

Charting a Family Course through Stormy Seas

John Clark
September 29, 2014



There is a lot of turmoil these days, both in our church and the world at large. It is a time of tremendous change. No one can confidently predict where we will be in five or ten years. To be a good ancestor, we should take responsibility for making a lineage tradition that will help guide our descendants through turbulent times and good times. Each of our descendants should feel a personal identity as part of a blessing lineage working to make true love foundations on the earth. This is what I want to accomplish as a first generation Unification Church member.



John Clark

We have long preached world peace through ideal families, but what exactly does our ideal family look like? Are we known for creating such families or merely for organizing conferences that promote them? Are we better at making great families or at sacrificing our families? Our children would be best qualified to answer that last question. We need to be a movement that creates great families.

The world at large is also facing many problems. Economic crises and war threaten our future. It is easy to get depressed by the trend of current events. We need to demonstrate a strong way to survive and prosper through difficult times.

We should seek to distill our faith in practice so it is an undeniable truth in our children's consciences. One of the great ethics of our faith is the true love lineage. We should give our children many happy, unforgettable family experiences when they are young so they will naturally want to seek happiness by continuing the same family tradition with their own children. True love lineage has a strong identity and responsibility for all family members.

Many of our youth programs would benefit by using true love lineage as the basis of their curriculum, rather than a general schedule of Divine Principle lectures. Long boring lectures probably drive most young minds away from the church and captivate only a small percentage of the children's imaginations. If they are excited from the workshop, they can read a certain number of pages in Divine Principle every day the rest of the year as homework.

Father emphasized the multiple generation home many times. He also said he learned Divine Principle by studying creation. One way to implement this guidance would be to create a big happy home with lots of plants and animals. Some significant benefits come to mind from having such an environment for our grandchildren to be raised in.

1. The grandchildren can develop good character by interacting with many different relatives.

2. Taking care of plants and animals is very good for children to learn and become responsible. Home grown food is good for health.
3. Sharing living expenses between several couples can save money. Choosing a home on a cul-de-sac can mean more safety. These could be important concerns if the current international inflation of currencies begins to affect retail prices. The U.S. workforce is steadily shrinking as well, so future employment could be unreliable. Many first gen Unificationists have poor financial preparation for retirement.
4. Grandparents can contribute a lot in their retirement through helping to raise their grandchildren. Their decades of experience can help wiser decisions to be made so the grandchildren become better and more successful adults.
5. A large happy family with a few acres and interesting animals and plants to take care of is a natural love magnet for other children and their parents. Life is boring in the average home or apartment. It becomes easier to serve other families with such a property. Children are naturally interested in nature.
6. Being raised in a large family environment will make the children naturally receptive to the idea of true love family and lineage. The rest of DP will be more easily acceptable on that foundation.
7. The children can spend their formative years being homeschooled. They will then be much more likely to inherit their parents' faith tradition. Homeschooled children generally receive better educations than those in public school. Public schools thoroughly secularize children and often guide them to wrong directions. Many school buildings are designed almost like prisons.
8. The appeal of our movement would be more ethical than theological. Seeing our beliefs practiced would be more powerful than hearing workshop lectures.



Our theology contains big ideas that a relatively small percentage of society is ready to contemplate. Seeking happiness through a great family life can be a gateway to discuss religion. It has universal appeal. It takes a long time to develop and change personal beliefs. If visiting our house is more interesting and uplifting than going to church, folks will want to know what makes us tick.

My sons were in a Mormon Boy Scout troop for a few years. I was surprised to find out that most of the members of that congregation who had boys in the troop converted as adults. The appeal in joining their church was that it would make their family better. I never met anyone who said they joined the LDS church because they were attracted to the theology.

Last month, I ran into a sister who was my son's teacher over 15 years ago. She taught for some years in a church school in Alabama. The school is no longer open because there weren't enough blessed children in

the community to keep it going. I was very surprised when she said that despite all the hard work of the teachers, none of the students is blessed today. We thought of one, and another has recently been matched. There may be a few more as neither of our families has lived in Alabama for some years. Nonetheless, it does not bode well for the future of our faith if our own children are voting with their feet to walk a different path.

My wife says the main problem with creating a multiple generation home is women sharing the same refrigerator and kitchen. I am hoping that the many points of stress can be resolved by everyone wanting to create a wonderful environment for young children to grow up in.

We are a single income family, but I have managed to buy a small house on four acres tucked back off a dead end road. It backs to a large tract of woods. Our three children are in college and still single. I am very much looking forward to how our family develops in the next five or ten years. We have room to grow on this property if our children and their spouses are interested. I am certainly hoping they will be. I want to make my home so wonderful for grandchildren that they will demand to live with me.

If our descendants typically marry in their late teens or early twenties, and also share Father's dislike of birth control, it would not be unreasonable to average five children per family. Five to the twelfth power is 244 million. In three or four hundred years, a lineage tradition can create a nation of relatively common ethics. It is much more powerful than holding a conference about true love. Conferences are nice to have, but they are not going to change the world or the course of history. I have become somewhat disillusioned by conferences, thinking of them as mostly producing photo ops.

It is amazing to see ministers from other denominations give Divine Principle lectures, but there seems to have been much more limited success reaching out to academics and politicians. I was quite disappointed at the lack of meaningful American political representation at Father's seung hwa two years ago, because many political leaders knew of his contributions to America, like The Washington Times, but did not stand up to honor him at his passing.

Religion can provide education and guidance, but cannot produce goodness. Only a family can do that. Sex is perhaps the most prevalent theme in Father's speeches. Creating a heavenly lineage tradition is the primary way to reverse fallen history and multiply goodness.

We can be historically influential through our lineage tradition. We can elevate our movement from being an obscure sect to a great world religion that transformed humankind. The three generation home on a few acres of nature is my focus. I would love to hear what other families are doing to make a lineage tradition that can survive for many generations to come.

Other faiths have created traditions that have survived for centuries. How will we create ours?

John Clark has been a member of the Unification Movement since 1977. He lives in Maryland with his wife and three children.