

The Basis for a Constitution

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New times require new thought.

Western Unificationists cannot simply offer the U.S. Constitution as a model constitution for *Cheon Il Guk* because it is based on a worldview that increasingly reflects the way Americans used to think, not the way we would like to think in the future. It defines life in terms of ownership of material resources and the overarching need to escape the oppression of authoritarian leadership. More human rights-based thinking crept in over the years, but was relegated to the Bill of Rights that is supplementary to the Constitution itself.

The proper order for a healthy society is the reverse. The original purpose of life and identity of a human being should be the primary thrust of a constitution, while the regrettable need for some governmental authority and control should become secondary.



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It could be argued that the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights are so obvious they don't need verbal expression. To young people they probably are.

However, we see much evidence in today's society that competing in the marketplace and living subject to the many and proliferating instruments of governmental regulation and control has produced a population that lives defensively. Society is finding self-preservation so burdensome that there is little room to care actively for human rights on a larger scale. Those who have been successful in the financial world tend to speak of their own rights much more than of the needs of others, and tend to see poverty as a sign of failure more than anything else.

Constitutional rights have become legal rights, and the legal world dominates modern economic life. Without a wide, encompassing basis for a constitution, it is inevitable that the restrictions will eventually become part of everyday life via a system of laws and societal institutions.

Therefore, it is essential to broaden the Constitution to embrace growth and the freedoms commensurate with our much greater technological and scientific knowledge.

We find ourselves in a society where so much is based on laws and the legal system, yet the quality of legal help is circumscribed by access, typically confined to the wealthy. How burdensome it must be to a corporation to have to keep a team of lawyers, at huge expense, to manage their existence. What a waste of productive energy and creativity that could have been applied to research into better products or services! In a world where we are largely beyond the need to labor constantly to produce goods and services, a corporation can be more financially successful by judiciously managing its relationship to government and the banks than by producing more and better goods. The Founding Fathers could not have foreseen such a development.

The U.S. Constitution, so essential for the creation of a society with basic freedoms, nonetheless now leaves us powerless to manifest the deep desire of the population to overcome the widening economic inequality and deepening poverty (in a nation that has dominated the world economically for decades), unprecedented government surveillance of its own people, overflowing jails filled with the mentally ill as well as our disenfranchised youth, etc. The real issue is that what is only part of life has been taken too often to be the whole, even to the extent of the Founders permitting slavery because it fit within their worldview that overemphasized the importance of property.

However, there is nothing wrong with the values expressed in our Constitution that reprioritizing cannot

put right. We want the future to be one of trust and cooperation, but there is still a need to keep watch on governments in case individuals with power complexes start to take over. We would like equality and general empowerment rather than a competition for survival, but we know that taking from the rich to give to the poor is a recipe for resentment and blame.

We require a new relationship with the natural world and with each other that guides us towards stewardship and sustainability, and yet still enables personal growth, freedom and adventure in life. This cannot be found within the current Constitution, due primarily to the overriding necessity the Founding Fathers felt to define a realm of freedom in a world where it was almost universally denied. Now, however, we cannot hope to have freedom without universal economic freedom and universal human rights.

The time is right for us to enter a process that leads us eventually to a definition of life as a basis for a new constitution.

For a Unificationist, this step should not be too challenging, since we have already seen the transformational power of a statement of a new, greater identity within our lives. Human beings have the capacity to grow into the highest vision of their identity of which they can conceive by making appropriate choices. And we are now at that point where we need to make a transition to a united whole, as evidenced by the efforts to arrive at a constitution for the Cheon Il Guk era.



A panel session from the "Public Hearing on the Cheon Il Guk Constitution" held on July 23-24, 2013 at the Cheongshim Graduate School of Theology in Korea.

We need a constitution that emphasizes what it means to be a post-Foundation Day human being, not one that preserves the old approach of defining property relations and stating the chain of command. Mature adults should make decisions for themselves rather than look to an outside authority. If we cannot claim that we now have the right to be regarded as trusted adults, then we will never have that right.

Of course not everyone is mature, and we cannot simply abandon the necessity for a judicial system. But we can put these things into their proper place, not as a rule of law by which we should forever remain dominated and restricted.

Therefore, I offer eight points which I believe are a starting point for the primary definition of a society which manifests a post-Foundation Day Cheon Il Guk, and which will also apply to the larger world in which Cheon Il Guk will play a part.

Eight fundamental areas to be addressed in a healthy society are:

1. All people at birth inherit the right to receive parental love and nurturing, leading to growth and development towards self-actualization. In this process, responsibility is gradually transferred from the parent to the child.
2. All people at birth inherit the right to ownership of enough of the created world to guarantee survival; all people also inherit the responsibility to guarantee this same right to all other people.
3. All people at birth inherit the right to education to the level at which they will be able to continue

to pursue their own education as they choose, be able to fulfill their role as citizens of the world, and participate in all decisions pertaining to the society in which they live.

4. Society functions to support the creative endeavors of all adults, in the context of their fulfilling their basic responsibilities to the whole, facilitating, not hindering, people's innovative ideas and entrepreneurship so they can be co-creators.

5. A justice system is focused on rehabilitation and reconciliation, not punishment for its own sake.

6. Leadership is a position of service towards the whole. A true leader is the one who creates the most leaders, and who creates the most opportunities for growth and fulfillment for all people.

7. All people are born with the right to live within a clean and healthy environment, and have an equal responsibility for preservation of the planet for future generations.

8. A happy society encourages healthy relationships, with particular emphasis on marriage practices. Heart will rule all relationships.

Rights cannot be claimed without responsibility for their fulfillment being assigned, but in the case of a defining constitution, acceptance of such rights assumes that responsibility lies with the whole. These questions can arise in designing the constitution. There are clearly many ways in which such basic rights can be assured by community-level agreement, and the least restrictive terms should be used within a constitutional document to allow for individual creativity and insight in its implementation.

Once a society has covered every facet of human life by a system of rules, it is most likely time to start over on a new constitution. Such is the nature of human beings.

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