



Foundation Day Letter and Website

Michael Balcomb
January 5, 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families Happy New Year and a fruitful and prosperous 2013. I strongly believe that it is going to be a great year!

Let me confess that I for one am very glad to see the end of 2012. There were so many events both inside and outside our Movement that challenged us to the very core. None could ever be more dramatic and unexpected than our beloved True Father's ascension, but we also had to deal with the implosion caused by our Senior Pastor's resignation. As a nation, we watched in horror as innocent young children were gunned down in their classrooms just before Christmas. Clearly, we have a long way to go before we reach the God's ideal world of peace.

Yet, now that we have begun this new year of 2013, we do need to look forward, and to turn our hearts and minds toward God and True Parents as we prepare for Foundation Day and beyond. In ways that we do not fully understand, Foundation Day represents the consummation of True Parents' life work. Father spoke about it many, many times over the past twelve years, and now it is just over 40 days away!

Preparing for Foundation Day

As I travel around the country, I have met many members with urgent, sincere questions about how best to prepare for participation in Foundation Day. Emotions range from great anxiety to great indifference, and everything in between. We've surely all seen the long lists of suggested offerings and conditions that we have received from Korea. Some of these conditions have been changed and modified, which has led to confusion.

Quite a few people have already asked in all sincerity: "Is it too late? If I can't do all of these conditions, am I disqualified?" "What if my husband, my wife, my children, or others in my family and tribe are no longer interested or care about it? What can I do?"

Allow me to share a few thoughts on this matter.

It is and has always been my firm conviction that God is inviting EVERYONE to participate in His grace. Of course, this has always been true. He is our loving Father, and He never wanted to be separated from us in the first place. He does not want or intend to put in place barriers that would limit participation. Yet there certainly are barriers between us and God, erected both Satan and by our own hands.

One of the most important discoveries and declarations of the *Divine Principle* is that as human beings we have, and will always have, our own portion of responsibility to fulfill. The Principle describes this as a small "5%" compared to God's "95%."

We also learn that our "5%" actually represents "100%" of our effort, and that is true. Even so, it is still only 5%. Without God's 95% -- his overwhelming love, power, forgiveness and grace -- everything we are asked to do will seem too difficult, too far, too much. As the scriptures say, "with man, it is impossible. Yet with God, all things are possible."

We have also learned well about the Foundation of Faith, which requires a central figure -- me -- conditional offerings, and a time period. And we also know that while many people in history were able to make acceptable foundations of faith, very few were able to make the even more important foundation of substance, or true love.

I do indeed believe that it is very important to prepare appropriately for the grace of Foundation Day. The question is, "what is truly appropriate." What does God really want or require from us at this time?

I would like share with you one of my favorite scriptural readings, taken from Psalm 51. By tradition, this very well-known passage is the prayer of King David after he had committed a truly terrible sin: he had engaged in adultery with Bathsheba, another man's wife; and sent her husband, Uriah, a loyal soldier, to his certain death. After being confronted by the prophet Nathan, David spent a week in prayer.

As we know, God was able to forgive him even to the point of allowing this couple to be ancestors of the Messiah. I do believe that this would not have been possible had David not truly repented and changed his heart toward God.

Psalm 51 -- *Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me... O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise...*

You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

The phrase “broken and contrite heart” does not mean broken as in damaged, but rather humbled, cleansed, repentant and renewed. In other words, the most important thing on Foundation Day – on any day – is to change ourselves from within.

I’m not downplaying the conditional offerings: the Divine Principle teaches that they are indeed important. Yet more important are the substantial offerings, those that help us to make real changes in our minds and hearts, and in our relationships with God, True Parents, and others.

That is our individual responsibility. Beyond that, as families, communities, as a church and indeed as a nation, we need to practice principled lives. In Micah 6:8 we read: *And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

Fulfilling Conditions

Let us now turn for a moment to the rather lengthy set of conditions and offerings that have been recommended to us by our World Mission Department. As a National Church, we are required to inform you about all these conditions and to encourage you to use your prayerful discernment and judgment to make the best offering you can.

Some of the conditions, like the suggested donation, are relatively simple offerings that can be done at once. In fact, the recommended donation, which was once set ten or a hundred times higher, is now very modest, so we certainly encourage everyone to make that offering with a heart of gratitude.

Other efforts, such as the Hoon Dok Hae readings and devotional bowing, call for a daily effort or commitment over a long period of time ... several months. I think it is very important to take time each day to make a connection with God. If you haven’t yet started, start now; if you can’t do everything, do something.

Other conditions, such as distributing copies of True Father’s autobiography, witnessing to twelve families, restoring our ancestors and our tribes, require a sustained commitment over a long period of time that will realistically last long after Foundation Day. Again, if there are some baby steps you can take or continue to take toward these goals, do what you can, and do your best. Of course it would be best if all members of your family can participate in these conditions of preparation, but it is not absolutely required. You are the Central Figure.

Special Grace from True Parents

At this point, I would like to say something more about the Holy Wine Ceremony and the Special Grace that True Parents intend to bestow through that ceremony just before Foundation Day. We have had some quite detailed instructions on this from Korea, and I urge each of you to study them carefully. Of course, this is not the first time that we have been invited to participate in a Holy Wine Grace Ceremony; nor the first time that we have been called to renew our Blessing vows. But rather than think “here we go again” I hope we can rather have the attitude “thank you, for one more opportunity.”

You will see that this Special Grace ceremony is built on the guidance for living in the Kingdom of God that True Father gave back in 2001 when he declared the Coronation of God’s Kingship and first started talking about Foundation Day. These directions included stern warnings against the misuse of public money and assets, sexual and love relationship mistakes, and violations of the heart.

This grace is for everyone. There is no sin too great, too heinous, too miserable, that cannot and will not be forgiven. No one who wishes to receive grace and forgiveness can or will be turned away. At the same time, there also no sin too small, too insignificant, that should not be reflected on and repented for. This also is very important.

We should not take this opportunity lightly. I am reminded of the parable of the Wedding Feast in Matthew 19: the table was set and the feast was ready, but the invited guests were no longer interested. So the King – God – sent his servants out to the streets to compel people to attend the feast.

I’ll be honest here: when I first looked at the list of sins that need to be repented for, I did so quite superficially. I thought, “Well, I wonder if I even need to show up? After all, I have not committed adultery, nor broken my blessing, become an apostate, etc, etc!” But God soon showed me that this was a very wrong way to think.

I grew up in the Anglican Church tradition, and although we rarely went to church, whenever we did a recitation of the Apostle’s Creed would take place. The creed makes a clear distinction between the sins of commission – the wrong things we do; and also the sins of omission – the things we have “left undone that we ought to have done.”

In the latter years of his life, True Father was often most grieved by our sins of omission, and more recently Mother has been talking about these as well. This list is long. We have not fulfilled the Three Blessings, we have not restored our tribe, or even our own direct family. Many of us have not been able to pass on our faith to our beloved children, to the second generation. We have not made America the True Elder Son Nation; we have not taught the *Divine Principle*, we have not been inspired and relentless in witnessing to the good news of True Parents’ coming; we have not built a church we can be proud of; our numbers are small to the point of insignificance. When we compare this to the enormous hope and expectation that God placed in each one of us when he called us to be with True Parents, I am frankly heavily burdened and ashamed.

As the Psalmist says in Song of Solomon 1:6: *“They made me a keeper of the Vineyards; but my own vineyard have I tended not.”* Facing this internal reality, I have allowed myself to become surrounded by chains of fatigue, fear, discouragement and weariness.

The Real Meaning of Foundation Day

For me, then, Foundation Day is about being liberated from that oppression. But how is that possible?

Recently at East Garden, we’ve been having Wednesday praise and worship services with our President, Rev. Hyung Jin Moon and his wife, Rev. Yeon Ah Lee. There’s one hymn, Chris Tomlin's adaption of “Amazing Grace” that we’ve been singing over and over again that is sticking in my mind,

“My chains are gone, I’ve been set free;

My Savior God has ransomed me.

And like a flood His mercy reigns,

Unending love, Amazing Grace.”

I think that this is the real meaning of Foundation Day and all the conditions, ceremonies and rites of attendance that we are being asked and invited to participate in. God wants to remove the chains of fatigue, fear and failure, and welcome us into the Holy Presence of God and True Parents, a new Eden, a new beginning.

It is not, of course, and cannot be the end. Our journey of Kingdom-building can and must continue on past Foundation Day. Already, True Mother is speaking about “Project 20-20” referring to the restoration goals to be accomplished by the centenary of True Father’s birth (1920-2020). God is looking for sons and daughters of faith who can and will stand in re-commitment and purity of heart to walk this journey together.

Foundation Day Registration

We have now created a Foundation Day website at <http://foundationday.unification.org/> that contains important information about events and schedules as well as an application form for the Holy Wine Ceremony and registration forms for the Blessing ceremonies. Please study the information carefully and begin the registration process.

For those of you who do decide to travel to Korea, we have created a good system to help manage accommodations and ground transportation. However, it is not necessary or required for the United States to mobilize a particular number of members to attend Foundation Day in person. Indeed, it is quite likely that space at the ceremony in Cheongpyeong will be very limited.

We will be conducting local and District-level observances throughout the nation which will allow for everyone’s full participation. All practical and logistical matters pertaining to those Foundation Day celebrations are being handled here in the United States through your local and District Pastor and through our online registration system.

God Bless you and your family.



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