

A child's place in the universe

Unification Thoughts, March 2023

Welcome back

In case you're joining us for the first time, it'd be best to take a look at the *purpose* and *focus* of this *Rearing Monarchs* series.¹

Where we left off and where we're going

Last time, we'd wrapped up the series with a summary of all 20 articles. But that gave me the opportunity to review the series and I realized that there is one more article that's necessary to cover the bases. It's an article on *Position* and that's explained in the Theory of Original Human Nature.² I'd initially omitted it because young children don't normally worry about their place in the universe. But it's a core concept for their later self-understanding, as well as in Father and Mother Moon's thought.³

So let's imagine that at some point past infancy, a curious child might innocently ask "What are we here for?" Or that later on they ask with more urgency "What is the value/use of my life?" The notion of *Position* is fundamental to answering those kinds of questions. The textbook *New Essentials of Unification Thought* (2006) explains that we humans occupy three positions: the *Object* position, the *Subject* position and the *Connected Body* position. And an earlier textbook *Explaining Unification Thought* (1981) includes another: the *Intermediate* position. We'll take a closer look at each one.

The *Object* position

This is the first position a person occupies in their lifetime. Unification Thought puts it this way:

"When people are born, they start out as children in the position of object to their parents. After growing, they become parents themselves and stand in the position of subject to their children. In social life, too, people start out from a lower position and gradually rise to a higher position. Thus, human beings stand first in the object position, and then gradually grow to stand in the subject position."

• *New Essentials of Unification Thought*, p. 172

Using the word "object" in reference to the human being can be disconcerting since it might be taken as *devaluing* us. In fact, the *first* definition in dictionaries refers to something material and likely inanimate. But that is certainly *not* what is meant here. Rather, it is the *second* definition which applies—that of something that's highly valued.⁴ In the *ontology* of Unification Thought, the human being stands apart from all other beings because we are endowed with a *Divine* Image and a *Divine* Character just as the Original Being has. (In biblical terms, we are made "in the image and likeness" of God - [Genesis 1:27](#).) And this is because the human being was created as the object of God's heart and the source of God's joy.

"The human being was created as the object partner of joy before God. Accordingly, **the primary significance of the life of a human being**, who is in the object position to God, **is to please God.**"

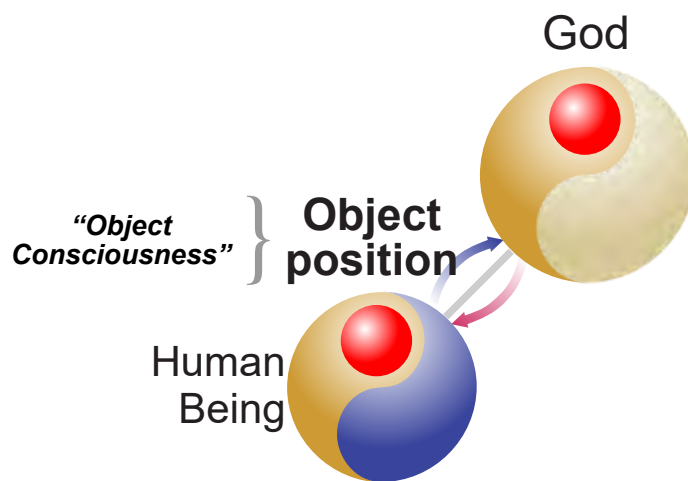
• *New Essentials of Unification Thought*, p. 172

So for us to stand in the "object" position to God also means that we are the object of God's care, concern, affection, devotion and [attendance](#). Knowing this, there is a basic attitude that it is important for a child to eventually learn:

"...to receive the dominion of his or her subject figure, a certain mental attitude, an **'object consciousness'** toward the subject figure is necessary. ...What these various types of object consciousness have in common is a heart of...**humility** and an attitude of living **for the sake of others**. ...Since human beings were created as the children of God, they have **in the depth of their hearts**, consciously or unconsciously, the object consciousness of **attending**, being loyal to, and pleasing God."

• *New Essentials of Unification Thought*, p. 173

I remember that by the time I'd finished college, I considered that wanting to please anyone was an indication of inconfidence and weakness. I believed that strong, successful individuals were fully independent, followed their own instincts and were not constrained by the opinions of others.⁵ But reading Unification Thought helped me understand my desires to apprentice to a master machinist or my earnest search for spiritual training. I realized that these were not weaknesses, but were innate and original characteristics of the soul. So I could reconcile my desire for autonomy with my desire to find a teacher. These were not exclusive and contradictory—both can lead to accomplishment and be sources joy.



Young people start their life in the object position to parents, elders and ultimately to God. So they will need to cultivate the first mental attitude: Objective consciousness.

Interestingly, I noticed that in an earlier edition of the Unification Thought texts (circa 1981), there was a very important bit of guidance that didn't appear in later versions of the material. But I include it here because 30 years later, we now live in the post-Foundation Day C/G Settlement Age, when we are to live more according to the Principle of Creation. That bit of guidance explains that in order to attend, be loyal and to please doesn't mean that a person should be submissive and silent:

“On the other hand, what should be the attitude of an object with regard to his subject? As mentioned before, the object should obey and respect the subject. This, however, does not mean that he must be servile or sycophantic. In fact, he ought to present his own ideas and opinions—with a humble attitude—whenever necessary....”

• *Explaining Unification Thought, p.111*

When people have relationships of trust and sincere concern, it is easier to be frank and to present other ideas, both complementary and contrasting. And as anyone whose creativity and work embraces collaboration knows, different views can really enliven and enrich our endeavors.

The *Subject* position

As stated earlier, “human beings stand first in the object position, and then gradually grow to stand in the subject position”. To be in the subject position means that a person has dominion over his or her own objects. But this exercise of dominion is rooted in heart and love for the object. For that reason, I found this following statement very poignant, because it reminds us that the created world’s experience of God’s love fully depends on the quality of heart we have:

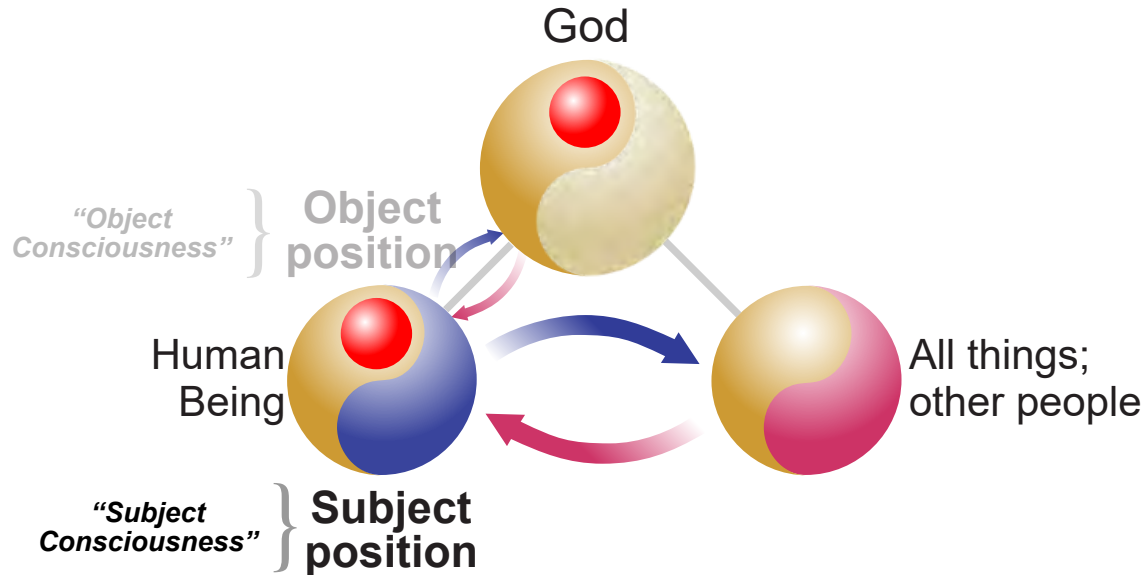
“The universe does not of itself have internal sensibility toward God. Hence, God does not govern the universe directly. Rather, God endowed human beings with sensibilities to all things in the universe and gave them the mandate to rule...directly.”

• *Principle of Creation §6.2 (p. 46)*

I think that this is something that our young ones need to learn sooner than later, as it affects the way they’ll treat the created world, especially living things. And there’s a particular mental attitude that accompanies this position:

“...as human beings grew and became perfected, they were to come naturally to stand in the position of subject... from which they were to have dominion over all things. However, the subject position referred to here is the position of subject in the various relationships among human beings. In exercising appropriate dominion over the object, it is necessary for the subject to have a certain mental attitude. The mental posture required of the subject toward the object is ‘subject consciousness’.”

• *New Essentials of Unification Thought, p. 174*



A young person will eventually grow into the subject position over things and people, and this requires a second type of consciousness: that of a subject.

Subjective consciousness also addresses how a true subject behaves to subordinates:

"...the subject must **love** his object and have a **genuine interest** in his well-being. He must **not overlook anyone**—no matter how many subordinates he may have—for **only by showing interest does love grow**. If you are the subject, when you give a lecture or sermon... you should not feel that you are great. Instead, you should feel that you are representing the church leader or Rev. Moon or God...**You must think that your subject is behind you**; this will help you to maintain your object-consciousness. **Only then will you remain humble...**"

• *Explaining Unification Thought, p. 111*

And that last part about not forgetting your own subject is a gem of wisdom that safeguards against behavior that could become arrogant and egotistic. I think there's a danger of that when people are young and enjoying their first successes—they might get overconfident about their ability and get a swell head. And here's another gem about true subjective consciousness in education:

"Heaven does not want to see you, or any teacher, selling knowledge as an 'education merchant'. **Teachers must teach their students with their whole heart and soul, praying** that through their teaching, the students will grow up to become loving family members, useful constituents of society, a backbone for the nation, and good servants of mankind."

• *Explaining Unification Thought, p. 144*

This of course is pretty far into the future for a young person. Still, it's very worth knowing about, for it's the heart that matters. And every young person will someday be in a position to influence or guide someone else—they won't need to be a professional teacher to experience that.

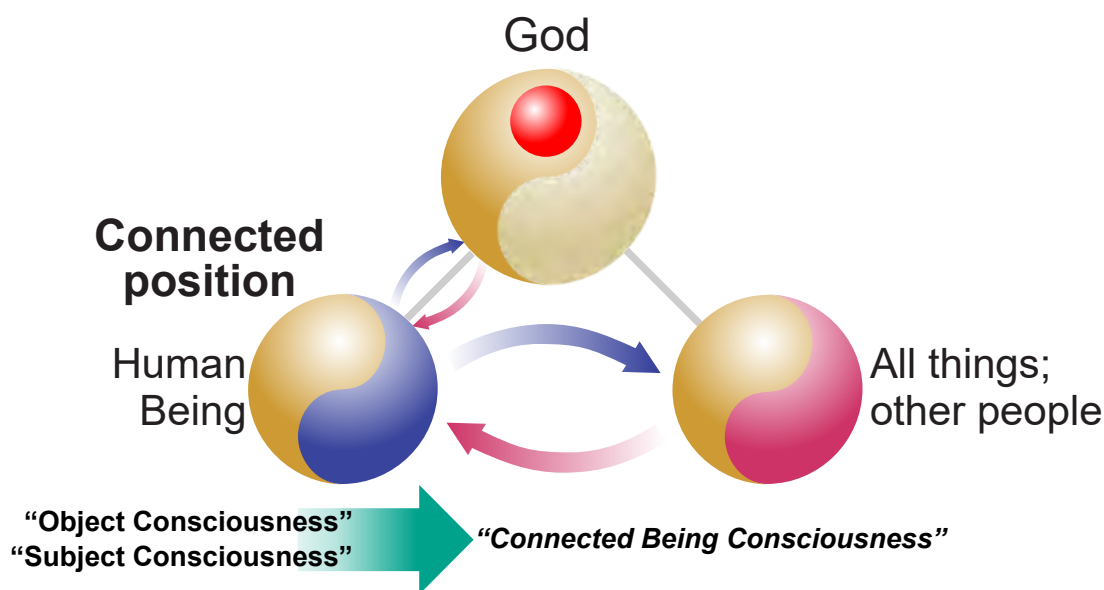
The *Connected Being* position

This third position highlights the interdependence of the two previous ones and brings them into a single awareness:

"The connected being position possesses dual purposes.... For example, in a working place, a person is in the subject position to his or her subordinates, while, at the same time, in the object position to his or her superiors. Though someone may be in the highest possible position, that person still is in the object position to God. Therefore, in a strict sense, everyone is always a connected being. The mental attitude that a connected being should take is that of possessing both object consciousness and subject consciousness: this is called 'connected being consciousness'."

• *New Essentials of Unification Thought*, p. 176

So once a person can fully understand the primacy of their object position to God and then the proper way of being a subject to others, he or she can learn how to maintain both and stand naturally with the proper mindset towards everyone.



Connected Being Consciousness is the self-awareness of one's complete relationship to others.

These are the three positions of the human being that are mentioned in the textbook *New Essentials of Unification Thought*. However, there is one more to mention.

The *Mediator* position

At the beginning of this article, I'd said that the position of *mediator* was explained in an earlier Unification Thought textbook but omitted in the latest one. I have the impression that the difference in intended readership is the reason: the 1981 book was based on notes from Dr. Lee's presentations to members in Japan, whereas the 2006 book had to accommodate readers who aren't members of the movement, particularly scholars who attended the PWPA and ICUS conferences as guests. Regardless, the mediator position is critical for a young person to eventually understand clearly.⁶ This is why:

"If man had not fallen, he would have become a perfect mediator, harmonizing the physical and the spiritual worlds... Originally, man's spiritual senses should resonate harmoniously with his physical senses, and vice versa... the spirit world is always willing to respond to, and to cooperate with, those who earnestly seek its help. This is called *Hwa-Dong* (Harmony)... Hence, man is the mediator—the center of harmony—between the two worlds."

• *Explaining Unification Thought*, p. 112

As a young child grows up, the ability to receive spiritual inspiration will be invaluable and it will also inspire those spiritual persons who are interested in supporting the young person.

One other important point to understand about the mediator position: it doesn't mean being *passive* to everyone in the spiritual world and just allowing them to say whatever they think through you. Note this phrase, which is a continuation of the preceding quote.

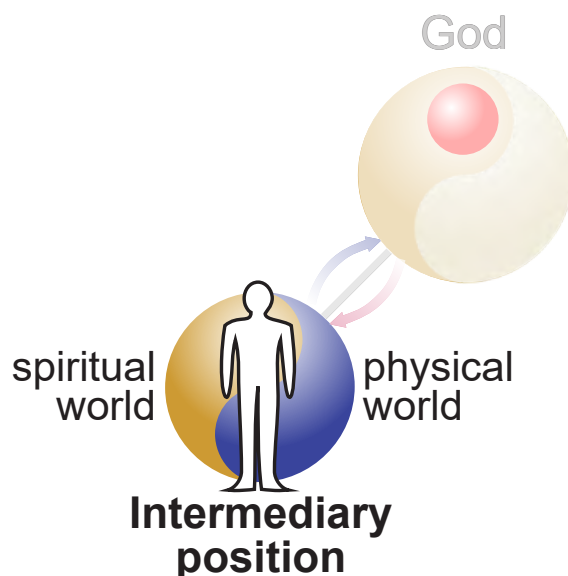
"...man is able to dominate the spiritual as well as the physical world, even while still living on earth."

• *Explaining Unification Thought*, p. 112

To *dominate* both worlds is obviously a position of great authority. Some insight into the *active* role of mediators can be gathered [here](#) and [here](#). This latter page contains this important statement: "The mediator is an **active participant** in the discussions and attempts to **work out** a solution." So we can understand that to have dominion involves not only listening to those in the spiritual world but also exercising discernment, just as we do when speaking with folks in the physical world. For these reasons, we are advised to speak and act wisely, and especially to honor the Word:

"Since we are in the position of mediators, we must **choose our words carefully...** If you act centering on the Word, the spirit-world will cooperate with you. Here, again, you are a mediator."

• *Explaining Unification Thought*, p. 112



A young person will eventually stand in the position to mediate between the physical and spiritual worlds.

So even though this position of mediator is clearly beyond the grasp of a child, he or she will eventually reach it at some point. It would be wise, I think, to gradually prepare children to identify and pay some attention to spiritual inspiration when it comes to them.⁷

Not only would it safeguard them from dismissing the reality of the spiritual world and the people there, but it could be invaluable when they are older and hold positions of responsibility. Then they could draw on the experience of even their spiritual supporters to help them guide wisely.⁸

Finally, there's one more very intriguing quote about the spiritual world that explains how deeply intertwined it is with the physical one, much more so than many of us are accustomed to thinking:

"...That environment (of the spirit world) is actually similar to the environment of human life on earth. ...when you die, you may feel just like that; you may not realize you have died. You may think like this because the two worlds are so closely interwoven." (338-273, 2000.11.30)

• *Cheon Seong Gyeong, Book 7, Chp2, §2, ¶32*

Conclusion

We'd mentioned at the start of this article that the notion of a human being's *position* was an important point for understanding the purpose and value of human life. Questioning those two are very common in the irreligious age that we live in. And without answers, young people can become skeptical, cynical and from there fall into troubled mental states and unhealthy behaviors.

And so, as obvious as our position in relation to God might seem to our generation, it's not necessarily shared by our young people. In their world beyond our Community, they're not educated to understand that human beings are the beloved objects of God's heart. And despite the humanistic emphasis on caring for the environment, that's not as complete as the additional religious dimension that Godism brings—that of humanity's position as the God-centered subject of loving dominion over nature and some other people. Nor is it generally believed that there is an invisible but very substantial world which we were to mediate with the physical world we know. I hope that this article has provided the necessary perspectives to guide our young ones to this critical aspect of their self-knowledge and understanding.

In the next article, we will be looking at another remarkable aspect of each child's unique individuality.



Endnotes

¹. This series' purpose is to offer the perspective of Unification Thought on raising our grandchildren. Our basic premises come from 1) the [Realms of True Love](#)—in which Father and Mother Moon explain the *five* realms of divine love—and 2) the [Three Great Kingships](#)—which inspires the title of this series. If you take a look at those two links, you'll at least understand the *perspective* of the preceding 21 articles, if not the details.

2. The source chapter in the *New Essentials of Unification Thought* textbook is available online [here](#).
3. For those reasons, this article fits in the section that address a child's first blessing, following [this article](#) on unique individuality.
4. According to [wordnik.com](#), the *second* definition of "object" in The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language is: "A **focus of attention, feeling, thought**, or action".
5. Strong influences were my courses in philosophy, particularly [Existentialism](#), and the work of [Ayn Rand](#).
6. Father Moon expressed his wish that Unification Thought would include a theory of the spirit world. But there aren't many precedents for such a theory in traditional philosophy. Prominent in antiquity, Plato articulated his idea of a spiritual realm and prominent in the modern day, Ken Wilbur addresses it. Among a few others, they're mentioned in [this informative article](#).
7. Book 7 of the *Cheon Seong Gyeong* is entirely devoted to explaining the spiritual world. Its nature is discussed [here](#).
8. As I was writing about the position of mediator, I suddenly remembered the 2014 movie *Interstellar*. There's a scene where the father was trying to communicate from another dimension to his daughter. He was desperate because of his daughter's initial disbelief and skepticism. That scene is described about two-thirds of the way down on [this page](#).



Gerry Servito was appointed by Dr. Sang Hun Lee to the *Art and Culture* section of USA's Unification Thought Institute. Currently, he's Senior Teaching Fellow of [RIIWT](#). He found Unification Thought after spending college looking into philosophy (esp. [existentialism](#)), the [Gita](#), and doing transcendental meditation. He was very grateful to find a spiritual path that pursues not only centered mind-body unity, but a 2nd and even a 3rd Blessing—all for the greater purpose! A first granddaughter arrived in October 2022.
