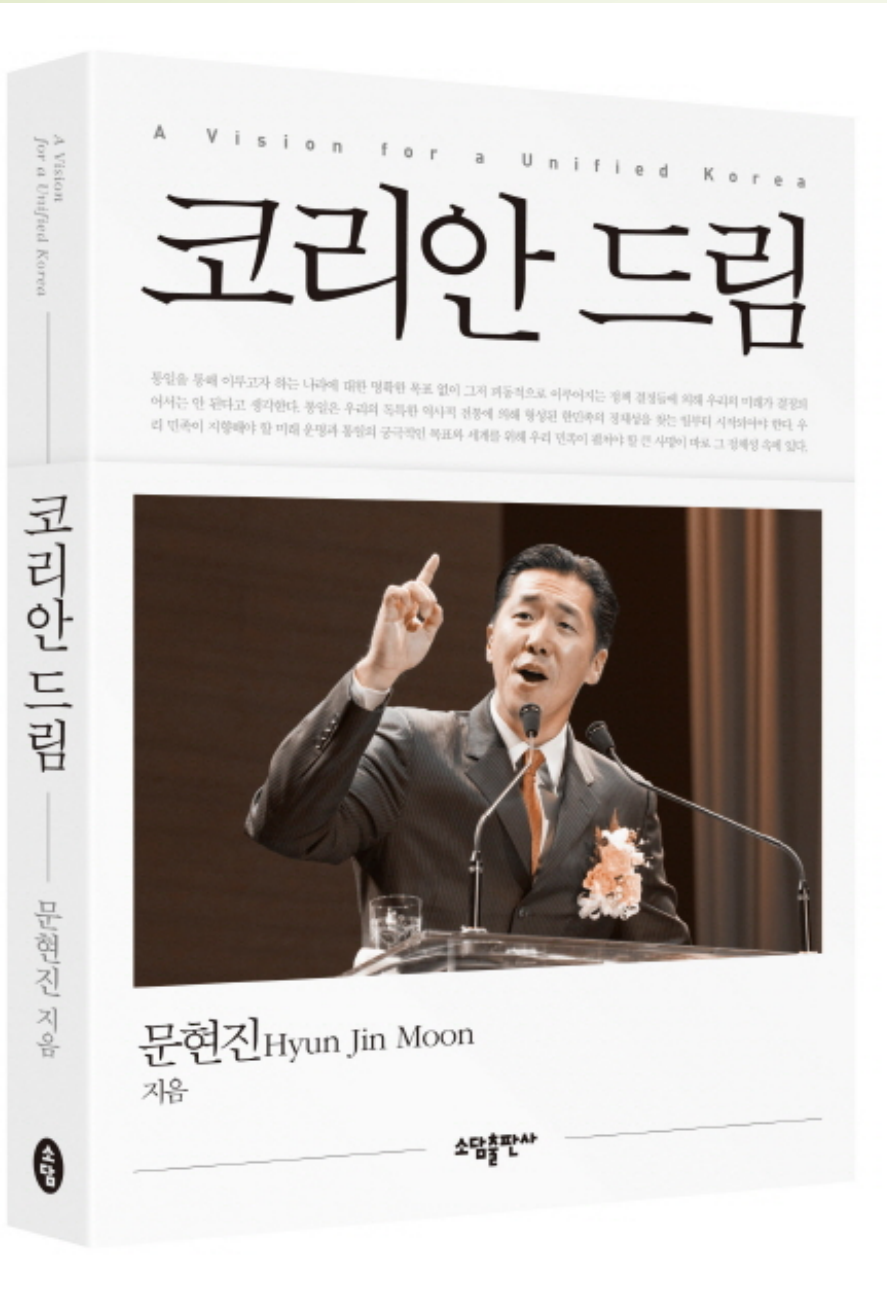
«One Family Under God»

- ▶ While nonsectarian, the activity of the GPF is hardly secular. Its main slogan is «One Family Under God», meaning that we are all part of the one human family because we share a common origin in the Creator God. GPF asserts that affirming our shared human heritage is essential to addressing the roots of identity-based conflict

Priorities: The Korean Dream

- It would be impossible to account here for all the initiatives of GPF, but three priorities may be indicated. The first is «The Korean Dream», the title of a successful book published by Preston Moon in 2014 and of a number of events, including a 2015 contest for the creation of a new song for a united Korea, which involved politicians, singers, and miscellaneous celebrities





A Legacy Assumed

- ▶ Reading the book, one finds interesting political considerations and at the same time a clear claim that Korean unification was part of Reverend Moon's dream and legacy Preston intends to assume

The Mongolian Connection



- ▶ Preston also mentions Mongolia, a country where he once worked on behalf of his father developing significant political friendships, as a nation where the transition from communism to democracy happened peacefully, thus an example for North Korea

Inter-Religious Dialogue and Conflicts



- GPF's second priority concern is peace-building in countries plagued by religiously based conflicts, including East Africa, West Africa, Ireland, India, and Indonesia, particularly through inter-religious dialogue and volunteer work

Spiritual Identity of the Americas



Preston Moon, Asunción, Paraguay, 2014

- ▶ The third priority of GPF is reaffirming the spiritual identity of the Americas. A center of GPF initiatives is Paraguay, another country where Preston worked on behalf of his father beginning in 2008. The Instituto Patria Soñada is one example of GPF's initiatives in Latin America, which, following the tradition of Reverend Moon's old projects, involve former presidents, judges, and politicians

Why the Global Peace Foundation?



- ▶ Preston Moon explains that he founded the Global Peace Foundation as a vehicle to engage people of all faiths in collaborative efforts to realize the vision of «one family under God». Such a vehicle, he maintains, ultimately reflects the truly universal intention of his father's work and should not be used to promote any religion

An Alternative to the Unification Church?



- ▶ But what, if any, is Preston Moon's religion? Starting in 2010-2011, Preston moved to the Seattle area and his followers started forming «not an organization but an association» in the shape of the Blessed Family Community, later Blessed Family Association, In 2016, the Family Peace Association(FPA) was inaugurated. It has now some 2,000 members. The largest chapters are in Korea, Japan, and in the U.S. (where Youngjun Kim, left, serves as international president)

An International Association



- Smaller FPA chapters exist in the Philippines, Mongolia, Taiwan, Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Germany, Kenya (above), Nigeria, Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Colombia

But Is It a Religion?



- In interviews I conducted in the Seattle area, typical answers were: «If you look at us, you will say we are a religion. But we are not». Although «practices are very similar to the [Unification] Church» and «try to maintain the original rituals of Reverend Moon», FPA members insist that in 1996 Reverend Moon declared «the end of religion». FPA sees herself as a «faith community» open to all «families centered on God» and without dogmatic teachings

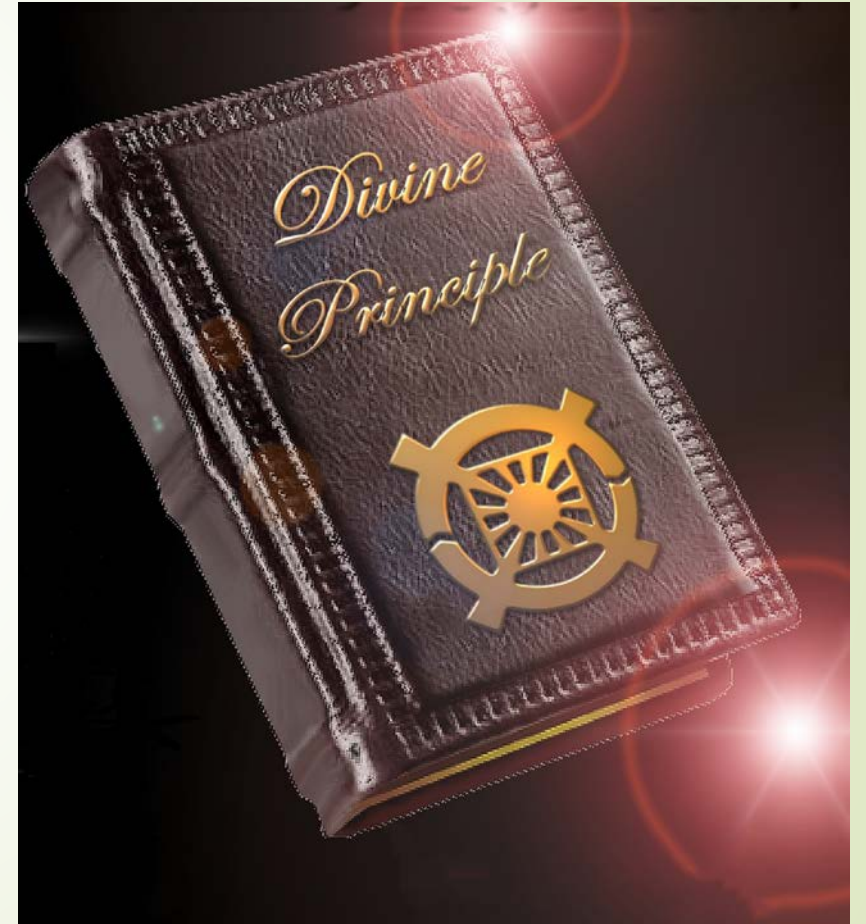
Spiritual Practices



- ▶ Despite FPA representatives arguing that it is not a religion, the organization has all the trappings of one: a set of holy scriptures (the «Original Eight textbooks»), observance of holy days, a type of pledge that is recited, Sunday school for children, communal reading of holy texts, spiritual retreats, marriage blessing ceremony (from 2015), and other rituals

A Question of Conscience

- ▶ «Follow your conscience» is an answer I often received in my interviews about questions of doctrine. However, not without precedents in other traditions – see, in the Catholic Church, the analysis of conscience by John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801-1890), as interpreted by Pope Benedict XVI – the FPA believes that conscience does include within itself certain universal truths, which are also the core teachings of Reverend Moon's *Divine Principle*. They include the primacy of selfless love, traditional family as a divinely ordained institution, and harmony with – and ethical mastery over - nature



FPA vs the Unification Church and the Sanctuary Church



- ▶ FPA believes that authority in the Unification movement belongs to the elder True Son, i.e. Preston
- ▶ The Unification Church (Family Federation) revealed that Mrs. Moon is the «only begotten Daughter of God» and holds ultimate authority
- ▶ The Sanctuary Church recognizes Pastor Moon as Reverend Moon's successor and «the new king of Cheon Il Guk» based on his participation in the coronation ceremonies of 2009

Fundamental Differences 1. Scriptures



- FPA maintains that the canon of Holy Scriptures, as fixed by Reverend Moon, is immutable. UC has introduced several modifications, with new editions, in particular, of the *Cheon Seong Gyeong* (an anthology of Reverend and Mrs. Moon's teachings), and of volume 594 onwards of the 615 volumes collecting Reverend Moon's speeches. Ultimately, the difference concerns again the role of Mrs. Moon and her authority to change the canon and the Scriptures, which seems to run counter to Reverend Moon's statements that he left "eight textbooks and teaching material for humankind to use for all eternity" without the slightest change

2. Gender Roles

- ▶ FPA maintains that, although men and women are equal in love, they are not equal in authority. FPA claims that, as Eve effectively undermined the authority of Adam, Mrs. Moon (right) – especially with her recent claim to be «the only begotten Daughter of God» – has undermined the authority of Reverend Moon and of his male lineage, which is centered on Preston



The Sun-Kil Choi Argument



- Some FPA members also mention, as evidence that Mrs. Moon's claim for herself that «the two-thousand-year history was one of searching for the only begotten Daughter of God» cannot be true, the fact that Reverend Moon explained that his first wife Sun Kil-choi (left), had she not failed, would have been in the position of True Mother, and Hak Ja Han «would not exist today» in her present role

3. The Role of Blessed Families



- ▶ FPA interprets Reverend Moon's teachings in the sense that, although he and Mrs. Moon were the first True Parents, eventually all the Blessed Couples might become True Parents, with a direct relation to God. FPA accuses Pastor Moon and Mrs. Moon of having created a religious mythology where blessed families cannot relate directly to God but only through the mediation of «deified» Reverend and Mrs. Moon (with the latter now replaced in the Sanctuary Church by Pastor Moon as the «crowned king», left)

4. Church Hierarchy vs Lineage

- ▶ As happened in larger religious groups – the Sunni-Shia division immediately comes to mind – the conflict is also between lineage and hierarchy. FPA maintains that authority in the Unification movement is transmitted through male lineage, i.e. from Reverend Moon to his eldest surviving son. The UC has introduced a «Cheon Il Guk Constitution» vesting all power in a Church Supreme Council

Cheon Il Guk Constitution

天一國憲法

Religious law to actualize God's peaceful ideal world



FFWPU

5. Church vs Movement



- As mentioned earlier, there is another difference. FPA does not aspire to be a church but a movement of ideal families (left), not all with the same religious beliefs and practices. By closer examining FPA, on the other hand, one realizes that its core membership shares certain ideas on the messianic role of Reverend Moon and his lineage, and continues practicing the main sacraments established by Reverend Moon, including the Blessing, the daily study of Reverend Moon's words for daily life practice, and the celebration of the four main holy days: God's Day (now called in the UC «Heavenly Parents Day»), Parents' Day, Children's Day and the Day of All Things (i.e. of the Creation). It also maintains the Seung Hwa funeral ceremony

Reconciliation?



- ▶ The fact that crucial beliefs about Reverend Moon are shared by both groups might in principle allow for a reconciliation. Preston Moon is more restrained than his brother, Pastor Moon, who is publicly attacking Mrs. Moon. Preston has repeatedly written to his mother without excluding a reconciliation. However, the new theological ideas of Mrs. Moon as the «only begotten Daughter of God» made reconciliation more difficult

Left: Preston and his mother

The Family Tree, Again



- ▶ For assessing the future, yet another True Child should be considered: Sun Jin Moon (Salina), born in 1976, the fourth daughter of Reverend and Mrs. Moon. She has been inaugurated in 2015 as international president of FFWPU and also serves as chairperson of the UC's Supreme Council. How she will relate to UC leaders outside the True Family and dissident brothers remains to be seen



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