

The Family in God's Providence

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My wife and I were blessed with the 777 Couples on October 21, 1970. At that time, I was 25 years old and my wife 26. Just before the wedding, the rumor spread that a blessing would take place. Approximately 70 couples were estimated to be blessed. As an older member, I was one of the blessing candidates. Finally, 210 couples were candidates, including many members who had not expected to participate.

Although I had been informed that I was a candidate, I felt that I wasn't ready, since I had not joined the church to get married. Mr. Sang Ik Choi (first pioneer in Japan) did not start his family until he was over forty years old, and we were taught that we should reach individual perfection before we were married and had children. If a senior member like Mr. Choi did not get married until he was over forty, we naturally felt that we should not get married until we were about fifty or sixty.

But I was 25 years old. Actually, I could not consider it with real feeling. At that time, I was pioneer witnessing and directing the Kushiro church of Hokkaido. The young members of

our church used to say that they could hardly imagine their church leader being married. I myself could not believe it.

Even before I joined the church, I hardly thought of marriage. I had a premonition that I would never marry. Also, a fortuneteller predicted that I would have neither wife nor children. This was my frame of mind at the time of the blessing.

After the blessing

Our separation period of about five years lasted until July 1975. During that time, I heard that many couples quarreled. Our case was no exception. The most appropriate word for us was "comrades:" my wife and I were merely comrades both carrying out God's will. We didn't feel like brother and sister, or like husband and wife.

When I first saw the woman who was going to be my spouse, I felt: "This is the very person who is going to be my wife!" When I felt that God himself had chosen my spouse, my impulse to fight was checked, even though we sometimes did fight. Sometimes we quarreled and called each other names, and even spat on each other. But when I meditated on it over and over again, I realized that I was only spitting on myself. The more you speak ill of your spouse, I found, the more it reflects upon you. There was no particular way to become reconciled, but we felt so empty that we could not help but finally unite. It became so foolish for us to continue, so we just had to stop. Father warned us never to hit each other. It is a significant message. However, when we quarreled and I was emotionally upset, I felt a great temptation to throw anything in my reach and I could not help but hit her. Every time that happened, Father's words accused me. It takes months or even years to heal any injury you inflict upon your spouse. At these times, my foundation was very unstable and nothing went well for me, even though I tried hard to witness and do God's will. Everything became empty. Unless you solve your problems, you cannot even begin to do God's will. I realized that if I hit my wife, my whole providence was affected and I had to pay a lot of indemnity.

I realized that a good relationship between husband and wife would bring the strength to do God's will, and relief to brothers and sisters.

The members around us became anxious when we fought. But no matter what quarrels we had, because

we were given to each other by God, there was always a trusting relationship deep inside.

Starting a family

I was very anxious to start my family and have my wife with me because I was very aware of my limitations as an individual. I knew so well that I was not loving the church members as well as I wanted to. I realized that my wife had another type of love which I lacked - the love of a woman. Because I could not continue to do God's will without this love, I yearned to begin my family as soon as possible.

The separation period for the 777 couples had not yet ended -- only those who were 34 years old and over had started their families. I was so anxious to start my family because I felt that I was in a deadlock. I was so pleased when everyone was able to start their families.

I believe that it is necessary for us to consider why we have families. For me, I deeply feel that it is to deepen our love. My love as an individual is inadequate and insufficient. But the love between man and wife is eternal, based on an everlasting relationship. A God-centered family cannot betray itself. That is why we must be sincerely loyal.

Therefore, the love with which you love your spouse, I believe, should be the standard for your love of your fellow church members. Brotherly love falls short of the perfect standard. Other members are not necessarily with us forever, but our spouse is; the family is eternal and therefore its relationship must be genuine.

Children

My wife has had two miscarriages. Because of that, I was even more anxious to have children, so that I could experience parental love. Although we are taught to love our brothers and sisters, our neighbors, and all mankind, unconditional love is uncertain until it is experienced. That is why I was so eager to have children -- I wanted to learn to love eternally and unconditionally.

I was very happy when we had our three-day ceremony because I felt relief of my sin being forgiven. The greatness of the Divine Principle is that it can be applied to our lives. If the Divine Principle does not apply to our families, then it is not absolutely true. As we try to create an ideal family, we see how the Divine Principle applies precisely to us.

I believe that everyone has suffered from problems with love and sex before and after joining the Unification Church. But through the three-day ceremony, love and sex became holy and supreme, and we can live without Satan's accusation. This is truly salvation. Many deeply religious people in the past have suffered greatly; not knowing the origin of sin, they have tried to overcome sexual problems by asceticism.

Several months after our three-day ceremony my wife became pregnant. It was a difficult pregnancy, with bleeding and other complications. But she recovered and the doctor said that she was OK. Then I was transferred to the Kanazawa district. My wife got involved in moving and attending farewell and welcoming parties. We were very busy. Unfortunately, soon after that we lost the baby.

I struggled very much, but my wife must have suffered more than I did, with the pain that only a woman could understand. When she became pregnant again, she lost the baby after several months. We expected hopefully to hear the heartbeat in her womb, but we were told that it was in vain. I was so discouraged, thinking that we could never have children.

Among the 777 couples, there are still couples suffering a lot because they have not yet had children. Since we know that the formation of the four-position foundation is the essence of our life, our suffering was that much more intense. The fact that you cannot bear live children places you in the same position as not getting pregnant. Being unable to get pregnant is sad and hopeless. A big subject in our marriage was what kind of attitude I would take. Eventually I was able to understand the suffering of other people. I could realize the sadness that many people carry with them which I might have otherwise ignored.

I admired Mrs. Honda, who has often visited us as an IW. She always had hope, even though she had not yet given birth. Instead, she was bearing spiritual children through witnessing, then loving them as if they were her own. Seeing her way of life, I have been impressed so much with her greatness. And I also wondered about the purpose of life. Is it only for us to have a family and bear children? Then what about those who cannot get married or have children? When I thought about this, I concluded that the only permanent, true and sincere thing is our heart connection, centering on God. I wished that I could become an unchanging man of faith, loyal to God throughout my life whether or not I had a child.

There was another pillar which supported me. That was Mr. Kim in Korea, one of the 72 couples. He had a five or six year old daughter who excelled in school. When I first saw her in Korea, she was a healthy-

looking smart girl. But a year later she became sick and extremely thin, and later died. I witnessed this misery. But Mr. Kim always encouraged me, saying that he was being tested like Job. However many trials came to him, he was determined to attend God with the utmost sincerity and loyalty. Mr. Kim cheered me up to try my best, saying that God's blessing and grace would surely pour upon me eventually.

Then the 1800 couples began their families. Many of them got pregnant immediately, and I became impatient. My younger sister was one of the 1800 couples, so I worried: "What if she gets pregnant before my wife?

We have to have a baby at least one day sooner than she does." But this feeling finally disappeared, so I began to reconcile myself to our situation.

One time a spiritual liberation ceremony was held by Mrs. Shin Wook Kim [Lady Dr, Kim]. Husband and wife were to be together for this, so my wife wept and begged me to go. But I was so miserable that I did not want to rely on anything else. I just wanted to believe that God would give us his love as long as we were working hard for his will. But my wife went to the ceremony and got a special blessing. Right afterwards, she conceived. I'm now grateful that my wife went to the ceremony.

When I found out about our third pregnancy, I felt that this was a special event occurring beyond our will. Really, I had been about to give up. But I totally dedicated myself and made up my mind to rejoice at the successive births of children to the 1800 couples. Then unexpectedly came the good news of the pregnancy. I felt that this child was going to be given to us by heaven. God is watching our minds so closely. Whenever necessary, God gives us many trials to test us.

My wife asked permission for a leave of absence from her mission as IW for four months. She stayed still in bed during the coldest part of the winter. I hoped that she could successfully make it through the critical early period of her pregnancy. When she entered the fifth month, we were both so grateful to hear the baby's heartbeat.

When our baby was born, I was holding a meeting of our parents' group. We prayed together, and the parents were especially grateful, with tears in their eyes. I did not cry, but I was so grateful that our baby was safely born, helped by the loving prayers of our brothers and sisters. At the baby's dedication ceremony, I prayed to God that he would grow up to be a man of loyalty to God and Father for his whole life.

It seems like a miracle that I could have a baby. God gave such a blessing to me, who was so sinful and arrogant. I never would have had a family if I had not joined the Unification Church. To have children may be natural for other people, but for me it was the result of 14 years of a life of faith, and I feel like it was a gift of heaven.

I would like to tell everyone that God has been leading me and loving me for 14 years. Even though there have been many trials, I want to finally say: "God is love!"