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Succession: An Open Letter to My Dear Unificationist Friends

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True Father, Live Forever in the Spirit World!

The writing of these lines began on the day following the passing into the spirit world of a splendid human being whom I counted as a friend: Sun Myung Moon. It was a sad day (“Jesus wept.”) for all who loved and appreciated the man, but a day of victorious celebration for all who understand that his mission to, and importance for, the world can now transcend his individual mortal life (“Where, O Death, is thy victory? Where, O Grave, thy sting?”)

This message is an “open letter” to all my dear Unificationists, former students of “Church History Survey” at the Unification Theological Seminary, Barrytown, New York, from 1975 to 1981, and beyond them to a subset of special Unificationists whom I knew then, barely, as young children. The time has now come, my friends, for you to take up your responsibilities as Church leaders in ways that you have not previously known or imagined. Up to this moment, we, your non-Unificationist teachers, offered you our intense efforts and our truest knowledge, hoping to help you become “the best Unificationists” you could be. Whatever of value came to you through following the True Parents, through the Divine Principle, through your spiritual experiences, through our Seminary education, through your further higher education, and through your existential commitment to “the House of Jacob for ten thousand years,” you must now gather up all your strength to respond with passion and joy to the best challenge I ever heard Rev. Moon issue to his followers: “What better world can you imagine?”

In these few paragraphs, my intention was to accomplish three purposes: (1) Juxtaposition of aspects of the history of the early Christian Church with aspects of the Unification Church as it moves from its first generation to its second. (2) Reflection on the difference between “the Original Sin” and original sin. (3) A look ahead to desirable Unificationist possibilities in the post-Sun Myung Moon era.

Second Founding

According to “Lewis’s Laws of Church History,” every new religious movement must experience a “second founding” if it is to survive. As Loisy insightfully quipped, “Jesus preached the Kingdom of Heaven, and Paul delivered the church.” No one is clear exactly as to what Jesus had in mind when he spoke of the “Kingdom of God” (or “of Heaven”), but one specific item he mentioned had something to do with his Twelve Disciples seated on the thrones of eschatological Judaism, ruling the Twelve Tribes of Israel (Luke 22:3) and the whole world in the power of the Almighty. Maybe that will happen some day (Rev. 21:12); meanwhile, we give James and Paul and Peter and John and some (not all) of the other notables high marks for their devotion to the messianic mission as they understood it. Second-best is better than nothing at all.

On the other hand, in other messianic cases, Mother Ann Lee (1736-1784) made no provision for succession to the “Second Coming of Christ according to the Female Line.” Where are the Shakers today? In an opposite direction, Peter John Olivi (c. 1248-1298) somewhat over-enthusiastically proclaimed St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) to have been the “Second Advent of Christ in spirit.”^[1] More than one person, you see, has applied for the job of “Lord of the Second Advent.” What does one do after the messiah has come again and then gone?^[2]

Sun Myung Moon, or “True Father” as devoted Unificationists call him, by contrast, made abundant provision before his death for the succession of leadership in the Unification Movement. The challenge now is which of many possible ways might that leadership go? Whichever way the Unification Church goes, it will want to

fulfill the mission that True Father defined, adapt his methods, and follow through with whole hearts, clear minds, and sacrificial bodies. The Unificationists are at the crossroads: *Quo vadis, Domine?*

The history of Christianity offers a range of parallel situations and several paradigms of succession and second founding, each of these corresponding to some element of potential future direction within the daunting array of Unificationist Divinely Principled action that is the legacy of Sun Myung Moon. *Which way, O Lord?*

The Holy Spirit?

Theologically speaking according to the Gospel of John, chapters 14-16, the True Successor of the Risen Lord Jesus was the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts of the Apostles ought to be called the Acts of the Holy Spirit because it was She (“My Mother, the Holy Spirit”—as Jesus called Her in one non-canonical version of the Gospels) who directed the mission work of the earliest disciples, inspired change and development, and fostered what unity there was among the quarrelsome disciples of Jesus. According to the Divine Principle, Hak-Ja Han (Mrs. Moon) or “True Mother,” the consort of the Lord of the Second Advent, is the latter-day embodiment of the Holy Spirit. Mother Moon, the resident Holy Spirit of Unificationism, ought, therefore, to guide every aspect of the *Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of Christianity* (and All the World’s Religions).^[3] The Movement is, after all, named for her!

Hak-Ja Han, the human being, now 70 years old and vital, clearly seems to be inclined to this kind of public role: She has proclaimed herself the “center of unity” in “the Family” (the entire extended “family” of all Unificationists) and the heir of “True Father’s victorious foundation,” ready to “stand in the forefront to lead the providence on earth.” She has solidified her position in the homeland of the Movement and declared that “everything that is carried out in Korea from this day onward will be centered on True Mother.”

The gracious First Lady of East Garden, at whose home in Tarrytown, New York, I visited and at whose table I dined, was an elegant and radiant woman, the loving and dutiful wife of a “great man,” and the sturdy mother of an apostolic number of heirs apparent. I can personally testify that she makes the best *chapchae* in the universe. Now, if Korean culture is as alive and well in her as I suspect it to be, she has graduated to the position of a dowager empress, Korean Mother-in-Law status, than which no greater human power can be conceived on earth. Applying the biblical text in a Principled way, the spirit of Jesus prophesied of her as follows: “When She is come, whom Heavenly Father will send in my name, She will teach you all things and remind you of everything that I taught. True Father has gone away, but True Mother will come to reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. She shall not speak of herself but of me. And you shall do greater works than I have done.” (Read John 14-16 for the original.)

The early church, filled and empowered with the Holy Spirit, was, nevertheless, not unified. Ideological, moral, managerial, and behavioral failures troubled the first-century Christian movement much in the way that similar challenges now beset the Unification Movement. Mrs. Holy Spirit Moon with her covey of apostolic children—all elbows and knees—has an authentically “first-century” set of problems on her hands. She will be busy with the reproof of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and at the same time she must also manifest other gifts of the Spirit: As she reproves, she must also heal. As she judges, she must also inspire and unify her own children. As she upholds righteousness and spirituality at home in Korea, she must project divine energies that resonate globally throughout the international network of national Unification Churches.

Apostolic Succession?

During his ministry, Jesus appointed 12 apostles and a larger body of 70 (72) missionary disciples, also called “apostles”—people whom he “sent out.” Rev. Moon similarly appointed 36 “Blessed Couples” with a range of messianic responsibilities. One main responsibility was to help grow-up a promising crop of Moon heirs. Some of these older people are now dead, some have strayed, some have failed in their role as Unificationist Godparents to the Moon children, and some are engaged—alongside four or five of the elder Moon children—in a tense and uncivil war for control of the Movement. Outside the Gospels, we hear mostly scant, not-quite-historical accounts of the majority of Jesus’ closest early followers, and it will be that way with the 36 Blessed Couples as well. Important though they were at the formation stage of the worldwide Movement, they are getting old, now; they do not think of themselves as “successors,” and like most of the apostles they will fade into the mist of legend. Jesus’ plans for the continuation of his ministry seem not to have been realized perfectly.

The greatest schism within the Early Church began only a few weeks after Jesus' death. The quarrel was over whether the church would remain an ethnic enclave and legally Jewish or whether it would become international, a church for gentiles as well as Jews. James, "the Lord's brother," was the successor in a "family way" who took over leadership of the Jerusalem community. Brother of a dead brother, James—according to the Torah—was bound to take care of his brother's widow and orphans. Paul, by contrast not one of the original disciples, became the international "apostle to the gentiles" who preached salvation by grace, not by the Law of Moses. James stayed at home, the leader of the Jewish-Christian Church of Keeping-the-Law; Paul, meanwhile, went missionizing to the gentiles; and Peter, one of the original followers and usually named first, was caught in the middle. The apostolic council described in Acts 15 was a tense and superficially unified gathering at which an unstable agreement was reached to heal the breach, after which Paul and his gentile sect went on breaking the Law of Moses, and James and his Jewish Christians went on trying to keep it.

An analogous struggle is now taking place within the ranks of the Unification Movement.^[4] Hak-Ja Han has returned to her native Korea. Like James in Jerusalem according to the Book of Acts, she has become the guardian of the heartland, the original and most authentic Unification Church. Her stated idea is to recover the pristine qualities of the Church as it existed in the 1950s and '60s (she married Moon in 1960), a simpler time uncluttered by "numbers and systems" (e.g., Tong-il Group, the international network of Moon's global enterprises, and Moon's numerous organizations and efforts aimed at influencing intellectuals and politicians in the interests of "world peace"). These "external things" designed by her late husband, according to Mrs. Moon, were marketing devices "to make us known as quick as possible, but it didn't work well." Instead, Hak-Ja Han proposes a focus on "witnessing" and "missionary work." Although she has not yet made clear how or where the missionaries will do their witnessing, she is assuredly right in thinking that far-flung Unificationism will wither and dwindle if it loses its spiritual core.

Mother Moon is aided and advised by Mrs. Hyo Nam Kim, a Korean *mudang* who spiritually "channels" Mrs. Moon's mother.^[5] Mrs. Kim herself typifies the Holy Spirit in her charismatic style of Unificationist ministry, manifesting such worthy gifts of the Spirit as intense prayer, focus on the "liberation" (in the spirit world) of U.C. members' ancestors, the "blessing of spirits," healing and hospital work, youth guidance and education, theological higher education, and spiritual peace. This shift from a largely male-dominant leadership of the HSA-UWC to a largely female leadership is entirely fascinating. The world of Moon watchers waits with avid attention to detect the ramifications.

This re-Koreanization of the Unification Church could play out in at least two ways. One way, possible but unlikely, is that the two elderly ladies might settle into a comfortable living beside Cheong Pyeong Lake, a beautiful retirement home and pilgrimage site, at the "Heaven and Earth Training Center," where the widow seeks the comfort of séances with her deceased husband and presides over his memory, attended by her confidante and spiritual guide, Mrs. Kim. On this relaxed model, the motion might well go out of the Movement, and the Unification Church worldwide might well dwindle as a result. The Korean Church could become an ethnic nationalist cult of a dead saint, absorbed with its shrines and symbols and fading memories.

If that were the direction that Unificationism were to go, the result would resemble the stay-at-home Jewish-Christian cult of Jesus, called "The Way" in the Book of Acts. Under the hereditary leadership of James, "the Lord's brother," Jews who had become messianic followers of Jesus continued to worship in the Temple, keep the Law of Moses, and understand the church as predominantly a Jewish sect that believed in Jesus as the fulfillment of the Law. Gentile converts with their *goyish* ways were unwelcome.

Divine Providence, however, took a hand in history, and the decision about which way the early church would go was made by nothing so comfortable as an apostolic council. The too-cozy situation was destined to oblivion when Temple authorities and fanatical Jews persecuted followers of The Way; first Stephen and then James himself were martyred; then, the Jesus-people were scattered to places like Antioch in Syria, where they were soon nicknamed "Christians." Worse was to follow: The Romans laid siege to Jerusalem, burned the Temple in 70 C.E., destroyed the city in 135 C.E., and sent the entire nation into a diaspora that began to be reversed only in 1948 after many centuries of suffering and holocaust. One can only hope that an analogous cataclysm will not befall the HSA-UWC, should the "threat in the North" wage similar war against South Korea.

Historically speaking, the Church of Christ would have failed if the first-century followers of Jesus had remained Jewish only and only in Jerusalem. Christianity was, is, and must remain ever and always a missionary movement both to survive and to realize its essential purpose (another of Lewis's Laws of Church History). That is why I do not accept at all the idea that Mother Moon has retreated to a Korean Unification

Church headquarters that might be described as an “old messiah’s retirement home!” As the true Holy Spirit of the Holy Spirit Association, Hak-Ja Han knows that her job, now, is to inspire the next steps of her messianic children and Rev. Moon’s messianic movement in fulfillment of the Great Commission. This more likely scenario would come to fruition in parallel with the better-known history of the late first- and early second-century Christian Church. Paul missionized in Syria, Asia Minor, and the European mainland in Greece and finally in Rome. Peter, too, eventually went to Rome and, like Paul, died there a martyr’s death. John is believed to have missionized in Asia Minor; Mark in Egypt; Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Matthias throughout the Middle East; and Thomas later also in India; and others elsewhere.

The Unification Church of Rev. Moon’s intentions and founding efforts, wobbly though it be, looks more like the incipiently international religion of second-century Christendom. Already the Unification Church exists as national churches in more than 50 different countries. The Japanese Church, the largest and wealthiest, is devoted to the financial support of the Mother Church in Korea; in recent years, the Japanese U.C. has survived deprogrammings and the government’s repression with a net strengthening effect. The American Church boasts of a well-educated, energetic leadership and a small but devoted membership. The European Unification churches, oppressed for a number of years, are now relatively quiescent. Unification Churches in South Asia (Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand, and Nepal), in Brazil, and in some African countries are growing, analogous to the growth in general of Christianity in the “emerging nations” and south of the equator. Hak-Ja Han, the “second coming” of the Holy Spirit, upheld by the firmly grounded Korean Church, has a broad range of spiritual and material energies at her disposal through which to inspire the apostolic work of her own and Rev. Moon’s children.

“Thou Art Peter...”

The apostle Paul, reflecting on the disunited, squabbling apostles and baby churches, and his modest sense of his own efficacy, commented: “We have these treasures in earthen vessels.” Mother Moon, likewise, holds her treasures in a grand set of not yet highly polished Korean vases that, from time to time, require a bit of buffing up. The four^[6] Moon children who thus far have been the most active in following in their father’s footsteps are In-Jin (Tatiana, b. 1965), Hyun-Jin (Preston, b. 1969), Kook-Jin (Justin, b. 1970), and Hyung-Jin (Sean, b. 1979). Each one in her or his own way is a chip off the old Moon rock: They are magnetic centers of influence and kinetic energy, each one offering a different style of leadership and boasting impressive credentials, each one rather top-down and occasionally heavy-handed in their management styles. The future of the entire Movement depends on the personal *unification* of all these messianic pillars, and the *unification* of their respective gifts and powers with the Korean Mother Church.

The “True Child” who seems most likely to inherit his father’s mantle of international leadership is the one on whom Rev. Moon himself laid the blessing and burden of succession. As if Christ, who said to Peter, “and upon the rock of your faith, I will build my church,” Rev. Moon in 2010 proclaimed formally and ceremonially for all to read and hear, the following: “The representative and the inheritor is Moon, Hyung Jin. The others who say they are inheritors are the heretic and the destroyer. The content above is the proclamation of True Parents. [signed] Sun Myung Moon.”

Case closed. Sean Moon has already turned in an impressive record of following in his True Father’s footsteps. Taking a Buddhist path (rather than an obviously Christian “way”) to Unificationism, Sean finished his temporary monkhood and has now become a family man and father. As a church leader, he often flies under the radar of suspicion that new leadership typically provokes: In a Buddhistic effort at egolessness—not to mention Christ-like humility, Sean’s policy is to become “the servant of all,” thereby endearing himself to the rank and file of U.C. membership.

On the other hand, Sean deeply grieved many older Korean leaders whose churches he closed in a reorganization and consolidation move. A Harvard man, Sean has enjoyed—like his brothers and sisters—a top-notch education in some of America’s best schools; but, like his father before him, Sean has given up the pursuit of academic goals in favor of the spiritual life. Now that Mother Moon has established herself as the spiritual leader both of the Korean Church and of the entire Unification Movement, she exercised that power to reassign Sean to head the American Church when scandal at Sister Moon’s “Lovin’ Life Ministry” in Manhattan required In-Jin (Tatiana) Moon’s removal from office. Now, reassigned again as head of the Unification Church International, Sean is well situated as Rev. Moon’s chosen successor for effective international leadership—once Mother Moon and her satellite Moons have worked out the gravity of their mutual orbits around their spiritual Sun.

Sean, the most theologically astute offspring, is not afraid to amend Unification theology. For example, he has rationally and pragmatically tempered the oft-misunderstood claim that the True Parents did away completely with original sin. Sean has stated in classic Buddhist yes/no fashion: “Even though you have no original sin, you are still a sinner.” The conceptual misunderstanding of “the Original Sin” to which Sean was pointing addresses a roadblock towards succession of the True Children in the minds of many theologically serious Unificationists. Mrs. Moon’s children may theoretically have been born without the taint of *the Original Sin* (archangelic lust involved in their conception), but their own human natures, as it turns out, are as wormy as any other kid’s.

Coping with Original Sin

I agree with Sean. Sun Myung Moon, as I understand the Divine Principle, did not claim to have done away with original sin *per se*, that is, with the pervasive inclination to sin present in all the children of Adam and Eve, Moon’s own brood included. What he did claim was that he had progressively and experientially over the years of his own checkered marital history, and through his mystical wrestling with the Satanic Archangel in the spirit world, overcome *the Original Sin* in his own life, that is to say, the specific mistake that Mother Eve made in the Garden of Eden in conversation with the Talking Snake. By the time Moon came to “the Marriage of the Lamb”—his wedding day with Hak-Ja Han in 1960—the founder of Unificationism had suffered the bumps and bruises that taught him how not to re-commit *the First Sin* of Eve (and Adam) with the Archangel. In so doing, he had “indemnified” the First Parents’ first, in that sense “original,” sin, “restored” himself, and “laid the foundation for a new providence,” the possibility that he and his new wife could come together to produce children of innocence and holiness.

This did not mean, however, that Moon had rooted original sin itself out of the human race. He never claimed that he himself was otherwise completely sinless, or that Mrs. Moon was entirely without fault, or that their many children would not be tempted, miss the mark, and feel the guilt. According to St. Paul, “The good that I want to do, I do not do; and the evil that I do not want to do, that is what I do.” St. Augustine amplified the moral concept, saying that “humans cannot not sin” (*non posse non peccare*). All past and future human beings are stuck, alas, with the persistent habit of sinning. I personally know this to be true in my life, and so do you: Can you name one person of your acquaintance who has not sinned?

Unificationists often discuss sin according to Rev. Moon’s teaching in *Exposition of the Divine Principle*, chapter 2. Thus they will speak of someone’s “chapter-two problems”—the fallen Archangel’s desire to engage in illicit love with Eve. Even if one grants that the Moons’ children were born outside the realm of that guilt, innocence on their birthday was no guarantee of how they would behave as they grew up. One can always re-commit *the Original Sin*.

Moreover, the traditional catalogue of sub-sins included within generic original sin extends to the “seven deadly sins”—PEGLAGS: pride, envy, gluttony, lust, anger, greed, sloth—and well beyond. Fit in there somewhere violence (both violence within families and among nations), pushiness on the playground and in the office, bickering between husband and wife, all manner of excess (food, drink, drugs, sex, ostentatious display of wealth), lack of caring (“the poor you have always with you”), corruption (in management and government), boredom (the spoiled American teenager’s constant complaint), and a good deal more. A selection of these characteristic human foibles has been reported of various Moon children in the media from time to time.

Anyone personally acquainted with the Moon family is not confused about whether or not those perfectly ordinary people are “free of sin.” Poor Hyo-Jin (Stephen), for example, the first-born son, was a spoiled P.K. (Preacher’s Kid), selfish and self-willed as a young kid who snatched the toys away from his kindergarten playmates, telling them: “Give me that! I am True Father’s son!” Hyo-Jin died young, officially of a heart attack; but one must wonder the extent to which the “bad boy’s” heart was weakened by too much pot, too much alcohol, too much coke, too much hard-driving everything, trying to get over and, at the same time, trying to live up to being True Father’s son. Preacher’s Kids have it tough.

Kat Moon offers an opposite example. (Kat, please do not take offense that I refer to your individual example. I do not mean to embarrass you, but rather to honor your bravery in appearing on TV freely to confess to the whole world the truth about yourself.) Kat, at age 25, announced on a Reality TV show, “Survival of the Richest,” that she was “bored.” How—we all wondered—could an attractive young woman, worth nearly a billion dollars, well educated, world-traveled, bi-cultural, the child of amazing parents, the sister of equally

amazing brothers and sisters, possibly be bored? And yet, how many other spoiled American youths would say the same?

Kat, I imagine that no one ever told you that boredom is one definition of “sloth” (one of “the seven deadly sins”), and that a further definition of boredom is “acedia”—not caring about or being concerned with one’s position or condition in the world. More important than dictionary definitions is the question of *why* you were bored, Kat. Could it be because you had not yet realized the destiny to which you have been born? You and I are not personally acquainted, so it would be impertinent of me to dare to tell you what that destiny is, but I have an inkling that your original mind is whispering something to you about your destiny, and it does not include the original sinfulness of boredom. Will you be a wife and mother? Will you express yourself through one of the arts? Will you give your life in service to others? Will you be a business person? Will you become a spiritual leader? The whole world lies before you! Your father kept himself alive in the Communist death-camp by feasting on the love of others. No boredom there!

Tatiana, I ask your pardon, too, for mentioning your private life; since, however, it has already become public, perhaps you can excuse me. When the birth of your “love child” was announced over the internet, many were quick to cry, “Sinner!” When Jesus was confronted with a similar situation, however, he stopped the mouths of that woman’s accusers: “Let whoever is without sin cast the first stone!” And when everyone fell silent, he said to her: “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more!”

Jesus also said of the soldiers who crucified him, “Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.” Sometimes we make mistakes because we are stupid and ignorant. For example, in centuries past, Christians in good conscience held slaves. People still kill whales for their meat, but I believe that is a kind of murder. In the future, I believe we shall all come to realize that hyper-competitive, win/lose capitalism is a sin, whereas cooperative, win/win capitalism is righteous economics.

Jesus commanded us all, “Judge not!” No one but you, Tatiana, in your own conscience, knows whether the act of love and life that brought your baby into the world was a sin. The morality and immorality of any specific act must be weighed and measured in terms of the internal conscience and motivations of the person who does the act, also its external causes, situational circumstances, and eventual outcomes. Were you unhappy in your marriage and seeking love elsewhere? Were you in that moment not in control of your body and mind? The outcomes seem to have been damaging to your “Lovin’ Life” ministry in Manhattan, but anyone who automatically condemns you is disobeying the Lord of the First Advent! *If* (and I do say “if” because I do not—I cannot—know whether your act of procreation were an archangelic event or a providential event) you have re-committed *the* Original Sin, then you now can travel the path upon which Rev. Moon himself struggled righteously to indemnify the sin of our First Parents. In so doing, you will understand True Father’s heart more perfectly than do your brothers and sisters thus far. Restore yourself as thoroughly as your dad restored himself, and thereby become the female messiah of all “fallen women,” the mother of all mothers alone, the sister of all teenage girls in trouble, the hand reaching out to desperate women everywhere in our world of violent men. What seemed sinful at first may turn out to have been a blessing for many. Let no one say that you are “dead to the Church.” You “love life” too much to be “dead.” You may just now have been born to your true ministry.

It would be impertinent of me to go through the full list of Moon children and discuss their several styles of original sinfulness. And what purpose would it serve? Too much thinking about sin leaves us too little time for meditation on righteousness. Preston, you are truly a righteous advocate for world peace, but how would you describe the potentially originally sinful acts of egoistic behavior, disobedience to parents, taking legal action against a fellow Christian, and grabbing for power? Justin, you are an expert in economics, but would you defend the originally sinful qualities of late-stage, win/lose capitalism; greed; and downsizing as a means to increase profitability? Sean you have already traveled far along the Buddhist path towards Christhood. What could you tell us about the struggles that all profoundly religious people face when criticizing others and with self-righteousness?

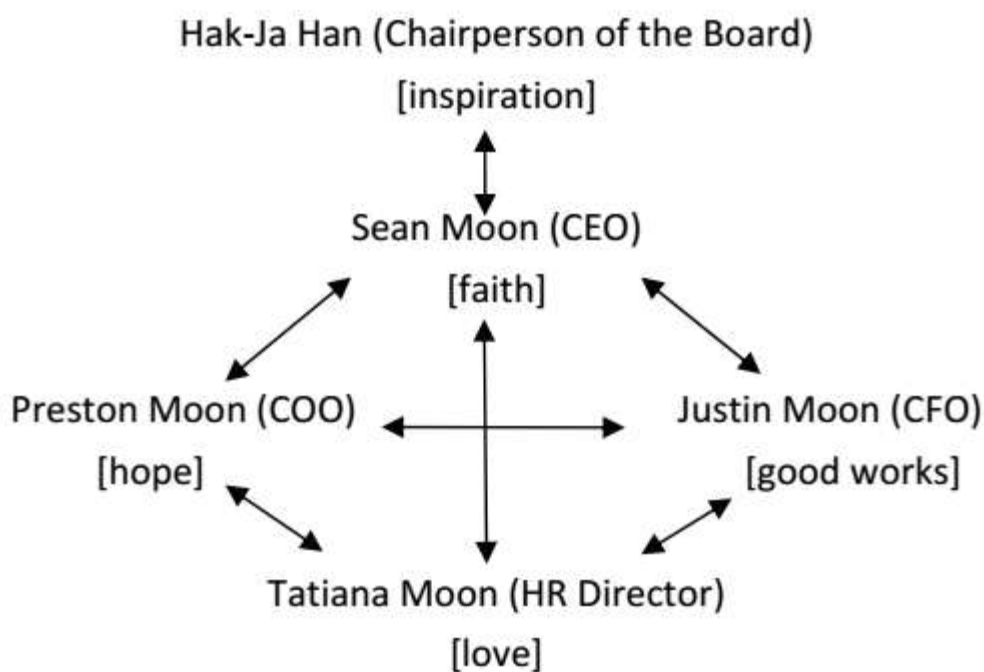
Group Messiahship?

If Sean Moon is the designated heir, then what may we expect from the other children of Father Sun and Mother Moon? Herein lies the Unification Movement’s greatest potential for stunning accomplishment.

Each of the four True Children thus far most active in the Unification Movement has distilled some aspect of their world-class father into a fractured image of their dad: Sean, the spiritual leader; Preston, the warrior for

world peace; Justin, the entrepreneur; Tatiana, the lover of life and all things beautiful and fun. What energy for good will be generated when Tatiana, Preston, and Justin, agree to acknowledge Sean as the chosen spiritual leader and *primus inter pares*! What unconquerable energy when Sean agrees to acknowledge the equal, legitimate leadership and co-ownership of the family business of his sister and brothers! Each in their respective vital spheres, they would become a successful composite of their father, four Moons instead of one. This Unification coalition would necessarily take place according to the advice and consent of Mother Moon, all-ruling on her throne of True Parenthood in Korea. She is their True Mother, their natural link with their deceased father, and Unificationism's direct link with the spirit world.

Consistent with the philosophic-linguistic infrastructural construct that underlies Moon's systematic thinking, this initial pattern of succession takes shape as a perfect "four-position foundation." When we juxtapose it with office-holders in a typical corporate structure, it makes even more sense. We could as easily have elaborated a discussion of the charismatic gifts of the Spirit, each gift essential to the whole, no one gift more important than the others.



To be sure, as the other True Children "find themselves" as part of the Unificationist directory, the "four-position foundation" would have to be adjusted to accommodate their broad range of personal talents and spiritual gifts. The emergent result would be a united, mutually supportive, stunningly effective group messiahship that would be something truly new and revelatory in religious history, perhaps in world history.^[7]

When I asked Rev. Moon once how to conceive the answer to a particularly tricky theological issue, he replied—with a grin—"Use your theological imagination! What do you think I do?" What I am now imagining for the future, happy, successful Unification Movement is a creative act of that kind of theological imagination. The heirs of Moon's genius have it within their reach to become a planetary system of leadership revolving around the solar power of their father's legacy and inspiration, guided by their mother. But it all depends on their own collective "theological imagination," and their willingness to apply their father's example in muscling the various temptations of original sin under control, so that their Principled, original minds may work freely. The process must be progressive, experiential, and interpersonal, every subsequent stage building on the one before—in Principled jargon, "formation, growth, perfection stages"—as each of the siblings takes his and her turn at learning the important lessons of self-knowledge so as to maximize the individual contribution that each can make to the corporate capital. At the "perfection stage," the suggestion of eleven full Moons all shining at once borders on the eschatologically apocalyptic!

Hak-Ja Han, Holy Spirit of the Holy Spirit Association and True Mother of the True Children, is their spirit and blood connection with True Father, and the irreplaceable guide of the spirituality of the entire Movement.

Sean, devoted disciple of his father in Rev. Moon's last years, is the fulfillment of the biblical Seth, the third son of Adam, the child of destiny after the death of Abel and the loss of Cain. He must become a second Rev. Moon. *Sean, hold firmly to the Divine Principle and, in true devotion to your mother, uphold the originally spiritual nature of the Unification Movement! Mediate among your brothers and sisters, leading them gently into their preordained greatness.*

Preston knows that Unificationism is, and inherently must be, something importantly more than “just another church.” Impatient with theological fine points, and action oriented in his drive to think freely and act decisively, Preston is righteously clear that nothing less than world peace is the purpose and goal of Unification. *Preston, keep the focus on peace-making! World peace was your father’s great desire.*

Justin, already a Unificationist tycoon, knows that his dad was the head of a really big international cartel of enterprises founded to support the U.C., its several specific efforts, and its ultimate goal: world peace. Justin’s Harvard economist’s brilliance and MBA savvy puts within his messianic power his potential to re-invent late-stage capitalism according the Divine Principle, and expand the Moon empire into a solid foundation in commerce, industry, and global trade in support of Preston’s ideal and Sean’s teaching. He will guarantee a “focus on delivering actual, substantial, measurable results.” *Justin, make all the money you can by way of Tong-il, Inc., and underwrite all the Unificationist efforts with every available dollar! Rev. Moon was the best business man that any preacher ever became.*

Tatiana, the minister of the “Lovin’ Life” church of dancing and celebration, is great at giving parties and making people happy; she embraces the world, the whole creation, in a natural and earthy way. In all this, she is truly her father’s daughter. More than that, she reincarnates all the strong Korean women in her dad’s history without whom he would have foundered and flopped: Young Oon Kim, the first systematic theologian of Unificationism; whole armies of Korean “spiritual” women who were the prayerful wings of the original Church in Pyongyang; “Madame” Choi, first-lady-in-waiting to Mrs. Moon. Tatiana is her mother’s female messianic heir in a way that parallel’s Sean as his father’s messianic male heir. Tatiana’s role is to be the first “liberated” Unificationist woman, to stand up against the genderism and male dominance that we so often find in religions. Tatiana rightly affirms “romantic love,” good education, leadership conferences, summer camps, support services for U.C. members, conversion experience to the Principle and a sense of belonging to the Movement. *Tatiana, keep the people well informed, dancing, happy, and lovin’ life! Your father founded “The Little Angels.”*

This first Unificationist directorate of the post-Moon era will set the course for the future development of the Church in terms of their own individual and corporate perspectives. The Movement must continue to be deeply rooted in the soil of authentic Korean spirituality. Resisting natural inclinations to engage in male-dominant contention for power and cultural habits of genderism, the first “four-position foundation” leaders must continue the idealistic drive towards the unity of the world in peace, the actual goal of the Movement. This goal cannot be reached, however, without the economic effectiveness of an entrepreneurial approach to substantiating “thy Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.” The human means of this process must continue to be the missionary conversion of some to the Divine Principle and their international marriages and families founded in the Principle, and the promise of joy and earthly peace by way of gatherings, conferences, and celebrations; music and art; education and science; and the accomplishment of actual, local, and regional peace-making among enemies of class and race, and warring nations.

You other True Heirs of the True Parents, you, too, must arise and find your places in some expanded “four-position foundation” of Unificationist leadership. Your father’s empire is waiting for you, you Princes and Princesses, to acknowledge your destiny, to take responsibility for your own lives, and to advance what your father began.

Nina, Christina, Nathaniel, claim your birthright! Forgive your father and mother: They were not infallible. Join your brothers and sisters in forgiving one another: Happiness in life is not possible without utter forgiveness. And remember, none of this is magic!

Tiffany, you have been smitten; now heal the others! You returned to your family when disease brought you home. Are you now a healed healer? You are a charming expert in the field of travel and professional hospitality: Your place in a group messiahship may be to help heal your brothers and sisters of their messianic jitters—and you can cook them an elegant and delicious meal, too, while you’re at it. Then go on to host new Science Conferences (your dad loved them so well) and great gatherings focused on world peace.

Victoria, keep on lecturing about the Divine Principle! That’s what your dad did until the day he died.

How to Be Perfect Children

My dear Moon friends, the destiny, to which you were born like the children of a king—like it or not—now demands your adult response. You may forfeit your status, if you choose (Royals and Popes sometimes abdicate their thrones, and so may you), and the world will not condemn you. On the other hand, great wealth,

great influence for good, and a worldwide Church of faithful and eager Unificationists are poised to uphold you in your highest aspirations. These are not subjects or serfs or slaves, neither a drafted army nor even paid workers, and certainly not the “brainwashed zombies” described by the foolish American media. They are, instead, willing volunteers, high-minded idealists, earnest people who are spiritually committed to the same high calling for which your father lived, your mother lives, and to which you were born. If you fail, the members of the Unification Church will forgive you and help you try again; if you succeed, they will wildly cheer you on, putting their shoulders together with yours to move the future. *Noblesse obligelies* as heavily on you as on anyone in history: “Of those to whom much has been given, much is required.”

When one of you True Children messes up—and all of you will, sooner or later, one way or another, mess up!—the first priority of everyone else instantly becomes helping to restore the wayward one’s self-esteem, balance, and position. Mother Moon and Daughter Moon (and all you other Moons), please read two of Jesus’ parables as you ponder your responsibility towards one another: The parable of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:10-14 or Luke 15:3-7), and the parable of the wayward son (Luke 15:11-32). As you read, put yourself into what you are reading. Are you the parent waiting for the return of the wayward child? Are you the wayward son (or daughter) who has gone away or gotten into trouble? Are you the critical brother? Are you the shepherd who needs to go looking for his lost sheep? Are you the lost sheep? Which person, then, bears the responsibility to make the first move towards healing the breach? In the parable of the lost sheep, the little lamb is too cold and lonely and probably too stupid to find its way home: The shepherd has to make the first move. In the parable of the wayward child, the parent patiently waits until that foolish young man finally gets hungry enough to return home to get a good meal. The meaning is for each of you: Everyone must make the first move.

No one of you alone is *mahatma* enough to become the sole and undisputed leader without the others. Divine Principle is a theology of relationships. Family rivalries must never be allowed to wreak havoc on the Church from within. Unificationists already have enough enemies and opposition in the world; they do not need to engage in civil war. Go forward, then, all of you together: arm-in-arm, heart-to-heart, mind meeting minds. Divided and scattered, all of you will fail; united, you can work miracles.

An Invitation to All Unificationists

The Unification Movement is poised either to fall into utter irrelevance or to achieve unprecedented good. Rev. Moon composed a world theology (Divine Principle), established the Holy Spirit Association (the Unification Church), and launched his multilateral international conglomerate with the ultimate goal of making substantial on earth an improved version of what he understood Jesus to have meant by “Kingdom of Heaven.” Mrs. Moon and her children are now rising to the challenge, and if the membership of the family of Unificationist churches around the world rally to their united leadership, Rev. Moon’s dream has a chance of some significant measure of realization. As a non-member observer of the Unification Movement for over 35 years, a friend of the Moon family, and a former teacher at Unification Theological Seminary in Barrytown, New York, I believe that they are tooling up for a far better performance than they have demonstrated thus far.

The Unification Church is genetically Korean in foundation, philosophy, culture, and spirituality. Korea is the right and best location for its headquarters. The Church in Japan must continue its financial support of the Korean Church, and the Korean Church must continue not only to be the spiritual center of the entire Movement but also to expand and solidify its economic base so that it will not have to depend on the Japanese.

The American Unification Church, which knew Rev. Moon so well, must now offer itself in loyal support to the Moon family. Hak-Ja Han’s movement of Sean to live in America and become the central figure of the international Movement may—in the yet highly fluid situation—signal a new level of teamship between the Mother Church in Korea and the Church of the Heirs Apparent in America and around the world. Mrs. Moon will continue to be the Holy Spirit of the Holy Spirit Association, and Sean, Preston, Justin, and In-Jin, along with the other brother and sisters as they become willing and able, can succeed in becoming a whole church with all its allied agencies, businesses, and educational efforts dedicated to realizing Rev. Moon’s vision of the Unification of the world in peace. Surrounding and upholding all the Moons, American Unificationists must step forward as never before.

Therein lies the new call to the American Unification Church, my own dear Unificationists. You have been followers and disciples in the past; now you must become leaders. Following your True Mother’s directive, your time has come to revitalize mission work and witnessing. What better world can you imagine? Use your own theological imagination: What do you think *he* did? Open yourselves to the spirit world as never before. Come to terms with your individual doubts and hesitations, strengthen the Blessing of your marriages, and

raise your children lovingly in your faith. Achieve your own spiritual peace so that you may become peace-makers for the world.

The Seminary and its new undergraduate program must grow and flourish, rising not only higher than the academic heights we once enjoyed but also in the study and practice of experiential spirituality, as well as instituting new areas of Mission Studies and Peace Studies. It must become linked to educational efforts at all levels in Korea, so that the two closely allied partners, the Church of the East and the Church of the West, can be united in heart and head, legs and arms. Through cultural and educational exchange, the Korean and American educational efforts can bring forth professionals in many fields, angels of messianic proclamation, agents of global Unification, and the blessedness of peace-makers “who will be called children of God.”

I close with a Gospel Invitation and a Unificationist Challenge:

I invite the True Children individually to become genuine Christians. You cannot grasp the purposes of the Lord of the Second Advent if you are not friends with the Lord of the First Advent. Change your minds about your own original and personal sinfulness. Be immersed in the death and life of Christ Jesus. Be filled with the Holy Spirit. The charismas of leadership that you need and seek will pour down upon you from the spirit world in immeasurable abundance. Fear nothing! Brave every good thing!

I challenge all the True Children as a collective to stand up. Seek the guidance of Heaven. Share the leadership of the national Unification Churches and the many parts of the Movement among yourselves according to your respective gifts and talents. Give yourselves entirely to the ultimate task of establishing world peace. If you do your jobs well, some of you may even achieve holy martyrdom.

Keep it real! Rev. Moon passionately wanted to reunite the two Koreas. You can build on his foundation: Spend your entire wealth, if need be, feeding the starving people of the North and convince them of the potential for good if they will rejoin the community of nations. Meanwhile, Unificationist missionaries can be sent to the Muslim world to teach the Divine Principle to Muslims without the offensive Christian talk. Help to end the wars in Africa and the Middle East. Help to make peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Go to India! Help China and Japan, and China and Taiwan to co-exist peaceably. And while you're at it, the Catholic and Protestant communities of the Irish island could use your help.

We, the world, do not have time for you, the True Children of the future, to be self-indulgent. Repent of your ego-centered original sinfulness. Become the successful “successors” and “apostles” and “second founders” that the Unification Movement needs you to be and that your True Parents want you to be. “Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days”—and our days—“may be long upon the earth!” And all you other dear Unificationists, say, “*Mansei!*”

Notes

[1] See Warren Lewis, “In what ways was Peter John Olivi a *True Prophet?*” introduction to *Peter John Olivi, O.F.M. (1248-1298): Lectura super Apocalypsim (1297) in English* (St. Bonaventure, New York: Franciscan Institute Publications, forthcoming 2013).

[2] See “What to do after the Messiah has come again and gone: Shaker “Premillennial” Eschatology and its Spiritual Aftereffects,” in *The Coming Kingdom: Essays in American Millennialism & Eschatology*, M. Darroll Bryant and Donald W. Dayton, eds. (Barrytown, New York: International Religious Foundation, 1983), pp. 71-109. I was reflecting in advance on this church-historical parallel to the Unificationist situation that has now arisen.

[3] The formal name of the Unification Church is the “Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity,” often abbreviated HSA-UWC. David Kim, the first president of Unification Theological Seminary, Barrytown, New York, one of SMM’s most cherished associates and my boss for six years, once told me that the name of the Movement ought to be “The Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of the World’s Religions on the Basis of Christianity,” and then added that this would be “too long a name for a church.”

[4] The most reliable, most up-to-date details concerning the individuals of the Moon family can be found in Michael Mickler, “The Post-Sun Myung Moon Unification Church,” in *Revisionism and Diversification in New Religious Movements*, Eileen Barker, ed. (Farnham, Surrey, U.K.: Ashgate, 2013), forthcoming. I am grateful to Andrew Wilson for guidance to the wide range of publications by and about the Unification Church, including these useful online resources: www.unification.org/bibliography.html, a number of blogs, and

information made available through *The Washington Times*, a Unification-Church owned and operated newspaper.

[5] Original Unificationism, in its founder's mystical religious experience and the similar spiritualistic experiences of the earliest Church members, was very much a matter of intercourse with the "spirit world," an aspect of Unificationism little understood by Americans and underreported by professional "Moon watchers." Korean folk religion, a taproot of Moon's theological system, includes the mystical spirituality of *mudang* and *paksu*, female and male shamans, ecstasies, and psychopomps. See my "Hero with the Thousand-and-First Face" (address delivered at the 1977 American Academy of Religion), in *A Time for Consideration*, M. Darroll Bryant and Herbert Richardson, eds. (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1978), pp. 275-89.

[6] Ye-Jin (Nina Hong), the first-born child (1960-), lives in the U.S.A., but she had been estranged from her family for two decades, though that rift is being healed. Ye-Jin was at her mother's side during Rev. Moon's ceremonial funeral in Korea in 2012. The others are Hyo-Jin (Stephen, 1963-2008), Hae-Jin (1964, died in infancy), Heung-Jin (Richard, 1966-1984), Un-Jin (Christina, 1967-), Kwon-Jin (Nathaniel, 1975-), Sun-Jin (Tiffany/Salina, 1976-), Young-Jin (Philip, 1979-1999), Yeon-Jin (Kat, 1981-), Jeung-Jin (Victoria, 1982-).

[7] According to Divine Principle, the quarrelsome, warring family of Charlemagne, who could have been the messiah to unite the world, failed in their post-messianic task precisely because they did not unite their father's "Holy Roman Empire" among themselves. They failed, according to Divine Principle, because their father before them had not overcome the Original Sin in his own life.