

Educating for
**True
Love**

Explaining
Sun Myung Moon's
Thought on
Morality, Family
and Society

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

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for
True Love

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New York

Educating for True Love:

Explaining Sun Myung Moon's Thought on Morality, Family and Society

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132 E. 43rd St., No. 443

New York, NY 10017

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Cover design by Jennifer Fleischman

Layout by Jonathan Gullery

ISBN 1-891958-07-0

Printed in the United States

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Preface

The opening of the 21st century revived the yearning of all the world's peoples for the dawning of a new era of peace and prosperity. Yet these ideals seem ever more elusive, as international terrorism and ethnic clashes create global fear and chaos. Societies worldwide continue to suffer from grave problems such as hunger and poverty, corrupt leadership, racial and religious intolerance, violence, AIDS, drug and alcohol abuse and rampant environmental destruction.

Of all these problems, the worst represent a profound crisis among youth and within the family: selfish individualism, moral corruption, violence and drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, divorce, absentee parents and family breakdown. The 20th century demonstrated how dramatic improvements in science, technology and material prosperity can resolve some issues, but these alone cannot ensure personal, familial and collective well-being. Unless the character and family crisis can be resolved, there will never be a basis for lasting peace and prosperity.

The rapid rate of change in the contemporary world has disrupted ancient traditions and transformed cultures worldwide. To fill the spiritual and moral vacuum, a new view of life based on universal values is necessary, one that integrates the best of spiritual and material values, traditional and contemporary values, left-wing and right-wing values, and Eastern and Western values. Such a worldview can help provide the basis for healthy individuals, strong families and stable communities that can connect with one another to create nations and an international network of peace.

What is the foundation for such universal values? For Reverend Sun Myung Moon, it is true love. True love is manifested in living for the sake of others, giving without calculating personal reward, sacrificing for those we care about and even more importantly for those we dislike, investing even while forgetting what one has invested and continuing to give. Such love is the source of meaning and the basis for maturity, happiness, ties to other persons and the earth, and prosperity. This resonates with the world's religions and classical philosophy that assert that it is better to give than to receive, and that God and the universe protect and support those who make service their way of life.

True love has been the theme of the countless talks and public addresses of Reverend Moon and his wife, Hak Ja Han Moon, over the last fifty years. This text elaborates on his teaching and way of life, which has been dedicated to showing how living for the benefit of others represents the True Way of Life, the path to inner and outer reward as well as the road to peace. This is because it reflects the nature of God, who gives endlessly of Himself to sustain His creation. God is the origin of true love and the ground of universal moral and ethical values.

When considering the challenges we face in the present era, many see education as an essential part of the solution. Yet it is clear that the conventional concept of education—training in knowledge and skills that will be conducive to a successful career—is insufficient. In the absence of true love, knowledge and skills are empty ends. The most comprehensive view of education encompasses the efforts of parents, family and the community in teaching what it means to be a full human being. This is a lifelong process of learning the infinite ways to manifest love.

Hence, the title and premise of this book, *Educating for True Love*—that true love should be a fundamental concern of education. Such education for true love includes educating for character, true family values, purity, and world peace.

Character education provides a vital foundation for living a life of true love. Such love is only possible where the heart has been cultivated and the conscience is strong. The heart is at the center of a person's character. From the heart issues our fundamental impulse to seek joy through loving. It is the conscience that then directs our love to be unselfish and conform to the principles that are reflected in all the great spiritual and moral traditions.

By cultivating the heart and fortifying the conscience, character education enables individuals to more fully manifest their likeness in the image of God. This allows them to better succeed in the great tasks of life—to achieve personal maturity, to create a loving family and to be good stewards of the earth and make a valuable contribution to society.

The capacity for true love is not only invaluable in this life, but it continues to bring benefits in the next. Just as the months in the mother's womb is preparation for life on earth, so living in this physical world and learning to love within the family and society readies the individual for life in eternity, in the spiritual world after death.

The family is the original school where the lessons of love are taught. *True family values education* thus becomes crucial for fostering people of true love. Reverend Moon teaches that this takes place through the experience of the four realms of heart. Individuals first develop a children's heart of filial love toward their parents by responding to their unconditional and sacrificial love. Second, they come to know the heart of mutual love and friendship between brothers and sisters or peers. Third is the heart of conjugal love between husband and wife. The fourth realm is the unconditional parental heart of love toward their children. Through family life, the heart stretches and the character matures, and individuals learn how to better love God and their neighbors.

The anchor of the family is the love and commitment between husband and wife. Reverend Moon has devoted much of his efforts to helping establish a strong tradition of God-centered marriage and

the practice of purity before marriage and fidelity within it. Because sexual love is so readily misdirected, *pure love education* is a necessary part of educating for true love.

Whether within the family or without, conflict represents a constant challenge to love. At the root of conflict is self-centeredness and the absence of true love. *Education for world peace* thus involves teaching an attitude of respect for the other—even the enemy—as a child of God, together with the practice of service to benefit the other. This attitude and practice comprise the heart of peacemaking, with the goal of drawing together the diverse peoples of the world into one global family.

To embody this vision of world peace through educating for true love, Reverend and Mrs. Moon have sought to set an example of living for the sake of the world. From service projects to marriage and family guidance, from moral education initiatives to establishing diverse organizations toward the goal of world peace, they have sought tirelessly to improve the human condition and bring the world closer to the ideal of true love. Among these projects is the International Educational Foundation (IEF), whose educational endeavors led to the publication of this book. This text elaborates upon the foundations of a previous IEF book, *Educating for Life's True Purpose: Fostering Character, Love and Service*.

Educating for True Love offers a systematic explanation of Reverend Moon's thinking and endeavors regarding other-centered love, exploring its principles, patterns and stumbling blocks, and its realization from the individual level to that of the family, society, nation, and international community. We offer this text to our readers in hopes that we may all become better students and practitioners of true love, thereby to be a blessing in the lives of those we touch.

This book is the result of the efforts of many people from around the world. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the sincere investment of heart and effort of the team of writers that worked with me in creating this book, led by Tony Devine and

comprised of June Saunders and John R. Williams, with Dr. Andrew Wilson serving as chief editor. The efforts of Ittetsu Aoki, Dr. Josephine Hauer, Dr. Thomas Phillips, Jack Corley, Robert Beebe, Hui Chen Liu, Alice Huang and Jacques Marion over the years provided essential support, as did many others too numerous to mention but whose contributions are nevertheless greatly appreciated.

Dr. Joon Ho Seuk
President, International Educational Foundation

Part I

True Love

Chapter 1

Seeking the True Way of Life

Love alone is the core of human desire.
—Sun Myung Moon

Contemporary life is fraught with ambiguity, pain and disappointment. All people enter this world hoping for happiness as individuals, fulfillment in their relationships with others, and a meaningful and rewarding role in work and society. The path to these life goals might rightly be called the “true way of life.” Yet such a path—if it exists—is not easily found. Discerning it requires lessons that are not taught in any school.

Schools may do a fair job of training young people in the knowledge and skills needed for career success. Yet even a six-figure income can be for naught for people who fail to form lasting relationships and establish healthy families. Today’s youth approach marriage and family life with high hopes of love and happiness only to find themselves incapable of living in the harmony they dream of. Pessimism about family relationships abounds, leading many young people to expect that their lives will most likely follow a pattern of “Marry. Divorce. Marry again.”

Similarly, modern life has left the natural human longing for community in a shambles. Relations between neighbors are often cold and distant. Few are willing, or even asked, to watch out for one another’s family or property. “All we want is peace,” neighbors tell

one another, yet they rarely take steps to foster genuine communities of mutual help. Instead when there is a problem, citizens blame one another, or blame politicians. Where there is a problem at school, teachers blame parents and parents blame teachers.

Even in peaceful, prosperous, and well-functioning communities, there is, or should be, the nagging awareness that not everyone lives as well as they do. Can one community's peace and happiness be complete, knowing that others are suffering? A smug self-assurance that others are simply not as meritorious, hard-working, or deserving drowns out the voice of the conscience, which calls people to help the less fortunate.

On the national level, partisanship divides national policy; racism abounds, corruption festers, and issues seem unsolvable. Nations act in their own self-interest rather than in the interests of the world community. Quarrels between nations can escalate into a cycle of revenge-retaliation-revenge, with each side claiming to be evening up the score from the past. Even generous gifts of aid from one nation to another frequently come with strings attached.

Humankind exists in disharmony with the environment; often taking more than is given back, ruining delicate ecosystems, sacrificing the long-term blessings that come with care and prudence in favor of short-term profits. We are incapable of sharing equitably, even with the natural systems that sustain us.

Where can we find answers to these problems? Can we find a comprehensive approach that leads us to a true way of life, one that generates positive results on every level? Philosophy and religion have sought answers, but their answers have often created more confusion. Political and educational programs have been instituted in hopes of reform, only to flounder in the morass of half-truths and superficial solutions that fail to touch the core of the problem. In seeking objective truth, science has tried to dispel the ignorance that pervades human life and makes it "nasty, brutish and short." While these efforts have helped the human situation enormously, they are at their best when focused on narrow and

precise goals—curing disease, generating energy or improving communications. They still have not effectively addressed the root of the problems that plague human existence.

The Longing for Love

There is a yearning—a hunger—that all human beings have felt but few have satisfied. Men, women, and children experience it. Writer John Steinbeck described it: “You are warm enough, but you shiver. You are fed, yet hunger gnaws you. You have been loved, but your yearning wanders in new fields.”¹ King Solomon wrote how he built palaces and gardens and strove for learning and other accomplishments to fill the howling void inside only to find that, in the end, “this too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind” (Ecclesiastes 2.11). The Buddha felt it too, when as a young prince he could not find any gratification in the pleasures of the palace, and so set off on a quest for enlightenment.

Satisfaction always seems just out of reach, just over the horizon, coming tomorrow, or next year or the next, when the ship comes in. People think they will at last find fulfillment “When I win the lottery,” “When I get a raise,” “When she finally loves me,” “When the new house is finished.” Yet even when these things happen, the yearning remains in force. Happiness eludes one like mercury slips away from the pursuing fingertips. The Qur’an affirms, “The life of this world is but the comfort of illusion” (3.185).²

Augustine said that the human heart is restless for God, and will always be so until finding rest in Him. A modern-day preacher said, “There is a God-sized hole inside of us. No matter how many steaks, electronics, liquor, drugs, entertainment and sex we pour down it, only God can fill the hole.”

However, to many people God is an abstraction. Worse, He may seem like a God of punishment with many rules and demands. Worse still, people have done horrible things to one another in the name of God, leading to division and hatred rather than unity and belonging. Witness all the terrorist violence being done in the name

of God; witness the Inquisition, the Crusades. Religious and denominational loyalties tend to keep believers apart rather than bring them together.

Furthermore, in the post-Freudian era, religious yearnings have been looked at as pathologies, crutches, or self-delusion. Religion has even been seen as a tool of capitalist or colonialist imperialism and exploitation. Given all these caveats about religion, how, then, can we say that God is the answer to the universal human longing?

The apostle John said, "God is love" (1 John 4.8). What people actually want is behind God and inside of God. They want the essence of God, which is love. People want to know and feel pure and selfless love, and they want that love to pervade all their relationships and their world. Such love is the key to feeling filled and fulfilled. Paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin said, "Love alone is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete and fulfill them, for it alone takes them and joins them by what is deepest in themselves."³

Indeed, when people accomplish something, purchase something, hope and dream about attaining something, what they are really yearning for is to further their experience of love. In every relationship, in every action and transaction, all day, every day, people are seeking true love. The need is universal. It is found in all people at all times and under all different circumstances. Mother Teresa stated, "People throughout the world may look different or have a different religion, education or position, but they are all the same. . . . They are all hungry for love. The people you see in the streets of Calcutta are hungry in body, but the people in London or New York also have a hunger which must be satisfied. Every person needs to be loved."⁴

True love is so ultimately valued that it encompasses and informs all other values. We may say it is the wellspring of value and the standard of all value. So good, so satisfying, so ambrosial and fulfilling is true love that Reverend Moon has said people are drawn to it like bees to nectar. What is more, having tasted it, they will not let

it go. He says, "If a bee is sucking the nectar from a flower, you can try to pull him away; but instead of letting go, his body will tear in half. He will never stop sucking the nectar."⁵ Selfless love is that delicious, that desperately desirable.

Lack of Love

Yet as much as we yearn for love, it eludes us. We find precious little, and what little we find is rarely true. We can identify this absence of true love as the root problem which colors human life with its dark and ambiguous hues. For instance, in family relationships, it can be terribly hard to give and to give in to one another. Without love, it is well nigh impossible to stifle the blame-assigning remark, to refrain from sowing the seeds of resentment by arbitrary and insecure power-grabbing. Being able to see the other person's point of view, to listen and really understand when opinions and interpretations differ is almost impossibly difficult when love is absent.

Spouses look at one another in pain and puzzlement as to where the love they had imagined for themselves could possibly have gone. It often seems like they had more affection at the beginning of their marriage than they do further along. The honeymoon is over, and the fond feelings have been replaced by something that more closely resembles contempt. Disillusioned by their parents' failing love, teenagers react and seek love among their peers, sometimes in destructive ways of which their parents disapprove. Given these and other situations, most people look at their family relationships with at least some ambivalence, guilt, and regrets.

Lack of love robs us of community among our neighbors and frustrates our desire for peace in the world. Without the true love that sees our neighbor's children as just as deserving of our attention and care as our own children, we stand idly by while they make mischief and are even afraid to intervene for fear of offending their parents.

On the national level, patriotism can be beautiful and ennobling; yet love of the nation above all others falls short of what is required for peace. Nationalism is a form of self-love writ large, which can take monstrous forms; Paul Tillich called it “a god who certainly proves to be a demon.”⁶ Rare is the nation capable of giving the balm of unselfish love that would make for lasting peace. To resolve the conflicts that lead to war, terrorism, oppression of minorities and ethnic violence, true love calls for sacrifice; yet rare are the individuals who possess such love that they would put their lives on the line to stand against the hatred.

Somehow, the pipeline of true love has been broken. Many religious and cultural traditions would call it the “Fall of man”—the entry of evil and sin into a once paradisiacal world where, according to many traditions, man walked with God in oneness of heart. However the origin of the problem is conceived of, it remains unsolved. There is not enough love. And where it exists, it is rarely true love.

The Centrality of Love

The desire for true love dominates human life. Philosopher Erich Fromm noted that love “is the most powerful striving in man. It is the most fundamental passion, it is the force which keeps the human race together, the clan, the family, society. The failure to achieve it means insanity or destruction—self-destruction or the destruction of others. Without love, humanity could not exist for a day.”⁷

Every cell within human beings responds to love, yearns for love, and drives them to seek for love. The human face is meaningless in isolation; it is meant to communicate with others in love. From the arched eyebrows that rise in conveyed interest, to lips capable of smiles and words of affection, the old song rings true: “You were meant for love.” As Benjamin Disraeli observed, “We are all born for love. It is the principle of existence, and its only end.”

Teilhard described love as a force, mysterious yet binding, even

on the molecular level. Within each entity in nature, from the most sophisticated and complex to the simplest, he found an observable attraction to other entities. Teilhard said, “Driven by the forces of love, the fragments of the world seek each other.”⁸ He saw the entire universe as bound together, molecule by molecule, by the force of love: “We do not get what we call matter as a result of the simple aggregation and juxtaposition of atoms. For that, a mysterious identity must absorb and cement them.”⁹ That “mysterious identity” is true love. The yearning for unity with another and others—yearning for oneness in love—is the glue that binds the universe together.

Love is thus the core of human striving and the *raison d’être* of the created world. Therefore, in searching for the comprehensive principles that might delineate a true way of life, there is no better place to begin than with the study of true love.

Love motivates sacrificial and virtuous acts of all sorts. Who has not felt that he or she could give all—risk all—for the sake of true love? It is what prompts a mother to run barefoot over glass to save her child. It is what moves the older brother to say nobly to the teacher, “It is my fault,” to take upon himself the punishment his frightened younger brother has incurred.

Love is a healer. No matter how deep the hurt, how intractable the trauma, no matter how profound the alienation or how deep the sin, love can seep in and penetrate like cleansing warm waters to ease the pain, salve the wound, and restore wholeness. Psychologist M. Scott Peck said that issues of love were at the bottom of all the problems his patients struggled with. He asserted, “The essential ingredient of successful, deep and meaningful psychotherapy is love.”¹⁰ Dr. Karl Menninger, a towering presence in medicine, observed, “Love cures people—both the ones who give it and the ones who receive it.” Health experts are finding that feeling loved is far more predictive of long life and good health than even such important factors as diet, exercise, and abstinence from smoking.¹¹

Love is a sustainer. As Viktor Frankl recounted of his life in a

Nazi concentration camp:

I understood how a man who has nothing left in this world still may know bliss, be it only for a brief moment, in the contemplation of his beloved. In a position of utter desolation, when man cannot express himself in positive action, when his only achievement may consist in enduring his sufferings in the right way—an honorable way—in such a position man can, through loving contemplation of the image he carries of his beloved, achieve fulfillment.¹²

Love makes life on earth worthwhile, and it presages life in the next world as well. Philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote, “In the union of love I have seen, in a mystic miniature, the prefiguring vision of the heaven that saints and poets have imagined.” “Death, where is thy sting?” Romeo inquired when he realized that his love for Juliet went beyond her demise. “Death, be not proud,” penned poet John Donne, for love lasts beyond death. Many widows and widowers continue to love, talk to, and pray for their deceased partners, cherishing hopes of meeting again on the other side.

The ultimate experience is that of divine love. “Man is meant to be intoxicated by the love of God,” Reverend Moon has declared. “Since humanity lost this original capacity, people seek unnatural, artificial intoxication—getting drunk on alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs. The perfect individual, however, is created to be intoxicated in God’s love. There is nothing that can go beyond this feeling of joy. Every cell in your body will explode with joy. Your eyes and ears, the tissues in your face, your arms and legs—everything will be newly alive in a rapture of joy.”¹³

It is impossible to properly orient ourselves and educate our children for the good life without giving priority to questions of love. If we can understand this fundamental reality, this value of values, we begin to gain a clear perspective with which to address any issue of life. The breaching of distances, the resolution of opposites, the dissolving of disparate complexities into an integrated

whole—all this comes through true love and that alone. To paraphrase Saint Paul, no power, no principality, not even the gates of hell, can prevail against it. Inevitably, then, our search for the true way of life will take love as its major theme.

Educating for True Love

The ability to give and receive love may be as vital to human life as breathing, yet true love does not come naturally. Rather, it must be taught, learned, and practiced. Human beings spend many years as immature, dependent children, learning how to act in the world and provide for themselves within it. They are given knowledge through schools, libraries, mentors, masters of trades and parents. Yet there is no formal school or system to teach people how to love and be loved.

Bereft of wise instruction, people are left floundering, learning about love through painful trial and error. Science and the arts have progressed rapidly over the centuries, yet our wisdom about love has grown unevenly and slowly at best. Pitirim Sorokin, a sociologist at Harvard, expressed his chagrin at “our enormous ignorance of love’s properties, of the efficient way of its production, accumulation, and distribution.”¹⁴

It is time to remedy the situation by studying about and educating for true love. To love and be loved is one of life’s most daunting challenges, yet it is more essential than many other aspects of life people work hard to succeed in. Counselors testify to the numbers of high-powered professional people who break down in tears in their offices because, in spite of all their qualifications and accomplishments, they are at a complete loss when it comes to their important personal relationships. Politicians, business executives, and celebrities find that their wealth, power and talent fail them when faced with the demands of love.

Our study of the true way of life, therefore, begins with the elucidation of the nature of true love and the nature of the human being who is fulfilled in love. Chapter Two begins this task by delin-

eating features of true love that distinguish it and point the way toward a life lived in true love. Only when people are well versed in the nature, precepts, and practices of true love will they find the comprehensive path to a life that satisfies this human yearning and fulfills life's highest aspirations.

Chapter 2

Understanding True Love

*The most precious philosophy
is to live for the sake of others.
—Sun Myung Moon*

For people to live in love, they need to understand it. Yet love is notoriously difficult to define. The ancient Greeks divided love into numerous categories and described the various features of each. *Eros* was impassioned romantic attraction; *philia* was friendship; *eunoia* stood for general benevolence or good will; *physike* constituted kindness toward people of one's own race. *Xenike* represented kindness to the guest or stranger. *Agape* love, which the Greeks defined as unselfish affection for others, became the keystone of Christianity and is a recognized feature of all the faiths of the world. *Agape* love is called "compassion" in Buddhism and Hinduism and "human-heartedness" or *jen* in Confucian thought.

In addition to these categories of love, there are the kinds of love found in the family. There is the devotion of parents to their children, and there is the affection that children reciprocate with. Siblings care about one another in a unique and special way. The love between spouses is a world in itself. Grandparents bear a profound regard for their grandchildren. All these types of love have their distinctive features.

An all-around definition of love is needed to encompass and characterize all of love's types and forms. Reverend Moon has provided such an overarching definition of love, which will be used

throughout this book. For Reverend Moon, true love is “to live for the sake of others.” Sometimes this is expressed as “live to benefit others.”

This definition weeds out aspects of love that are not true— aspects that are in fact deceptive and that lead people to despair rather than to joy. It draws out specific attributes of true love. This definition also raises some important issues: What are the qualities of true love? Where does it come from? Who are the others to be loved? How does self-care figure into a life lived for others?

True Love Is Other-Centered

Reverend Moon teaches:

God created humankind for a reason. Why were we necessary? God needed to create humankind in order to fulfill His love. It is for the sake of love that human beings are the supreme creations.¹

True love happens in relationship with others. Even God required an “other” to fulfill His love. He created human beings as love partners, to share the glory of His creation with. He needed an object—someone to share with. He needed a relationship in order to experience love fully.

If God is so, so must be His creatures. As author Sherwood Anderson said, “Two oddly sensitive human atoms” find one another, cling together and think, “Here is this other.”² Only in the presence of another person is satisfying love possible.

Biblical emphasis on loving God is always coupled with love of others. The Old Testament law and the prophets said that the greatest commandments were to love God and love one’s neighbor. Jesus echoed this thought. Jesus enjoined his followers not to come before the altar of God while quarreling with someone; they were to set things right with their “brother” before approaching God. He said further that God only forgives those who forgive others. Jesus also told his followers not to judge others, for as they judged others,

so God would judge them. Further, Jesus said he would be present if “two or more” were gathered in his name, implying the need for believers to seek not only communion with God but with one another. Loving others is always in couplet with loving God well.

This is confirmed by the words (Hadith) of the prophet Muhammad: “On the day of judgment God Most High will say, “Son of Adam, I was sick and you did not visit Me.” He will reply, “My Lord, how could I visit Thee when Thou art the Lord of the Universe!” He will say, “Did you not know that My servant so-and-so was ill and yet you did not visit him? Did you not know that if you had visited him you soon would have found Me with him?”³

Russian thinker Vladimir Solovyov said that love “forces us with all our being to acknowledge for another the same absolute central significance which, because of the power of our egoism, we are conscious of only in our selves . . . shifting the very center of our personal lives.”⁴ Reverend Moon calls this shifting of center from self to others a “revolution,” and holds that such a revolution toward true love is necessary for happiness and peace.

True Love Is Principled

Modern cultural notions have it that love is a spontaneous feeling in one person’s heart toward another. Yet, in fact, ethics figure prominently in successful and loving relationships. Examination reveals that ethics enable true love. Love based on feelings alone can be dangerous. A man may feel he has fallen in love with another woman and desert his wife and children for her, leaving emotional devastation in his wake. A teacher may feel a romantic attraction toward a young student and wind up psychologically damaging the student for life with sexual approaches. Psychologist M. Scott Peck points out, “Many, many people possessing a feeling of love and even acting in response to that feeling act in all manner of unloving and destructive ways.”⁵ In order to benefit the other, true love adheres to ethical principles.

Based upon principles, a truly loving person will behave benevolently toward a person he or she does not feel benevolent toward in the moment. To be kind to a spouse even when the spouse is being surly means a person believes in kindness, even when the other is not evoking it. It means a person believes in preserving and protecting marriage itself. To help the homeless man on the street means a person believes in treating one's fellow human beings with compassion, even when that fellow human being is disreputable. To love those who have done a person harm means belief in the ultimate redemption of all, including the reprobate.

Ethics Enable a Life of True Love

Principles help stiffen the will to love the unlovable. They provide the impetus to enact the prodding of the conscience, which tells a person to act caringly even at his or her own expense. Mother Teresa could not have overcome her natural revulsion at the sights and smells of the diseased and dying in Calcutta had she not believed that the image of Christ was alive in each person. When she saw filthy people being gnawed on by rats in the gutters, it did not cause her to turn away, leaving them to the trash pile. Instead, she saw them as Jesus in a "distressing disguise" and asserted their eternal value as children of God. Adherence to a strong belief system enables a life of true love.

The necessity for ethical principles in love may be noted in the visceral reactions people have to violations of right and wrong in their relationships. For instance, learning that a spouse has been unfaithful is always an occasion for great anguish and pain. Marital love is bound up with expectations of loyalty, and these expectations are not just culturally conditioned. The emotional pain—the rage and hurt—that adultery causes is testimony enough to the deep affective content of the principle of fidelity in married love.

All other forms of love depend upon principles, too. In the love between friends, ethical violations are felt keenly as personal betrayals. The friend who lies, the friend who talks behind one's back,

the friend who passes one over in favor of another, the friend who is always willing to let the other pay the check—all these kinds of ethical shortcomings cause friendships to founder.

Ethical expectations accompany every human interaction and relationship—even fleeting ones. A person expects the clerk in the store to be polite and helpful. A driver expects fellow motorists to drive in a safety-conscious way in order to prevent injuries. Passengers on buses expect other passengers to make a minimum of noise, to say “Excuse me” when brushing past, and to move their things out of the way when the seat is needed.

The other-centeredness of these ethical expectations is clearly discernible. In fact, all virtues may be seen to be other-centered in perspective; all vices may be seen to be self-centered. It may be said, therefore, that “living for the sake of others” is the most all-embracing and all-encompassing moral principle.

True Love Is Serving and Sacrificial

True love is active. It involves enacting through willpower the promptings of beliefs and principles. Author and Christian philosopher C. S. Lewis noted that the more one feels without acting, eventually the less one is able to feel. This echoes the Book of James:

If anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his own face in a mirror, he sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like. But the one who peers into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres, and is not a hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, such a one shall be blessed in what he does (1.23-25).

Many faith and ethical traditions emphasize service and self-sacrifice. The great disciplines require fasting, prayer vigils, caring for the poor, the sick, the imprisoned, working to bring others into the light of truth, lengthy periods of silence and contemplation, and the giving up of worldly goods and pleasures in order to direct the mind toward God and others. It is as if in order for love to come down from Heaven,

service and sacrifice must create a vacuum on earth.

Sacrifice in service to others creates a pocket in the usual maelstrom of selfishness—an empty space where God may dwell. As Reverend Moon has said, “God is creator and the originator of the two basic principles of service and sacrifice,” and when those principles are put into effect, God’s true love moves in.⁶

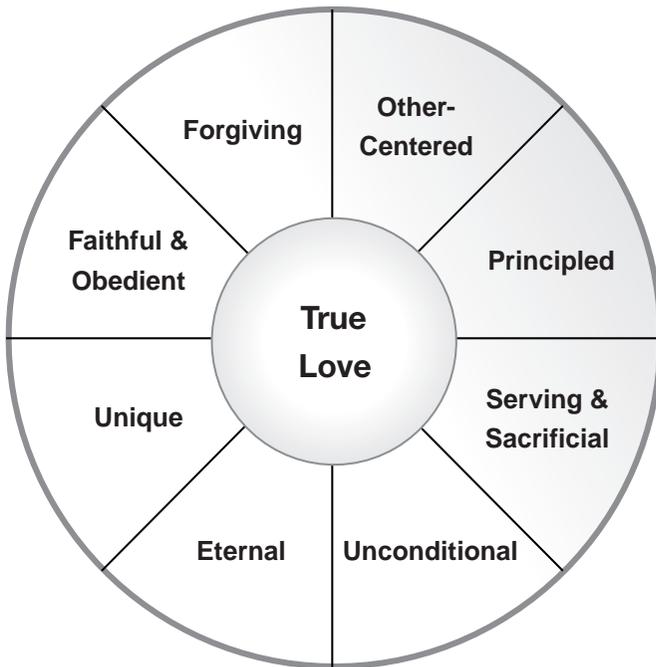
The touching story of Shay shows how sacrifice and service to others creates an open place for heavenly love to come down to earth. Shay was a young, learning-disabled boy. He and his father were walking past a park where some boys were playing baseball. Shay wanted to play, and his father reluctantly approached one of the boys on the field. The boy said, “Well, we’re losing by six runs, and the game is in the eighth inning. I guess he can be on our team.”

Oddly enough, Shay’s team started to score until they had a chance to win the game. But Shay was up next. Knowing it meant they would lose, Shay’s team still gave him the bat. He didn’t even know how to hold it. Thoughtfully, the opposing pitcher moved forward to throw Shay easy soft pitches. When Shay managed to hit a grounder, the pitcher instead of throwing it to the first baseman, lobbed it in a high arc out into right field. Everyone started yelling, “Shay, run to first!” Startled, eyes wide, Shay ran to first and past it. The right fielder then deliberately threw the ball way over the second baseman’s head, and once again, everyone shouted for Shay to run to the next base. The shortstop from the other team even turned him in the right direction. Another wild throw over the third baseman’s head had boys from both teams shouting, “Run home, Shay!” Shay ran home and was cheered by all as the hero who had hit the winning home run.

“That day,” the father said, with tears rolling down his face, “The boys from both teams helped bring a piece of the Divine Plan into this world.” They did so by their willingness to sacrifice their own interests for the sake of a little boy who needed a win more than they did, and who would always remember the day others

created a special space for him to belong in.

It is hard to give things up that are in a person's own self-interest. Yet when a person does so to serve others, a window seems to open in the heart. It is a window through which the warm sunlight, gentle breezes, and the pure oxygen of the love of God may be seen and felt. For a moment, heaven comes to earth, and the whole world breathes a little easier.



Attributes of True Love

True Love Is Unconditional

In order to truly benefit others, true love needs to be unconditional. This means that love is based on the person's intrinsic worth as a human being—no matter what the person's status or appearance or the accidents of his or her birth. Unconditional love respects and

recognizes the worth of the other simply because he or she was created by God.

Reverend Moon comments on the unconditional nature of true love:

True love can transcend national boundaries or racial boundaries and discrimination between religious sects. In this unity, we are all brothers and sisters. In the sight of God, there is no such thing as Orientals, Whites, and Blacks . . . we are different only on the surface. Underneath, we come from the same God.⁷

A second aspect of true love's unconditional nature is that it is extended to the worthy and unworthy alike. As the Bible says, God lets His sun shine upon good and evil people. It is easier, of course, to love those who are lovable and doing well, but unconditional love calls people to love those who are unlovable in the moment, because they were conceived in the perfect love of God and are destined someday to return to His bosom. The day will come when they are restored and revealed as an indispensable part of God: His precious and beloved children.

Unconditional love does not mean that any behavior is acceptable and bad conduct is to be charitably overlooked. Unconditional love is given with the hope of redeeming the other and calling him or her back to the true, Godly way. The paradox of unconditional love is that once people feel accepted and loved deeply, they are far better able to confess, repent, and make the necessary efforts to change.

Father Flanagan, founder of Boys Town, had it as his philosophy that, "There is no such thing as a bad boy." He believed that beneath each rough, tough, dirty exterior of a street urchin, God's child was waiting to be allowed to come out in safety to be loved. Father Flanagan's unconditional love "broke down" many an incorrigible boy into cleansing, healing tears and inspired many to live amended lives. Boys Town remains the most successful child reha-

bilitation program in the world. Many of its alumni, having come off the streets and come out of lives of abuse and neglect, go on to live productive and valuable lives because of the vision of a man who loved without condition.

True Love Is Eternal

Reverend Moon has commented:

People like gold because it doesn't change What element in diamonds makes people love them? As far as its hardness and solidity is concerned, the diamond excels any other stone. Other rocks and metals will be eroded as time goes by, but diamonds won't The more valuable something is, the less changeable it is.⁸

Related to the unconditional nature of true love is the fact that true love doesn't waver; it is eternal. True love does not change according to whims, circumstances or convenience. A good friend stays at his pal's side in good times and bad. A devoted husband stays with his wife even after her youth and beauty have faded. The deserted parent still looks out the window every night, hoping for the recalcitrant son's return. Constancy is the ballast of all lasting and true relationships.

People who practice true love are "there" for one another in times of pleasure and of pain. Similarly, God's unchanging love is a place of the heart we can return to again and again for forgiveness, renewal, reassurance, wisdom, and fresh determination. A bumper sticker reads, "If you don't feel close to God—guess who moved?" We may be sure that He didn't. The "Unmoved Mover" remains constant, the ultimately loving parent.

One parent demonstrated the power of steadfast love when she won back the heart of her teenage daughter. The teenager had been growing increasingly "smart-mouthed" and rebellious, much to the chagrin and pain of the parent. Things came to a crisis point when the mother received a phone call from the local police depart-

ment saying they had picked up her daughter for reckless driving. The mother was furious and didn't speak to her daughter all night. Yet, thinking it over, the mother realized that she believed in her daughter's essential goodness. To show her faith in her, the mother wrapped up a little gift box and gave it to her daughter. The daughter opened it to find a rock inside with a note: "This rock is a thousand years old. That's how long it will take before I give up on you." The teenager broke down in tears at this evidence of her mother's devotion, and the two became closer after that.

God does not give up on people—even when people give up on themselves. People may feel worthless, hopeless, despairing, beyond redemption—as the teenage girl undoubtedly felt about herself in the above example. Yet God's love is like a rock. He is always there, waiting and hoping for the child's return. As Jesus expressed so poignantly, "Ask, and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door shall be opened unto you." God is a parent who is always home, always ready to answer the door, always hoping that the children He loves so steadfastly have come to pay a visit and be embraced again in the love that never wavers.

Reverend Moon has said:

"What made Jesus sacred was that he trusted and loved people, wanted to live with them and save them more than anything else—even though they betrayed him. He blessed his enemies. There are sixty-six volumes in the Holy Scripture, but when you condense its significant meaning, the teaching of Jesus is . . . unchangeability."⁹

True Love Is Unique

True love takes into account the uniqueness of each individual and their circumstances. It is not "one size fits all." Each person needs to be loved especially for who he or she is, a unique entity in the universe with likes and dislikes, preferences and foibles. To love with discernment requires wisdom, attentiveness, and patience. It

is the essence of devotion to another.

In this regard, Reverend Moon has noted, “No two petals on one flower look alike, and if you examine all the small stones and pebbles on a mountain carefully, you will see that they are all different. That is one of the beauties of nature, and so is the way you were born.”¹⁰

The uniqueness of true love is vividly demonstrated in family relationships. One highly successful marriage program advises husband and wife to make individual lists of the kinds of things that make them feel loved, and then share their lists with their spouses. A wife may feel deliciously cared for when her husband makes her a cup of tea in the morning. A husband may feel loved by warm socks fresh out of the dryer lined up on his dresser. Other equally considerate little favors may not have as profound an effect if they do not cater to the person’s uniqueness.

Parents are compelled to learn to love their children in unique ways. Siblings are often very different from one another and must be encouraged and nurtured in different ways. Further, children’s love needs change as they grow. The nine-year-old who loved being kissed now feels, with the dignity of ten years, that his mother is smothering him when she does it. What used to be a way of giving love has turned into an offense and must be adjusted to the uniqueness of the emerging individual.

Children’s lives are a veritable education in how to love the unique adults who are their parents. One father loved wrestling with his young children and was completely agreeable even if they threw their whole weight on him. Yet if they touched his hair, he would lose his temper. He had a sensitive scalp and hated for his head to be touched. The children had to learn that Daddy felt more loved when they pounded him in the stomach than when they caressed his hair.

There are overarching principles of love that work for and apply to everyone; yet love is also tailor-made to the individual in order to make him or her feel uniquely loved. God shows this under-

standing of each of His children, gently guiding them through things that speak most strongly to their individual hearts. God shows His knowledge of and appreciation for an individual's uniqueness by speaking to the person's heart through music, art, literature, sports, pets, dancing—whatever a person loves. God will use such things to reach out to him or her, saying in essence, "I know you. I understand you. I love you for who you are."

Sherry used to sing at a Christian coffee house in a large city. One night she felt a strong urge to sing the old jazz song, "Georgia on My Mind." Not very holy, she told herself, but she gave in to the urge and sang it into the microphone. A young woman at a front table started sobbing. She came up to Sherry and said, "How did you know I was from Georgia? I'm so homesick here in this big city!" God had opened the young woman's heart through the song, reaching her through something unique about her to connect her with a new friend.

True Love Is Faithful and Obedient

True love sees beyond the twists and turns of fortune and believes in the good outcome at the end. It is faithful that way. As St. Paul proclaims, love "always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres" (1 Corinthians 13.7).

The wife who lovingly sends her husband off on a business trip has faith in his fidelity. She believes and hopes he will be faithful, and she waits for him, faithful herself. She cannot know the outcome of his trip, but her faith in him strengthens them both.

True love is faithful in that it is submissive and obedient. Obedience does not always know the whys and wherefores of God's commands, or of the promptings of the conscience, or of the orders of authorities or the advice of mentors. Yet "keeping faith" with them brings good outcomes. Often God's purposes or others' wisdom only become clear much later, after one has faithfully obeyed. Sometimes the reasons are not even clear within a lifetime. Yet, once discerned, God's wisdom and reasoning doubly impress the

faithful as they watch Him work all to the good.

Faithful obedience is called for in familial relationships as well. Parents need, want, and expect their children to obey them, even when the parents are not there to see, because the parents are older and wiser and have the child's and family's welfare at heart. The parents are also overseeing large situations the child may not understand, yet needs to submit to.

Faithfully obeying one's beloved is important in sustaining a relationship. Marital therapist John Gottman says that the strength of a marriage is indicated by how much a man listens to his wife. (He also advises the wife to give her verbal feedback gently!) Responsive husbands who obey their wives' suggestions consistently enjoy happier marriages.

On the other side of the coin, a woman's obedience to her husband can be a precious thing that lets love reign in the home. "He was just storming past me rudely," testifies a wife, "frantically getting ready for an international business trip. I was offended, but I just stepped back and said, 'Yes, honey.' Boy, did he grin, and we had a sweet goodbye because of my submission."

Sweet submission to the needs and wants of another allows more room for love to come in. Submission to someone a person cares about can be as simple as saying to a friend, "Where would *you* like to meet for lunch?" and having faith that the occasion and the friendship are going to be enhanced thereby, more than making up for any loss of preference.

True Love Is Forgiving

Finally, true love is forgiving. In order to continue loving the other, forgiveness is a necessary balm on the inevitable wounds people inflict upon one another. Everyone needs forgiveness constantly—to have his or her foibles and failings cast in a merciful light. Without forgiveness, love is not possible, for grudge holding, resentment, faultfinding and accusations block the flow of love between hearts and create a "one-upmanship" atmosphere.

Reinhold Niebuhr says forgiveness means, “the evil in the other shall be borne without vindictiveness because the evil in the self is known.” Truly loving people remember their own faults and failings whenever they see such in others. If we hope to be forgiven, we must forgive. We are called to forgiveness in many everyday circumstances.

For instance, one woman was recalling a time when her husband had humiliated her in front of her family. Her family was well educated, and his remarks at the dinner table had shown ignorance of the topic being discussed. She wished he had simply remained silent. She had seen the suppressed smiles on the faces of her loved ones as they tried to respond politely to his remarks. She had been mortified.

However, in thinking it over, she remembered a time when she had humiliated him. They had had an argument in a restaurant, and she had allowed her voice to climb and had even stormed out—her anger obvious to the whole clientele. Yet he had never said a word of rebuke to her about it. Embarrassed by her own lack of self-control, she thought of how it must have made him feel. She was humbled, penitent, and grateful to him. She then found it easy to forgive him. In fact, the memories of the humiliating occasion with her family turned into fond remembrances of her husband’s stoic character and forbearance in putting up with her faults.

Ideally, a person of true love is able to forgive even his or her enemies, knowing that they are people too, only as yet unable to overcome their insecurities, ignorance and fears. Love penetrates to the hurt beneath the anger, and love has mercy on the pain. Love sees the jealousy and insecurity beneath the arrogance, and love forgives and supports. Love sees the exhaustion behind the impatience, the good intentions behind the blunders, and love generously gives another chance—and another, and another.

God's Love: the Measure of True Love

Shakespeare's Portia spoke of the quality of mercy being an attribute unto God Himself. All of the above-named attributes of true love originate in the heart of God, the source of true love. Love that resonates with the heart of God is love that is true. God's heart is the tuning fork or standard of measure for true love. God is the sum and substance of true love: the origin, mentor, and model.

Reverend Moon says, "By experiencing true love, God intends that we come to reflect His true love and grow to perfection. God created the power of love to be the strongest of all forces. Through the experience of such power of love within the realm of Heaven's love and law, people are to increasingly resemble God, their Parent."¹¹

God's love is always best compared to that of a parent for a child. The creation and birth of a child is a momentous event. Every muscle and system is strained or shut down to accommodate the body's engrossment in the huge physical event of giving birth. We may well imagine what a momentous event creation was; how God must have labored to give birth to all that is—the skies, the oceans, the manifold creatures, and, at last, humankind.

Like the most nurturing of parents, God prepared a nursery and a setting for His children to grow in. The tender sparkle of the stars in the soothing depths of night, accompanied by the gentle glow of the moon—enough light to comfort and reassure without disturbing the sleep—in this and in thousands of other ways, God shows his care and devotion to the comfort and joy of His children. The gush of incomparable sweetness in a sun-warmed apple plucked right from the tree; the kiss of a cool breeze off a verdant river on a hot day; the smells of holiday meats and spices as a person comes in from the crisp outdoors; the comfort and mystery of birdsong in the morning—earth is indeed paradise. The intricacy and fabulousness of God's living creation cannot be compared to even the finest, most exalted works of art in the museums of the world. God's creation surpasses them all. And it is all for the sake of His children.

If we but had eyes to see, we would find proofs of God's devotion to us in every molecule of air we breathe. As Shakespeare put it, we would realize that there are "sermons in stones and goodness everywhere."

Poignancy of God's Love

With a full, exasperated, and exhausted heart, God still labors to salvage His created ones, like a parent keeping vigil over a deathly ill child—like a parent hopelessly running from house to house, asking if anyone has seen her missing child. Heavenly hosts converge to prevent accidents, injuries, crimes, all manner of evil, but they are often unperceived and rendered ineffective. God's heart is hemmed in by human indifference and selfishness. He is unable to express all that He would because of human deafness, dumbness, and blindness to true love.

The poignancy of God's love for humankind is shown in His hurt- and hope-filled relationship with the Biblical nation of Israel. "When Israel was a child," God reminisces in the book of Hosea, "I loved him" (11.1). He healed them without their knowing it was He. He bound them with cords of kindness and "ties of love" (11.4), took the yoke from their necks and fed them with plenty. Yet God feels betrayed by these children: "My people are determined to turn from me" (11.7). This echoes the lonely lament found in the New Testament: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God, all have turned away" (Romans 3.10-12).

An indescribably lonely and abandoned God who has never had His love and care properly returned, still cries out to His children as He did in Hosea: "How shall I deliver thee?" (11.8 KJV). This heart is echoed in the cry of Jesus to the people, "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing" (Matthew 23.37). And again, Jesus pondered with frustration on

humankind's lack of responsiveness to God's will and heart: "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not cry" (Luke 7.32).

Yet somehow, God holds His anger in check. "I will not carry out my fierce anger, for will I turn and devastate . . . for I am God and not man, the Holy one among you" (Hosea 11.9). Jesus demonstrated his oneness with God's heart when he prayed for his enemies' forgiveness. Reverend Moon teaches, "When you sacrificially give of your love to those who are hostile to you, you begin to reflect the real quality of God's own love."¹²

When people practice the attributes of true love, it makes room for God to dwell and brings heaven more fully into human affairs, benefiting all. The great power of God's love is waiting in the wings, listening anxiously for the cues of true love from the human stage to herald its entrance. By cultivating lives of true love, people work to literally bring the Kingdom of God on earth. This is the desire of all humankind. It is the often inarticulate, half-conscious, frustrated desire of every person ever born to live in a world of love. To live in a world where true love abounds and abides among His precious children is the desire of the Creator Himself.

An Ever-Expanding Network of Others

In Reverend Moon's view, the "others" a person lives to benefit are constantly expanding in scope, until the entire world is encompassed by true love. This is the nature of true love. Reverend Moon says, "It cannot be true love if it is only for myself. True love cannot be my individual possession. True love is for all people and for the whole universe. True love is what connects family, society, nation, world, and the universe."

The individual must love the family more than the self. Love for the family should expand to love for the community. In times of national crisis, love for the community should naturally be fulfilled through the greater love of country. Love of country must ultimately extend to love for humanity. One's others are an ever-enlarg-

ing circle, encompassing all of the world. If love for others settles and stops at any one point of limitation, it has the potential to become disproportionately focused upon that object of love, and even to become an evil.

Experts agree. Philosopher Pitirim Sorokin said, "If . . . love does not extend over the whole of mankind, if it is confined within one group—a given family, tribe, nation, race, religious denomination, political party, trade union, caste, social class or any part of humanity—such in-group altruism tends to generate an out-group antagonism."¹³ Love, in order to be true, needs to be "extended over the whole of mankind or over everyone and all."¹⁴

Erich Fromm said that love involves an "attitude or orientation of character which determines the relatedness of a person to the world as a whole, not toward one 'object of love.'"¹⁵ He said that unrelated to love of one's fellow man, love for an individual is not love. To love only one other person—or even to love one's family or the groups to which one belongs—without loving humanity means one does not truly love.

"Let him cultivate a boundless heart towards all beings," is a teaching of Buddhism that supports this notion of love as all-encompassing (Metta Sutta).¹⁶ Hinduism also affirms love that reflects the divine as being all-inclusive: "Seeing all life as My manifestation, they are never separated from Me. They worship Me in the hearts of all" (Bhagavad Gita 6.28-32).¹⁷

The Rewards of a Life Lived for Others

The sage places himself in the background,
but finds himself in the foreground.
He puts himself away, and yet he always remains.
Is it not because he has no personal interests?
This is the reason why his personal interests are fulfilled
(Tao Te Ching 7).¹⁸

In a life lived for an ever-expanding network of others, a person breathes, eats, and sleeps to have the strength to help others. His or her every action is infused with thoughtfulness and care for others, seeking to supply their every need and understand what is in their hearts. In doing so, a person attains oneness with God, who lives for the sake of His children. As the Bhagavad Gita says, “When a person responds to the joys and sorrows of others as if they were his own, he has attained the highest form of spiritual union” (6.28-32).¹⁹

Living for the sake of others does not mean obviation of the self—far from it. People who live for others become more truly themselves. Authentic selfhood and autonomy have not been cast aside, although self-centeredness has been. The Dalai Lama recommends that people practice “a radical reorientation away from our habitual preoccupation with self” that does not result in self-immolation but which rather leads to the enhancement, enrichment, and revealing of the Godly self.²⁰

Psychologist M. Scott Peck concurs. He says, “Love is a strangely circular process. For the process of extending one’s self is an evolutionary process. When one has successfully extended one’s limits, one has grown into a larger state of being.”²¹

Self-care, in the form of physical and spiritual nourishment, is enhanced if it is offered so that the self can better serve others. Sitting quietly and reading a spiritual text would be an act of love because it tempers one’s spirit toward loving others more. Spending an afternoon laughing in the cinema or shopping with a friend could likewise be in service to love if it refreshes the heart to be able to give more. All self-care is best offered for this purpose. Otherwise, it might turn out to bear little fruit. A person’s own salvation is a by-product of seeking the salvation of others. If it is the goal itself, it becomes self-seeking, and grace is obviated. The words of Jesus may be understood in terms of becoming a living offering: “he who loses his life (for the sake of others) will gain it.”

This tallies with the Buddhist ideal of the *bodhisattvas*, the highest spiritual beings. Having reached nirvana themselves, they

are impelled by their enlightenment to bring others into similar ecstasy and peace. Enlightenment is not a quantity to be gained and held by an individual; it naturally impels one toward the salvation of others.

Living a life of love for others gives one constant peace, refreshment, vitality, and joy. Fully at ease with the universe, truly loving people can say, as Gandhi did, amidst his labors: "I am always on vacation." Reverend Moon assures that, with total involvement in living for the sake of others, people come to live in a state of oneness with the universe and with God. In such a life, people are bathed in, soaked in, steeped in love. The truly loving person's world is a world pulsating with the sensibilities of the heart. The person is intoxicated—"convulsed with joy" in a life of love. Such a life holds the promise of loving union and reunion with all in an ultimate world of oneness. This is the ultimate state of fulfillment in true love humanity is destined for: our birthright as the children of God.

Chapter 3

Love and Life's Purposes

God is our Parent. Then why did He create us? God's creation of humankind started from the place participating in love. Humans started from God's mind, growing up in God's bosom of love, becoming mature in God's bosom, and making the family which can connect with the love of the world. Through that, they come to return to God's bosom.

—Sun Myung Moon

People are not born knowing how to love others. True love must be learned; indeed, a person must cultivate his or her capacity to love truly. Yet how? What are the contexts through which love grows and flourishes? How can true love be practiced over a lifetime here “on the ground”? Is true love cultivated through performing “random acts of kindness,” or is there a blueprint for leading a life of true love?

Fortunately, many sources suggest that the cultivation of true love over a lifetime may be broken down into three essential pursuits. These are: (1) attaining individual maturity, (2) experiencing and building a family and other close personal relationships, and (3) making a creative contribution to the world. These three pursuits are the fertile grounds for the cultivation of true love. Hence, they serve as directions, purposes, or a framework for a life lived for the sake of others—a life rich in true love.

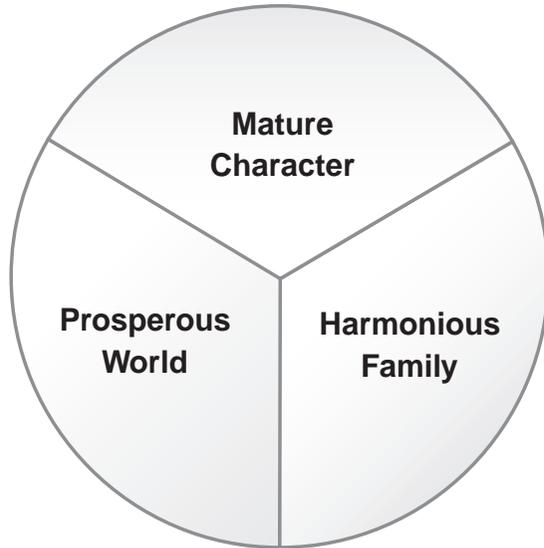
The Three Great Blessings

Reverend Moon calls these three key purposes “The Three Great Blessings.” They are gifts granted by the Creator for the fulfillment of human life. Reverend Moon notes their Biblical derivation from the three orders given to Adam at the beginning of the world and again to Noah, when God had hopes of beginning the world anew: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. 1.28 KJV).

Like the earth, Reverend Moon says, these Blessings were founded forever. They are the universal and enduring pattern for human life; indeed, they are the means by which we become most fully human. They distinguish humanity from the animal and other kingdoms and endow us with the potential for a lordship of love.

The Three Great Blessings may be summarized in the following way: The first, “Be fruitful,” may be interpreted as the exhortation to achieve mature character, to become a well-integrated, Godly person capable of loving others. Just as an immature tree cannot bear fruit, so an immature person cannot bear the “fruits” of a loving spirit: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5.22-23).

The second blessing, to “multiply,” refers to creating a warm and harmonious marriage and family. The last, to “replenish and subdue” the earth and to “have dominion” over it, means to care for the natural environment with true love and invest in human culture and civilization through work and all other creative activities. Thus, the third blessing charges us with the responsibility to create a prosperous world.



The Three Great Blessings

Multiple sources, both ancient and modern, affirm the significance of these three life purposes. A foundational Confucian text begins, "The Great Learning teaches: to manifest shining virtue, to love people, and to rest in the highest good." In modern terms, British educator Richard Livingstone said that the purpose of education was to (1) achieve personal maturity and integrity, (2) find real happiness in love through having a family and friends, and (3) be successful in one's chosen career, and so contribute to society.¹ Psychologists Conner and Chamberlain's study found that the most common sources of meaning in people's lives correlated with personal development, relationships with people, creativity and relating with nature.²

Aspiration in these three areas is designed into the human personality. There is a clearly discernible will or thrust toward them. A child is impelled toward maturity: "I'm not six. I'm six and a half!" the child cries. The teenager wants nothing more than to appear "grown up." Likewise, people are impelled to seek loving relation-

ships and family. Even when people reject or bypass the traditional configuration of father, mother and their children, they tend to follow its patterns anyway, forming surrogate families along the familiar lines.

The will to interact with the natural world is likewise self-evident. Most people delight in the beauty of animals and nature and long for their own bit of land, their own “vine and fig tree.” This desire is linked to the desire to have a special area of dominion to receive their creative efforts and thus leave their mark in the world. Author John Steinbeck said each person asks him- or herself as they get along in years, “What have I contributed in the Great Ledger?”³ Instinctively, people feel compelled to leave a legacy, to make their unique contributions and leave a lasting imprint upon society.

The universality of the three great aspirations of life and the fact that people naturally and consistently pursue them indicates that they are an important part of God’s design for the fulfillment of human destiny. The Three Great Blessings provide an earthly template for cultivating and living a life of true love. Each area or Blessing will be explored in some detail.

The First Blessing: Mature Character

It is Reverend Moon’s unique contribution to interpret the first Biblical injunction to “Be fruitful” as pertaining to individual maturity. This interpretation illuminates these three Biblical injunctions in a way that does not render fruitfulness as a part of multiplication, which would place what appears to be inordinate and confusing emphasis on physical reproduction.

Reaching maturity as a human being means more than becoming reproductively functional and growing to full height and weight. These things occur naturally with even the most rudimentary sustenance. Growth into full maturity as a complete human being, on the other hand, means maturity of the heart, conscience, and will.

True love requires a good and mature character as its foundation. Although love is often thought of merely as a warm, pleasurable, sweet feeling that arises spontaneously, it is easily seen that various loves depend upon character. Well-developed character enables love; poorly developed character disables it.

Love of country, for instance, requires the virtue of self-sacrifice when the nation calls. Love of a friend requires consideration and fealty. Love of a child requires devotion and consistency over a long period of time. Love of a brother or sister requires supportiveness, caring, dependability, and honesty. These loves call for the virtues of good character.

In romantic love—the most potentially confusing love of all—virtues are also paramount. Rare would be the young woman who would believe in her young man's "love" if he refused to leave the couch in front of the TV to pick her up from the train station. Rare would be the older couple who would stay together many years without some admiration or appreciation for one another's internal qualities. When beauty, youth, and sexual attraction fade with time, character continues to shine.

Love flounders without the underpinnings of character strengths or virtues. Author Don DeMarco said:

Love would be impotent if it were not for the various virtues that withstand attendant difficulties and deliver their message of love where love is needed . . . A soldier without courage, a doctor without care, a teacher without patience, a parent without prudence, a spouse without fidelity, a priest without faith, a leader without determination, a magistrate without integrity and a friend without loyalty are all partners to futility, not because they lack love, but because they lack the virtue to express it.⁴

Character and love are inextricably connected. A person of mature character with an integrated moral identity is far better able to form beneficial relationships and contribute to the world than a

person of immature character who is conflicted within. The person who lacks a mature character spends many hours of dissatisfaction and inner struggle. The person's relationship with him- or herself is a disharmonious and uncomfortable one, often leading to strife in relationships with others. Mature character is a prerequisite for joy and peace. Only those of mature and virtuous characters are able to enjoy and share fully the fruits of true love.

Reverend Moon said, "It is when the divine soul or mind becomes the master of the human body that a person's love can become God-centered. It is as if God's mind were coming to dwell within that person."⁵ Reverend Moon calls this state of character maturity "mind and body unity." Such integrity is the ultimate requirement for true love to flow. There will be more on the importance of mind and body unity in Chapters 6 and 9.

The Second Blessing: Harmonious Family

The second blessing, "to multiply," means not only to embody one's love and extend one's lineage through marriage and children, but on an internal level, it also means to multiply the others to be loved in one's life and thus expand one's horizons of loving unselfishly. Marriage is a fundamental way of doing this. It provides a primary other, different in emotional, physical, and spiritual makeup yet who is there to be loved. Reverend Moon claims that love cannot be complete without a member of the opposite sex. He says:

You men here are wonderful, proud people, yet . . . in reality your love cannot be seen or proven until you meet a woman. A woman is the one who will awaken your love. You can insist that you have love and try to prove it, but no one will see that love until the day it is sparked by a woman.⁶

Marital love inspires the couple to have and care for children, further expanding the parameters of love to embrace yet more

others. Establishing loving relationships between family members is a holy undertaking that has everything to do with growing closer to God through becoming a person who lives for the sake of others. As Jack Kornfield, a student and teacher of Buddhism said, “The sacrifices of a family are like those of any demanding monastery, offering exactly the same training in renunciation, patience, steadiness, and generosity.”⁷

Good family life is the primary context where the capacity for warmth, caring and commitment is cultivated. People thrive on the joy that comes from loving relationships of all kinds: the warm concern of a mother’s love, the camaraderie of siblings, and the special intimacy of conjugal love in marriage. Loving relationships in the family are essential to learning how to love others in a true way. Reverend Moon has called these four aspects of love in the family “realms of heart”: the child’s realm of heart, the sibling’s realm of heart, the spouse’s realm of heart, and the parents’ realm of heart. These realms significantly affect a person’s relationships with others beyond the family too, multiplying the love first found in the family to others in society (see Chapters 14-18).

The Third Blessing: Prosperous World

The desires to make a contribution to society and to appreciate and care for the natural world are outgrowths of humankind’s endowment of the Third Great Blessing to make a prosperous world. In Biblical language, this is to have dominion or to assume stewardship. It means to exercise caring leadership over what we have been given and bless others with it—yet another way to give true love to others. In the case of nature, it is the “other” to be loved, but so are future generations who will benefit from wise stewardship of the earth’s precious resources. Reverend Moon urges people to think of future generations in their everyday use of water, disposables, and money. Conservation, he says, is a way of loving others who are not yet born.

The world has nurtured us; in turn, we are to nurture the world. Martin Luther King once said that due to the inventions, innovations, sacrifices, and genius of people the world over, we are indebted to many:

Whether we realize it or not, each of us is eternally ‘in the red.’ We are everlasting debtors to known and unknown men and women . . . When we arise in the morning, we go into the bathroom where we reach for a sponge which is provided for us by a Pacific islander. We reach for soap that is created for us by a Frenchman. The towel is provided by a Turk. Then at the table we drink coffee which is provided for us by a South American, or tea by a Chinese, or cocoa by a West African. Before we leave for our jobs we are beholden to more than half the world.⁸

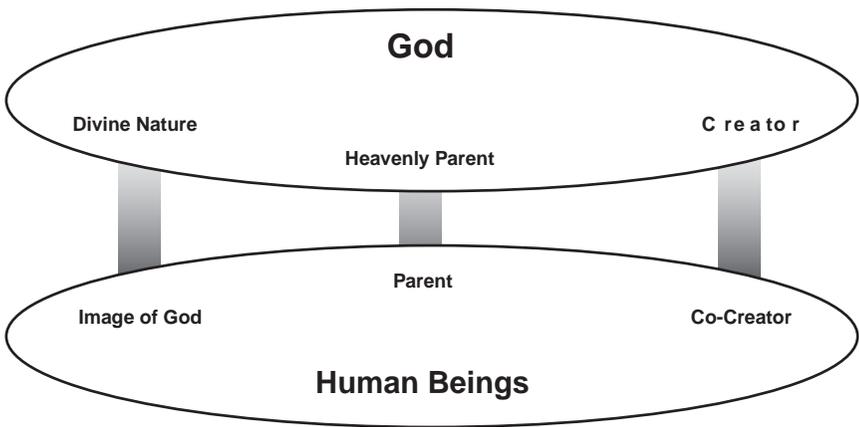
Feeling grateful and responsible to the world makes us consider the best use of precious resources, ways to more equally distribute wealth, food, and health care, and ways in which to bring our unique gifts to bear on the world’s problems. These are God’s concerns, for, as Jesus said, when we do not feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned, we are ignoring him. The third key purpose brings us closer to a kingdom that includes all that lives and which returns the gifts and talents human beings have been endowed with to benefit the world as a whole.

Resembling God through the Three Great Blessings

The Three Great Blessings are the roadmap for the journey toward true love. Each of them involves the development and expression of people’s abilities to live for the sake of others rather than for themselves. In this, these innate imperatives provide a blueprint for resembling the greatest exemplar of true love—God.

Scriptures have God declaring before His children are born, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Genesis 1.26).

People please God when they reflect His virtuous nature back to Him. Jesus exhorted his followers to “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly father is perfect” (Matthew 5.48). An Islamic hadith says, “Conform yourselves to the character of God” (Hadith of Abu Nuaym).⁹ The *I Ching* states, “The Superior man reflects in his person Heaven’s virtue (I Ching 35; Progress).”¹⁰



The Fulfillment of the Three Blessings Reflects God

Jesus was an example of someone who has fulfilled the First Blessing. His actions were so well-integrated with the highest promptings of his mind that he existed in a relationship of oneness with God. “I am in the Father and the Father is in me,” he said. (John 14.11) Jesus partook of the nature of God in his own nature, inheriting His wisdom and love and reflecting His heart and character perfectly. In a similar way, Muhammad once stated, “Who ever sees me has seen God,” (Hadith of Bukhari and Muslim)¹¹ and Buddha said, “He who sees me sees the Dharma” (Samyutta Nikaya iii.120).¹²

This level of Godliness is the inheritance of all people, bequeathed to Adam yet left unfulfilled. By uniting with and following God’s messengers, people grow toward greater maturity of character and begin to reflect the nature of God as true sons and

daughters, perhaps someday to warrant the same divine declaration as Jesus received: “This is my son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased” (Matthew 3.17).

Love and Unity Reflects God

The second blessing furthers the resemblance of human beings to God. Love and unity between a man and woman in marriage brings great joy and satisfaction to the Creator through reflecting His nature and character more fully than does an individual.

God embodies the perfect oneness of the masculine and the feminine. His creation is the most obvious confirmation of this, given the pervasive complementarities inherent in every single aspect of the natural world (see Chapters 11 and 12). This polarity reflects the nature of God. Scriptures testify to the same: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female he created them” (Genesis 1.27). Confucianist thinking has the Origin as the balance of the complementary opposites of yin and yang (*I Ching*, Great Commentary 1.11.5-6).¹³

Further, God revels in the tender affection that passes between fathers and mothers and their sons and daughters. It reflects His own parental heart. Family life thus partakes most fully of the nature of God’s true love. Through “multiplying”—establishing a loving family—people imitate the masculine and feminine oneness as well as the parental nature and heart of God.

The Third Great Blessing, granting humankind stewardship, calls for human beings to partake of the nature of God as a Creator, resembling Him in this way. When people improve upon, experiment with, add to, and supplement the creations of others, they begin to share creatorship. When an artist improves upon the masters of the form, shows “influences” yet transcends them to create something that is both new and yet rooted in what has gone before, he or she is credited with a new creation and is considered a master of the art in his or her own right. Similarly, human beings are to act upon the world and share in God’s creative nature. That

is why the Qur'an calls human beings God's "vice-regent on earth" (2.30).¹⁴ Imagine a rich man hiring a gardener to tend a wild, overgrown section of land. The gardener husbands it carefully, treats it with love and care, gets rid of the weeds and stones, and calls forth greater abundance from the land than it had previously given. The gardener is justly proud. If someone carelessly tramps into the garden, he will cry out as if something of his—not just the rich man's—had been violated. Indeed, through his investment, love and care, he has become part owner of the land, resembling the rich man in his concern for it.

This is humankind's endowment—to become owners and heirs of civilization and the earth through creative giving. In this, human beings become masters and mistresses of destiny—able to impact the world and the universe. As they give and give to this "other" of the world, they come to resemble their Parent of true love. They become co-owners and co-creators of the world they lovingly help to fashion.

Framework for a Life of True Love

Having discussed true love and its attributes, the question still remains: What shape does true love take in real life? What does a life of true love look like? "On the ground" true love adheres to and grows in three basic purposes of life: growing to maturity of character, establishing a loving family, and contributing towards a prosperous world. These three components may serve as a framework for a life of true love. They will resonate throughout this book in discussions of cultivation of the individual moral life, family life and related topics, and implications for civilization.

Part II

Gifts for Growing in True Love

Chapter 4

Cultivating the Heart

Heart is the source of love.

—Sun Myung Moon

To speak of true love is to speak of the heart. People commonly refer to the heart as the human faculty involved with loving: “I love her with my whole heart,” “She has given him her heart,” and “My heart is lonely without you.” People also see the heart as being involved with matters of right and wrong: “I didn’t have the heart to tell him no,” “Do what your heart tells you to do,” and “Have a heart.” Furthermore, heart is associated with one’s actions or will: “Do it with your whole heart,” “Do it from the heart,” and “My heart is not in it anymore; I can’t do it.”

Heart is more than the seat of the emotions. Just as the ocean depths are different from the surface that changes minute to minute—once calm, then turbulent—the heart is the deepest root of the mind and the faculties of reason, emotion, and will. The Victorians believed “in the promptings of the heart are combined will, judgment, and feeling.”¹ Educator Parker Palmer speaks of “heart in its ancient sense, as the place where intellect, emotion, spirit, and will converge in the human self.”²

This part of the book begins by investigating the heart and describing how it may be cultivated. Next, it will discuss the conscience, which stands second only to heart in guiding actions that are right and true. Subsequent chapters explore how these fundamental attributes of character are manifest in a life of loving as one

takes responsibility in relationships with others and relates to the world as a good steward. They have the attribute of eternity—the undeniable “forever” quality that is an intrinsic part of loving from the heart. The faculties of heart and conscience, along with their application to a life of responsibility, stewardship and creativity, as well as eternal life—are God-given gifts for growing in true love.

What Is the Heart?

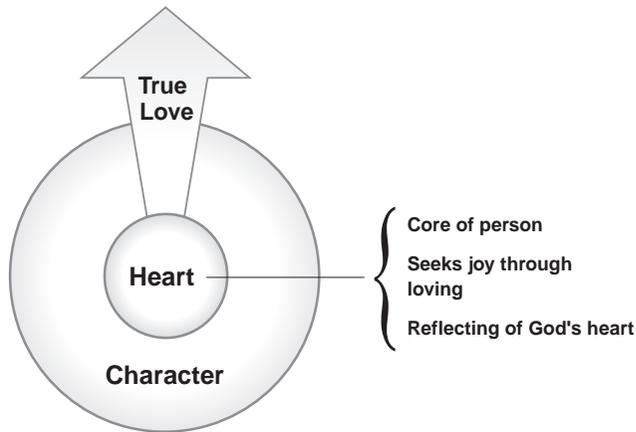
Commonly accepted though its presence may be, the heart remains something of a mystery. What is it? Is it intrinsically good? Can the heart be corrupted? How does the heart relate to God and to others?

In the insights of Reverend Moon, at the center of our being lies an irrepressible impetus to seek joy through loving and be loved in return. This is the heart. The impulse to love is the core motivation of the human being. Everything we do is either a bid to experience love or is a frustrated response to a lack of that experience. The impetus behind all motives, intentions, and actions is the heart's fundamental impulse to love and be loved. The things we do are either expressions of love, aspirations toward love, preparations to be able to love, or actions taken out of exasperation at not being able to give or receive love properly in relationship to others.

The yearning for the joy of loving is relational in nature; it cannot be satisfied in isolation. Love can only come through a partner or object of love, whether it is our husband, sister, mother, son, friend or pet puppy. The yearning to be together with their objects of love is manifested in the way people cherish photos of loved ones, cling to mementos, run fingers over the name on the gravestone, etcetera. People spend large amounts of money on phone calls just to hear a faraway loved one's voice.

Impulse to Seek Joy through Loving

The longing to have a family—universal among human beings—is an expression of the heart's impulse to seek joy through loving. It is a desire for permanent, committed intimacy with others who, tied together by blood and heart, will always be there for one another in an uninterrupted flow of love.



The Heart Motivates True Love

Although it finds its deepest expression there, heart is not limited to family members. Indeed, because of the heart's impulse toward relatedness, people feel an innate connection even with strangers. Few people can have an argument with a store clerk, fire an employee, have words with someone in the street, or be cat-called to by a gang of kids, for example, without feeling some pain in the heart—pain that, annoyingly, cannot be dismissed by saying those people aren't important. Every human being is important to every other human being because of the impulse to love—the heart—which binds us to all others in unavoidable relationship.

So strong is the impulse to love, even fictional representations of human beings affect people strongly. Many people weep, grimace, or laugh out loud while watching films in identification with what

is happening to the people on the screen. Good authors turn their books into page-turners because readers cannot wait to find out what happens to the characters they have come to care about. So strong is the impulse to seek joy through loving—so strong is the heart—that even if the “others” are mere symbols of human beings, the heart cries out to them in empathy and love.

In Chinese ethical thought, a synonym for heart is *jen*—roughly translated as “human-heartedness.” The connection to others is considered to be the root of a person’s humanity. The philosopher Mencius gives the famous example of a child who is about to fall into a well. Anyone who passes by, regardless of his relation to the child’s family, cannot but be moved by anxiety for the child’s safety and rush to save her. Mencius claims that not to feel such compassion would be inhuman. A person’s compassion is tugged with anxiety for another because of the heart.

An actual incident of this sort happened in Midland, Texas, in 1987 when two-year-old Jessica McClure fell down an abandoned well and was trapped for 58 hours. During the anxious hours rescue crews worked to save her, the entire country watched the drama on the news. Strangers from across the nation showered the child’s family with gifts, letters and money. When the child was rescued unharmed, the whole nation breathed a sigh of relief, their hearts at peace.

The family is the root of *jen* in Oriental thinking. From a child’s relationship to his or her parents (filial piety in Confucian terms) springs the ability to relate to others lovingly and virtuously. It is in the family that the impulse to love—the heart—is best cultivated. Driven by the heart, people form and strive to sustain families where the heart is nurtured, grows, and gains satisfaction. Then it becomes capable of reaching beyond the family to embrace the human family.

Substitutes fail to satisfy

Much of the time, because of the pain or difficulty of relating to others in love, the impulse to seek joy through loving gets twisted into seeking something else to an inordinate degree: fame, money, material possessions, or other substitutes. Sometimes this is done consciously to assuage the pain; at other times people are deluded into thinking that the acquisition of such things will bring them the joy and satisfaction they seek.

However, those who have enjoyed the full fruits of those substitutes know that real satisfaction lies in the heart's fulfillment through loving relationships, especially the most intimate ones. As famed singer and songwriter Billy Joel said, "The happiest times in my life were when my relationships were going well—when I was in love with someone, and someone was loving me." He said his success—including a place in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame—is little consolation for the loss or lack of such relationships. Joel told *The New York Times Magazine*, "You don't get hugged by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and you don't have children with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. I want what everybody else wants: to love and to be loved, and to have a family."³

Crossroads of Human and Divine

The heart was meant to be the defining quality of being human. Humans were made to be the "crown of creation" not because of superior intelligence or creativity, and certainly not because of superior physical prowess. God created men and women to be the pinnacle of the created world by endowing them with an immense capacity to love. This capability of heart is an attribute unto God Himself. It puts human beings in the image of God. "Truly do I exist in all beings," reads a Hindu passage, "but I am most manifest in man. The human heart is my favorite dwelling place" (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2).⁴

Heart in human beings is a reflection of the divine Heart and character. God is also impelled to seek joy through loving. For this,

He requires a responsive “other”—humankind. Indeed, Reverend Moon has said that this was the reason for creation; God’s heart impelled Him to have another to love, and He chose to create humankind as His love partner. “Heaven and earth contain me not,” declares the Lord in an Islamic hadith, “but the heart of my faithful servant contains me.”⁵

God’s Word, His love, and His grace touch us in our hearts, resonate in our hearts, and lodge and dwell there. Thus the heart is the unfathomable depth dimension of the self, where boundaries between God and humankind become porous.

It is our connection to God’s heart that empowers the human heart to function properly. It invigorates, refreshes, and makes possible our love for others in human relationships. Without resonance of heart with God, we are bereft and empty of love, easily “burned out,” and our judgment becomes faulty. A “hopeless” or uninspired relationship can be reinvigorated through contacting God in prayer and bringing His love and vision into the heart. The Christian scripture declares, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” (Matthew 5.8), but it is also true that the unclouded heart is more likely to be able to see as God sees—that is, with the eyes of total love. “It is only with the heart that one sees rightly,” writes author Antoine de Saint-Exupery, for the heart is the lightning rod to attract the power of God’s mighty devotion.

The Blinded Human Heart

Since the pipeline of love between God and humankind is damaged, human beings find themselves disconnected from the Source of love, and hence unable to love others or themselves. The pursuit of the heart’s basic impulse to seek joy through loving often “barks up all the wrong trees” and “looks for love in all the wrong places.” Because the heart is blinded, the impulse to seek joy through loving gets filtered through distortions and misperceptions. Strong emotions attend these distortions and misperceptions. Because they are our “feelings,” we think they must be true guides

to love and coming from the heart. They are not, however.

Because distortions and misperceptions layer over the heart, our consciousness of others and even of ourselves is limited and often skewed. We see “through a glass darkly” so to speak, through the filter of our own needs, wants, fears, hopes, selfishness, and insecurities.

For instance, Susan “loves” Rory. She is crazy about him, on fire for him, thinks about him night and day and wants to be with him all the time. He is wildly attractive to her. She feels she loves him with her whole heart. She rationalizes going to bed with him by saying, “If it feels so right, how can it be wrong?”

However, in reality, Susan is projecting a great deal onto Rory that isn’t really there. She sees him as the fulfillment and completion of her own inadequate grapplings with adulthood. Mingled with sexual desire, schooled by media impressions—Rory has movie star good looks—Susan’s “love” for Rory is colored by things related more to herself than to him. The emotions attending all these impressions are strong—very strong. They are certainly “real” to Susan, and so she thinks her “love” is real.

Rory, however, senses the inauthenticity of their relationship on a deep level, although he could never put it into words. He is getting restless because of this, and a part of him feels inexplicably exploited. When he “dumps” Susan, he rationalizes, “She got as much out of me as I got out of her.” Both paper over their pain by seeking new partners to “fall in love” with. Such are the vagaries of emotion.

If Susan and Rory had related to each other from the heart, they would have respected each other’s inward divinity and approached a romantic relationship with extreme care. They would have given themselves plenty of time to learn to care for one another. They would have paid each other the profound respect of abstaining from sexual relations until they were ready to make a life-long commitment, and sought the help and guidance of elders and mentors. True love between a man and a woman requires nothing

less. Had they done all that and still decided to part, neither of them would have felt violated by the other.

The heart is capable of seeing beyond another's body and external traits into their soul—to recognize someone with fears, vulnerabilities, hopes, dreams, needs, gifts and strengths as real as our own. The heart is ready to take responsibility to love someone taking all of this into account. The emotions are not. Notoriously mercurial, loss of emotions toward a “loved” one is a major cause of marital disruption. When the heart leads, another person becomes real to us and we become capable of truly caring for them and capable of depths of feeling that we had only dreamed of when ruled by emotion.

Intrinsically Good

Because of the confusion overlaying it, the heart has sometimes been depicted as capable of evil. A Hebrew verse paints a pessimistic picture: “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17.9). Yet a seemingly corrupt heart is merely a distorted presentation of the good and original heart. The natural inclinations to care, to connect, to feel compassion and commonality have been perverted—misdirected toward service of the self rather than to others.

This is why a person's greatest weaknesses may be his or her greatest strengths once the depths of the heart are uncovered. The angry and shrill mother, at heart, cares deeply for the well-being of her children and is afraid of her own inadequacy. The girl who goes from relationship to relationship down deep has a great capacity to love. The rebellious teenage boy hanging out with the gang has been frustrated in trying to relate to his father and older brother. On the level of the heart, the truth about a person is revealed, and it is always understandable, forgivable, and compassion-provoking.

Love Can Be Misdirected

It is through a distortion of love that the original qualities of the heart get twisted into offensiveness. Love is misdirected, misaligned and disordered. It is turned inward, serving the myopic ego instead of the welfare of others. The heart labors beneath the weight of it all, so buried at times as to seem nonexistent, out of touch with itself and with its Creator, even doubting His existence, and unable to tap into the wellsprings of His correcting love.

The causes and nature of the distortions that blind the heart have been the subject of ongoing debate for millennia, as they are tied up with questions of essential human nature and the origins of evil. Reverend Moon understands evil as arising from the misdirection of love in the first human family. As was said before, the family is the primary and natural context for cultivating the heart. Distortion of love in the first family, therefore, has been passed down and has plagued countless people and generations ever since (See Chapter 23). This primordial breakdown tainted the human lineage with a legacy of self-destructiveness that is a universal inheritance, as in the Christian notion of original sin. Thus the heart is hard to reach, difficult to mature, and its impulse toward relatedness with others is often skewed into selfishness, leaving it vulnerable to what religious traditions have long recognized as involvement with evil.

Modern psychology and sociology have sought knowable causes for the problems within a person's life history, physiology, and culture. Personal deprivations and trauma, internalization of destructive role models, arrested development, nefarious social influences, twisted belief systems—all these and more are conditions that can readily overwhelm individuals' natural defenses and encourage corruption. Says Anodea Judith, Ph.D., a practicing clinical psychologist, "Sadly, [the heart] chakra is easily damaged, diminished, or wounded," with devastating effects on a person's development.⁶

When describing evil both in theory and practice, psychology relies on the metaphors of immaturity and disease, be it physical or

psychic, thus avoiding its moral and spiritual dimension altogether. Yet both perspectives enrich each other, as demonstrated by the best of faith-based or pastoral psychology. In any case, the heart, like a garden, needs protection and cultivation if it is to flourish and break through the forces that warp and distort its impulses. “Above all else, guard your heart,” says the proverb, “for it is the wellspring of life” (Proverbs 4.23).

To “keep the heart” means to keep the pure vision of the heart polished. It means to access the unbesmirched part of us—our hearts—by cutting through all the dross of ego and misperceptions and distortions that lie on top of it. How can we purify our hearts, and access the intrinsically good and pure heart—the heart that mirrors and resonates with the heart of the Creator?

The Heart of God

Dr. Martin Luther King said, “At the heart of reality, there is a Heart.” Behind the human heart, of course, is the divine Heart. God’s Heart is the wellspring of His love, the core of His being. This heart impels Him to live for the sake of His children and creation. Within and behind His unchanging laws, awesome might and majesty is a fierce concern, intense sensitivity, and incomparable tenderness. God is the king of love.

“Can God enjoy His life without love?” asks Reverend Moon. “No. However omniscient or omnipotent He may be, by Himself alone, He cannot enjoy happiness . . . You say you are happy because you have your parents, your husband or wife, your sweetheart. You say to someone, ‘I am happy because I have you with me . . .’ If that is true with human beings, the same applies to God.”⁷ Jesus addressed his Lord and Creator as “Abba”—Papa (Mark 14.36).⁸ More than the most devoted of earthly parents, the Heavenly Father is so passionately concerned with every single one of His children, that no one’s gladness or distress escapes His notice. “Not one [sparrow] is forgotten before God,” we are assured, and surely each person is “worth more than many sparrows” (Luke 12.6-7).

God's heart is utterly relational; it cannot stand aloof and apart; it cannot enjoy isolation. Philosopher Abraham Heschel speaks of a Lord passionately and personally involved with His people.¹⁹ The Bible has the Creator as affected by humanity as a man is by his wife (Hosea and Jeremiah 3.20).

God's heart shapes His ideal, what religious traditions have called the Kingdom of Heaven, the World to Come, the Golden Age. It is the place where "The dwelling of God is with men," (Revelation 21.3) as He intended. Intimacy with one's children, grandchildren and great grandchildren—does any parent desire anything more? In the same way, God's heart wants eternal closeness with every one of His children.

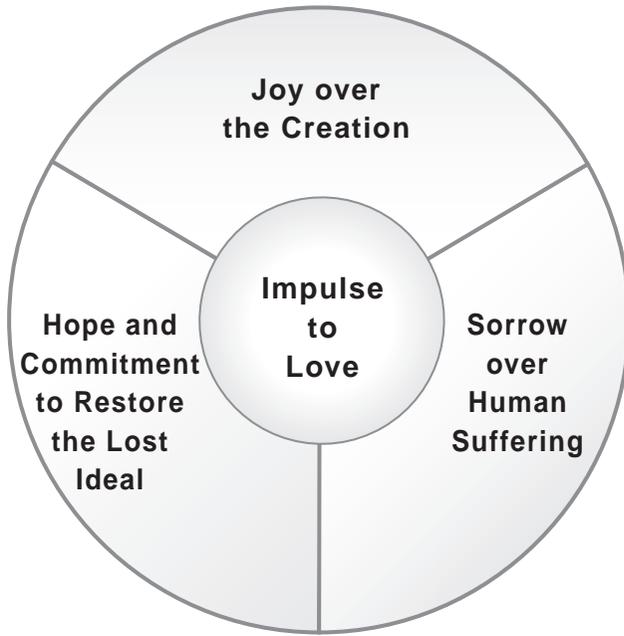
This parental heart means no one is outside its reach. The divine grace falls like rain on the worthy and unworthy alike. There are no limits to this love; no sacrifice is too great. He "so loved the world" that He would offer everything He has, even His most beloved Son (John 3.16) that "not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" and be saved (2 Peter 3.9). "Turn to me and be saved," He cries through the prophet Isaiah, "all you ends of the earth!" (45.22-23).

Indeed, this is a defining characteristic of God's Heart—no one is outside it. Even those who disobey Him, reject Him or even seek to destroy everything He holds dear are not excluded. His wrath and judgment are ultimately for the purpose of reconciliation, of being together with His children. Thus there is Jesus' exhortation to "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you," in imitation of the Creator (Matthew 5.44). As Reverend Moon has said, no matter what state human beings are in, "God cannot but love man. You can be so confident as to say, without you, God cannot be happy."¹⁰ The impulse to seek joy through loving is too strong for any permanent rejection or estrangement between the Father and any of His children.

Heart of Joy

The Heart of God has three primary aspects. One is joy, the spirit with which He created the universe. It is the exultation that is reflected in the infinite varieties of the beauties that make up the creation. The divine imagination was animated with gladness: “It was good,” He said of His creation (Genesis 1.10). He was especially joyful in anticipation of sharing His life with responsive children and having them delight in the creation He had made. When human parents happily prepare a nursery and then tearfully welcome a new child into the world, they taste something of God’s heart of joy at the creation.

The Heart of God is the ultimate counterpart to the human heart, deeper and wider than our own and overflowing with the purest, most profound love. Only His heart so fully, in the words of Blaise Pascal, “fills the soul and heart which He possesses”—it alone has the capacity to completely stimulate every part of us. Those privileged to have tasted of its fullness have described its intoxicating rapture. “Once the heart of God dwells within you, no matter how lonely you may be you will be filled and the universe will be filled,” states Reverend Moon. “Such a person is infinitely joyful, lacking nothing.”¹¹ “Ah, my Lord God,” wrote Thomas à Kempis, in *The Imitation of Christ*, “most faithful lover, when Thou comes into my heart, all that is within me rejoices!” This is the ultimate happiness and the essence of Heaven. It has been called paradise, nirvana, bliss. Whatever it is called, it is ineffably good and satisfying—an oasis in the desert to the thirsting human heart.



Aspects of God's Heart

Heart of Sorrow

This is why the distance from Him that has been the human condition throughout the ages leaves such an ache and restlessness. As the psalmist expressed it: "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? My tears have been my food day and night" (42.1-3).

Conversely, when Adam sinned, God searched for him in the Garden, calling, "Where are you?"(Genesis 3.9). Thus, both the Heavenly Father and the earthly children can find no ultimate fulfillment without the lost "love partner" of one another.

God's heart has experienced much that is not pleasure. The agonies of the world that burden all but the most callous of souls are

not lost on the Creator. This is an important aspect of the divine heart: sorrow. Like parents who see their precious children suffering through a reckless act or worse, as victims of a crime, God's heart breaks to see the torment and misery of the world: the senselessness of war, the wretchedness of hunger and poverty, the misery of disease, the agonies of families torn apart, the angst of spiritual emptiness. "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it," said St. Paul of the body of believers (1 Corinthians 12.26); how could the Head of the body not suffer? He agonizes with His loved ones as any of His children do with theirs. "In all their distress, he too was distressed" (Isaiah 63.9), say the Hebrew scriptures of His relationship with His people; He "could bear Israel's misery no longer" (Judges 10.16). He was even agonized as a mother in labor: "Now, like a woman in childbirth, I cry out, I gasp and pant" (Isaiah 42.14). Muhammad likewise felt God's misery, saying in a Hadith, "I see what you do not see and I hear what you do not hear; heaven has groaned, and heaven has a right to groan."¹²

Not only does God feel the pain of every person, but this is ever amplified by His understanding of what could be—His unrealized vision for the beautiful world He intended. A parent grieves even more painfully over a child's mistakes and suffering than the child does, because the elder also knows more fully all the potential and hopes and dreams that have been lost.

Besides His pain arising from compassion, God's heart aches for the broken communion with His loved ones. He feels the pangs of joys lost, unable to fully share the lives and the loves of His myriad sons and daughters. This frustrated hope is what Asians call "han," the basis of what theologian Andrew Sung Park calls God's "wounded heart"¹³ and pastor Kazoh Kitamori calls "the pain of God."¹⁴ Scriptures reveal the pain of the Parent who has given all yet cannot connect with His children enough.

His love is largely unrequited. "The more I called Israel, the further they went from me . . ." (Hosea 11.2). This Hebrew verse captures the poignant lament of a heartbroken Father. "How often

I have longed to gather your children together,” He confesses to a rebellious world, “as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing” (Matthew 23.37). The parent is willing to give without end for the sake of her child, but joy is incomplete when love is not returned. Indeed, He is described as “grieved” over the wickedness and faithlessness of His children (Genesis 6.5-6).

A Christian from California recounts:

I've never really been very good at sharing my faith with people. Then one day I was walking down the street in Berkeley, California, and I saw this big poster of a missing child. That poster seemed to speak to me. I realized that God is missing all kinds of children. Day after day, He watches His children killing each other, robbing each other, crumbling down in loneliness and then going to hell. When I thought how I'd run around searching if my own child was missing, I realized I had to testify to my faith with more fervor to help God find His missing children.

Heart of Hope

Yet, God is also the fountain of hope. This is the third primary aspect of God's Heart—the hope in the restoration of His lost ideal. This is the power that overcomes the sorrow, disappointment, and grief. This is the force that sustains His awesome perseverance, laboring painstakingly and patiently through His representatives for the day of the great homecoming.

He fervently seeks every child who does not know Him. The Bible offers metaphors for the almighty Lord of the universe. One is the image of a poor woman desperately searching for a lost coin (Luke 15.8-10), as if the omnipotent One forgets all dignity in His urgent efforts to save His children. Another is that of a shepherd, leaving all of his flock to track down the missing one and rejoicing when it is found (Luke 15.4-7).

A parent would sacrifice anything and offer any amount of ransom if it would mean the liberation of his child from the bonds of captors. Likewise, God invests His whole heart and effort towards liberating man from the bondage of ignorance and the force of selfishness. God cannot rest until even those who have committed the most heinous of crimes repent and begin to cultivate their own hearts of original goodness.

Perhaps no image of the tender Creator is more poignant than that which Jesus painted in his story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15.11-32). The patriarch is revealed to be so aching for his wayward son as to have waited by the window in case he might someday return. He suffered to be separated from his son. When he first glimpses his returning son, the father forgets all decorum to run forward and greet him. He is beside himself with joy to have his son back, no matter what pain the young man caused. One could say the father is a willing slave to parental love.

God's heart is not essentially different. He allows Himself to be vulnerable to His children, to be captive to the same love that captivates them. "He is the Lord omnipotent, the Lord of all beings, the controller of all," the Hindu scripture reads, "yet he permits himself to be controlled by those who love him" (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.3)¹⁵—and by love itself.

Because of His unfailing faith in His people and His vision, God can endure the agony of seeing His faithful ones scorned and persecuted and to keep on working until every part of the original plan is realized. "He will not falter or be discouraged," the prophet Isaiah declared, "till he establishes justice on earth" (42.4). With the heart of the Father yet in the shoes of a servant, God perseveres to save His children, driven by His heart of hope.

The father who pays for his son's careless damage to another person's car, the mother who goes to the principal to ask for one more chance for her daughter, the father who stands with his boy in court and offers his own respectability as a hope for leniency, the mother who apologizes to a child her daughter has hurt—all share

the sorrow of God over the misbehavior of His children and all share the same hope: if they pay enough, pray enough, love enough, and try hard enough, eventually their children will respond to their sacrifice and love and will become responsible people in their own right. This is the hope of every parent. God, the Parent of all, is the same.

How the Heart Grows

It has been said above that the heart is like a garden, requiring cultivation. Cultivating the heart opens a person to God and His influence. The metaphor of the Garden of Eden comes to mind. When people yearn for a return to Eden, or a lost paradise, we may say that they are yearning for a return to a state of heart. Eden is a place of the heart—a place of purity and wonder, where God dwells with humankind in oneness and love, and where humans dwell with one another in peace and joy. How do we access the heart within and begin to dwell in the garden of the heart with God?

The heart is designed to grow naturally in other-centeredness through experiencing love in the family. Family relationships are paramount in the cultivation of heart and love. As will be explored in more detail in Part V, people experience four “realms of heart” in family life: as children, as brothers and sisters or friends, as a spouse and as a parent. These provide the natural environment and challenges for the heart to grow.

Yet, as previously noted, the love in the family was distorted in the beginning, burying the heart under layers of self-concern. As Reverend Moon says, “Due to the Fall, man lost three kinds of love: true parental love, true marital love, and true love of children. Due to the Fall, we were deprived of ideal families. Man was degraded from the original quality that was God’s expectation. We are not the way God would want us to be.”¹⁶

Religion is literally a “re-binding” of the severed ties with God, and its practices are to restore the love relationships that should occur naturally through and in families centered upon God. We will

study ways to “re-bind” the heart with God in the next section. For now, let it be said that the family is such an indestructible vessel of love that social scientists have thrown up their hands trying to find replacements for an institution that seems almost inherently dysfunctional. The power of the family to raise viable human beings has been diminished but not destroyed by the effects of the fall. The place where people learn the most about love in life—the place where their hearts’ urges are most nurtured and well-satisfied is still the family. God remains deeply vested in the family. Flawed as it may be by the distortion and misdirection of love, the family remains God’s indispensable instrument for schooling people in what it means to be human—what it means to live according to the loving dictates of the heart.

Besides the family, there are other means of accessing and cultivating the heart. We will cover a few of the major ones: Prayer and faith, loving others, following good mentors, service and suffering.

Ways to Cultivate the Heart

1. Prayer
2. Faith
3. Loving others
4. Loving family environment
5. Service
6. Suffering

1. Prayer

Prayer is a direct encounter with the greatest Heart of all, that of the Creator. The abstract “He and I” becomes an intimate “You and I” experience. Prayer is like pure oxygen for the heart. The source of the impulse to relatedness, God can renew our stores of care and concern that others need and deserve from us. Meeting with Him

enlarges and refreshes our perspective towards other people and the meaning of the tasks awaiting us. It clears the surroundings of the heart to bring others more clearly into focus. Receiving God's guidance, inspiration, or admonishment strengthens and enlarges what is original and true, while that which is false and petty melts away.

If we imagine the inner heart as being a muscle like its physical counterpart, then the divine encounter in prayer is as if God's great Heart enters one's own and forces the walls to expand outward. Our vision, scope of concern, and capacity for caring expand. When prayer ends, the heart tends to revert to its prior state, but it is never quite as small. Like a muscle, it is now a bit larger, stronger, more pliant and more readily stretched to contain God's love in the future. If prayer is frequent and accompanied by action, this effect occurs over and over until it becomes big enough for the divine Heart to become a permanent resident.

Of the many kinds of prayer, the most valuable from the standpoint of heart development is that which focuses on the needs of others, for this is the prayer of true love. "He who prays for his fellowman, while he himself has the same need, will be answered first," states the Talmud (Baba Kamma 92a).¹⁷ Another valuable prayer is one of offering something back to God. Thus, many religions emphasize praising God in prayer. The prayer of gratitude for a beautiful sunset, a rain-washed morning with an upcoming sun, children's laughter, birdsong—such a prayer goes like an arrow into the heart of God and brings forth an almost electric response. Reverend Moon has counseled that the way to feel closer to God is to practice offering thanks for all circumstances.

There are many kinds of other worthy offerings in prayer. Seeking to please and comfort the Creator—the way an elder child seeks to comfort a weary parent—may be particularly precious. "Let me help you with your burden, your cross"—what could be more touching for a parent to hear? About his ordeal in a North Korean prison camp, a punishment for preaching about God in a

Communist regime, Reverend Moon relates:

I never complained [in prayer]. I was never angry at my situation. I never even asked His help, but was always busy comforting Him and telling Him not to worry about me. The Father . . . already knew my suffering. How could I tell Him about my suffering and cause His heart to grieve still more? I could only tell Him that I would never be defeated by my suffering.¹⁸

2. *Faith*

It is faith that supplies much of the courage that allows us to “take heart” and continue trying, giving, and loving. Without faith, we “lose heart”; the heart closes down and hides itself. Faith represents belief in what is not yet apparent. In the words of St. Paul, faith is “being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see” (Hebrews 11.1). It is seeing the sun behind the impenetrable clouds and hearing the sweet birdsong of spring beyond the howling winds of winter. It means trusting in one’s own and others’ potential for goodness, the capacity to change for the better, and to grow in goodness. It entails confidence in heaven’s support and protection for worthy endeavors against all practical odds. It involves belief in the power of true love, just as such love “always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres” (1 Corinthians 13.7).

The practice of faith fortifies the heart’s ability to lead with its unique sensibilities. This means practicing trust in one’s intuition, taking a measure of risk to pursue an inner prompting. Sometimes it entails believing in people when there are good reasons not to. Blaise Pascal said, “The heart has reasons that reason knows not of.”¹⁹ Taking the risk toward loving others in the faith that they, like oneself, have a heart that yearns for connection is almost always affirmed by the response of the other.

3. *Loving Others*

A most basic mode of cultivating the heart is to have warm relationships with a wide range of people. This is commonplace in traditional cultures, where extended family and village life bring the individual into constant contact with all age ranges and personalities. Between siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles and grandparents, every age from infant to the very elderly is represented, and there is little opportunity to restrict oneself only to peers. Because one also cannot readily escape those with challenging personalities, people learn how to get along and through time may learn to appreciate the value of types of people they don't have a natural affinity for.

Expanding one's parameters of love is always a heart-growing experience. Approaching neighbors for a conversation is sometimes a real challenge to the heart. It has been said in modern times, "we can put a man on the moon but can't walk across the street to greet a neighbor." Talking one-on-one with respect and ease to a person from another race, another culture, another background, is an exercise in heart-stretching.

Sometimes the institution of marriage is a place where a person is called upon to love in places and ways he or she never thought possible before. Often, people find day-to-day life with another person to be very different from what they imagined when they first wed. Learning to love someone of the opposite sex, who is very different in physical, emotional, and mental make-up, is a heart-stretching opportunity. As mentioned earlier, all the relationships in the family are opportunities to gain new ground in different "realms of the heart" (See Chapters 14-18).

The greatest expansion of the heart is to love someone who has acted like an enemy. Indeed, sometimes people we initially dislike and have conflict with wind up being our best friends as the excitement of the heart's expansion overwhelms us. One woman had such an experience with a neighbor:

Her children had been rude to my children numerous times when we were new in the neighborhood, and she herself was unfriendly. For a long time, we never waved to one another or greeted one another. Finally, I decided to love her in spite of it all. When I raised my leaden arm to greet her, it was hard, but when she smiled back, it was like electricity. I got a jolt of joy far exceeding anything I felt when I greeted my other neighbors. All I wanted to do was greet her again and again and again. I loved her!

4. Loving Family Environment

Hearts are also cultivated through imitating noble examples. Parents, teachers and other elders and superiors play the most meaningful roles in this.²⁰ Adolescents for example look to their parents and grandparents for values far more than to pop stars, politicians, sports figures or religious leaders.²¹ The teaching and example of parents and other authorities are a potent force shaping conscience (see Chapter 5), but their influence is of a slightly different kind regarding the heart.

Research points to the fact that young people pick up the moral feelings of their parents more than their words. For example, when young Jessica heard her father talk about respecting the national flag when they took it off their family flagpole, that was one thing. But seeing her normally stoic father cry when the flag was hoisted up during a town ceremony was something else. What people important to us feel passionate about registers strongly. They model to us what one should care about and thus help shape our hearts. Some of this takes place unconsciously. Altruistic and kindly people grow to be that way through warm and loving relationships with their parents and through observing the consideration and kindness their parents show toward them and toward one another. A loving home environment nourishes and grows the heart of a child so that he or she grows up to be a trusting and giving person in future life.

5. *Service*

Service is a powerful instrument for conditioning the heart. Religion has prescribed it as a vehicle for spiritual growth for millennia, and it is being newly discovered in schools as character building. Its impact has several dimensions. It fosters empathy, through contact with another who is in need and experiencing a common humanity. It cultivates a sense of personal value and meaning. Some experience themselves tangibly as instruments of divine love and assistance in the lives of the ones being helped. It counteracts false pride, when in the course of service a person finds herself doing what she had considered menial or lowly work. It also has a magical power to bring participants into oneness of heart, as they see each other being used for goodness in this way.

Those serving perceive how others may suffer more than themselves and this engenders gratitude. They notice how others suffer apparently unfairly, and this provokes a healthy soul-searching to make meaning of this and decide how to respond to this larger issue. They witness how some may bear their sufferings nobly, and this brings admiration and humility. It is a rare person engaged in service who does not affirm the statement, "I received more than I gave." What one receives is a life-giving, heart-stretching experience.

6. *Suffering*

Suffering is another way to develop the heart. Everyone experiences suffering in life. What people do with their suffering determines how it affects their hearts. Suffering can either embitter a person, making him or her resentful and angry for years on end, or it can refine the character into one of shining beauty, revealing and strengthening the heart.

Suffering can be a great teacher—perhaps the greatest teacher—but only if the person is able to make meaning out of suffering. The twentieth century witnessed a crisis of meaning that shook the world to its foundations. One of Reverend Moon's greatest con-

tributions and greatest strengths is that of a meaning-maker. Born during a famine, undergoing Japanese occupation of his country and being arrested and tortured as a resistance fighter, he then experienced a communist takeover of his native land and was imprisoned and tortured by the communists for talking about God in public. The Korean War claimed most of his relatives, and he fled South as a refugee, only to be so poor as to have to live in a house made out of U.S. army ration boxes. "As I look back," he said, "I am reminded that my life has never been easy. My life has been intertwined with the suffering history of our people and the numerous difficulties that our people have undergone in the midst of the great powers."²² Yet he found meaning in all this suffering. Korea, he felt, had a special message about God's suffering heart to give to the world. If his and his country's suffering could be offered to God, it could pay the price for a rebirth of religion.

The great religious leaders all suffered, and their hearts were anointed by God because of their sufferings. Making meaning out of suffering—offering it to God and using it to identify with His sorrows and the sorrows of humanity—plunges through the layers of distortion and selfishness encasing the heart and brings forth its fountains of true love.

These are but a few examples of how the heart grows. Growing the garden of the heart may require a lifetime of investment, but no goal could be more worthwhile. Growing the heart enables a person to practice true love, which is the fulcrum of a fulfilling life. Because of its centrality to human existence, educating the heart in true love should be a prime concern.

However, trying to develop the heart without the guidance of the conscience may easily lead down the road of following the emotions rather than the heart. The heart needs the conscience and also the will—the taking of responsibility through action—to pump life into its growth. While the heart is ascendant, it cannot be developed properly without the aids of the conscience and the will.

Chapter 5

Strengthening the Conscience

*The entity that represents my parents,
my teacher, my God, is the conscience.*
—Sun Myung Moon

Drawn to others by the heart, people need guidance as to the proper forms that love should take and what are its proper expressions. The inner guide to channel love properly is the conscience. If love “rejoices in the truth” in the words of St. Paul (1 Corinthians 13.6) then the conscience is an important ally in realizing a life of true love—love that benefits others and is in accordance with God’s ways.

The conscience is the inborn agent of divine discernment. It is a compelling sense that drives people to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, worthy and unworthy, and greater and lesser goods. It acts as an innate moral compass that points “true North” despite the magnetic pull of competing forces. The conscience is what moves human beings toward their divine nature and leads them to think beyond short-sighted self-interest.

“Conscience is God’s presence in man,” said scientist and mystic Emanuel Swedenborg. Most religions recognize this inborn goodness of human beings and hold some understanding of a divine spark, original innocence, and a mind or seed of heavenly character within people. St. Paul speaks of those unfamiliar with religion

or formal moral teachings as having “the requirements of the law . . . written on their hearts” (Romans 2.15).

The conscience is active in everyone. Law-breakers have turned themselves in because they could not live with themselves due to this faculty. Even the most unrepentant psychopaths, who have committed heinous crimes, still feel the force of conscience, for they still tend to rationalize their actions as justified, right, and good. A study by David Farrington and Donald West showed that criminals said they would be very angry if their own children committed a crime.¹ They want their children taught right from wrong, and they want their children to adhere to the right.

Some have asserted that the conscience is merely the result of what others teach us and is therefore relative. Psychology generally views the conscience as resultant, the product of social conditioning. One can readily discern the admonishments of one’s parents and authority figures in the voice of the conscience. The voice of conscience is indeed mediated by culture and other relative factors.

Yet others, like anthropologist James Q. Wilson, assert that there is a “moral sense” within human beings that is found worldwide. What Wilson finds worthy of note is not the fact that some people are not peaceable, honest, friendly, helpful and law-abiding, but that the vast majority of people are.² The only explanation he can find is that there is indeed a moral sense that governs human behavior from within.

The presence of an innate sense of right and wrong was corroborated by Jean Piaget’s observations of children. He found an innate sense of justice at play in the children’s dealings with one another, about which he said, “The sense of justice, though naturally capable of being reinforced by precepts and practical examples of the adult, is largely independent of those influences.”³

Reverend Moon speaks of an original core of conscience that allows each person to “hear moral laws and . . . feel and touch the heart of God with your mind.”⁴ Through the conscience we are created to know the divine will at all times. In the midst of all the

vicissitudes of our feelings, thoughts, and lives, it is a steady and reliable receptor of promptings from Heaven and as such, is a precious faculty.

“If you obey the orders of your conscience,” Reverend Moon has also said, “you can become the direct son or daughter of God.”⁵ All around us, and all throughout time, individuals have been moved to be obedient in this way, sometimes at great cost to themselves. Some are held up as great inspiring examples, such as Thomas More in the Christian tradition, who defied King Henry VIII of England for the sake of his faith and was executed for it. Many others no doubt go unnoticed by their contemporaries, but through such as these, God has been refining and elevating human sensibilities over the centuries. As the most morally mature individuals grasp some deeper nuances of God’s absolute standard, culture advances and socializes individuals in higher and higher ethical codes that more and more resemble the unchanging original nature of the conscience.⁶

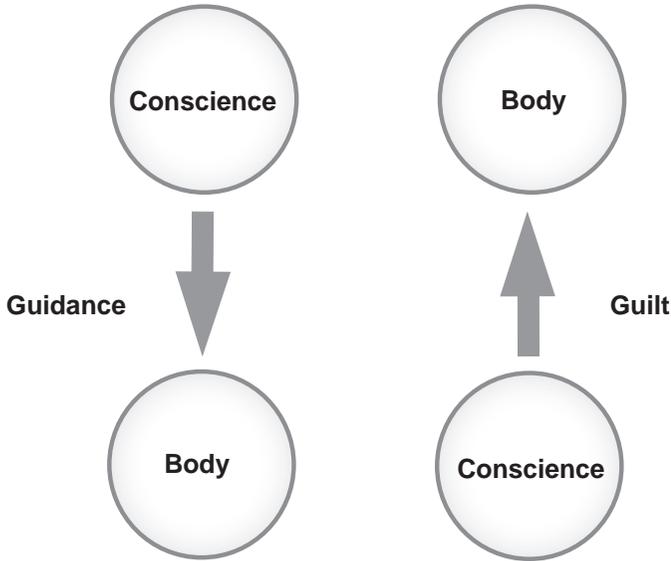
Positive and Negative Functions

Central to the conscience is a sense of duty and obligation. This functions in two modes. The first function of the conscience is to proactively and consistently point toward goodness and warn against potentially destructive behavior. It urges people to live for the benefit of others and to align their behavior with the highest ideals and the will of the Creator.

The second function is reactive and negative. Emotional distress, remorse, and empathy for the victim—the guilt and “pangs” of conscience—arise after a transgression. This guilt, notes one encyclopedia, is a “complex experience of a sense of judgment, unworthiness, self-depreciation and estrangement from God, others and self.”⁷

Guilt is a warning that an inner standard has been broken, a universal principle has been violated, a sin has been committed. Its purpose is to prompt a quick correction so that the individual can

return to personal integrity and harmony with his or her own original nature. Like the buzzer that prompts a driver to wear his seat belt, the conscience's "safety feature" goes off and we feel uncomfortable.



Positive and Negative Functions of the Conscience

When self-centered thinking dominates us, Reverend Moon has described this as the body dragging around a protesting conscience. In order to feel peace, happiness and well-being, a person must make her actions at one with her conscience.

This is not always easy, and sometimes the conscience can seem like a painful burden to bear. Acutely aware of the existence of the conscience, humorist Mark Twain wrote a fable in which his conscience appeared personified as an elfin creature, a convenient scapegoat for Twain's constant moral discomfort with smoking, cursing, and all his other vices. In the story, Twain rose up and killed his conscience. Finally, he enjoyed perfect freedom from all

inner restraint. He then says he went on a crime spree, doing anything he liked for his own pleasure, without a twinge of remorse. Dispatching anyone who annoyed him, he even burned down a neighbor's house that obstructed his view.⁸ The satire captures both the civilizing effect of the conscience as well as people's ambivalence about its "helpfulness."

Challenges to the Conscience

At the same time, the voice of the conscience is filtered through all the confines and corruptions of a world far from what humans need for optimal moral and spiritual growth. The net effect is that the conscience is commonly overridden and disobeyed, its influence weakened. "Conscience is thoroughly well-bred and soon leaves off talking to those who do not wish to hear it," quipped author Samuel Butler. These challenges confronting the conscience can be categorized as the problems of misdirected love, predominance of body over mind, and ignorance of truth—roughly corresponding to the three faculties of emotion, will and intellect.

Misdirected Love

All too often, people's self-love overrides their consciences. The little prompting to sweep the neighbor's walk, to help the lady with the groceries in the rain, to give more money to the underprivileged, all get buried as self-concern holds its sway. "I'd be too embarrassed to do that," "I don't have time," "I need that money for my own kids" become a person's self-talk, and the conscience is overridden. Love and concern for the neighbor is subsumed by love and concern for the self—misdirected love—and the good deeds never get done.

Another illustration of the power of misdirected love is negative peer pressure. Because the heart naturally impels people to want others' approval, it sometimes overrides the conscience in order to keep love for itself. It becomes challenging to resist arguments from

loved ones and esteemed associates to do what one feels in one's innermost self is wrong. When a parent gossips about the immigrant family who just moved in, when a friend at school hands in a paper she copied from the Internet, when a married colleague voices his sexual fantasies about a female co-worker—these are small but potentially potent ways to mute the conscience in order not to jeopardize the self and to keep the close relationships one enjoys intact.

Body over the Mind

Related to the power of love is what religious tradition calls the “pull of the flesh”—the acquired tendency of the body to dominate the mind, to neutralize the public-mindedness of the conscience.⁹ To bestir the body to sacrifice in order to help others is sometimes a real battle, and unless it is won, the conscience is forced into a perpetually negative mode, constantly protesting its violation. It is only too easy to choose the path of least resistance and not do the good things the conscience urges, especially when doing them means a sacrifice of physical comfort. “Do you understand the situation of the conscience,” asks Reverend Moon, “that has been trampled upon by the body for an entire lifetime?”¹⁰

When people disobey their consciences' urgings in order to preserve their physical comfort, it usually causes strife within them, which then translates into strife with others. To justify their own inaction and get away from the conflict they feel inside, people tend to accuse the people they have not bestirred themselves to help. They tell themselves that people suffering from poverty in the Third World are that way because of some sort of inferiority. They should pull themselves up by their bootstraps, as the person fancies he or she has done. Homeless people are not suffering from mental or emotional illness; they are merely lazy. As soon as a person's physical comfort zone overrides his or her conscience to help others, he or she tends to accuse, blame, and put down the very others who are in need of help, not criticism. The conscience

is quelled, but the price is inner uneasiness and less regard for others than before.

Lack of Moral Truth

The third key difficulty is ignorance about true human nature and moral law. The conscience can be obscured by learned standards that directly oppose its moral absolutes. Thus, the experience of one's conscience can be misguided by false or limited belief systems, negative attitudes, and cultural factors. The most dangerous form of distorted conscience is one that has been hijacked by a flawed ideology that channels all one's most noble motives in service to a lie, and elaborately clothes the most heinous violations of basic moral law with righteous justifications. The colossal horrors of Marxism, Nazism, and the Inquisition are illustrations. The vicious murder and oppression of countless innocent people can be construed and justified by a hijacked conscience as necessary sacrifices towards a worthy end.

Moral Blindness or Chronic Guilt

Whether due to love, instinct or moral confusion, where its voice is repeatedly ignored, the conscience can become so dulled that it fails to register even the grossest violations of moral law. In fact, even basic morality can come to seem remote and strange. When its "warning voice has been suppressed and perverted habitually," wrote Robert J. Little, "instead of serving as a guide," the conscience "only confirms the person" in the wrong he intends to do. Examples include sociopaths at one extreme, and at the other, more ordinary persons who have a moral blind spot in a certain area. The cop who daily risked his life for his neighbors yet allowed himself to routinely filch from confiscated drug money, and the conscientious professor who nevertheless rationalizes occasional affairs with her students, are illustrations of such blind spots.

Yet in most if not all cases, the violated conscience continues to have its say, making it impossible to escape the harvest of self-judgment—guilt, shame, fear and other psychological and spiritual consequences. In some cases, the guilt is buried outside of conscious awareness, where it still leads to insecurity, anxiety, and sometimes even paranoia, which in turn prompts a compensating sense of superiority, an eagerness to accuse and punish others, a craving for power and control, and other efforts to cope. Entire personas can be erected and elaborately defended in reaction to this betrayal of the conscience.¹¹

In other cases, the reaction is the exact opposite. The sense of guilt and unworthiness is instead amplified, fed by self-accusation, and there is an insatiable desire to be punished. The effect is crushing pain and despair. In either case, such unfortunates certainly dwell in their own hells even as they wreak havoc in the lives of others. A variation of problems with the conscience is chronic guilt. This renders the conscience worse than useless, like a car alarm that triggers at every disturbance or even will not turn off. Gloria, raised in a quiet home, feels conscience-stricken to have raised her voice to her co-worker, even though her colleague deliberately humiliated her in front of her son. Manny cannot shake his guilt over leaving his former gang and breaking his vows of loyalty, even though he realizes how wrong the gang and its activities are. Haruko is paralyzed with remorse over an abortion she had 10 years earlier.

This kind of overactive voice of conscience is less a matter of real guilt than a morbid obsession with guilt.¹² A measurable result of chronic guilt is a weakened immune system and ill health due to stress.¹³ Guilt also has a constricting effect on a person's life, destroying self-respect and isolating and alienating him or her from healthy community. These leave the individual more vulnerable to further temptations towards destructive pursuits. Catholic authorities call it "overscrupulosity."

Conflicting Moral Obligations

The most common challenges people face in following their consciences are not the dramatic confrontations between virtue and depravity but rather dealing with the tension between two relative goods. For example, there is the clash between love of neighbor and care for one's family. Judy, a young mother, was walking to school to pick up her children when approached by an elderly neighbor using a cane. The neighbor asked her to walk her home, saying that her nurse was sick for the day. Judy was torn by the request, because she was already a few minutes late to get her children. Still, she knew she ought to serve her neighbor. Despite her annoyance, she helped the woman. Later, with her children safely home, Judy's heart flooded with feelings of lightness and pride. Her choice to serve her neighbor was in accord with her conscience, which gives priority to the greater purpose. She felt its reward as a deep inner satisfaction.

Conflicts between one good and another are especially difficult when they arise in relation to one's faith tradition, usually the most powerful moral authority in one's life. What does an individual do when he finds himself at odds with the moral authority of his religious community and its teaching? Picking and choosing of doctrines to disregard does not always represent a carefully made moral decision as much as a rationalized convenience.

Yet Reverend Moon has said that the conscience warrants complete allegiance: "You have to absolutely serve and attend it as the representative of God."¹⁴ In the final analysis, after an individual has thoughtfully and prayerfully weighed the issues and sought the truth, he or she has the duty to follow his or her conscience: "I may be wrong, but I am convinced that I should do this."¹⁵ This does not necessarily ensure the right decision, but it is the only way for the individual to maintain integrity and be available to the divine voice within. Thomas Aquinas went so far as to declare that if the church, "in ignorance of true facts, imposes a demand that offends against the 'clear conscience,'" a person should rather choose to

forfeit salvation than to violate his or her conscience.¹⁶

A literary example of this is the fictional character Huck Finn in Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Having cast his lot in with a runaway slave, Huck is torn about the rightness of his actions in protecting Jim from capture. The society he knows and even the churches of his hometown would tell him that slavery is right and that he is wrong, even sinful, to aid and abet a runaway slave. His socialized conscience bothers him about going against the dicta of society. Yet, on the deepest level, Huck feels incapable of betraying Jim. He remembers Jim's kindness and loyalty, and he decides to go ahead and liberate Jim from slavery, no matter what the consequences in this world or the next: "I was a trembling, because I'd got to decide, forever, betwixt two things, and I knowed it. I studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then says to myself, 'All right, then, I'll go to hell.'" From then on, everything Huck does is to protect and liberate Jim.¹⁷

Strengthening the Voice of Conscience

Though the God-given conscience at its core is an absolute and reliable guide to right and wrong, accessing it, integrating it into one's habits of thought and action, and applying it to the challenges of daily life all require learning and reinforcement. In other words, as Father Moon has stated, "The conscience does not need to undergo education of any kind,"¹⁸ but the conscience does need to be accessed and fortified, especially through practice. This requires several key factors: training the body to obey the mind, keeping rules, moral mentors, the study of truth and the enhancement of moral reasoning, transparency and confession, and an understanding of grace.

Ways to Strengthen the Conscience

1. Discipline of the body
2. Obedience to rules
3. Emulation of examples
4. Study of truth
5. Enhancement of moral reasoning
6. Transparency and confession
7. Understanding of grace and forgiveness

1. Discipline of the Body

Like a physical muscle, the conscience is best strengthened through exercise. Similarly, the best way to reinforce any impulse is to act upon it. From another perspective, practice is what amplifies the voice of conscience and what incorporates moral truth into the character. “That knowledge is very superficial which remains only on your tongue: the intrinsic merit and value of knowledge is that you act up to it,” states an Islamic text (Nahjul Balagha, Saying 90).¹⁹ The Bible declares, “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” (James 1.22).

Acting in response to the dictates of the conscience is its most powerful reinforcement. It brings about the desirable spiritual state of mind and body unity, described in Chapter 9 as essential to an authentic life of goodness and true love. Awareness of the importance of mind and body unity helps the person overcome too-strong desires for food, sex, sleep, and material comforts. The person who can put off dinner to sympathetically listen to a friend’s plight over the phone, the man who decides against acting upon the strong attraction he feels to his wife’s best friend, the woman who pulls herself out of a deep sleep to respond to her child’s cries in the night are all answering the conscience’s call to serve others over the self. Making it a practice to deny the body all of its immediate wants and needs until they can be filtered through the conscience as to their correctness is the path to a peaceful life filled with true love.

2. *Obedience to Rules*

If obedience to the promptings of the conscience is the goal, then conformity to rules and requirements in one's environment is fundamental training. Conversely, if one is accustomed to "bending the rules" when convenient, then the signals from the conscience will be similarly disregarded. This is one reason why parents instinctively press upon their children the importance of following their instructions. Teachers enforce classroom decorum and responsibility for assignments through rules: "No talking out of turn," "Keep your hands and feet to yourself," "Homework must be turned in on time or a lower grade will result."

Though parental and social conditioning is not perfect, it has much in common with the innate norms within the conscience. Following appropriate rules and regulations such that they become automatic helps a person to do the same with these inner norms. The effect is to align the person with the truth of his or her nature.

Rules strengthen the mind's power over the body. The body may be urging a person strongly toward overindulgence in some form, but rules in different forms—a diet, a budget, a code of fidelity, the setting of an alarm clock for a certain time each morning—all help to keep one's body, and subsequently one's life, under control.

3. *Emulation of Examples*

A potent force in empowering the conscience is the example of respected people, especially parents. People of every age inevitably imitate those with whom they are emotionally involved, for better or worse. Parents, as the first moral teachers, have a great deal of influence in shaping the responsiveness of the young to their consciences. Their edicts—"Don't be rude at the table," "Do send a thank you note"—are so internalized within the voice of the conscience that secular psychologists mistook them for the sum total of the inner moral compass, as discussed above. More than words, however, practice is important. The parents' good examples speak volumes to the children about how to live their lives. A father who

is an honest businessman sets his children on the path toward honesty for the rest of their lives. His example resounds in their consciences as a vivid display of how they should act. A mother who brings food gifts to new neighbors, introduces her family, and treats the newcomers as welcomed and valued additions to the community engrains in her children a portrait of goodness and other-centeredness they will find natural to imitate in later life.

Heroic stories and tales of the lives of saints exert a considerable exemplary influence through the imagination. As readers identify with a character who struggles to do the right thing, they are vicariously exercising their moral will and shaping their moral identity. This is the rationale behind the popular Christian slogan “WWJD”—what would Jesus do? Research confirms that reminding oneself of such an inspiring example does enhance moral and loving action.²⁰

Moral mentors are not always in a vertical relationship; equally important is having friends and colleagues that support the conscience. If “birds of a feather” do indeed “flock together” as the saying goes, then individuals are wise when they take advantage of the power of peer pressure to consciously select the people they spend time with. Though choice of friends naturally revolves around common interests and mutual enjoyment, shared values are a key consideration. One of the greatest services one’s friend can do for another is to support him or her in being true to the conscience.

4. Study of Truth

Studying moral truth is a time-tested way to amplify the voice of the conscience. Regular study of God’s Word is a universally encouraged among the world religions. “O how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long,” cries the Psalmist (119.97). “This is your path to the world of good deeds,” declares the Hindu scripture (Mundaka Upanishad 1.2.1).²¹ “All Scripture,” states the Bible, is valuable “for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for

every good work" (Timothy 3.16-17).

The study of scripture helps overcome the ignorance Reverend Moon has said was a result of the original ancestors' faithlessness: "Considered from the viewpoint of the intellect, the human Fall represents humanity's descent into ignorance."²² Catholic theology calls this the "invincible ignorance"—the deadness to natural moral law—that arises from humanity's fallen condition. In Genesis, the primordial separation from God involved the earliest ancestors' rebellion of the divine commandment. One result of this rebellion was the loss of easy access to truth that could inform and guide the conscience. We now have to make considerable effort to absorb and digest scripture and wisdom literature. This is all part of fulfilling St. Paul's exhortation: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12.2).

It is helpful to read the words of scriptures aloud, because the spoken word—as a manifestation of the spiritual into the material world—has enhanced power. Even subliminally, beyond the point where the rational mind can continue to take it in, the simple and regular reading of the words has a cleansing and conditioning effect. Similarly, learning to recite pithy adages that may originate in scripture or cultural wisdom may become the medium by which the conscience speaks to us. Like sacred scripture, such time-tested axioms guide the conscience in times of need.

It helps to be mindful of the metaphysical dimension of scriptural study. The reading of God's Word attracts His spirit and thus naturally creates a pure and beautiful spiritual atmosphere. This atmosphere is both protective and nourishing.

5. Enhancement of Moral Reasoning

The original nature of the conscience to speak clearly is affected by factors of maturation. One such factor is the capacity for moral reasoning, the fruit of both cognitive and emotional development. Since the body tends to dominate the mind, the power of good rea-

soning can counteract the pervasive bias towards short-sighted self-interest that sabotages the voice of conscience.

Though even young children experience their conscience as a visceral reality, their limited ability to empathize and share in another's perspective as well as their incapacity to think logically can obscure the voice of their conscience and lead to many moral mistakes. Simply growing up solves many of these limitations, but the honing of moral reasoning requires more. Elders and peers can stimulate better reasoning in this area by challenging immature thinking. "I didn't see what could be wrong with me borrowing a video from the school library without checking it out," says Miranda, 14, "until my mother asked me, 'Well, what if everybody did that? What if a video you wanted was gone and nobody could track down who had it or when it would come back?' That made sense. And I could feel my conscience agreeing!"

Appropriate questions can stimulate higher moral reasoning, even when asked of oneself. The goal is to make a compelling appeal to one's highest level of intellectual, emotional, or spiritual development and specifically to prompt the effort to take the perspective of others affected by what one is doing or considering to do. The example cited above is the familiar: What if everyone did this? Would that be fair? Would you like to live in such a society? Would that contribute to a world of true love? Another common example is, How would you feel if someone did that to you?

6. *Transparency and Confession*

A life of honesty and transparency allows the conscience optimal freedom to operate. It not only protects the conscience, but it also liberates the individual from the fear of being found out.

Such a practice is a long-standing and universal tradition. "If one hides the evil, it adds and grows. If one bares it and repents, the sin dies out. Therefore," states a Buddhist scripture, "the wise do not hide sin" (Mahaparinirvana Sutra 560).²³ Hinduism has a similar prescription to relieve the burdened conscience: "By public con-

fession, repentance, penance . . . the sinner gets released from guilt” (Laws of Manu 11.228-30).²⁴ Confucianist literature advises similarly that the individual who finds he has made a mistake, “must not be afraid of admitting the fact” (Analects 1.8.4).²⁵

The early Christian church practiced this kind of open confession with one another. This was the basis of the warm fellowship that closed the meeting and characterized the early community of believers,²⁶ and why the Bible encourages us to, “confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed” (James 5.16).

Thus, the best response to recognition of having done something immoral and unloving is to confess it to oneself, to God, and to at least one other person. That person becomes a representative of other people who may have been hurt by the offense, and this may lead to confessing to them as well. The importance of this kind of transparency is to live “in the light” and deal with spiritual and moral errors head-on and not allow them to continue to do damage.

7. *Understanding of Grace and Forgiveness*

A solid understanding and experience of grace and divine forgiveness is essential for a healthy relationship with the conscience. Guilt pangs are meant to be short-lived. Their purpose is to lead us to correct whatever transgression is being committed as soon as possible, to make amends and ultimately seek forgiveness from all those hurt by the mistake—God, other people, oneself.

Believing in the possibility of parental and divine forgiveness and having the ability to forgive oneself are requirements for the conscience to function properly. So is knowing how to repent fully—turning from the mistake, reversing direction and making amends—in order to bear what one resource calls “the proper fruit of repentance: getting up and going on without wallowing in self-recrimination.”²⁷

Many Christians have had the experience of being “born again” through Jesus Christ. This infusion of divine grace involves a com-

plete cleansing of sin—a wiping clean of the slate of one's life—so that one can start anew. Such total renewal and clearing away of debt gives a person a new lease on life, and the conscience sparkles and speaks with new clarity and force, now that all the layers of deceit, self-deception, untruths, skepticism, humiliation, and guilt have been wiped away. The image of God, a synonym for conscience, is revealed in the person, and he or she works to keep it clean from then on by listening to its directions and attempting to live up to its standards.

As Reverend Moon has said: “Your conscience always speaks out for your own benefit. It is trying to connect you to true love.”²⁸ Though the promptings of the conscience may challenge people at times, the conscience is a fine instrument and an absolute necessity to point humankind toward goodness.

Chapter 6

Maturing Through Responsibility

*Accomplishing one's portion of responsibility is the only
path to the perfection of character.*
—Sun Myung Moon

Action, as we have stated, embeds the promptings of the heart and conscience into a person's being. Responding to the heart's urge to seek joy through loving, choosing and channeling one's loving actions through the right-and-wrong barometer of the conscience, and exerting the will to take the right actions is the process by which virtues become written into a person's being and the person matures in the ability to love truly.

If love is the *raison d'être* of human existence, responsibility aids people in the development of its requisite qualities. It is hard to imagine someone claiming to love a child, for instance, yet refusing to take the responsibility to provide for that child's needs through sacrifice and service. A husband who refused to take responsibility to be faithful to his wife could not be considered a loving husband. A friend who is on-again off-again, or who deserts one in time of need, would not be considered the kind of friend a person could give his or her heart to in trust. Love is a matter of character, and character grows into maturity through taking responsibility.

As Aristotle said, "Men become builders by building and lyre-players by playing the lyre; so too we become just by doing just

acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts.”¹ We become people of character through the taking of responsibility to become so through what we do.

Responsibility is a rudder to steer a person into a life of goodness and morality. Character educator Thomas Lickona boiled virtues education down to the two major ones of “Respect” and “Responsibility.”² He said that educators had found again and again that these two main rubrics covered all of the virtues. Responsibility is indeed a major umbrella virtue. It encompasses the development of most other virtues. Responsibility is pivotal to a fulfilled life.

Therefore, it may be seen as a gift from God. It is given for the enhancement of human beings, so that they may be participants in their own creation. Reverend Moon has said that if God intervened too much in humankind’s responsibility, their “honor and dignity would be nullified.”³ As the common saying goes, “What you are is God’s gift to you. What you become is your gift to God.” It is our responsibility, together with God, to create ourselves into the types of persons we want and were meant to be. This responsibility is immutable, and people do well to be aware of it so as to participate optimally in fashioning their own destinies.

Unique to Being Human

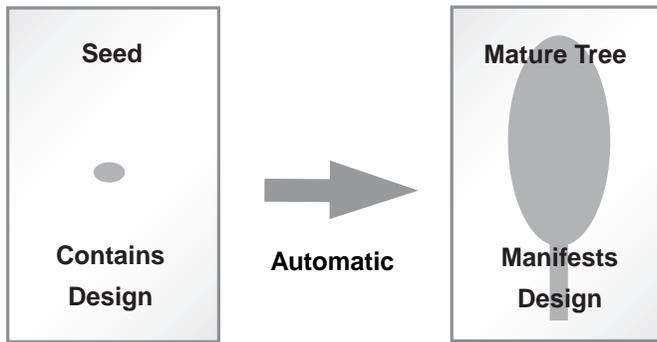
Human beings are unique in nature in that they exercise responsibility in the course of their development. This is related to their capacity to love, a capacity that surpasses all of the rest of creation. As noted above, responsibility is an important part of building the virtuous foundations to be able to love truly. Human beings—alone among all creatures—are endowed with it, because they are the direct images and children of God.

With animals and plants, growth is automatic. A seed germinates and becomes a sprout, a growing sapling, and finally becomes a mature tree yielding fruit. The design of the mature tree lies latent within the seed. As long as the proper nutrients are supplied—sunlight, water, clean air, and rich soil—growth follows according to

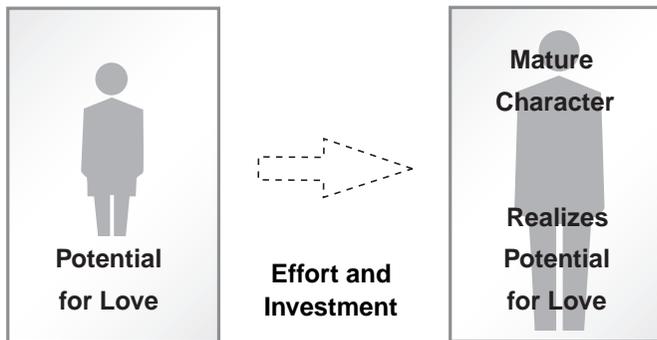
the seed's innate design and the laws of nature. Animals likewise grow to maturity and bear offspring according to the innate pattern written into their genes and unfolding in their instinctive drives.

The human body forms as an embryo in the womb, grows through the childhood years, and eventually matures physically into an adult. As far as this process goes, the proper nutrients will automatically bring the human body to maturity just as they do plants and animals.

Growth in Nature



Growth of Human Character



Human Development Requires Responsibility

The inner aspect of a human being—character—however, is very different. Although a person possesses innate faculties—the heart and conscience—that guide his or her development, they need to be nurtured by the input of parents and significant others. They must be guided and awakened. As the person grows, the response to this input becomes more and more a matter of choice and will, more and more a matter of personal responsibility. It is through this taking of responsibility that human beings co-create themselves into what they will become. It is how they mature themselves spiritually.

As C. S. Lewis said:

Every time you make a choice, you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different from what it was before. And, taking your life as a whole, with all your innumerable choices, all your life long you are slowly turning this central thing either into a Heavenly creature or into a hellish creature—either into a creature that is in harmony with God, and with other creatures, and with itself, or else into one that is in a state of war and hatred with God, and with its fellow creatures and with itself. To be the one kind of creature is Heaven: that is, it is joy, and peace, and knowledge, and power. To be the other means madness, horror, idiocy, rage, impotence, and eternal loneliness. Each of us at each moment is progressing to the one state or the other.⁴

Through the office of responsibility, human beings are masters and mistresses of their own destinies, no matter what. How they choose to respond to circumstances—whatever those circumstances may be—determines the type of people they will be. Evidence of the irreducibility of this divine gift of “response-ability” may be found in, of all places, Hitler’s concentration camps. Former prisoner Viktor Frankl tells us:

We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.⁵

I Am Responsible

Confucius remarked, “In the practice of archery we have something resembling the principle in a moral man's life. When the archer misses the center of the target, he turns round and seeks for the cause of his failure within himself” (Doctrine of the Mean 14).⁶ People are responsible in relationships to behave as lovingly and morally as they possibly can, the other person notwithstanding. When things go wrong, it is important to look inside oneself for at least part of the cause. Often, we find that being unable to love another person has more to do with us than with them.

A man named Rick tells an illustrative story about being in a seminar with two men he came to dislike intensely. Though there was nothing he could put his finger on, there was something about the way they tilted their heads, the lines of their mouths, that Rick did not like. At the end of the seminar, group photos were taken, and to his annoyance, Rick was asked to stand right next to the pair. The photographer made an arresting comment. He said that the three of them looked a good deal alike. Indeed, when Rick thought about it, he realized that there was a strong resemblance both between the two friends and himself.

This led him to ponder upon how he might be more like these men than he wanted to admit. In time, he realized that he was projecting onto them qualities that he disliked in himself—without really knowing them at all.⁷

Often we project onto others motives, qualities of character, and inner attitudes that are not there at all. It is our responsibility to continually clean our “filter” of others—to take the log out of our eyes—so that we can see others as they really are and love them. This is an important part of maturity.

All of us think we know each other well. We look at one another through squinting eyes, appraising and deciding about one another—judging one another from the few scraps of “evidence” we have picked up from our observations. Yet this “evidence” is filtered through our own needs, fears, hopes, and secret shames. We don’t know one another. Not really. It is our responsibility to admit that and to deal with the only person we really do know—ourselves.

Responsibility for Oneself

“I” can only control “myself,” not others. A person can only be responsible for his or her reactions and responses, but he or she is totally responsible for that, even if others are failing in their responsibilities. For instance, a highly motivated salesman noted that the sales manager did not notify him about an important season kick-off meeting until the very morning of the meeting. The sales manager apologized and gave reasons, but the lapse was so strong, the salesman felt he shouldn’t even be expected to go to the meeting. In fact, he wanted to make a statement of protest by not going. Soon, however, his feelings changed. He cared about the company, he believed in their products, and he cared about the camaraderie with other salespeople established at such meetings. He decided that it was his responsibility to attend the meeting, regardless of whether the sales manager had lived up to his responsibility to inform others of the meeting in a timely manner or not. Reverend Moon would say that such people will eventually become leaders or managers themselves due to their ability to take responsibility.

Taking responsibility in relationships with others means guarding and regarding one’s own soul, even when others are being difficult. In spite of provocation, each person is responsible to hold

him- or herself back from unloving words and actions and to give love in spite of it all. Sometimes even when the other person has clearly been “in the wrong,” one’s own actions and attitudes usually need some re-examination as well (see Chapter 24). Suffice to say for now that each person is responsible for his or her own thoughts, attitudes, actions, and reactions to other people, no matter what those other people have done.

When a person is taking responsibility for his or her own being—actions, attitudes, and words—he or she can have a benevolent impact on others and help them, indirectly, to take responsibility too. Most people have experienced at one time or another taking the initiative to apologize sincerely for a difficulty that was both parties’ fault. Almost always, when such an apology comes from the heart, the reply from the other person is a sheepish, “I’m sorry for the way I acted too.”

One buyer for a successful jewelry line said of her work situation, “Things come up every day—the remark, the accusation that something is my fault when the other person didn’t do their own part right. But I’m responsible for my own inner peace. The only way I can keep it is by forgiving people. People may think I’m stupid not to assert myself more, but I got tired of the sleepless nights and the adrenaline. Now that I forgive instead of retorting, I’m so much more at peace, and I notice things going my way a lot more. God doesn’t need me to mete out the judgment. He’ll take care of it.”

The Apportioning of Divine and Human Responsibility

It may well be asked: If people are to take total responsibility for their words, actions, and attitudes, then what is God’s responsibility? Often people say that God is completely in charge of everything; that all things must be left to God, in God’s own time, that nothing happens outside of God’s will. Others say human agency is equally, if not more important: salvation, for instance, must be worked out “with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2.12). “O ye who

believe!” says the Qur’an, “You have charge over your own souls” (5.105).⁸ What portion of responsibility for a good outcome is humankind’s, and what portion of responsibility is God’s?

The definition and limits of individual responsibility are discerned differently by the various religions. Theravada Buddhism, Jainism, and non-theistic Hinduism regard the journey of life as entirely the responsibility of the individual. Each person is a “lamp unto himself”; each works out his own salvation alone and by himself. On the other hand, in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, individual responsibility is given in the context of grace that has gone before it. The relationship between effort and grace is what Thomas Aquinas called synergy: effort calls forth grace, and grace prompts effort. A number of holy texts stress human initiative as calling forth grace, as does the common saying, “God helps those who help themselves.” Conversely, others describe grace as preceding and overshadowing human effort.

Five Percent Human, Ninety-five Percent Divine

Reverend Moon has proposed a mathematical formula to represent the responsibilities of humankind and God: 5 percent belongs to man, 95 percent belongs to God. Five percent may seem like a light portion of responsibility for humankind. Reverend Moon emphasizes, however, that in order to fulfill his or her 5 percent, a person must invest totally—giving 100 percent of him- or herself.

The simplicity embodied in a common saying helps clarify things: “Pray as if everything depended on God; act as if everything depended upon you.” Indeed, everything does depend on God; and indeed, everything does depend upon human responsibility too. They are synergistically interrelated; they need one another’s contributions in order for things to work out well.

An example of a person doing 5 percent of the job to God’s 95 percent was Rosa Parks. Rosa Parks sparked world-altering events when she refused to obey the unjust rule that black people had to sit in the back of city buses in Montgomery, Alabama. Since blacks

who defied white hegemony were sorely punished in those days, it must have taken all of Rosa's courage and will power to refuse to change seats—her 100 percent. This respectable seamstress underwent arrest and interrogation over the simple fact that she was tired of having to give up her bus seat after a hard day's work solely on the basis of skin color every single day.

Parks's simple action for human dignity sent shock waves through the black community, the white community, and came to affect the nation and even the world. Unbeknownst to most, God had been preparing a bevy of black ministers in Montgomery who were ready to challenge the unfair segregation laws. They were just waiting for an opportunity to do so. Among these ministers was a young unknown named Martin Luther King, Jr.

King was chosen among the other ministers to lead the effort against segregation because he was too new in town to have made any enemies. Yet the young unknown turned out to be an oratorical, philosophical, and tactical genius who riveted the attention of the world on the civil rights movement in America.

By fulfilling her 5 percent portion of responsibility, Rosa Parks set off a chain reaction of events, all clearly prepared and aided by God. She jump-started a movement that changed the soul of the mightiest nation on earth. She affected generations to come, and left the world a legacy of justice. Such is the power of human responsibility coupled with God's. Because of the gift of responsibility, human beings have access to a Power capable of transforming the world.

Responsibility and Freedom

God values freedom. He is, as the song says, the “author of liberty.” Nature spreads its bounty, animals wander freely, sunlight glints on the water refulgently. All of the world is free in its being. The world breathes and exudes freedom.

People react strongly to bounds upon their freedom. In fact, freedom is so fundamental to being human that it is one of the few

things people are willing to lay down their lives for. Humanity has been engaged in a lengthy, painful, and bloody battle to be free. Impingement upon people's freedom is seen as injustice.

Freedom and responsibility are tightly interconnected. If one is not free to choose, there is no choice, and therefore no responsibility. Conversely, if one is not responsible, sooner or later, one's freedom will be hampered.

A simple example is eating. Of course, people may eat what and however much they choose as often as they want, as long as food is available. On the other hand, if they are not responsible about their food intake and eat freely without any thought for nutritional content or capacity, they may wind up losing the freedom of good health and the freedom of movement involved in having a body unencumbered by fat. Too much freedom, then, detracts from life's value and pleasure. It must be bound by responsibility.

A child's moral development requires incremental amounts of freedom to provide opportunities for responsibility, and responsibility earns them greater freedoms. Children who have been allowed the privilege of going somewhere on their own if they promise to be back by a certain time gain more freedom from their parents as they prove themselves responsible by consistently coming back at the appointed time. The parents are likely to allow them more and more freedom as they prove they can handle it responsibly.

Young people need freedom to practice what they have been taught, to test boundaries, and learn from experience. An effective math teacher welcomes wrong answers and employs them in lessons to encourage creative problem solving. An ineffective teacher, on the other hand, may inspire fear in students that would inhibit them from suggesting an incorrect answer. These students may turn in accurate work in terms of content but may not understand the implications and applicability of math in real life. They have not learned creative and independent thinking.

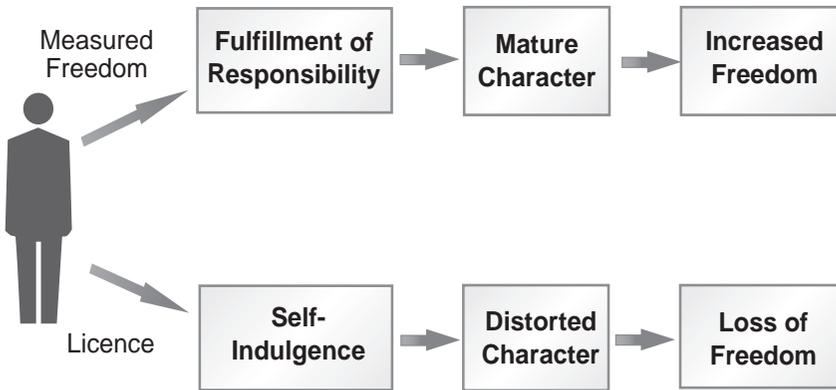
From this standpoint, it can be said that without freedom, a person's potential—moral and otherwise—cannot be realized. Yet

it is useful to distinguish genuine freedom from irresponsible freedom or license. The above example about eating results from irresponsible use of freedom. It is also obvious that if people took the license to ignore traffic laws because they wanted to be “free,” they would lose the freedom to get to their destination safely; fatal and other accidents would become commonplace, continually blocking people’s progress on the road. In the same way, indulging self-centered whims can lead to a loss of freedom due to bad habits, exploitative relationships, and toxic behaviors. Sensible rules and limits preserve freedom.

A certain amount of freedom often must be sacrificed in the interests of greater freedom. This means observing the limits imposed by responsibility. An Olympic gold medallist, for instance, has sacrificed many hours of leisure and pleasure to pour her energies into her sport. Yet she has the freedom to do something she loves, to gain the esteem and admiration of others, to break new ground in her sport, to achieve fame and fortune, and to enjoy a life of ease and honor after an early retirement from the field. Her responsibility to herself, her sport, and her audience has earned her greater freedom.

Professor Catherine M. Wallace speaks of the discipline and sacrifice behind a performance by a virtuoso musician: “The glorious coherence and lucidity and passion of a fine musical performance are not possible except through years of excruciating discipline.”⁹ The soaring achievements and the freedom they bring cannot be divorced from the responsibility of harrowing practice sessions. Wallace draws a parallel with sexual responsibility: A good marriage depends upon sexual fidelity, which must be practiced like an art. It “depends upon a deeply complex, not fully conscious array of spiritual and material aesthetic practices and disciplines.”¹⁰ In sacrificing a certain amount of freedom in order to be responsible to the self and to another, the person has gained the greater freedom of a beautiful relationship between two people—one of great depths and breadths.

The faith traditions of the world also celebrate the paradoxical freedom to be found in obedience to the truth. As a child enjoys wholesome pleasures within his parents' rules and is protected from his own immaturity, so each individual can enjoy the many wonders of the world free from the hazards of his or her own immaturity, ignorance, and fallen state by conforming to God's way of life. Paradoxically, although obedience to God seems to limit one's freedoms, in fact, it opens a person to the greatest freedom of all—it opens the soul to the freedom of love.

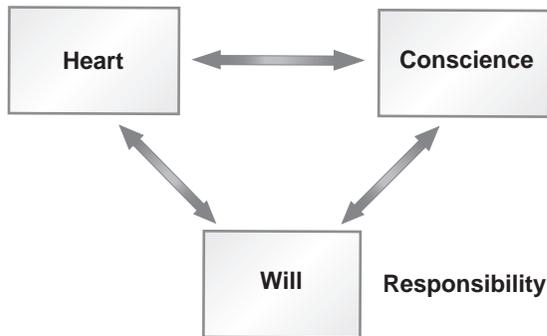


Freedom and Responsibility

There is no freedom without responsibility. There is no love without responsibility. There is no maturity without responsibility, nor is there a relationship with God without responsibility. Responsibility is one of the great fulcrums of life—the hinge upon which human fulfillment turns. Through the taking of responsibility, we become people of freedom, love, and life—people who reflect and partake of the nature of God.

Maturity

What does maturity look like? The state of maturity is a well-integrated, synergistic functioning of a human being who is centered on his or her moral faculties. The foremost moral faculty—the heart—is the wellspring of love. Its auxiliary—the conscience—directs the heart's loving impulses according to right and wrong. A person who lives by the directives of the heart and conscience exercises responsibility—for him or herself, for others, and for the environment.



Inner Harmony of a Mature Person

In Reverend Moon's terminology, such a person has achieved "mind and body unity"—that is, his or her body enacts the promptings of the moral faculties perfectly through the will or the taking of responsibility. These moral faculties are directed outward, toward purposes defined by a person's social world. Hence, much of character development is about people enlarging their sense of self from a limited bodily sphere to encompass others—family, friends and society—and taking responsibility to enhance those relationships. This process begins in early childhood.

Babies are inherently self-centered. Their world revolves around their bodily needs. As they grow, so does their consciousness of the world around them. They begin to have relationships with others, especially their parents, and in so doing, they learn that they must

take responsibility. They must obey. They must learn to control themselves—in basic things like impulse control, control of bodily functions, control of the “me first” impulse that keeps them from sharing and taking turns, expanding to respect for others and property.

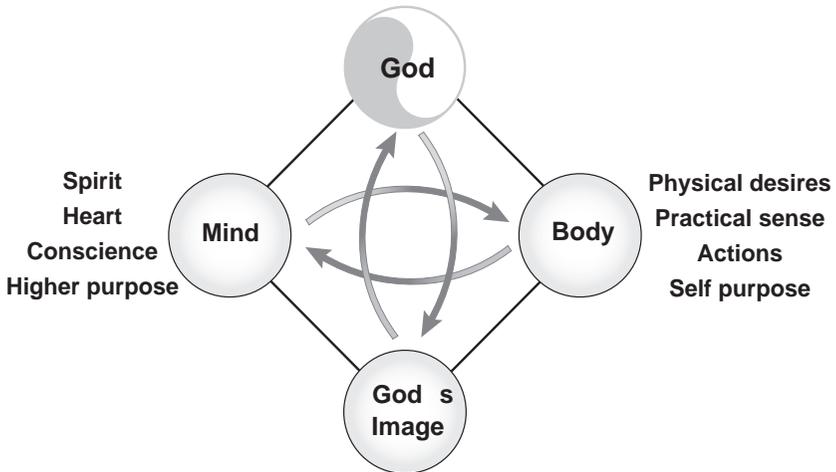
Immature people continue to focus on their own needs, especially bodily ones, like very small children. They do not learn self-control, impulse control, or to postpone bodily needs, comforts, and desires for the sake of others. They are irresponsible. Marriage therapist Lori Gordon says such people are “emotionally infants” and their hallmark is that they are self-centered: “They expect to be taken care of and to get what they want when they want it, without having to give in return. They know only what they need, see others primarily as objects to meet their needs and are incapable of empathizing with the needs of others.”¹¹ Predictably, this state of immaturity affects their marriages and other relationships adversely.

An extreme example is domestic abusers. Therapist Lundy Bancroft notes that the main characteristic of male domestic abusers is self-centeredness. They see others as means to fulfill their needs. Their comprehension of others beyond their own needs is limited and shrunken, just like a very small child’s. Therefore, such a husband may react violently to a wife who does not have dinner on the table on time because she is not serving his need for food. Her needs, in the abuser’s universe, are not anywhere near as important as his; therefore, his anger seems justified to him. Bancroft says, “When he focuses on her, most of what he thinks about is what she can do for him, not the other way around.”¹² Though he wields the power of a grown-up man’s body, inside there is a very small child who never grew out of being centered upon his own bodily needs.

Unity of the Mind and Body

The body is an integral part of the self; it has legitimate needs and desires. Still, it plays a supportive role to the human mind, which guides it in purposeful activity. The challenge of character development is to set up the appropriate order between mind and body, so that both can function optimally.

In a person of mature character, the inner self directs the outer self. They work in concert, inner and outer, the mind seeking value and the body realizing value substantially. The focus of their partnership is the higher purpose toward which they move.



Maturity —God Dwells in the Unity of Mind and Body

Good rearing and mentoring encourages this. Yet due to the Fall, attaining a mature state is not easy. The human experience is that people are disunited in mind and body—that is, they do many things they know they should not do and immediately regret them. They also do not do the many good things they know they should do, and they experience the regret and chagrin this brings about. This is a state of mind and body disunity, which prompted even

the great Saint Paul to say that there was a war going on between his mind and his “members” or body (see Chapter 9).

People seeking moral maturity have traditionally had to go a path of self-denial and sacrifice in order to restore a right relationship between mind and body. If one looks at people of great moral stature—people whom the world recognizes as being extraordinarily pure-hearted, passionate for truth and righteousness, and morally advanced—they are people who have overcome selfish desires and attachment to worldly concerns such as lust, gluttony, possessions, influence, or status. They follow the dictates of what is good and true and beautiful even at great sacrifices to themselves. In Jesus' words, they have “overcome the world,” but, in fact, they have overcome the influences of the world within themselves in order to respond wholly to God and the imperatives of true love.

We call them the saints, the sages, the enlightened ones. They are sometimes called incarnations of God. As a person comes into unity of mind and body, there is an affinity with the divine integrity and perfection, in which He influences the individual directly and bestows His extraordinary love and power. Such a person is able to manifest the divine nature to the world, serving as a more or less clear messenger, mirror, window and reflection of God. Jesus boldly declared, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14.9).

Such a person also becomes a complementary partner to the Creator, a companion to comfort His heart, a son or daughter to take up His burden on behalf of His other children. This person is responsible in the extreme—he or she is the person advancing God's work on earth, an instrument of His will, having repaired the dysfunction of mind and body disunity through sacrifice to strengthen the mind's promptings to love God and others.

In an Islamic passage, the Almighty describes His perfect servant, who likewise resembles an incarnation of the living God: “I am his hearing by which he hears, his sight by which he sees, his hand by which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks”

(Forty Hadith of an-Nawawi 38).¹³ Such responsiveness to the Heavenly Parent is a special form of serving Him. Such fully mature people become conduits of divine love to human beings and conduits of true human love to God. In this way, they are bridges of love between heaven and earth. Indeed, this is the ultimate human responsibility.

It is these people who are able to bear the fruits of the Spirit within and without—they are the “fruitful.” They are often the peacemakers of the world, for they are at peace with themselves and with all others. To paraphrase Shakespeare’s Polonius, the person who is true to himself cannot be false to anyone else. They are well-integrated, whole, truthful, and loving, bearing the fruits and virtues of the spirit as the Biblical First Great Blessing enjoins.

Although they seem extraordinary, in fact, they have attained what every human is to achieve: maturity through the taking of responsibility. “All humankind is created to be able to say, ‘I am in the Father and Father in me,’” says Reverend Moon. “This is the fully attainable goal of everyone.”¹⁴

Crossing the line into moral maturity

Psychologist James Fowler has depicted six stages of moral maturity, based roughly upon the works of Kohlberg, Erikson, and Piaget. Graduating from lower stages of seeing God as a sort of “Sugar Daddy” with gifts and blessings to bestow, to a tit-for-tat, you-scratch-my-back, I’ll-scratch yours morality, people enter the higher stages of moral maturity where they are more and more concerned for others—and more and more willing to sacrifice for their sakes.

The distinction Fowler draws between Stage 5 people—the second highest stage—and Stage 6 people—the highest stage—is that Stage 6 people have crossed over a line toward being willing to sacrifice themselves for others, even to the point of being willing to give their lives. They have attained Reverend Moon’s ideal of mind and body unity. Their bodies follow their minds’ promptings toward truth and love at all times, even when this calls for sacrifice. Stage

5, on the other hand, says Fowler, “remains paradoxical or divided . . . because Stage 5’s perceptions of justice outreach its readiness to sacrifice the self.”¹⁵

Stage 6 people have solved the paradox between the mind and the body. They are not divided. Their minds and bodies are utterly united; their words and thoughts are matched by their actions and deeds. They are ready to sacrifice themselves for truth and love, even at the cost of their lives.

These people have gone beyond the body and the extensions of the body—the groups to which they belong, including established social institutions. No sense of “myself” or “my own” hinders the person from striving for absolute love, truth, and justice for all. He or she has become willing to take whatever actions are necessary to bring a universal community of true love into being, knowing that ultimately all that she loves will be included in that community of true love.

Reverend Moon says, “You must become a totally selfless person, making yourself a living sacrifice. Then power, limitless power, will flow into you. You are no longer sagging without the power, sagging without the energy. You must truly feel that, ‘I am a living sacrifice; I am just totally nothing.’ And ‘There is no me, no myself.’ When you have that frame of mind, then whatever you do, wherever you go, you will draw God’s power.”¹⁶ A Hindu scripture affirms, “They are forever free who renounce all selfish desires and break away from the ego-cage of ‘I,’ ‘me,’ and ‘mine’ to be united with the Lord” (Bhagavad Gita, 2.71).¹⁷

Because they are experiencing God’s love and presence, such people are lucid, alive, peaceful, free and fearless. Dr. King, a Stage 6 person in Fowler’s view, said that if a person did not have anything he was willing to die for, he was not really alive. Reverend Moon continually emphasizes Jesus’ words, “He who seeks to gain his life will lose it; he who seeks to lose his life will gain it.” Reverend Moon elaborates,

Once you have achieved oneness with God, nothing can trouble you. Neither sorrow nor loneliness, sickness or anything else under the sun can discourage you. God is the ultimate security. You could pay many millions of dollars and still not buy that kind of security. It is priceless. This is the total experience of life. We are meant to live with God.¹⁸

Perhaps, then, the most succinct definition or mark of maturity is that a mature person loves God wholly and totally, and loves others as God loves them, taking the responsibility to manifest that love in the world even at a sacrifice of oneself and one's own. Living up to this greatest of commandments and responsibilities is the ultimate mark of maturity. It means being a person of true love.

Chapter 7

Creativity and Stewardship

God is the first creator—the first and greatest artist.

God created His children to be like Him, giving us freedom so that we can co-create with Him. God created the incomparable variety of nature, the sunrise, oceans, deserts and mountains, all with their distinct beauty, for our mutual delight and satisfaction.

Is it not fitting that we should seek to understand and emulate the nature of our Creator?

—Sun Myung Moon

Creativity is closely related to responsibility. Responsibility allows people to fashion their destinies; creativity allows people to impact the world in unique ways, allowing for the innovative, the undiscovered, and the scaling of new heights of accomplishment. Directed by heart and conscience, creativity has a benevolent impact upon the world—it is an expression of other-centered love.

Human beings resemble their Creator in that they are irrepressibly creative. The sixth grader who embellishes his book report with suggestions for an alternate ending, the manager who creates a new position for her bored but invaluable employee, the grandfather who labors to get his rose bushes to climb the trellis, all exhibit this pervasive quality. The tendency to experiment and innovate in everything from cooking to communication, from gadgets to governments, can be seen in people everywhere and in all times.

Though the higher animals have been known to display some aspects of creativity, no creature can rival that of humanity—the children of the ultimate Creator.

The crowning gift of creativity is the ability to bear young. Although all of nature shares this gift, humankind alone bears the ability to reproduce creatures with eternal spirits, and minds that pulsate with the energy that made the galaxies. Each person has the power to make a difference in the world by the kind of life he or she chooses to lead. The greatest expression of creativity is the procreation of and spiritual nurturing of other human beings. Thus establishing and nurturing a family is a major life act full of creative significance. Not only do adults create families; their own characters are created through the various stages of raising a family (see Chapters 14-18).

Human creativity applied to the world is part of the original intention of creation expressed in the third life purpose or Blessing. Genesis depicts God bequeathing the world to the first man and woman, granting the gift of dominion “over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground”(Genesis 1.28). The world thus bequeathed includes the natural world and its resources, and the talents vested in humankind to produce the world of work, art, and culture.

In the words of Bill McKibben, Fellow, Center for the Study of Values in Public Life at Harvard Divinity School:

We need to conceive of it [environmentalism] much more broadly as the defense and the expression of the things worth loving in this world: by that I mean art and I mean music as surely as I mean backpacking. I mean our relationship with the divine and our relationship with other parts of creation. I mean . . . the exercise of free will.¹

Human creativity and dominion over nature thus intersect. They are the way people impact the world—how they nurture what exists, how they embellish it, add to it, love, and perpetuate it. Caring for and acting upon the world through creativity are part of

humankind's responsibility—part of free will. God gave us the world. It is up to us what we do with it.

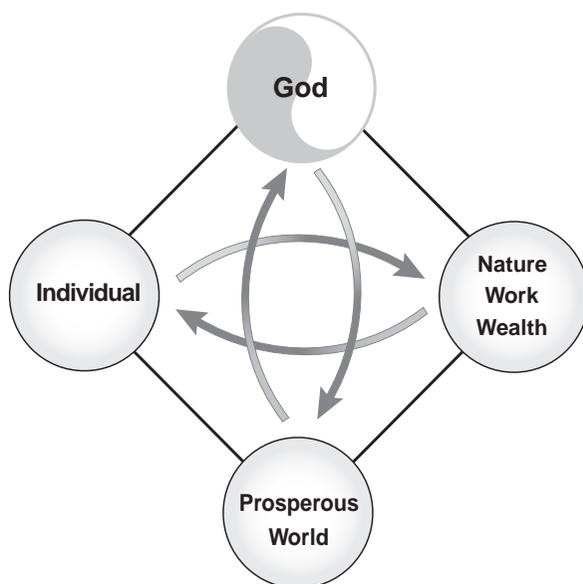
Loving the Earth

Because love became directed toward the self rather than toward God and others, humankind has had a tendency to use their creativity to take from the world rather than to give to it, stifling love and hurting the natural world. St. Paul said, “We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time” (Romans 8.22). Creation itself wants to be used for loving and beneficial purposes and to be treated with the respect and nurturance it deserves. The arts, culture, the world of work and production—the entire world waits for and flourishes only through true love. Anything made with anything else, even if it prospers for a time, will eventually fade away. Anything that lasts does so because it has elements of true love in it.

All expressions of our God-given creativity need to be directed by true love. This is what various religions call “stewardship.” As human beings, we “own” nothing. We are given the use of the earth and the things in it for a certain time, but these are temporary gifts we should care for, polish, and pass on to others with more value than they had before we received them. Jesus considered the use and care of property, money, and nature to be significant enough to make it the theme of half of his parables and a sixth of all his recorded teachings.² Stewardship was a major concern of this premier man of true love.

Natural resources sustain us, so that we may live and love. As such, we are totally indebted to the natural world. The natural world gave rise to us and keeps us alive every minute. “The universe made you by donating itself,” says Reverend Moon.³ In relation to the natural world, every person is a debtor, whose awe and gratitude should inspire the desire to care for, love, nurture, and use the many precious gifts we have been given well. Further, people are endowed with gifts and talents—inner resources. It is up to each individual how they use these gifts and talents. Creativity may be directed

toward the self or it may be directed outward—toward others—in true love. When it is directed toward others for their benefit, it bears the greatest results.



Co-creators and Stewards of God's World

Nature as the Textbook of Love

Reverend Moon observes, “God’s hand has even touched every small blade of grass that grows in the field. All creatures we see contain God’s deep heart and tell the story of God’s deep love.”⁴ The natural world inspires, comforts and invigorates. Natural things are harmonious in form and function, uncomplicated in purpose, innocent and not self-conscious in giving of themselves. They point to a greater reality and eternal mystery of which we are only a part. In this way, the pure creation often offers a clearer window to the divine than the human community. William Blake spoke of seeing “a world in a grain of sand, And a heaven in a wild flower.”⁵ A Shinto verse declares, “Even in a single leaf of a tree, or a tender blade of

grass, the awe-inspiring Deity manifests Itself" (Urabe no Kanekuni).⁶

We are impoverished when we draw too far away from the creation. "When a man moves away from nature his heart becomes hard" states a Lakota, Native American, expression. People commonly come to nature for renewal; this is why parks are so precious in cities and why monasteries are often in unspoiled settings. A counselor at a California county jail created an organic garden on land adjoining the jail for use in the rehabilitation of inmates. Due to the lessons they learn from nature, the recidivism rate of the gardeners is only one-fourth that of other inmates.⁷ Reverend Moon has called nature a textbook to learn about true love.

The earth itself is therefore the most invaluable of resources entrusted to humanity, the extension of our priceless physical bodies. Yet just as the body is often abused, so the environment has been a victim of recklessness. Centuries of human taking without giving back has dangerously compromised the resiliency of this benevolent provider.

When we exploit nature and extract its treasures faster than they can be regenerated, we are in effect borrowing against the future. Precisely because of nature's exquisite harmony, purity, and generosity, the condition of the environment is a transparent indicator of human moral standards. When exploited, the devastation—poisoned air, filthy water and scarred land—is only too obvious.

Humans as Microcosms

One important reason why humans are qualified to lovingly govern the created world is because of our unique capacity to understand and even empathize with our fellow creatures, as symbolized by Adam being granted the privilege to give them names. This is due to the unique place that humans occupy in the natural scheme. Human beings were made as a microcosm of the universe—encompassing in some manner all the elements, forms and faculties of every animate and inanimate entity. This is commonly demonstrated when children play; how readily they can assume the posture

and demeanor of any animal or plant. Consider the musical compositions, dances and animated films that so convincingly convey the essence of insects, sea animals, jungle wildlife and other creatures.

Reverend Moon elaborates: "You could accurately say that you are a small walking universe."⁸ As a microcosm, humans have the widest scope of thought and action, able to know and appreciate, nurture and guide and ultimately transcend all other creations.

The idea of microcosm is pervasive in the spiritual traditions. "Man is the heart and mind of Heaven and Earth," states a Confucian text, "and the visible embodiment of the five elements" (Book of Ritual 7.3.1-7).⁹ Buddhism concurs: "The Essence of Mind is great because it embraces all things, since all things are within our nature" (Sutra of Hui Neng 2).¹⁰ The Jewish Talmud says simply, "All that the Holy One created in the world He created in man" (Abot de Rabbi Nathan 31).¹¹

The human position as such not only embraces the great diversity of the material world, but also that of the incorporeal world as well. Comprised of both physical and spiritual elements, human beings straddle both the eternal and the temporal worlds. This "amphibious" position allows humans to be mediators between the two realms, bridges between Heaven and Earth. On one hand, they link angels and other inhabitants of the spiritual realm to the "greenhouse" opportunities for spiritual growth inherent in the physical plane. On the other hand, they serve as channels for divine love to the earth and its creatures (see Chapter 8).

Dependent upon Humans for Love

All things are sacred, endowed with at least rudimentary consciousness. Reverend Moon says that they are bodies of truth symbolic of the Creator, whereas humans are bodies of truth in the image of the Creator. Both human beings and other creations resonate with the divine and hence with one another. Therefore, people sense their kinship with other living creatures and tend to feel empathy towards them and a parental instinct to nurture and protect

them.

To such care, nature responds in kind, lavishing its abundance upon the representative of the Creator in image. Even mechanical things, like automobiles, seem to respond to their owner's care. Computers have been known to go haywire when their users are frustrated or furious. A well-kept house will sparkle with warmth and comfort if it is cared for with love.

Many of the religious founders displayed the fruits of their cultivated hearts and self-mastery by a miraculous mastery over the elements. One thinks of Jesus' calming of the seas. In the Hindu tradition, Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi* recounts many stories of Eastern mystics controlling aspects of nature in miraculous ways. People have often dreamed of being able to live in paradisiacal harmony with other creatures, as in such stories as *Dr. Dolittle*. This notion arises from the original heart as a reflection of a divine ideal captured by the prophet Isaiah:

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie
down with the goat,
The calf and the lion and the yearling together;
And a little child will lead them.
The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie
down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the
young child put his hand into the viper's nest.
They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy
mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of
the Lord As the waters cover the sea (11.6-9).

Reverence for Natural Things

Various spiritual traditions have sensed the deep energetic connections among all things and how nature is profoundly sensitive to the human heart. "Regard heaven as your father, earth as your mother, and all things as your brothers and sisters," is the senti-

ment of the Shinto faith (Oracle of Atsuta).¹² The Christian monk, Saint Francis, was known for his reverence for all creatures. The indigenous cultures of all continents have celebrated a reverent attitude towards the earth. Native American peoples, for example, thanked the universe for the sacrifice of bison for their food, and showed respect by only taking what was needed and using all that they took. They allowed themselves to feel judged by the virtues of God's creatures and prayed to be worthy of consuming them.

It is because of earth's dependence on humanity for true love that Christian scripture says that, since the Fall, "the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time" (Romans 8.22). The earth has been robbed of its loving vice regents and has instead been enslaved by thieves. On one hand, humans are eternal spiritual beings, children of God, in His likeness, and thus have intrinsic value far beyond any other creature. On the other hand, human beings are capable of cruelty and decadence that surpasses even the most savage of animals, and they are often put to shame by the loyalty and gentleness of beasts. For this reason, many cultures have felt inclined to exalt animals and other natural things. Today, many people are making heroic efforts to understand and preserve flora, fauna, and biospheres. Such gestures help reverse centuries of crimes against an abused and innocent Mother Earth.

Mother Earth

The commandment to "Honor your parents" has implications for our relationship to the earth. It is common to refer to the natural world as Mother Nature or Mother Earth. Reverend Moon has said, "Nature is your first parent."¹³ This reflects the Native American idea of the earth as the Mother of all people, a living being: "The soil is her flesh, the rocks are her bones, the wind is her breath, trees and grass her hair. She lives spread out, and we live on her When we look around, we see part of our Mother everywhere" (Okanogan Creation).¹⁴ Certainly not only are our bodies born of the Earth

Mother's body, but the earth is as generous in giving of herself to us as a loving mother. In this way, ecological conscientiousness can be seen as an extension of a filial heart.

Honoring the generous earth while bountifully cultivating the garden requires a fine balance. The artful equilibrium between conservation and development—sustainable development—remains an essential goal and ultimate challenge to human resourcefulness.

Loving the World through Work

“Work is your love made visible,” says the poet Kahlil Gibran. Work is the everyday way we manifest our creativity and express our loving dominion in service to family, community, the nation, the earth, or greater humanity. Work is a most ordinary and basic act of self-giving.

A materialist view of work focuses on providing for survival, getting practical things done, making money. A more complete view sees human work as a reflection of divine activity—transforming, serving, contributing, creating—and its ultimate goal is to glorify God and to help His beloved other children. In constructive human labors, God is working through His children to complete and embellish His act of Creation.¹⁵ Thus, the Hindu proverb, “Work is worship,” may be understood.¹⁶

Internal Rewards of Work

In the process of working, humans are completed too. A person “in a sense, becomes more of a human being,” as Pope John Paul II puts it, through his labors.¹⁷ Thomas Aquinas stated that work both “expresses man's dignity and increases it.”¹⁸ “Great is labor,” declares the Talmud, “it confers honor on the laborer” (Nedarim 49b).¹⁹

Responsible and loving labor implies certain qualities. The virtues of self-discipline, delayed gratification, punctuality, honesty, diligence and perseverance come to mind. These are among the important moral competencies to be cultivated for the workplace. They are also the virtues that religion has traditionally encouraged.

All the great traditions praise industry and doing one's share just as they denounce laziness. "Weeping is not the answer to poverty; a lazy man who is hungry has no one to blame but himself," goes a Nigerian Yoruban proverb.²⁰ Saint Paul expressed his simple Christian creed: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat" (2 Thessalonians 3.8-12).

Genesis records how work became accursed, as a consequence of the tragic disorder of the fall of humankind. The earth would not readily yield its fruits to its master. This reflects more the mundane reality of people's experience of labor. The body rebels, the natural world resists, co-workers conflict. For many people, the stresses of daily work represent a trial they want to escape from.

However, the challenges involved in work can be a source of purification and character development if one does not succumb to resentment and escapism. This means turning a job into a vocation, a chore into a calling. This is not easy, but it starts with finding a way to appreciate the task from the divine perspective. "In God's eyes, there is no small or large task, there is no significant or insignificant task," notes Native American observer, Anne Wilson Shaef. "There is just the task at hand."²¹ Thus, all work—even the most mundane—has its indispensable quality, its place in the scheme of things, and can be made into an offering of love.

"Even if it falls to your lot to be a street sweeper," Martin Luther King, Jr., once remarked, "go out and sweep streets like Michelangelo painted pictures; sweep streets like Handel and Beethoven composed music; sweep streets like Shakespeare wrote poetry; sweep streets so well that all the host of heaven and earth will have to pause and say, 'Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well!'"²² Indeed, a sincere street sweeper is of greater value than an insincere king. This is why Reverend Moon recommends that, in every vocation, a person should strive to give their "100 percent" of devotion. Then their work becomes truthful and holy.

Choreographer Jerome Robbins was legendary for how hard

he made the dancers under him work. Cast members of *West Side Story*, which won ten Academy Awards in 1961, joked that he made them dance until their feet bled. Robbins explained that he wanted truth to emerge from their work.²³ This could only be achieved by working them to their limits and beyond. When the human body has been worked to the limit, what it can do remains timelessly stunning.

Devoted work fuels joy. When day is done, refreshment, relaxation and peace are all the sweeter if a person has given his or her all to the work of the day. Family relationships, the evening meal, the night's rest, are all charged with the satisfaction of having given the world one's best that day.

A college student from the United States who went on an educational tour of Guatemala tells the story:

We passed through the countryside on the Pan American highway. It was sunset, and I saw field laborers coming off work. You could see they'd worked really hard. They were greasy with sweat and burned dark from the sun. You'd think they'd be wiped out. But then I saw one of them start to play kickball with his kid in the fields. I never saw such joy on a human being's face as on that laboring man's, his face red in the sunset, kicking a ball with his kid. I thought, "Now there's a happy man."

Part of work is, of course, relationships with others. Relationships with co-workers may be extremely rewarding. They may be sources of pride, fellowship, respect, learning, and support. The camaraderie of workers, the sense of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts, binds people together in a very special way. The respect and affection of a person's colleagues is one of the greatest rewards of work. Relationships with other workers may be seen as spurs toward acquiring virtues and learning life lessons as all labor together to achieve the task at hand.

Another internal reward of work—perhaps the greatest one—

is the gratitude of those for whom the work is performed. To know that one's efforts have enhanced other people's lives is tremendously gratifying.

These are the non-monetary returns on the work people invest themselves in—yet they are really the most important. Without these kinds of intangible rewards, work becomes meaningless. No amount of money can make up for meaningless work—work a person does not take pride in, that benefits no one, that is unappreciated or unnecessary, fruitless or undirected. Much of “job satisfaction” depends upon just such intangibles as feeling needed, appreciated, valued, and that one's labors serve an important purpose. When the internal rewards of work are in place, employee attrition goes down and there is greater contentment—and greater production—in the workplace.

External Rewards of Work

“Money,” declare financial advisors Vicki Robin and Joe Dominguez, “is simply something for which we choose to trade the hours of our life.”²⁴ In this sense it is congealed life energy, stored up labor, and stockpiled time. Economic exchange represents the giving and receiving of one another's work and time. In another way, money symbolizes sweat, and often tears and blood as well. This is why money has the same power as labor—to get things done, to manifest dreams, to realize possibilities. Because of its symbolism and potency, it has great moral and spiritual significance.

The use of money is an unerring barometer of a person's values. “What a person does with his money,” observes H.R. Stockert, a Christian thinker, “how he thinks about it, where he spends it, what he will do to earn it, and the things to which he will give it, are some of the real clues to who he is inside.”²⁵ This relates to the words of Jesus, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6.21). The man who has considerable stock in a company finds himself automatically turning to the financial pages in the newspaper to check on his investments.²⁶ The woman who

spills coffee on an expensive dress finds herself preoccupied with removing the stain before she can again enjoy the party. “No test of a man’s true character is more conclusive than how he spends his time and money,” says author Timothy Bryan Wiley. “If you really want to know what is important to you, get out your calendar and checkbook.”²⁷

Implied in the Biblical verse is the converse—where one’s heart wants to be is where one should invest one’s treasure. “Put your money where your mouth is,” goes the vernacular version. The directing of material resources provides an opportunity for people to refocus their concerns. On a school band trip to Brazil, 16-year-old Nika was stunned by the sight of orphans begging in the streets of San Paolo. Upon her return to suburban St. Louis, she decided to sponsor a little boy there, investing a portion of her after-school work wages every month. The monthly donation keeps him regularly in Nika’s mind and she eagerly anticipates news about her sponsored child. Money has helped engender love.

This brings up the second role of stewardship in the religious life. It is not only the act of returning to the Creator what He has given. It is also a matter of using money in a way to rid oneself of unwholesome attachment to it—making sure it is not an idol—and to cultivate new moral growth. “In our culture,” notes Stockert, “nothing binds us more than money—the symbol of material things.”²⁸ Thus, intentionally investing money into higher purposes pulls the heart toward those purposes and away from self. It also gratifies the desire to fulfill ideals and live meaningfully.

Wealth and Character

“The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil” is a famous Biblical passage (1 Timothy 6.10). Because of the tradition of asceticism among the religiously devout, it is common for people to equate humility, faith and unselfishness with a disregard for money. Money is seen as dirty and corrupting. Yet obviously money can be used for good ends; indeed, there are few worthy pursuits that do

not require material support.

The most obvious moral decision is how to use one's resources. One of the most vexing problems is that of finding a way to distribute wealth more equitably and to ensure that everyone has what they need to be healthy and safe. Forcible redistribution as in Marxism has been a colossal failure, yet these attempts have been made due to the obvious inadequacy of religious appeals for people to voluntarily share what they have.

Property has always presented the temptation to greed, to love things more than God or people. Some religious groups have eschewed private property and live communally. They consider private property to be the root of sin. Reverend Moon has also urged people to cultivate a consciousness of Eden, where there was no ownership of land. The reader may recall the opening paragraphs of William Faulkner's "The Bear," where he recounts the incomprehension of the Indians that a man could ever parcel off or claim to own the forests, mountains, and trees.

Moral problems surrounding material and wealth are present regardless of whether a person is rich or poor; yet there are certain kinds of moral challenges that plague those in affluent societies more than others. Constructive use of wealth—a problem that confronted only a very privileged few in ages past—is now a challenge facing millions of people in the established and emerging affluent societies. Wealth presents temptations that are seldom anticipated.

In affluent countries, consumerism comes to define identity and leisure, and impinges on one's philosophy of life and interpersonal relationships. Consumerism includes endless choice, unlimited acquisition, infinite entertainment, and the preference for the new and the varied over the established and limited. Fickleness, impatience, avarice and disloyalty are dominant values. Boredom, inconvenience and distress are afflictions from which to be delivered.

Marital counselor William Doherty notes the destructive impact of consumerist values in dating and mating patterns among young

Americans, in which marriage is just one more choice in the marketplace, a commodity like a television or Internet service that can be replaced if it no longer meets their needs or something better comes along. Commitments to others suffer when individuals are perpetually “shopping around.”²⁹

The most basic character challenge afforded by material abundance is finding contentment, knowing when one has enough. The goal would be to have as much as one can manage lovingly and responsibly in a reasonably unfettered way so as to be able to put more time and energy into more soul-satisfying pursuits.

Psychologists Richard Ryan and Tim Kasser conducted studies independent of one another on the correlation between wealth and happiness. Kasser and his associates collected data from 13 countries, including Germany, Russia, and India. Both have concluded that people for whom affluence is the number one priority in life tend to experience an unusual degree of anxiety and depression as well as a lower overall level of well-being: “The more we seek satisfactions in material goods, the less we find them there.” Conversely, pursuing goals that reflect genuine human needs—like fostering caring relationships and helping others—turns out to promote more of a sense of well-being.³⁰

There is a need to establish an ethic of modesty in desires as well as thrift—what some call voluntary simplicity. This is the goal of a growing movement in the United States and elsewhere, in which people aim to adjust their desires and expectations and scale back their consumption of things and costly experiences. The idea is to find pleasure in non-material things. Often such a lifestyle is connected to a concern for the impact of consumerism on the environment—the trashing of still usable items and appliances, and the natural resources unnecessarily consumed in producing “newer, bigger, better.” As McKibben said, part of free will is the freedom to say no.³¹

Moral Impact of Poverty

Material deprivation offers countless occasions for character

building, both directly by the hard work and sacrifices required and indirectly by the temptations to self-indulgence prevented. “We didn’t know how poor we were,” people often say. “So we were happy.” When people have little prospect of increasing their material lives and when one’s friends, relatives and neighbors likewise have little chance to acquire more, it is easier to find acceptance of limited material comfort and be grateful for what one has.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that deprivations also create their own temptations. The poor may be easier prey to the quick fixes of alcoholism, drug use, and promiscuity in order to escape from their lot. The stresses of poverty may add to family tensions. Despair may lead to becoming paralyzed in the taking of responsibility. Temptations to crime in order to get more of what other people seem to have and resentment of those who have more can become rampant. This is particularly true since television is available all over the world and provides scintillating glimpses into the daily lives and material abundance of the developed nations.

Even in cases of severe deprivation, people who strive to live in accordance with God’s ways leave behind an imprint of indelible goodness. Material poverty does not have to mean poverty of morality too. In fact, behaving morally in the face of privations must surely win the approval and extra support of God, and may propel a person to new heights of prosperity if and when the period of deprivation ends.

Tithing and Philanthropy

One of the basic principles of good stewardship of money is the idea of tithing. Tithing is the practice of reserving a certain portion of wealth—and the larger sense of tithing includes time—to offer it back to the Creator. That portion symbolizes giving all one’s wealth. The tithe sanctifies one’s property in effect and allows it a certain protection. Tithes at their best represent a portion of wealth that is at least somewhat sacrificial, not a surplus that is hardly missed. The greater the sacrifice, the greater the faith it represents

that God and the universe will continue to supply what is needed.

More secular people see this kind of tithe in a related but different way: as “giving back” to a society that has rewarded them with wealth. This outlook is related to the practice of philanthropy, the furthering of good works through the investment of personal wealth. Philanthropy is the most responsible purpose of accumulation of wealth in the view of the world religions.

People with means testify that they find more lasting satisfaction from using their wealth for socially beneficial purposes. Hospitality to guests, helping needy relatives, kindness to strangers, volunteering for charitable community work, philanthropy—these are activities that make constructive use of affluence. When people with means practice charity to help those who are less fortunate, they facilitate the circulation of wealth throughout society.

An under-appreciated secret of America’s broad-based economic prosperity is its tradition of public responsibility and philanthropy among its wealthiest businessmen. Steel tycoon Andrew Carnegie established the first charitable foundation in 1911, with an initial donation of \$135 million; it funded hundreds of libraries and concert halls throughout the country. Carnegie wrote in *The Gospel of Wealth* that any riches above and beyond what people need for their family should be regarded as a public trust, to be managed and then expended to benefit the ordinary citizen. Philanthropy has been the social norm among America’s wealthy class ever since, as the generosity of many CEOs of today’s largest companies attests.

Henry Ford, the father of the American automobile industry, shocked the business world in 1914 when he began paying his workers five dollars a day—nearly double the average wage. Ford detested handouts, but he believed people needed opportunities for work to maintain their self-respect and be productive. He funded educational programs for his workers, and hired blind, deaf and crippled men that other companies refused. By paying his workers good wages, he enabled them to become consumers who could buy

his mass-produced Model-T automobiles. Ford showed that it could be good business to invest in one's employees, affording them benefits and paying them more than the prevailing wage.

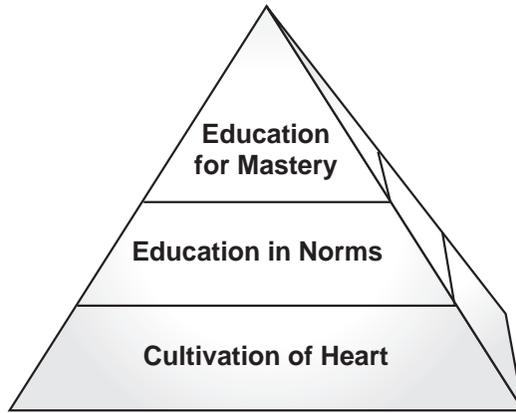
Educating for Dominion

We have spoken of the need for humankind's gift of stewardship over the environment and of the gifts of creativity to be used well in order to bring about the maximum external benefit as well as inner satisfaction. An essential part of this is being educated in the skills and principles that are needed for one's chosen form of work. Yet education so far has experienced an imbalance of emphasis.

As technology advances and more and more becomes externally possible, there is a greater need than ever before to wed factual knowledge, skills, and technologies with the wisdom to use them responsibly and well. Historian Arnold Toynbee once cautioned, and his warning is even more relevant today:

The greater our material power, the greater our need for spiritual insight and virtue to use our power for good and not for evil We have never been adequate spiritually for handling our material power; and today the morality gap is . . . greater than it has ever been in any previous age.³²

When people focus excessively on the practical and material side of life, pursuing technology, information, wealth and status while neglecting the moral and spiritual dimension, they are, in effect, neglecting the concerns of the mind in favor of those of the body. Therefore, the satisfaction they derive is likely to be empty and fleeting, for it lacks heart. The results of their works in the world may actually be detrimental in the long run if undirected by conscience.



Balanced Priorities in Education

A healthier life orientation balances these practical needs with a concern for the inner values of truth, meaning, goodness, beauty and love—the exercising of responsibility in that one’s actions reflect one’s inner values. Even by the measure of career success, the significance of moral and spiritual development cannot be underestimated.

A study at Bell Laboratories examined why among engineers of comparable intelligence and technical ability, some were more outstanding performers. It found that the top performers devoted time to cultivating good relationships with their co-workers. Hence when a technical problem arose, they could turn for help to a network of supporters and friends. Other engineers of equal intelligence, but lacking in cooperation-building skills, might wait for days to get necessary information. In the end, they did not perform as well, nor did they advance as far in their careers, as those with developed qualities of heart, who had the personal maturity to reach out and sustain relationships with others and who earned others’

trust and cooperation through their ability to give unselfishly.³³

Although the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and physical prowess are important goals, more important is the fostering of virtue. Formal education needs to recognize this in order to prepare students to impact the world responsibly and benevolently. Educating with mastery of the field solely in mind has created the predictable outcome that people's dominion over their world exceeds their selfless love to take care of it properly and relate to it in a giving rather than a taking manner.

Educating for Character and Skills

Educating in external mastery alone has tended merely to enable more skillful taking, more skillful misuse of gifts and resources. The Sikh scripture admonishes, "True learning induces in the mind service of mankind" (Adi Granth, Asa, M.1).³⁴ "Knowledge," states a Hindu verse, "makes a man honest, virtuous, and endearing to society" (Garuda Purana 115).³⁵ "The end and aim of wisdom," states the Talmud, "is repentance and good deeds" (Berakot 17).³⁶

The marriage of spiritual wisdom with technological skill is education's task, and many educators agree. John Sloan Dickey remarked, "The end of education is to see men made whole, both in competence and in conscience. To create the power of competence without creating a corresponding direction to guide the use of that power is bad education."³⁷

The ideal fruit of education is a person of both character and skills. This is a person who can exercise loving and benevolent dominion over the natural world and over the world of work, art, culture, and all other reflections of human creativity. The inner dimensions of education would take precedence over technical mastery.

This begins with education of heart, teaching young people to care and give of themselves altruistically to benefit the world and others. As discussed in Chapter 4, the heart needs cultivation, just

like a garden. Cultivating the heart's impulse to seek joy through loving might mean training young people in service, other-centeredness, steering them into beneficial mentor relationships, emphasizing the importance of family, and—ultimately—encouraging them to be in contact with the loving heart of the Creator through prayer and faith.

The next level of training would be the moral training needed to strengthen the conscience. This would involve educating people in the norms of human behavior: rules, etiquette, sportsmanship and the virtues of responsibility, respect, tolerance and fairness. Cultivation of the heart and education in norms are the two foundational dimensions upon which to erect competencies in academics and vocational skills.

The ideal objective here is to turn out individuals of genius, not only imaginative and informed but also able to translate their original ideas into tangible creations to better the world and express their love for humankind through their skills. In this unity of creativity within and mastery without, they give God joy, benefit their fellow human beings, and achieve their maximum potential.

Whether in regards to work, money or the environment, the governing ethical principle of true co-creativity and loving dominion is simple: live for the benefit of others. This is true love. True love is responsible and caring action in any arena of life. People may use their creativity in innumerable ways. Each person is capable of resonating deeply with nature. Each person is endowed with unique gifts to give to society and the world. The use of creativity and the results it produces—including wealth—are best put in the service of true love. Then, under human dominion, earth will reflect Heaven's refulgence and abundance, and all things will be "made new" (Revelation 21.5).

Chapter 8

Harvest of Love in Eternity

Eternity does not exist apart from true love.
—Sun Myung Moon

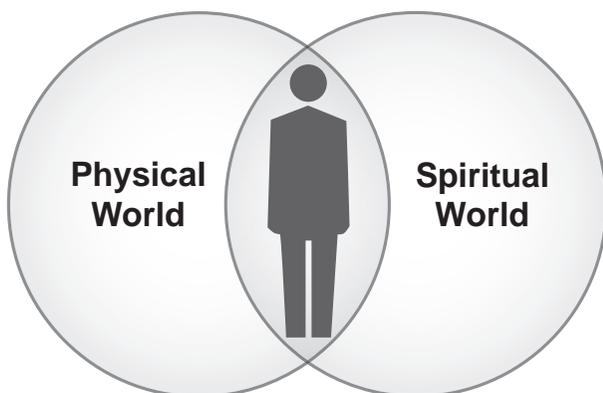
Human beings were given dominion over the creation. However, this includes more than just the physical world. The human mind is able to transcend the physical to connect with a metaphysical dimension that is also a part of God's creation. The gift of our eternal spirit allows us to relate to this realm.

The body is subject to physical laws, able to occupy only one place at one time, and it is focused on self-preservation. Thus it ties us to the material. "For dust you are," the Bible says, "And to dust you will return" (Genesis 3.19). The human body is very much of the earth, sustained by the earth, and contains elements of the earth. When its systems no longer function properly, it returns to the earth.

Our inner character, however, is different. It is transcendent of physical law. The mind is limitless in scope. Boundaries of the human mind's capacity for learning have never been found; nor has the heart's capacity for love ever found its limits. The mind is concerned with ultimate questions and altruistic concerns and is able to dwell in both the past and in the future. It is transcendent of time and space.

For instance, through the power of the mind, we can love someone who is physically very far away from us with enough power to bring tears to our eyes. We can love someone beyond physical death. Healing can be poured over the wounds of the past through the insights of the mind in the present. The mind can project plans and schema into the future.

The nature of a human being contains elements of the physical—the body—and elements of the metaphysical or spiritual—the mind. These two dimensions of a human being are like a microcosm of the larger universe, which is also composed of physical and spiritual elements.



Humans Mediate the Physical and Spiritual Worlds

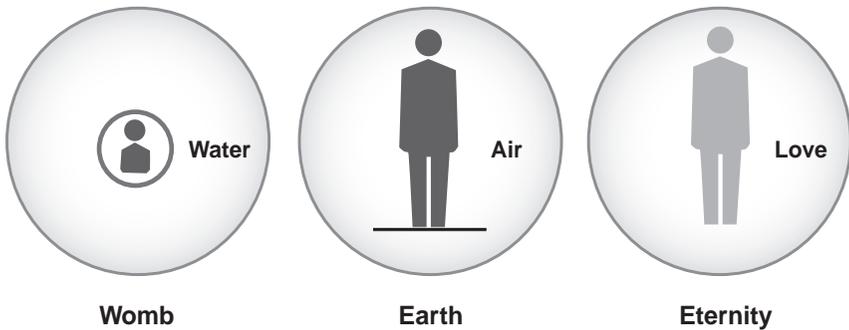
Human beings are unique in that they dwell in both worlds simultaneously. Thus they are able to serve as mediators between the worlds of flesh and spirit. The physical world and spiritual world are made up of completely different elements, but they are linked in human beings. Only through human beings do the spiritual world and physical world commune. Thus, human beings are the bridge between heaven and earth—participants in both the ephemeral and the eternal and lords over both.

What is the relationship between physical life and spiritual

life? How do the two interact and interrelate during life on earth? What happens after the spirit is separated from the body by death? What is the gift of eternal life?

Three Phases of Existence

To begin to answer the above questions, it is helpful to see how different phases of life segue into one another and what preparation and characteristics each phase has as related to the next phase.



Three Phases of Life

Reverend Moon characterizes human life as having three phases: in the world of water, in the world of air, and in the world of love. The first phase—life in the world of “water”—is the period of time in the womb. The individual lives in a watery world, sustained solely by nourishment from the mother. The chief task during this time is to prepare oneself to live in the next phase after birth—the world of air. Thus, for example, the body develops lungs that are useless in the present water world, but that soon will be crucial. The child’s awareness reaches out to the voices of his or her parents, and begins to bond with them; they too are vital to his surviving and thriving after this phase of existence is over. This period lasts for nine months until it is abruptly ended by being thrust into the next phase—the “air” world.

In this world, the individual lives more independently. It is here that one can have the priceless experiences of receiving family love, as a son or daughter and brother or sister, then the joy of creating one's own family as a husband or wife, father or mother, and perhaps as a grandfather or grandmother. It is here that a person makes his or her contributions to the world. Then, after 70 to 90 years, the process of physical death propels the person into the third and final phase—life in the world of spirit. The medium of exchange in this world is love.

As happened in the womb, life in the world of air is in preparation for the next phase that will be in a different atmosphere. In the spiritual world, the atmosphere is one of love; inhabitants “breathe” it. Thus, in life on earth, the individual ideally is developing his or her capacity to love—his or her “love lungs” so as to be able to function optimally in the next phase. The spirit breathes and exudes love—it is the medium of propulsion as well as sustenance.

This third and last phase, unlike the previous two, has no end—it is eternal. Life on earth is full of many “deaths” and each is mourned. Yet with every death comes a kind of birth. The mother clings to the baby shoes nostalgically, longing to hold her son—now a grown man—as an infant in her arms once more. That baby has “died.” Yet that son will make the mother a grandmother, holding another infant in her arms. The grad student returns to his hometown to find his boyhood soccer field paved over. That boyhood world has died. Yet the parking lot is part of a new community center, with facilities to give new generations of boys many happy memories. The father feels a twinge of grief when he hands his daughter over to her husband at the wedding. The beautiful young woman with her father as the only man in her life has died. Yet she is born anew, now a married woman, who needs her father's counsel and support in a new and deeper way.

So it is with physical death—it is but a birth into a new realm of existence. “Just as the womb takes in and gives forth again,” says

the Talmud, “so the grave takes in and will give forth again” (Berakot 15b).¹ This transition into the third phase of existence, from an existence encumbered by physical concerns to one free and metaphysical, has often been likened to the metamorphosis of the butterfly. In one expression of Japanese Buddhism, it is said, “Just as the silkworm will break out of its cocoon and fly free, so, too, will man break out of his body-cocoon and ascend to the spiritual world when his time is come” (Nectarean Shower of Holy Doctrines).²

The natural and supernatural are not separate realms far apart from one another; indeed, they coexist. In truth, all the world’s religions affirm that humans dwell in both worlds simultaneously, from birth. Death is not a significant change but merely the falling away of the physical self, and the total immersion of the inner self into the metaphysical world, which has always been there, imperceptibly or not, depending upon the person’s sensitivity to its presence.

Life and Vitality Elements

The physical body grows and maintains itself based on a myriad of factors that can be roughly divided into two kinds: those readily available and those that demand effort to acquire. Fresh air, heat, and light would fall into the category of the more freely available. They are gifts of God. The acquisition of food and water, however, requires greater exertion, even though these things too are gifts of God. The interaction between the two kinds of nutrients—those readily available and those requiring effort to obtain—sustains physical life.

These two factors are parallel to those vital to the cultivation and sustenance of the spiritual self, or spirit body of a person. On the one hand, there are such elements which are readily available, such as the light of moral truth, the warmth of human and divine love, and an atmosphere of spiritual beauty. Reverend Moon calls these *life elements*—grace or spiritual blessing within the religious traditions. They are the fount of moral and spiritual inspiration. This

grace is granted abundantly to all without condition, just as the Creator “causes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous” (Matthew 5.45).

On the other hand, analogous to obtaining food and water, there are also spiritual elements that require more intention and effort on the part of the individual. The practice of moral truth and true love generates what Reverend Moon calls good *vitality elements*, derived from the physical body. Such elements are what incorporate truth, beauty, and goodness into the character. Without them, great inspiration is quickly forgotten and there is no personal edification. Spiritual maturity and the maintenance of a strong character are the results of the interdependence of life elements given directly to the mind (spiritual self) and good vitality elements from the body (physical self). The spiritual self must be “fed” by the vitality elements arising from unselfish deeds of the body.

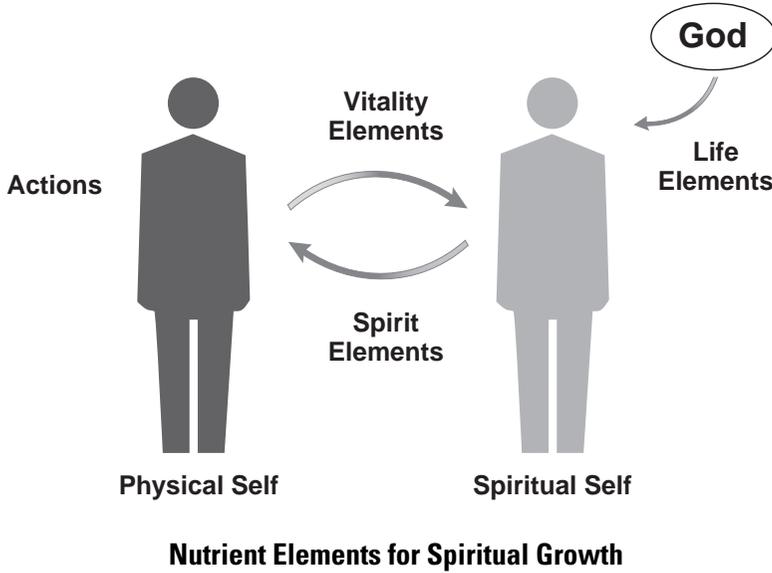
This is not an unusual idea. Most religions affirm the necessity of deeds to further spiritual growth. Even with its emphasis on faith and beliefs, the Christian Bible contains the arresting phrase in the Book of James that faith without works is dead: “You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead” (2.24-26). The Bhagavad Gita declares, “No one who does good deeds will ever come to a bad end, either here or in the world to come” (6.40-41).³ “Whether Jew or Gentile, whether man or woman, whether servant or freeman,” says a Jewish Midrash, “they are all equal in this: that the Holy Spirit rests upon them in accordance with their deeds!” (Seder Eliyyahu Rabbah 10).⁴ The Sikh scripture asserts simply, “Heaven is not attained without good deeds” (Adi Granth, Ramkali-ki-Var).⁵

Actions Infuse the Spirit

Substantial experience is critical to the spirit's development. The action of vitality elements means that what one experiences in the flesh deeply impacts the spirit. This is why acts of service, hard work, physical suffering or even natural processes like childbirth can be such profound catalysts for moral insight, and why it is hard to generate the same effects through vicarious experiences.

It also explains why selfish or immoral actions have such a dominating effect on character, regardless of what an individual professes to believe. Someone has said, "Character is made by many acts; it can be lost by a single one." After a few lies, for example, it is that much easier for the most conscientious person to become a habitual liar who can rationalize such falsehoods away. What individuals habitually do infuses their inner nature with certain values. If it is true that "you are what you eat" in terms of the body, it is also true that "you are (or are becoming) what you do," in terms of heart and character. Such is the power of vitality elements. Thus, the body is the ground supplying the nutrients out of which the spirit grows—it is, as one author put it, "nothing less than the real estate where . . . resurrection will occur."⁶

Earthly life ideally is an experience of maturing into ever greater inner beauty even as one loses more and more of his or her outer beauty. Like the shriveling, drying and finally the falling away of a vine, leaving behind the fresh, fertile fruit, so the material self is but a temporary instrument destined to be used up and die, leaving behind a radiant, beautiful, and imperishable character.



The Harvest of Love

Since love is the medium of life in the next world, one's countless actions through years on earth are summarized according to one theme that reveals their ultimate meaning: true love. "There is only one truly significant work to do in life, and that is love," asserts Dr. George Rodonaia, a Russian neuropsychiatrist who survived a near-death experience.⁷

Who and what individuals come to love and how they learn to express that love become the factors that shape and define their inner lives, both in this life and the next. The Bible reminds us, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6.19-21). What they treasure determines where people find themselves in the afterlife.

The destinations in the spiritual world are defined by love. Heaven, paradise, or whatever the highest place might be called, is a place of endless love, of innocence and no guile, of a clear conscience, no resentment and no regret. It is a place of fellowship

with God and others. It is living to be of service to others and experiencing the pleasure of being put to a worthy purpose. There is freedom and joy within the realm of such love.

Hell, or the lowest place, is characterized by the absence of love. It is a place of selfishness, pettiness, guilt and vengeance, loneliness and alienation, exploitation and abuse. It is a place of constraint, worthlessness, and waste. In spite of the Biblical imagery of fire, those who believe they have glimpsed hell describe it as stone cold, devoid of the warmth of love.

Thus, where one finds oneself in the spiritual world is not a function of prior position or prestige. It is not a matter of wealth or the lack of it. It is not a result of knowledge or ignorance, at least not technical knowledge. It is not even a matter of philosophical or religious belief and insight except insofar as that influences the maturation of one's spirit. Even recognition of and faith in Christ or other divine representatives, as invaluable as this is, does not release anyone from the responsibility to translate that relationship and its benefits into loving action. The determining factor is the ability to give true love and receive it.

Judgment

The principle of "like attracts like" holds true in the afterlife. No one can go to a place he or she cannot understand, cannot identify with—a place where he or she does not belong. Just as people find their comfort zone in this life, the saint in the spiritual world may not be comfortable with the sinner. Even more so, the sinner is uncomfortable in the presence of the saint. Even if invited into the highest realms of heaven, where people of unstinting devotion to true love gather together, how many people would want to do more than merely visit? The judgment is self-imposed; people gravitate to others like themselves, just as in this world. Researcher Kevin Williams concludes after his study of 60 near-death experiences, "In the afterlife, each person lives in the kind of a heaven or hell which they prepared for themselves while on earth. Nobody sends

us anywhere.”⁸

In the metaphysical world, travel occurs at the speed of thought and is curtailed only by the barriers of the heart and mind. One cannot go where one cannot imagine, where there are persons and things in which one cannot believe and which one does not love. Indeed, what one has habitually learned to see becomes all that one does see. For example, just as the callous shopper cannot perceive the clerk as a person like himself but only a functionary to serve his needs, so the individual entering the afterlife cannot connect with others whom he does not respect and appreciate.

The ability to love and enjoy many kinds of people, cultures and natural things is like a visa to visit a vast terrain in the spiritual world. An open heart and mind—and versatility in relating—is like a wide-open doorway that invites new people, ideas and experiences in to be entertained. Thus, the size of one’s heart comes to equal the size of one’s world. The greatest freedom, richness and joy come with a high degree of resonance with God’s heart. This is why Reverend Moon encourages people to learn to love their families, but beyond their families, to love their communities; beyond their communities, to love their nations; and beyond their nations to love the world. Such people will have the most mobility and joy in the spiritual realm.

There are as many places in the spiritual world as there are levels of maturity and moral standards on earth. Thus, in the Bible, Jesus says, “In my Father’s house are many rooms” (John 14.2). Yet, as groups of people elevate their standards closer to that of the original mind, and those with differing viewpoints find common ground to connect, barriers break down among inhabitants of this world. This in turn leads to a gradual integration and consolidation among the myriad levels and provinces in the next world.

To the trained eye, a person’s body language betrays his or her genuine thoughts and feelings—indeed, the entire character—regardless of efforts to put on a façade. “His guilt was written all over him,” we say. In the same way, there can be no hiding of one’s true

character in the afterlife. If the spiritual self incorporates the meaning of all actions, then it stands as an unerring record of an individual's inner and outer life, available to be laid bare for all to see, like "a wide-open book," as the Qur'an puts it (17.13)⁹ or viewed like a mirror, according to the Tibetan Book of the Dead, "wherein every good and evil act is vividly reflected."¹⁰

Most traditions teach that God or a divine representative judges the moral quality of a person's life and assigns him or her to either reward or punishment. A traditional African song from Benin colorfully compares it to a judge examining one's feet:

"At the gates of the land of the dead
You will pass before a searching Judge.
His justice is true and he will examine your feet,
He will know how to find every stain,
Whether visible or hidden under the skin;
If you have fallen on the way he will know.
If the Judge finds no stains on your feet
Open your belly to joy, for you have overcome
And your belly is clean" (Fon Song).¹¹

The Bible asserts, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him, for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5.10).

Self-judgment

Yet if the conscience has a valid sense of right and wrong, is there a need for anyone outside of oneself to assess the moral meaning of one's life? One's conscience has the basis to pass judgment at any moment on the life record inherent in the spirit. This capacity for instant self-assessment explains the common phenomenon of "seeing my whole life flash before my eyes" during a brush with death. Reverend Moon calls it a videotape of one's life. This is an expression of the original mind sifting through the count-

less moments of life to make a moral inventory, to distill that which is most meaningful. And what is meaningful relates to how one has enriched the hearts and lightened the load of fellow travelers on the journey.

This may have some bearing on the anxiety associated with death; most people sense their moral failings and their lack of living up to their potential for a meaningful life. "They shall be tortured by their own soul and their own conscience," states a Zoroastrian scripture, when they face the judgment (Avesta, Yasna 46.10-11).¹² A Native American maxim says it simply: "Each person is his own judge."¹³ Certainly acute regret creates its own hell, just as a clear conscience is its own reward.

Earthly Life as Preparation for the Next

Stacey Stapleton, 31, of Manhattan, whose husband worked three blocks from the site of the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, decided with her husband to have a baby right after the attack. "Before, my whole life was about what I could and couldn't afford," she says. "Now, really, the only thing that's important is that I have my husband and that I'm able to have a family."¹⁴ When people's mortality becomes all too apparent, the instinctive reaction frequently is to cherish loved ones and earthly life, and to sense acutely the preciousness of both. Contemplating the afterlife has the effect of bringing the meaning of earthly life into high relief.

Wisdom literature has no shortage of admonitions to use mortal life well. A song in Nigerian traditional religion of the Igbo people reminds us:

We are on a market trip to earth:
Whether we fill our baskets or not,
Once the time is up, we go home.¹⁵

The Buddhist Dhammapada cautions us that those who have not spent their youth accumulating treasure in their heart and character, "perish like old herons in a lake without fish" (155-56).¹⁶

The Bible reminds us in a similar vein about real wealth that no one and nothing—not even death—can take away: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal” (Matthew 6.19-21).

Influence upon Motivation

Belief in reward or punishment in the afterlife is an oft-cited reason people give for trying to live a good life. However, this motivation can support either good or bad causes. Consider suicide bombers in World War II or in contemporary terrorism; people have done good deeds as well as committed crimes in the belief that they would receive blessings in the next world. Thus, concern with the afterlife is not necessarily a motivation that directs one's deeds toward true love.

More importantly, such a belief in supernatural reward and punishment may be simply an extension of the ordinary motive to avoid the unsavory consequences of mistakes, such as guilt or punishment, as well as to invite the pleasures, such as feeling good about oneself. These can have more primitive and more sophisticated variations. Expecting “pie in the sky when you die” can easily resemble the child's concern with being praised or reprimanded—an immature level of moral reasoning—rather than with living according to principles. A self-serving desire for reward and/or fear of punishment can hardly be praiseworthy motives for unselfish behavior.

Certainly God as a Parent would assess it in a similar way. God cannot feel a deep affinity with those worrying about their place in heaven; that is so distant from the Heart of the Father. As Jesus said to the disciples haggling over their proximity to him in the Kingdom, the qualification for heaven is concern for the welfare of others. Reverend Moon has asked, what would God do if His faithful servant refused to take his or her seat in Heaven, but instead

went down to Hell to rescue his suffering brothers and sisters? Would God scold this child so focused on saving His lost children? No, He would bring Heaven down to where His faithful one was working. A parent's heart is with the children, particularly those who are in greatest need. The filial child knows this. He or she cannot rest as long as someone the parent loves is in distress.¹⁷

This is the motivation of the Buddhist Bodhisattva, the compassionate individual who delays the attainment of nirvana in order to deliver suffering beings from this world. Indeed, what kind of joy can there be either for God or His faithful if so many of His children—created in His likeness and of eternal spirit—are living in self-destruction? Even people of unexceptional character find their enjoyment of a holiday dinner impaired by the knowledge that loved ones are absent or in pain or even that strangers are going hungry. How much more would those who consider themselves friends of God be unable to rejoice in their own good fortune when many others are in grave distress?

A healthy motivation does not focus on the fear of punishment and desire for reward. The practice of true love with the afterlife in mind is concerned with taking advantage of earthly life and its opportunity for moral growth to realize one's capacity for true humanity and God-likeness, especially in loving. It involves taking responsibility for one's place in the lineage, nation, and other spheres of influence to help reverse any negative legacies and to pass on a positive one for posterity. Ultimately, the focus is on helping to bring others joy and alleviate their suffering, thus comforting the divine Heart at the same time.

Spiritual Influences

The human family and community are highly interdependent and interrelated. These bonds do not cease at death. Just as there is great interdependence on earth, there is great interdependence between the material and the spiritual realms and elements are constantly being exchanged between the two. The actions of a

descendant influence his or her ancestors, who remain active if unseen players in family and community life. Likewise, their influence on the descendant is keen, if frequently unrecognized.

People sometimes say “Grandma was with me” or “My departed father had a hand in that” when events on earth seem to indicate the continued influence of a personality who has passed on to the spiritual world. There is nothing frightening about this kind of experience. Usually such moments are accompanied by a sense of protection and love. It is natural that those with whom one shares a blood link would be connected to a person even after they have passed on to a different dimension of existence. It is also natural that their love and concern would live on.

What is more, the spiritual presences can be attracted and sometimes perceived depending on bonds formed through a common base, not only on the basis of blood relationship. In life, people tend to gather according to mutually held values and purposes. Whatever individuals invest their thoughts, time and energy into will attract certain kinds of friends and acquaintances who hold similar priorities. What often goes unnoticed is that it also affects the kinds of intangible entities that gather around people as well. These unseen spectators receive not only the vicarious satisfaction that their physical counterparts do, but they also benefit from vitality elements they can no longer receive except from those still on earth. These immaterial presences exert their own kind of peer pressure upon us, reinforcing either our best or our worst.

Those earthly people seeking to help others will attract the notice and support of like-minded individuals in the next world. The more altruistic the cause, the more unselfish and mature are those who come to assist, especially when attending to matters important to God and His work on behalf of humanity. Unfortunately, lower motives attract their own allies as well. Like the crowds that gather to watch and encourage a street brawl to relieve their own boredom and vent their own frustrations, spirits who spent their lives pursuing ill-gotten gains, lustful desires, glut-

tony, alcohol, and vengeance flock to those on earth who exhibit these tendencies to egg them on.

For this reason, self-discipline in thought, word, and deed tends to multiply and reinforce itself not only in obvious ways but also as to the type of spiritual entities a person draws around him- or herself. An alcoholic spirit is not likely to stay around a person who no longer indulges. The person who learns to abstain from illicit sex will no longer attract lustful spirits who amplify the feeling of temptation. The angry and resentful person who learns to forgive will no longer attract additional fuel on the fire from the anger and resentment of people who have carried their grudges into the afterlife.

Indeed, such self-discipline does more than resist malevolent influences from the deceased—it can also help them reform. A drinking buddy may have so much history with his newly abstinent friend that instead of favoring the bottle, he may follow his friend's good example. In the same way, departed persons who are attached to us for various reasons may find themselves pulled into greater moral and spiritual development by our own inner advancement, by virtue of the vitality elements that they receive from us. Every time a person defies the odds and reverses long-standing destructive patterns, they are helping to change entrenched habits of thinking among their invisible audience. This is simply an extension of what occurs among the ancestors still on earth. When a young woman challenges the anti-educational bias of her family and neighborhood to be the first to graduate from the university, both her living and deceased relatives are confronted with a reason to widen their perspective. When a young man marries a member of a group long-hated by his people, it is not only the members of the extended family on earth who are motivated to open their minds and overcome their prejudices.

This kind of assistance from the living to the dead complements the more familiar intercessions such as prayer. Indeed, if the most valuable prayer is that of repentance—expressing remorse on earth for crimes committed by those who are no longer in a position

to repent on earth—then choosing to reverse old sinful or limiting attitudes and behaviors can sometimes represent a kind of repentance in action. Both practices bless and liberate the countless “elders” who can no longer directly avail themselves of the learning and growth opportunities that earthly life provides.

Harnessing the power of miracles

A person who works for loving ends on earth may use the power of like attracting like to marshal spiritual forces to their aid. These may bring with them tremendous blessing and fortune. Reverend Moon speaks of this:

At the peak of your spirituality, if you resolve and act upon your resolution for God, good spirits from the spiritual world will descend and cooperate with you. However, if your spiritual level drops, those spirits that had been cooperating with you begin to leave, one by one Act, therefore, to increase the number of spirits who can cooperate with you. Then your work will make smooth and rapid progress.¹⁸

The Bible speaks of the righteous people who have passed on—the “great cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12.1)—who are eager to grant guidance and power to those on earth who would further the great cause to which they dedicated their lives. A sense of this possibility is universal among world cultures, from the Catholic appeal to the departed saints to the Chinese New Year custom of burning money to solicit benevolence from the dead.

Characteristics of Those Who Gain Spiritual Help

1. Public-minded commitment
2. Mind and body unity
3. Needing special help
4. Practical basis for success

1. Public-minded Commitment

There are five characteristics to those who attract invisible assistance.¹⁹ One is commitment to noble purposes—“his kingdom and his righteousness” (Matthew 6:23)—that would gain the attention of likewise noble persons in the spiritual realm. Only public-minded goals will attract the great and the generous; appeals for good luck in a poker game are beneath their concern. “For a person in concord with Unity, everything prospers,” states a Taoist scripture; “to one who has no personal interest, even the spirits are in obeisance” (Chuang Tzu 12).²⁰ Healers and sensitives worldwide have found that they are on safe ground when they apply their gifts to helping people, while using their gifts for personal gain may court disaster.

2. Mind and Body Unity

A second is personal integrity and dependability; that is, the mind and body unity to be able to act upon such guidance. Only those who demonstrate self-discipline, faith and perseverance will be seen as worthwhile to help. Reverend Moon particularly emphasizes purity of heart and intention:

Look at each man or woman as a holy person. Regard each person's body as sacred and their mind as hallowed. If you live like this, soon you will hear inside of yourself a small voice, the sound of your mind. Wherever you walk no evil or darkness can remain. Only good spirits can touch you if you create such an atmosphere. If you place yourself in such a position, then the spiritual world will pour down upon you its abundant blessing and power.

Single-minded, passionate commitment may garner support regardless of the endeavor. Modern organic chemistry owes much of its genesis to an insight that came as if it were a gift from beyond the earth. Intensely immersed in the problem of how atoms form molecules in benzene, German chemist Frederick Kekule fell asleep.

In a dream, he saw a snake coiling and biting its own tail, leading to the discovery that carbon forms itself into hexagonal rings containing six atoms.

3. *Needing Special Help*

A third characteristic of persons receiving spiritual aid is to be truly in need of extraordinary help. This is why it is at the eleventh hour, when all available resources have been spent, that supernatural interventions usually occur. The pilot about to crash, the soldier whose ammunition has run out, the patient on whom physicians have given up, the spouse about to file for divorce—these are the ones most likely to testify to a spiritual visitation or divine miracle. A person facing insurmountable odds who is stretched beyond her limitations will elicit sympathy of Heaven. Consider the dramatic rescues of Daniel in the lion's den (Daniel 6.16-23) and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the furnace (Daniel 3.1-28), as well as Paul's remarkable release from prison (Acts 12.1-19). Only when earthly strength is gone will heavenly strength be granted.

It also follows that one's hardships elicit the extraordinary attention and sympathy of departed saints only after one has approached or surpassed the hardships they experienced while on earth. A verse in the Qur'an alludes to this when it asks, "Do you think that you shall enter the Garden without such trials as came to those who passed away before you?" (2.214).²¹ A Native American verse is more direct: "Try to have one of our grandfathers, one of the War Chiefs, pity you Then . . . as you travel along the road [of life], you will know what to do and encounter no obstacles."²² These compassionate yet unseen helpers—"the thousands upon thousands of his holy ones" (Jude 14)—are often the agents of supernatural deliverance.

These latter two qualifications have led to the universal tradition of prayer, fasting and other acts of sacrifice and penance accompanying an appeal for special help. Such efforts simultaneously demonstrate sincerity, faith and self-control while also creating the situation of putting oneself in extremity. Moses' extraordinary

encounter with the Almighty that yielded the Law came on the foundation of his 40 days of fasting and prayer. A Taoist story illustrates this practice of demonstrating mind and body unity and going beyond limitations to enlist spiritual assistance:

Woodworker Ch'ing carved a piece of wood and made a bell stand, and when it was finished, everyone who saw it marveled, for it seemed to be the work of gods or spirits. When the Marquis of Lu saw it, he asked, "What art is it you have?" Ch'ing replied, "I am only a craftsman—how would I have any art? There is one thing, however. When I am going to make a bell stand, I never let it wear out my energy. I always fast in order to still my mind. When I have fasted for three days, I no longer have any thought of congratulations or rewards, of titles or stipends. When I have fasted for five days, I no longer have any thought of praise or blame, of skill or clumsiness. And when I have fasted seven days, I am so still that I forget I have four limbs and a form and body. By that time, the ruler and his court no longer exist for me. My skill is concentrated and all outside distractions fade away. After that, I go into the mountain forest and examine the Heavenly nature of the trees. If I find one of superlative form, and I can see a bell stand there, I put my hand to the job of carving; if not, I let it go. This way I am simply matching up 'Heaven' with 'Heaven.' That's probably the reason that people wonder if the results were not made by spirits" (Chuang Tzu 19).²³

4. Practical Basis for Success

The fourth characteristic of those most likely to attract spiritual help are those who have a practical basis for success. As Reverend Moon explains, "The spiritual world is using many channels by which to come down and participate in God's providence; they will choose the best ones to use first."²⁴ Like earthly financiers, those in the meta-

physical world are loathe to invest in someone who has little prospect of achieving the goal. Consider the angelic support granted Jacob, who so diligently labored over time to amass the material and social capital necessary to win over his estranged brother, Esau and facilitate his mission. Consider the supernatural assistance that Moses received as the lone Hebrew who was granted all the advantages of the Egyptian court.

Acting upon inspiration

Invisible support from the spiritual world is far from rare, but it only bears fruit when acted upon. Rachel recalls an incident when she was a young adult church worker in the 1970s in a large American city. She had just concluded a three-day period of prayer and fasting with a simple meal at midnight, and was looking forward to getting some sleep in preparation for the next day's labors at the church's cafe. Suddenly she was seized with an inspiration to begin drafting a proposal she had been thinking about for the city's first Earth Day celebration. She had entertained an idealistic hope to win approval for her idea as a first step towards gaining influence with the city council and making a positive impact on local politics. But certainly the proposal could wait until after she had some sleep! But no, a voice inside her was insistent that she had to work on it now, tonight.

Rachel rallied her strength and began typing in her room at the parsonage, while others slumbered. The very beginnings of dawn were visible by the time she had finished and she slipped it into a large envelope, grateful for a chance for a brief nap. No, you must deliver it now, a voice demanded. It's much too early, she protested, but to no avail. She was to drive it over to the mayor's home now, along with a treat from the café. Rachel offered up her night's rest to God and drove in the darkness to her workplace, selecting some pastries that had just been dropped off from the bakery. Finally she made the 20-minute journey across town to the mayor's mansion, arriving at his door with the sun and not quite knowing what to do.

The door abruptly opened and the mayor himself emerged in his bathrobe, to pick up his newspaper. Rachel greeted him and offered her gift—the mayor’s favorite, it turned out—and the proposal. She later learned that the city council was to discuss Earth Day that very morning, and had no suitable ideas for it yet. Rachel was indeed later asked to head the city’s celebration, which launched this unknown young woman into a public service career.

Rachel thanked God for what seemed like a miracle, but indeed she had created the conditions for spiritual assistance. She had qualified herself in a practical sense by doing the necessary homework. She was in need since she was unlikely to succeed without special help. She had demonstrated strong mind and body unity. Her public-mindedness was clear. In the end, she had the faith and humility to act upon the inspiration of unseen helpers who knew better than she what specific actions were needed, exactly where and precisely when.

Reverend Moon reminds us that our responsibility “is to control the spiritual world, not the other way round. With prayer coming from deep within your mind, you can move a man from outside to inside. Become a mover of people’s spirits; become a spiritual magnet, drawing people with love. Maintain this attitude, and then what you pray for will become a reality.”²⁵

Benefits of Focusing on Life in the Spiritual World

Though we have seen that concerns about the afterlife don’t always lead to the development of the heart and conscience, surely consideration of the eternal dimension is a context that can offer many benefits.

Benefits of Considering the Afterlife

1. Highlights internal goals over external
2. Encourages generosity and perseverance
3. Promotes accountability
4. Focuses on the inner value of people
5. Discourages murder and suicide
6. Reinforces humility
7. Helps delay gratification

1. Highlights Internal Goals over External

Life in the next world is eternal as opposed to temporal life in this world, so the afterlife is more clearly focused upon love and God's ways rather than acquiring the means of survival and caring for the physical body. It is governed more clearly by immutable laws of truth and love. Therefore, concentrating on life in that world focuses the person's attention on that which is unchanging and ultimately much more meaningful than mundane existence.

Understanding that all material things and circumstances decay and pass away helps individuals avoid the fixation on appearances and futile efforts to hang on to what cannot be held onto, whether it be youthful beauty, a moment of glory or a prized possession. When someone realizes that things in the physical world are for the sake of enriching the heart and character and that all must perish, what is truly precious and enduring stands in high relief.

Hence, contemplating the afterlife clarifies the priority of moral maturity, loving family relationships, and service to humanity over more external accomplishments like practical knowledge, wealth, fame and position. As the Sikh scripture admonishes, "O shrewd businessman, do only profitable business: Deal only in that commodity which shall accompany you after death" (Adi Granth, Sri Raga, M.1, p. 22).²⁶ It helps to remind people that cultivating intuition and compassion, integrity and dependability, imagination and creativity represents a lasting investment as contrasted with career knowledge and skills. It shows how versatility in leading and sup-

porting and learning to appreciate, respect and harmonize with the wide range of personalities and outlooks at school, at work and in the community are more important than convenience and getting things done. It gives greater incentive to practice discipline over the body and less attachment to physical—and thus more self-centered—concerns. In short, it promotes character, emotional intelligence, and spiritual life.

2. Encourages Generosity and Perseverance

The Biblical reminder to be kind to strangers because we may have “entertained angels without knowing” (Hebrews 13.2) suggests another facet of how contemplation of the afterlife supports more ethical and loving relationships. That demanding boss or annoying in-law may also represent someone influenced by a victim of our ancestors, seeking restitution from an earthly descendant of his or her enemy. Even if it is not, framing the encounter with that kind of meaning can lend it such significance. Giving time or money or care beyond expectations and resisting the temptation to reject or retaliate not only pleases Heaven and sows the seeds of peace on earth. It can also heal pain in the hearts of those no longer on earth.

Moreover, it means that constructive interactions need not end because of death. If the daughter knows she will not only see her mother again though she has passed away, but that the time together has no boundaries, this can be a potent source of comfort and support. Moreover, it can help her conduct herself in a way that she will be proud of before her mother when they reunite after earthly life is through.

3. Promotes Accountability

The absolute transparency in the next life is certainly a sobering thought. What would anyone do wrong if they knew everything they did was being watched and in fact recorded? All cameral surveillance, security guards, and one-way mirrors in contemporary

society are based on the simple fact that people tend to look for a private place to do wrong and to hide it after they have done it. It is amusing to see a young child stealing a cookie and believing he is out of sight just because his own eyes are covered. Yet if a permanent “videotape” is indeed being made in one’s own spirit self of all one’s actions and even one’s thoughts, then the concept of privacy and concealment is as illusory as the little boy’s efforts. Certainly this can spur people to think twice about their actions.

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The moral inventory that awaits people encourages them to take stock on a regular basis and make amends for mistakes. Time and distance tend to obscure the importance of doing this. A bad exchange with a stranger on the bus, for example, can be lost to memory in a short time. However, in the next life, where no memories are lost and there is plenty of time to settle all scores, lingering resentments about that encounter can draw the individuals together again to confront the unresolved issue. People can leave a difficult marriage and begin again, fire a challenging employee and find one easier to deal with, move away from family and find more compatible people to be around. But in the afterlife there is no escape from difficult relationships. If people knew they would have to face everyone they had wronged—or conversely, that they could reap the gratitude of all they helped—would that not impact choices

to be more loving even in fleeting encounters? Suddenly the faceless mass of humanity becomes more like a small town, where close relationships keep people accountable.

This perspective also extends the concept of consequences for one's actions beyond a few years or even to the end of one's life to consider many generations hence. This echoes the standard attributed to Native American Chief Seneca for their tribal deliberations: "We must consider the impact of over the next seven generations." Such a reference is a cure for shortsighted decisions. How many social tragedies would be averted if policymakers, legislators, courts, etc. always discussed issues with this in mind? On a more personal level, how many sorrows could be avoided if individuals conducted themselves with thought about the implications of their actions on their grandchildren's generation?

4. Focuses on the Inner Value of People

With the afterlife in mind, people can be viewed as eternal spiritual beings who will someday leave their physical bodies behind, like an old car. Such a perspective counteracts the tendency to be obsessed with physical appearance, both as a means to win others' love and as a basis to judge people. Though it is only good stewardship to keep the body fit and healthy, it is foolish to invest too much in such a doomed enterprise at the expense of the "true love capital" that is the real basis of prosperity after a person has "retired" forever from the earth.

It makes as much sense to view people as the sum of their material selves—beautiful or plain, stocky or thin, healthy or impaired, powerful or weak—as it does to judge them on the basis of their cars. The physically or mentally challenged here have perfectly functioning spirit bodies in the afterlife. The aged here are forever young there. The disfigured here are handsome there. At the same time, the morally corrupt are ugly and impaired there, regardless of how they look here.

The exhortation not to judge others by appearances takes on enhanced meaning when the afterlife elements are factored in. Since only love matters when determining status in the spiritual world, oftentimes “the last shall be first and the first shall be last.” The diligent washerwoman or gracious doorman may well beat out the wealthy CEO or celebrated religious leader in the next life in terms of freedom, recognition, and joy.

5. Discourages Murder and Suicide

It dramatically lessens the appeal of such moral transgressions as suicide and murder as solutions to problems. These crimes rest on the assumption that eliminating physical life eliminates the dilemma that the troublesome person (or self) represents. Understanding the afterlife means that killing only removes the material manifestation of the problem—and the context for resolving it most easily—not the problem itself. The woman who murders her boyfriend’s lover has certainly removed the tangible threat, but the victim still exists to exert an unseen influence on both parties in life. Moreover, she will certainly assert her resentment when the murderer goes to the spiritual world. Even the enemy soldier slain in battle remains with the same hatreds and can help inflame the passions of his counterparts left on earth.

The one who kills himself to end his emotional distress faces only more distress when he sees the anguish he caused to the people who care about him. Further, now that his physical body is gone, he cannot talk to counselors or take the self-helping actions that might help him overcome the hopelessness he felt about life. He is trapped in his state of hopelessness and despair indefinitely.

6. Reinforces Humility

When we leave mortal life and enter the spiritual world, we must start all over again in terms of learning about the ways of that new environment. However sophisticated and worldly wise we may

have been, it is of little use. In this sense, we are as babes. Herein lies the wisdom of the Biblical exhortation to be as little children to be able to enter the Kingdom. Moreover, since there is no “old age” in the eternal realm, we will never stop learning or exploring its infinite reaches. That is one more reason why a sense of humility, wonder, and openness to learning is an asset all during earthly life.

7. Helps Delay Gratification

Many reckless decisions are born out of the fear that there is not sufficient time to realize one's desires, so happiness is to be sought now, at whatever cost. “You're only young once,” “You only live once,” “Life is too short to put up with unhappiness,” are the common rationales for often devastating mistakes: extramarital affairs, divorce, embezzlement, abandoning commitments, and so on. Holding an afterlife perspective mitigates this temptation as it enlarges the horizons to include many pleasures in the future. Though it is important to have varied experiences in one's mortal life, this does not have to be an excuse to sacrifice moral concerns. Eternity is time enough for an endless quantity of experiences; the time on earth is for a focus on quality experiences that broaden love and deepen the heart.

Indeed, human ambition has no end. Who does not desire to see more, know more, have more, be more? This simply reflects the human potential for tremendous love, wisdom and creativity—to resemble God and be with Him. There is not enough time in fourscore years, more or oftentimes less, allowed during natural life to realize this ambition. How empowering to recognize that our limitless desire will be at home in a world of limitless scope, limitless time, limitless possibilities, limitless love.

Given our inevitable residence there, it is only smart to concern ourselves with getting ready: cultivating our characters, correcting our mistaken attitudes and actions and making amends for them, maintaining warm and constructive relationships, and doing our best to serve the highest goods we can. For those who neglect this,

death comes frighteningly and too fast, while those who keep this in mind are always prepared and have no need to fear. "As a well-spent day brings happy sleep," said Leonardo da Vinci, "so a life well spent brings happy death."

Part III

Principles for Loving Relationships

Chapter 9

Mind and Body Unity

True love appears where mind and body are united.

—Sun Myung Moon

“As high as the mountains and as deep as the sea,” is a metaphor used in countless songs and poems to describe a lover’s affection. This is a beautiful pledge of undying devotion, comparing it to the vastness but more importantly, implying also the steadfastness and reliability of the created world. To be as “faithful as those hills,” as “right as rain” and so forth is to exemplify the perfect integrity of all things in the universe, their oneness of purpose and expression, character and form. In human terms, this is harmony of word and deed, mind and body—a necessary precondition for true and enduring love.

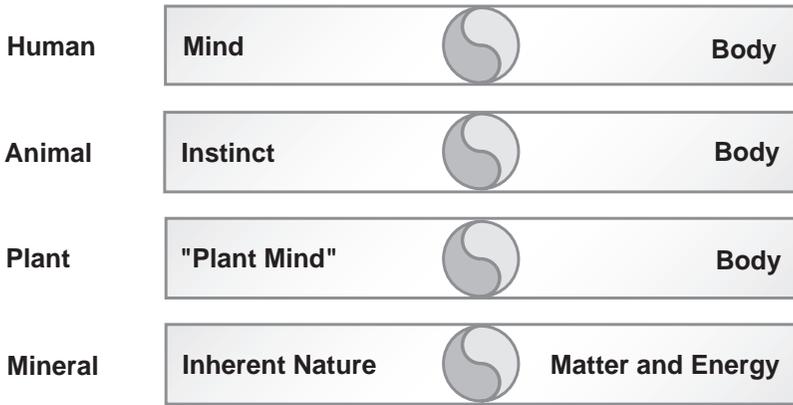
A pervasive duality of inner and outer natures characterizes all beings. Animals move their bodies according to their instinctive mind. Plants likewise exhibit sensitivity and responsiveness to their environment by virtue of the invisible life within them. Inanimate things also behave according to their inherent physicochemical natures. Aristotle termed these two dimensions idea and matter. Indian philosophy calls them spirit (purusha) and matter-energy (prakriti). The inner nature of a being gives it its purpose and direction and commands its outer form. These inner and outer natures are so inextricably connected, so inseparable—indeed, one cannot exist without the other—that we scarcely notice them.

The mental and physical aspects of animals are in natural harmony, with the inner instinctive impulses directing the body's behavior towards purposeful action. Thus, we admire the dignified beauty and elegant efficacy of even the simple housecat; nary a single movement lacks grace or in any other way betrays its essential and God-given feline nature. Does an oak tree have even an inch—in its trunk, branches, roots, leaves, acorns, bark—that is not true to its own nature? We rely on this absolute integrity of the created world as part of our fundamental security.

The absolute integrity within the creation is a reflection of its Creator. St. Paul speaks of God's "eternal power and divine nature" expressed in the created world (Romans 1.20). This "divine nature" represents His character while His "power" represents His manifestation in the world, like inner and outer in the created world. Another way of saying this is that the divine Word and His deeds are one; "What I have said, that I will bring about;" the Lord proclaims in the Hebrew scriptures, "what I have planned, that I will do" (Isaiah 46.11). God is the ultimate example of harmony of word and deed, character and expression, the equivalent of mind and body unity.

Humans of course can also manifest this kind of integrity, and when they do, we see both authentic humanity and a likeness of divinity. The government official who speaks out against a tyrant even though she may be killed, the Oxford graduate who sets up his medical practice in a slum, the middle-class couple who adopts three orphaned siblings with disabilities even though they have several children of their own—these are persons acting in a way that is true to their deepest heart and conscience. This is the unity of mind and body in service to love. For Reverend Moon, this mind and body unity is a prerequisite to altruistic loving. Thus it comprises a principle of true love.

But people can quite readily be found out of integrity, living lives of deceit, aggression and degradation that betray their essential nature. How can mind and body unity be better understood? How can it be cultivated?



Complementarity of Character and Form Pervades the Universe

Inner and Outer Self

It is first necessary to review what is meant by mind and body. The mind refers to the inner self, the heart and conscience, the moral and spiritual dimension. This is that which is oriented towards purposes beyond the self and prefers the needs of the others, one's family, the community, the nation, the world and God. The mind is also that part of us which is more receptive to the Creator and His inspiration. The mind has a sense of enlightened self-interest; it wisely understands the need for the lesser to sacrifice itself for the greater, because for example, if the nation prevails, the individual citizens prevail too. On the other hand, the body refers to the outer self, the instincts and practical sense, the material dimension. It functions to preserve and maintain the individual's personal well-being and has a here-and-now focus. The body allows us to participate in the richness of the physical world.

Mind and body both have their legitimate concerns to be respected. They are of course meant to be interdependent and complementary. They are neither isolated nor opposing entities, con-

trary to certain traditional Western notions that assume a radical split between flesh and spirit, the physical and the metaphysical. In all things, the inner and outer aspects contain some part of the other that allows them to interact. Physics is recognizing for instance that even matter has its own kind of primitive volition at the sub-atomic level.¹

For its own part, the mind possesses inner sight and intuition that complement the body's five senses. The Chinese yin-yang symbol pictures this duality well: within the yin is a spot of yang, and within the yang is a spot of yin, showing that they inhere within each other. Western medicine is more and more affirming the inseparable nature of mind and body.

In mature and loving individuals, the inner self directs the outer person in this natural and wholesome balance. They work in partnership towards one goal, the mind seeking value and the body realizing value. Their practices match their promises, their deeds correspond to their words, and their life manifests their ideals. Persons of such integrity are universally prized.

Contrasting Characteristics of Mind and Body

<i>Mind</i>	<i>Body</i>
Inner self	Outer self
Heart and conscience	Instincts and practical sense
Moral and spiritual dimension	Material dimension
Orientation towards eternity	Here-and-now focus
Orientation to higher purpose	Orientation to self purpose

The Experience of Inner Unity

Most people have experienced some moments of mind and body unity, and it is exhilarating. The simplest kind is where the body is trained such that it obeys and fulfills a particular goal of the mind, as in the grace and speed of an accomplished athlete or artist or performer. They are “in the zone,” as sports psychologists call it, or experiencing what psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

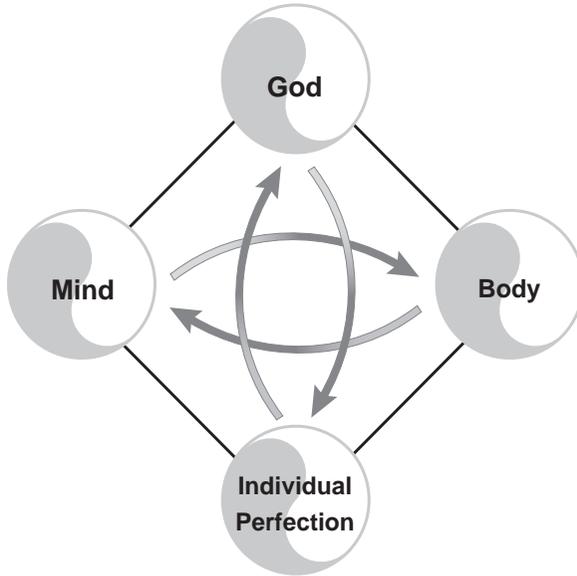
terms “flow,” or having one type of “peak experience,” where there is a rush of joy, heightened awareness, greater clarity of perception and thinking and top performance. “Once I get warmed up, it feels like something takes me over,” says a professional singer. “I surprise myself later on when I listen to the recording. ‘Who’s that?’ I ask myself.” Psychologists include this among their list of altered states of consciousness, in which there is great calm, focus, confidence, a sense of well-being and a sense of what is occurring all around the individual. Other kinds of control over the body—from drug-free pain reduction to control of heartbeat and other aspects of the autonomic nervous system—can be attained through conditioning, biofeedback techniques and meditation.

But this kind of mind and body unity is what is called an instrumental virtue, morally neutral. Thieves, safecrackers and assassins often have remarkable control over their nerves and considerable skill in executing their craft. What is obviously more challenging and rare is moral dominion of the mind over the body.

Moral and Spiritual Integrity

Completely attaining this is what spiritual traditions have called spiritual maturity or perfection (see Chapter 6). Perfection in this sense is not some unobtainable ideal, a state of knowing how to do anything without learning, never making a miscalculation and living without need for food or sleep. The authentic kind of perfection means to be unfailingly true and sincere, able to give one’s physical energies to the right priorities of love, as Jesus asserts:

You have heard that it was said, “Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? . . . Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5.43-48).



Perfect Unity

Such perfection is simply the result of the conscience being given free rein, unimpeded by selfishness. This is moral and spiritual freedom. Like the pleasure of the practiced musician who can play any tune that comes into her head, so the individual who has attained this kind of mind and body unity has the joy of being able to readily act upon any worthy inspiration coming from his heart and conscience. He is free to let true love move and use him. Most people have had at least a temporary experience of this. “She kept on thanking me for caring for her child,” relates Marisa, about the mother who collapsed with illness on the sidewalk, leaving her young son crying. Marisa, a bystander, had offered to take care of the child for a few days. “But I’m a mother myself—how could I not respond the way I did? It was nothing really.” “Nothing” is how automatic it is when the excessive self-interest of the body has been habitually subdued and the heart is liberated to respond to the call of love.

When this becomes the dominant mode of living, a person becomes a window of the divine heart and character. “The Supreme Reality stands revealed in the consciousness of those who have conquered themselves,” states the Bhagavad Gita (6.7-9).² Likewise, Jesus declared, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14.9). More than just a window, such a person is where God also wants to reside. Where he or she is, Heaven and Earth intersect.

The War Within

Yet the human experience is that mind and body are usually at odds. Sometimes people can be generous and kind; at other times they are self-absorbed and uncaring. A mother who cares the world for her children may suddenly erupt in anger at the slightest provocation after a long day. Under the stress of losing a key account, a usually kind and friendly boss may take out his frustration on his employees. In the deepest part of themselves they wish to take the long view and act good and loving, but this innate good sense can be overwhelmed by negative passions and desires. “Our selfish desires and moral capacities are at war with one another,” states ethicist James Q. Wilson, “and often the former triumphs over the latter.”³

Christians call it the battle between flesh and spirit; Jews, between the good and evil inclinations. The body’s narrow preoccupation with immediate self-interest tends to overpower the unselfish proclivity of the mind. Individuals find themselves acting in ways they believe they should not—and not practicing what they should. They regret too many things they have done. St Paul spoke directly to this when he confessed, “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do” (Romans 7.15).

How often do people find themselves saying the most hurtful things to the ones they love the most? Or letting their selfishness ruin an important relationship? “She was the girl next door, we loved each other; we were thinking of getting married once we graduated from high school,” recalls a middle-aged man of his high

school sweetheart. “We had only kissed and hugged, but the guys were always pushing me to go for more. One night in senior year I had a few beers and tried to get real physical with my girlfriend and wouldn’t let up. She got really upset with me, it was never the same again. I messed up a real good thing.” This self-contradictory and often self-destructive state is what religious traditions call that of sin. The mind or conscience suffers under the oppression of the selfish instincts of the body, its desires relentlessly frustrated. St. Paul ends his confession of self-contradiction with his question, “Who will deliver me from this body of death?”

People have adopted many perspectives towards this tension between body and mind. Some demonize the body and deny it as much as possible, seeking to escape into their mind and wait for death to release their spirit. Yet the body is essential for spiritual growth (see Chapter 9) and having both an inner and outer nature is part of God’s order. Others deem the capitulation to the flesh to be fitting for us as animals; we are simply following the ways of nature. Yet nothing in nature is as self-destructive and unreliable in realizing its potential as human beings. In other words, for adult human beings, surrendering to selfishness is actually unnatural, that is, contrary to our original design.

Repels God and invites evil

Because within God there is no conflict, no betrayal of His nature of true love, He cannot intimately connect to those whose mind and body are at war. He cannot readily find His image in them, so He cannot fully delight in His children. Moreover, He cannot manifest through His children as He would want so He cannot trust them. Consider the Heavenly Father’s many expressions of pleasure in the obedient Moses—“I am pleased with you and know you by name” (Exodus 33.17). Yet when Moses disobeys Him and yields to his own anger, He forbids him to lead the people into the Promised Land (Numbers 20.12).

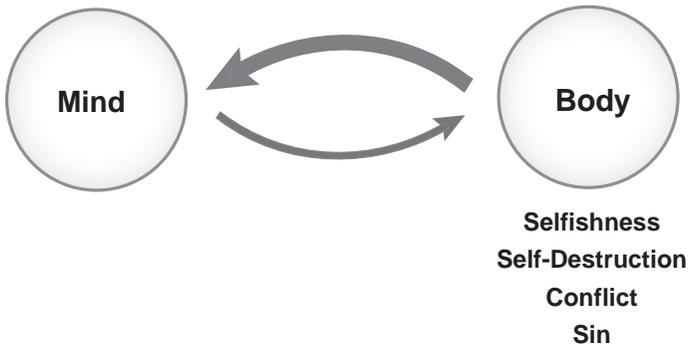
Because of this inner contradiction, we have a hard time seeing

divinity in each other as well. Indeed, the face of depravity is often easier to discern. This is because the reversal of the proper order, the body oppressing the mind, is the very definition of immorality and evil. It means that the awesome powers of both worlds—such as power, wealth and sexuality on one hand, and intellect, imagination and love on the other—are too often in service to small-mindedness, short-sightedness and self-centeredness. Instead of the individual living to serve others, others are sacrificed for oneself. Thus, every kind of pathology and iniquity is possible. Mind and body disunity is a fundamental condition for evil to manifest itself within the individual. It makes true love impossible.

The Challenge of Self-Discipline

Because of the power of the body over the mind, people must struggle mightily to restore their proper inner relationship. The essence of this training is self-discipline—the fruit of continuous practice of good deeds by curbing the more body-centered desires to conform to those of the mind. Theodore Roosevelt once said, “With self-discipline most anything is possible.” Self-discipline is fundamental to character growth, which in turn is fundamental to the capacity to give unchanging love.

“Before you desire to control the universe,” Reverend Moon has said, “you must first be able to completely control yourself.”⁴ Such a thought has echoes throughout the world religions. “Who is strong? He who controls his passions,” states the Jewish Mishnah (Abot 4.1).⁵ The Sikhs have a saying, “With the conquest of my mind, I have conquered the whole world” (Adi Granth, Japuji 28, M.1).⁶ In the Hindu Upanishads, the self is described as a rider, the body as a chariot, the intellect as the charioteer and the mind as the reins. The physical senses are likened to the power of the horses thundering down the mazes of desire (Katha Upanishad 1.3.3-6).⁷ This image shows that unless self-discipline is strong, the desires of the flesh enslave a person.



Inner Contradiction

Self-discipline requires faith, perseverance, and courage. It is the moral directing of the will. Moral will is required for the man to admit to his wife his attraction to his co-worker, for the young woman to run door-to-door in the burning dorm to alert fellow students to the danger, for the teenage boy to publicly denounce the bigotry being practiced in his neighborhood.

The key to reaching any goal

The will to suppress the body's impulses, resist unhealthy attractions, and delay gratification is crucial to realizing even practical goals.⁸ In a revealing study, preschoolers were given a choice of eating one marshmallow right away or holding out for fifteen minutes in order to get two marshmallows. Some youngsters ate the treat right away. Others distracted themselves to control their bodies from grabbing the treat. They were duly rewarded with two marshmallows. A follow-up study was conducted years later when the children graduated from high school. It found that those who had displayed the ability to delay gratification even at that young age grew up to be more confident, persevering, trustworthy, and had better social skills; while the grabbers were more troubled, resent-

ful, jealous, anxious and easily upset.⁹ Thus, even a modicum of self-control at an early age sets up a pattern that leads to greater self-mastery. Other research confirms that adolescents who have learned self-discipline enjoy increased self-confidence, affording them greater resistance to the appeal of negative peer groups. These teenagers are less likely to cut classes, abuse drugs or alcohol or get involved in sex. They have less anxiety and depression and perform better in school.¹⁰ Certainly they are also in a better position to be responsible sons and daughters, loyal friends, faithful spouses and sacrificial parents.

The practice of self-discipline also leads to respect for legitimate authority. "In self-discipline one makes a 'disciple' of oneself," writes William Bennett. "One is one's own teacher, trainer, coach and 'disciplinarian.'"¹¹ When a person has some degree of mind and body unity then he or she has less need for and yet more appreciation of the necessity for social control. The very concept of democracy was predicated upon a citizenry that was self-governed by the power of religion and education. The founder of the Boston settlement in America, Robert C. Winthrop, stated, "The less [societies] may have stringent state government, the more they must have individual self-government Men, in a word, must necessarily be controlled either by a power within them, or by a power without them" A self-controlled individual then is a better neighbor and citizen.

Fostering Mind and Body Unity

Contemporary society's fondness for maximum individual freedom and autonomy presents challenges to those who would discipline themselves, and who would strengthen the moral will of those under their care. On one hand, society imposes far less external controls on individual behavior than traditionally; social expectations are quite lax on every matter from etiquette to sexual behavior. This would suggest that the locus of control must reside within the individual as never before. On the other hand, there has

probably never been less social support for individual self-control. Western consumer-oriented society exalts comfort and self-indulgence and scorns restraint and discipline. To instill self-control in oneself or others goes against the cultural tide.

Yet it is an essential task. “To conquer the realm of the body is an awesome responsibility which every person must undertake,” asserts Reverend Moon.¹² The religious traditions are clear in their recommendations of the path to mind and body unity. There are two basic means. One is to weaken the influence of the body by denying its desires. “Offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God,” exhorts St. Paul (Romans 12.1). The other is to reinforce the strength of the mind through various methods, including prayer, study, respect for parents and other well-known measures (see Chapters 5 and 6).

The struggle for control of the appetites and passions does not have to lead to anti-physical, otherworldly excess. The challenge is to set up the appropriate order between mind and body, so that both can function in the best way.

Weakening the Power of the Body

1. Deprivations
2. Obedience and self-denial
3. Living simply

Weakening the Power of the Body

The first method is to reduce the influence of the body. This consists of deliberately choosing to rein in or even disregard the body's preoccupation with comfort and control.

1. Deprivations

One basic means is through fasting and other deprivations. These blunt the usual control of the body and material environment over the spiritual and moral desires to make it easier for the

mind to assert itself. Meditation, prayer and reflection come more clearly and readily. “The first week of Ramadan is really hard,” reports a university student. “I am just tired and really hungry by nightfall. But after that, I start feeling light and really good, and don’t miss eating. I am more in touch with myself, more aware of other people, more sensitive to God’s blessings in my life.” Such moments of deep joy and liberation were the motivation behind the sometimes extreme practices of the medieval ascetics.

One of the secondary effects of fasting is to bring out other self-centered impulses that exert too much control—like complaint, anger, impatience or jealousy—that may be habitually suppressed by reliance on physical distractions.¹³ Overcoming these along with the physical discomfort develops spiritual strength.

Besides fasting, there are other ways to undermine the power of the body. Cutting back on sleep by rising early for morning devotions is a common way. Enduring discomfort is another, such as subjecting oneself to cold showers or hard physical labor. Combating any unproductive habit is a simple way to stay in charge of oneself. “I quit smoking two years ago,” declares a restaurant manager, “and now I watch out for something getting a hold of me even in a small way. Like I stopped watching the news for a few weeks one time, and I skip my morning coffee once in a while, just to show myself I can live without it.” The practice of chastity is a potent means of keeping the strength of the flesh in balance.

2. Obedience and self-denial

Another means of weakening the body is through a life of active obedience and submission to a higher authority, whether it be to a moral or spiritual principle, God or country or something else. This involves self-denial—overcoming the tendency towards self-assertion and rebelliousness for their own sakes and immature attitudes like egotistical pride. The military is the obvious example of training in obedience. Members of the armed services learn to subdue their own selfish tendencies to become part of an effective group and be

reliably responsive to orders. Team sports is another avenue of such training. Members are expected to deny their desire for personal glory and give their best for the sake of the team.

3. Living simply

Simplicity in lifestyle can be compared to avoiding material idolatry. It is the choice to maintain a spiritual emphasis and rational approach in relation to property. The glut of material goods and constant marketing pressure to consume more and acquire more fosters a self-indulgent way of life where comfort and amusement take on undue importance. Simplicity resists this and helps to maintain a proper balance of mind and body.

Adopting a certain austerity in possessions means the preference of substance over style and remembering the difference between needs and desires. Simplicity avoids debt as an oppressive burden that saps peace of mind and constrains the ability to give. Like the Israelites in the wilderness who were instructed to take only of the manna and quail that they needed for the day, simplicity means resisting the temptation to hoard and trusting in tomorrow's provision. "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you shall wear," Jesus declared. "Is not life more important than food, and the body more than clothes?" (Matthew 6.25). He is giving a reminder that Heavenly Father is better able to care for those who keep priority of the spirit over the flesh. "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness," and material needs will be taken care of as well (Matthew 6.33). Implicit in living simply is a reliance upon treasures of the heart to bring happiness rather than pleasures of the body, a faith that real wealth is in love and spiritual growth, not in an abundance of things. It recognizes that God is the real source of material prosperity and security.

Strengthening the Power of the Mind

1. Determining and realizing goals
2. True love as motivation
3. Acting on faith
4. Service
5. Connection with God

Strengthening the Power of the Mind

At the same time the body is subdued, the mind needs to be boosted in strength. The essence of strengthening the mind is toughening the moral will. This, like muscle fiber, is built up by daily habit, by the constant small choices to do the right thing despite fear, distress or fatigue. In this regard, individuals need challenges—either given or self-sought—that allow them to encounter adversity as occasions to toughen their moral fiber and develop inner strength of will.

1. Determining and realizing goals

A most basic course to strengthen the will and foster self-discipline is making determinations to oneself and God and achieving them. These can be as simple as phoning a distressed relative before enjoying a book or as involved as deciding to change careers to be of greater service to humanity. Even more challenging is to set goals that rely mainly on spiritual power, fueled by prayer, study of spiritual truth and acts of love. "Twelve years ago when I first came to Mountainview High," recalls a physics teacher in a rural school in the American Midwest, "I swore that I would bring the white and Native American students and faculty together in a tangible way. I prayed about it every day, stuck my neck out more than a few times, got misunderstood a lot and once almost lost my job. But now in the faculty there are cross-cultural friendships developing and this year the president of the student council is a Native American boy." To make promises to God and fulfill them is sig-

nificant to reverse the history of betrayal between the Creator and humanity, not to mention how it builds self-respect and faith in oneself. As such it is perhaps the most powerful way to attract divine support. The one who can always be counted on to fulfill their promises and carry out their responsibilities is noticed not only by other people but also and especially by Heaven.

2. True Love as Motivation

Motivation empowers the will to go beyond discomfort. In turn, that motivation depends upon meaningful purposes that make the sacrifices involved worthwhile. The strongest motivation is true love; “love is the key to unification of mind and body,” states Reverend Moon. This power of love is familiar to parents. Dick Hoyt, 62, has raced in every Boston Marathon for over 20 years pushing his paralyzed adult son, Rick, in a wheelchair. In 1999 they became the first team ever to finish the Ironman Triathlon World Championship. It began when teenage Rick asked his father to push him in a local race. When they finished, the boy excitedly declared, “It was as if I wasn’t handicapped.” That was enough to move his father to challenge his every physical limitation to give him that experience over and over ever since.¹⁴

The power of love is behind the heroic sacrifices of religious and national lore. Many of the first Pilgrim settlers in North America starved to death while the group resisted eating their grain—intended for planting—during their first miserable winter out of love and hope for the next generation to build a community where they could worship freely. Christians recall how St. Peter faced his painful execution by crucifixion upside-down gratefully out of love for God and his Savior. Whether of legendary proportions or just small everyday acts of unselfishness, true love is the strongest means of subduing the body.

3. *Acting on faith*

People can mobilize tremendous powers of self-control when they can sustain their vision for the future despite the obstacles right before them. Debi Faris is a woman who knows what it is like to heed the call of her heart and conscience in faith. A wife and mother of three teenagers, she heard of an abandoned baby found dead in her town of Calimesa, California, and arranged to give the child a proper funeral and burial. One child led to three and her middle-class family committed to the costs, ultimately \$27,000, despite other pressing expenses. “I remember praying, ‘I don’t think I can do this, God. I don’t think I have the courage,’” she recalls. “I stayed quiet for a while until I sensed that what we were doing was right. It was an act of love, and at that moment I made a commitment to offer it to any child who needed it.” She has since organized the funds and volunteers to found a cemetery for abandoned babies, the Garden of Angels, and is fighting for legislation to help prevent such tragedies.¹⁵ Whether it is believing in one’s own gifts or the inevitability of the triumph of truth and goodness, those who have cultivated the power of faith and hope—who are “sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see,” in the Bible’s words (Hebrews 11.1)—have a priceless advantage enabling them to marshal their strongest resources to unite mind and body.

4. *Service*

Physical service to others—massaging the back of an elderly person, preparing basins of salad for a homeless shelter, picking up bagfuls of trash on a neighborhood street—is an especially helpful practice for training the moral will since it inculcates humility. “We made a point of just showing up ready to do whatever work was needed, no fanfare,” recalls a man of his group of comrades from a service club. “The staff at the rehab center were surprised to see middle-aged men willing to just set up the party, serve the boys soda and food and take down and mop up afterwards. And it didn’t do this CEO big shot any harm either to do grunt work for a bunch of not-too-grateful teenagers. I think I learned a few things.”

5. *Connection with God*

Ultimately all of these methods of empowering the moral will support the greatest prescription for mind and body unity: through the connection to the divine Source. “The first step is for your mind to become one with God,” says Reverend Moon, “and then your body will become one with your mind.”¹⁶ Prayer, worship, study of scripture, supporting one’s spiritual community, acting on faith, fulfilling determinations, practicing submission and offering service—these are all time-honored ways to access the Heavenly Parent and tremendous resources of strength. “Live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature,” promises St. Paul (Galatians 5.16). The stronger the bond, the more readily the mind can conquer the body.

Corrie Ten Boom was an elderly watchmaker who became a brave Holocaust rescuer of Jews and was sent to a concentration camp because of it. After the war, Corrie lectured about God’s love, forgiveness, and healing of the wounds of war. After one of her lectures, she saw a former S.S. guard from the concentration camp she had been at waiting in the back of the room.

Instantly, her mind flashed back to the times she and her sister had been forced to walk naked in front of the male guards on the way to the showers—ill, cold, hungry, elderly, and in pain, to be mocked sexually by them. She remembered her sister’s face, blanched with pain, bearing the humiliation in front of this very guard. Her sister had died at the concentration camp. This former guard now came up to Corrie, acknowledged God’s forgiveness in his life, and asked for hers. He held out his hand for hers.

“I tried to smile, I struggled to raise my hand. I could not. I felt nothing, not the slightest spark of warmth or charity,” Corrie said.¹⁷ Yet her religious beliefs told her she must forgive him. She breathed a prayer to give her the strength to do the right thing and resolutely took his hand in hers, matching her deeds to her highest ideals and loftiest words.

Then, “As I took his hand the most incredible thing happened.

From my shoulder along my arm and through my hand a current seemed to pass from me to him, while into my heart sprang a love for this stranger that almost overwhelmed me." Corrie cried out to him that he was her brother and assured him of her forgiveness. Her willingness to act upon her beliefs unleashed the flow of true love, liberating both persecutor and persecuted.

To love even when it is difficult requires the capability of the mind to assert itself over the demands of the body. Through efforts to reduce the pull of the flesh while enhancing our moral and spiritual strength, the mind and body can be brought into unity. The heart is thus liberated to give of itself freely and unselfishly, and reap the rich rewards thereof.

Seven Principles for Loving Relationships

Mind and Body Unity then is a principle that fosters and furthers true love. It is one of seven such principles described in this volume. Principles underpin both the natural and human worlds. "There is not a single thing that lacks an inherent principle," writes the Confucian philosopher Chu Hsi (*The Great Learning* 5).¹⁸ Such an observation is behind the idea of natural law, that there are invariable principles that govern the nature of each existence. Though human beings have free will and may choose to live in accordance with their own natures or not, the principles of the natural world and human world have many parallels to one another. This is because they both have a single origin, God. From a different perspective, these principles also reveal much about the Creator to us:

Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made (*Romans* 1.19-20).

This is Reverend Moon's insight, that the principles for true love not only have counterparts in the created world, but that they

also tell us much about God. The following chart summarizes all of the principles, first by briefly defining them and then describing the general principle active within the larger universe.

Principles for True Love

1. Maturing Through Responsibility

Each person grows into the fullness of humanity as he or she fulfills the responsibility to give true love (See Chapter 6).

All things in the universe automatically reach maturity except for humans. A person's mind reaches its potential only through the individual's exercise of his responsibility.

2. Mind and Body Unity

Mind and body unity—the mind leading the body—permits a person to give true love.

All things are composed of external and internal dimensions, with the external following the internal. In the case of humans, the body is to obey the mind.

3. Giving and Receiving

True love is generated and sustained by give and take. Initiating giving, investing continually and receiving well facilitate this (see Chapter 10).

In the universe, all new forces and things arise from two entities forming a relationship and solidifying it through giving and receiving elements of themselves.

4. Subject and Object Partnership

True love flows when a person respects his role in a relationship—either initiating or responding, leading or supporting (see Chapter 11).

Such relative positions are established in the course of every interaction in the universe.

5. Masculine and Feminine Harmony

Men and women need one another for support. Their harmony creates a context for true love to develop and deepen (see Chapter 12).

All entities in nature exist in a paired structure—male and female or positively and negatively charged—and each attracts its complementary opposite to form productive relationships.

6. Investing Towards Oneness

Trusting in the innate potential for unity between complementary partners facilitates the effort needed to realize true love (see Chapter 12).

Complementarities like male and female begin as separate beings in the world but are drawn into oneness.

7. Unity Around a Higher Purpose

Unity between people based on a higher purpose is a basic context for true love (see Chapter 13).

Entities manifest purpose in hierarchies, with individual purposes serving the whole. All beings also tend towards unity, based upon shared purposes.

Chapter 10

Giving & Receiving

True love gives completely. It is total giving, to the degree that we ultimately reach a point where there is nothing left to give. After we reach that 'zero point,' we will have the capacity to receive much more than we gave. This process of giving and receiving will achieve a balance that continues forever. Relationships of giving and receiving will produce a world where people live for the sake of others centering on true love.

—Sun Myung Moon

All around the world, youngsters love to play catch with their fathers. Teenagers enjoy sitting around talking. Young lovers delight in dancing. The common quality of all these activities—simple give and take between people—comprises the stuff of our lives. Certainly it is the substance of all relationships; what is a conversation but an ongoing exchange of words, what is a marriage but an enduring exchange of concern and support? Through that exchange, heart is transmitted back and forth. Giving and receiving is thus a second universal principle that comprises and sustains true love.

Contemporary Western science is more and more taking on a relational paradigm. The old viewpoint that all things are separate and distinct existences is giving way to a more process oriented view that recognizes that most things arise from interactions. For example, the old “nature versus nurture” debate in psychology has given way to understanding that both factors are equally important and interdependent. Educational theory no longer favors the one-

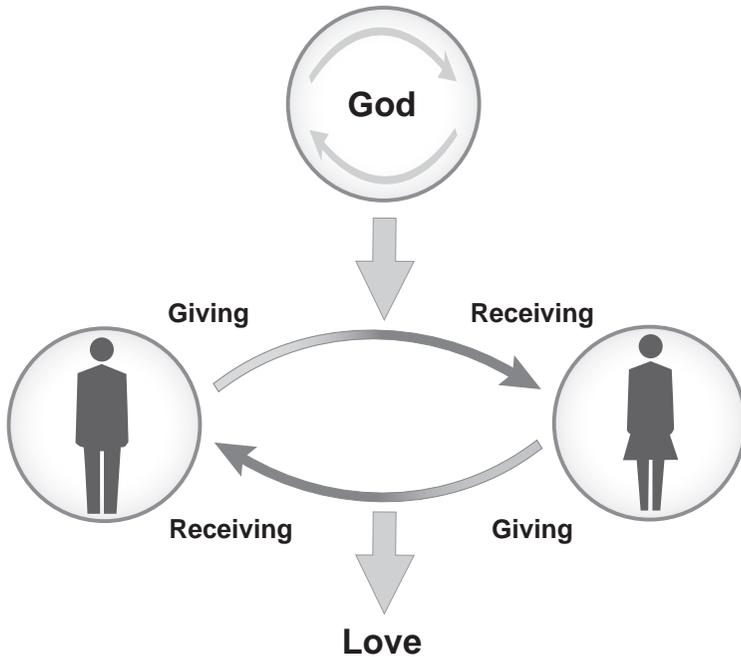
way lecture approach and encourages learners to have active give and take with each other, the material and the teacher. Organizational management similarly leans towards participation and interaction among levels and groups. Words like ecological, synergistic and holistic express this new paradigm.

Interaction is a ubiquitous phenomenon. In nature, entities—from subatomic particles to solar systems, from male and female animals to symbiotic plants—form a relationship and solidify it through giving and receiving elements of themselves. From the nuclear reactions in the heart of the sun to the biochemical reactions in the living cell, this is what powers all movement, development and reproduction. Even the very existence of things depends on give and take; the raging drama of a summer storm would not exist except for the intense give and take between hot and cold, high pressure and low, positively and negatively charged. “All God’s creations borrow from each other,” reads a Jewish Midrash, “day borrows from night and night from day . . . the sky borrows from the earth, and the earth from the sky” (Exodus Rabbah 31.15).¹ Interrelatedness and interdependence abound.

Like everything else, love itself depends on give and take—communication, support, working and playing together. Even the genesis of love relies on it. Interaction inspires affection. Merely exchanging a few words with a bus driver everyday can create enough of a bond that the commuter misses her when she changes routes. Returning to his childhood playground, the young man can wax nostalgic over the misshapen, netless hoop where he played ball. The middle-aged woman is surprised how much she misses the cantankerous, ever-complaining mother-in-law she cared for until her death. Given enough dealings with just about anything or anyone, we develop a bond.

Reverend Moon has observed that Giving and Receiving is thus a principle of true love. It is certainly so universal as to be taken for granted. Yet in human families and society it is neither always flowing nor satisfying. Here we explore several characteristics of

effective giving—understanding reciprocity, unselfish giving, initiating, being truthful and ethical—and also what it takes to receive well.



Giving and Receiving Generates Love

If giving and receiving with anyone can generate love, this principle can be used to advantage. We can learn to like and even love people we would otherwise not choose to be with. Many college roommates and spouses in arranged marriages can testify to the power of daily interaction to give rise to fondness that ripens into love.

Yet we might ask, why does give and take produce energy and love? Marx asserted that movement was simply a property of matter. But of course, it must be a reflection of a quality within the Creator. God is the source of all forces, especially that of true love. Interaction is the medium through which His love is manifested in the material

world. Just as the exchange between the mind and body of a person generates all that she is and does, so the interplay between God's Heart and power brings forth all the beautiful, true and good things in the universe. True love suffuses a warm family because its interactions resemble those within God, as in the Christian conception of the Trinity.

Reciprocity

"I'm rubber, you're glue; it bounces back and sticks to you." So goes a children's rhyming retort to name-calling peers, yet it captures the wisdom of reciprocity in human relations. "What goes around comes around" is another variation expressing the idea of reciprocation, that whatever a person invests will return to him or her. A respectful, polite demeanor will almost always bring out the same in other people. A rude, snarling attitude will almost always elicit like responses. Politeness tends to beget politeness—as someone holds a door open for someone in a crowded station, that person feels inclined to hold the door for the next person behind him, etcetera. Sometimes courtesy in the face of rudeness can turn the rudeness around. Customer service representatives are trained in this; if they are polite and helpful to an irate customer, it is likely he or she will calm down and continue on as a patron.

This reflects the ancient observation that human relations, like all of life, are reciprocal. The Bible observes that "a man reaps what he sows" (Galatians 6.7) and "with the measure you use, it will be measured to you" (Luke 6.38). A colorful proverb goes, "Whosoever diggeth a pit shall fall therein." Hinduism calls it karma. Psychologist M. Scott Peck speaks of the "strangely circular process" of love, "a two-way street, a reciprocal phenomenon whereby the receiver also gives and the giver also receives."² It's echoed in the vernacular wisdom, "You'll get out of it what you put into it" and "If you want a friend, be one." Indeed, if one would have respect, wealth, power or any other goal, the trick is to give the same to others.

More subtly, the heart and intent with which we give determines what we receive. Do we welcome a stranger because he is a potential customer, a fellow human being or a fellow child of God? Each brings a different return, as the New Testament affirms: “Anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward” (Matthew 10.41). That is, the more we value others as they truly are in God’s sight, so we shall be valued and blessed.

At the same time, reciprocity means that self-seeking attitudes and actions will also eventually extract their price from the perpetrator. They reverse the principle of good interaction and take away from others without giving back—the basic prescription for evil. The entrepreneur Elbert Hubbard observes pointedly, “Men are not punished for their sins, but by them.” Negative thoughts, curses, uncharitable interpretations of others’ actions and lives will also take their toll on the one who harbors them. “People pay for what they do, and still more, for what they have allowed themselves to become,” wrote novelist Edith Wharton. “And they pay for it simply: by the lives they lead.”³

Yet unloving actions are also repaired according to the law of reciprocity. That is, a wrong is undone by going the way opposite of the way the transgression was committed. Gestures of restitution, reparations and indemnity all involve reversal of the offense and giving back some or all of what was lost (see Chapter 24). Jesus demonstrated this when he deliberately demanded three affirmations of love from his disciple, Peter, to negate his disciple’s three-fold betrayals committed earlier (John 21.15-17).

The Golden Rule

The moral implication of reciprocity is that the active responsibility of a member of a relationship is to contribute positively to it. This appears in all of the world’s religions as the exhortation to treat others as you would wish to be treated—the Golden Rule. Islam declares, “Not one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother

what he loves for himself" (Forty Hadith of an-Nawari 13).⁴ "Try your best to treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself, and you will find that this is the shortest way to benevolence," is the version taught by Mencius (VII.A.4).⁵ The Hindu Mahabharata cautions, "One should not behave towards others in a way which is disagreeable to oneself. This is the essence of morality" (Anusasana Parva 113.8).⁶ African folk religion preaches in this Yoruba proverb: "One going to take a pointed stick to pinch a baby bird should first try it on himself to feel how it hurts."⁷ The Jewish sage Hillel taught, "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor: that is the whole Torah."⁸ Jesus concurred: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22.39).

Initiate Giving

"Giving as a way of living" is more than simple generosity. It means taking the initiative to give first, doing so unselfishly and keeping a commitment to be truthful and ethical.

Giving Well

1. Giving First
2. Unselfishness
3. Commitment to Truth

1. Giving First

True love is generous. It tends to give first instead of waiting to. Such initiative is a boon in human relationships. Families, marriages, friendships, business relationships and the like flourish when participants are more interested in what they can give to each other than what they will receive. A father delights in surprising his son with baseball cards for his collection; an older woman smiles in anticipation of bringing some of her raisin muffins to the new folks next door; a husband always wakes his wife with the smell of her favorite flavored coffee the morning after they've had a tiff.

People lucky enough to have cultivated the habit of giving first

have most likely experienced its rewards. If giving leads to receiving, then the one who starts the process enjoys a greater sense of influence than the more passive person. She also has reason to believe that the future will be brighter and more fruitful. "I hated my boss and my dead-end job," recalls a forklift operator in a warehouse. "And so did everyone else. But I decided that it's less boring if I try to make other people's day a little better." He began bringing in treats for the coffee table, and proposed the idea of a bowling league. "Now I've made a few friends, people are more friendly to each other too, and I look forward to bowling nights. Even the boss has lightened up a bit."

Prime the pump of healing one's own hurts

The value of giving first is also illustrated by the fact that most self-help groups were started by people who were themselves suffering from difficult situations. In seeking to help others cope, or to prevent others from having to endure what they had gone through, these people found their own suffering ameliorated. John Walsh, host of the television show, "America's Most Wanted," that has led to the apprehension of scores of criminals, created the program to direct his grief after his young son was abducted and killed, and the murderer was not found.

A story is told of a severely depressed woman who sought help from a famed psychiatrist. She had a lonely and bleak existence; the one bright spot in her life were her well-tended African violets in her home. The psychiatrist told her to take notice of weddings, births and illnesses at her church and on every occasion she should bring a gift of a flowering plant. This she did, and before long her depression was forgotten amidst the outpouring of gratitude she received as the "African Violet lady."⁹

As helpful as it may be, giving is often the last thing a person wants to do, especially when caught up in his or her own needs. It often takes an exertion of will to overcome the inertia and reach out first, but once the flow of interaction is started, it can take on a

momentum of its own. “I was really mad at Tom after that weekend, and I swore I’d never call him again. He’d have to call me and apologize,” relates Anthony about his best friend. They had parted ways after watching a football game together, when Tom had insulted Anthony’s fiancée and left him to find his own way home. “But my mom told me I was stupid to lose such a good friend. She dialed and got me on the phone with him. Turns out he felt like a jerk and didn’t know what to say to me.”

Giving first brings success even in business. Winning companies go “the extra mile” to serve customers’ needs—the clothes catalog company that employs an excellent phone staff to advise people on garment choices and measurements, the furniture store with a supervised playground so parents can shop relaxed, the department store that offers wheelchairs for the disabled and strollers for infants. Customers buy often from such businesses and recommend them to others.

Initiating love brings blessings to the giver because it resonates with the nature of the Divine and attracts His presence. “We love because [God] first loved us,” the Bible declares (1 John 4.19). God gives to us so we may initiate love to others.

2. Unconditional Giving

For Reverend Moon, true love is generous, unselfish—to “give and give, and forget what was given.”¹⁰ What stretches the heart and makes for moral and spiritual growth is to give for the sake of the beneficiary, with no thought of return, and to keep pushing the boundaries of such giving.

As part of the ordinary give and take of goods and services among neighbors and friends, giving is normally done with the expectation of return. The dinner party thrown to repay previous invitations, the tool lent with the unspoken agreement to likewise borrow if needed, the donation made in exchange for getting one’s name posted in the lobby—these are part of the ordinary economy of peer relationships. This has its place and certainly it is important

to at least return in kind what one has been given, yet such giving is neither particularly reflective of true love, nor especially edifying in character and spirit. It is more like bartering than giving, since there is a sense of trading one gift or favor for another.¹¹

Native American chief Seneca said, "We should give as we would receive . . . for there is no grace in a benefit that sticks to the fingers." When giving to others in need, the Bible puts it, "do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" (Matthew 6.3). A Buddhist text memorably speaks of "three kinds of persons existing in the world: one is like a drought, one who rains locally, and one who pours down everywhere." The drought person "gives nothing to all alike," the person like a local rainfall "is a giver to some, but to others he gives not," while the third type is like a great rain because "he gives to all, be they recluses and brahmins or wretched, needy beggars" (Itivuttaka 65).¹² Few are so stingy as to be a drought but so too are few of us willing to unconditionally shower our gifts on others outside a small circle of people whom we like or from whom we expect mutual support. To give "with no strings attached," runs contrary to instinctive selfishness. "A man who is out to make a name for himself will be able to give away . . . a thousand chariots," noted Mencius, "but reluctance would be written all over his face if he had to give away a basketful of rice and a bowlful of soup" without receiving credit (VII.B.11).¹³ Most of us find it very challenging to be like God, who "causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good" (Matthew 5.45).

Not keeping score

In the best relationships the parties decide to give without keeping track and without expecting anything in return except the pleasure and benefit of the other. In this way they are able to turn a blind eye to the times when the giving is uneven. This is the natural quality of the most cherished of family relationships and friendships. "It's not 50-50," says a husband who has been married 45 years. "If you keep score, you don't make it. You've got to decide

to give more than your share.” To be free of conditions and calculations in giving spells freedom. “I’m happy to do it,” is the reflexive response when such people are thanked. The Middle Eastern poet Kahlil Gibran describes them thus:

They give as in yonder valley the myrtle
Breathes its fragrance into space.
Through the hands of such as these God
speaks, and from behind their eyes
He smiles upon the earth.¹⁴

Indeed, through such gestures, the divine hand reaches out to feed the hungry and cheer the despairing. How else can He give to those who lack unless those who are blessed are willing to share it? Jesus put it simply, “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded” (Luke 12.48).

This brings up another reward of initiating generosity—the avoidance of being indebted. From the moment of our first breath, we have been the beneficiary of the largesse of not only our parents and society but also the creation, countless ancestors and the Creator. To give can be seen as merely the effort to even the score, to repay what one has already been granted. “We couldn’t help it. How could we go knowing that family was hurting?,” explains Marge and Ron Jackson, a working class couple in Phoenix, Arizona, who donated the money saved for a long-awaited vacation to a local family made homeless by a fire. “After all people have done for us, we wanted to do it.”

Challenging limits in unselfish giving then is a secret of expanding the capacity for true love. Just as in weightlifting, such stretching may hurt sometimes as it strengthens and enlarges the heart. Continuous giving can actually transform the recipient into being more worthy too. This is the way God treats humankind; He shines his light upon the good and the bad alike, showers His love and blessings and protection upon everyone as much as He can according to the conditions they make. He hopes that His unremitting

giving will eventually turn human hearts toward the sunlight of His love as an inevitable result of His principle of interaction.

No giving is in vain

“Love God and love people at the price of your life,” exhorts Reverend Moon, “And then you can gain your own life and gain all people also.” Because of reciprocity, no giving is ever wasted. Acts of kindness, generosity, charity, politeness and helpfulness will redound to one’s credit and return as a blessing. Even thoughts and feelings radiated out into the universe—prayer is an example—do not come back empty-handed. Shakespeare’s Portia speaks of how the gift of mercy is “twice bless’d; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.”¹⁵ “The rose leaves its fragrance” the saying goes, “on the hand that gives it.” Goodness comes back, multiplying goodness and blessing all.

Thus, giving renews, revives, and replenishes its store. This runs counter to the conventional wisdom that inclines people to guard their resources, be sparing in giving—measuring out one’s life with “coffee spoons” as the poet T. S. Eliot put it¹⁶—and invest only in what will surely bring a return. People fear to give lest they become depleted. Ironically, of course, their fears are confirmed. In the case of this kind of giving, one author notes, “the principle [of reciprocity] is not fully activated and the giving does not multiply and return.”¹⁷ A reluctant giver is like a tentative driver on the freeway—he “jams” the universal flow of give and take. Even a radical gesture of giving done conditionally is without true love and so it proves ultimately fruitless. “If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing” (1 Corinthians 13.3).

Literature assures us of the paradox—at the very least, when one gives, nothing is lost and more likely it shall return a hundred-fold. “Consider the flame of a single lamp,” says the Buddhist text. “Though a hundred thousand people come and light their own lamps from it so that they can cook their food and ward off the darkness,

the first lamp remains the same as before. Blessings are like this, too" (Sutra in Forty-Two Sections 10).¹⁸ Another Shakespearean heroine, Juliet, said the same, "My bounty is as boundless as the sea; my love as deep; the more I give, the more I have." Aesop told the fable of the lion who spared a mouse's life, only to have the small rodent save his later on.

Reverend Moon illuminates a deeper dimension of this truth. He explains that when someone sincerely gives that which is true and good and beautiful and the recipient not only does not reciprocate but actually returns scorn and abuse, then something of the recipient's good fortune transfers to the giver. The law of reciprocation will not allow the imbalance and injustice to remain forever. This is one of the dynamics behind the historical phenomenon of misunderstood, selflessly serving individuals being persecuted—yet eventually their enterprise flourishes and its enemies decline over time. Jesus' enigmatic statement, "to every one who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away" (Luke 19.26), is referring to this.

With the assurance that nothing is ever lost in giving, however difficult, it is easier to invest more heartily in one's relationships. For example, Joe was tired one night when an acquaintance called to thank him for his work in a charity event. Joe realized that if he just said, "You're welcome," and remained silent, the conversation would soon end and he could go to bed. However, he decided to invest some energy in the conversation, so he made a few jokes and soon found himself in a stimulating, hour-long conversation. When Joe hung up the phone, he felt energized and uplifted, his tiredness forgotten in thinking about his newfound friend.

Psychologist Erich Fromm elaborates on this: "In the very act of giving, I experience my strength, my wealth, my power I experience myself as overflowing, spending, alive, hence as joyous. Giving is more joyous than receiving, not because it is a deprivation, but because in the act of giving lies the expression of my aliveness."¹⁹ The giver experiences potency and vitality as a participant

in the endless reciprocation of the cosmos, an instrument of the boundless benevolence of God Himself.

Return may not be noticed

Reciprocity eludes notice by many people because what comes back may not be the same as what was put out. A monetary gift to a needy family may return as mysterious recovery from a grave illness, but the principle of good for good prevails. What makes it more ambiguous is the frequent time lag between cause and effect.²⁰ The metaphysical machinery of reciprocation works subtly and at its own pace to bring the return, and that result may not be noticed for what it is. That evening spent helping a stranger far from home find his relatives in a nearby city may bounce back as a blessing even decades later. Consider the case of those who have given their lives to save someone; their reward certainly cannot be in this life at all. Or it may pass on even to the extension of oneself—posterity. The Talmud alludes to this when it declares, “Happy are the righteous! Not only do they acquire merit, but they bestow merit upon their children and children’s children to the end of generations” (Yoma, 87a).²¹ This is why, when trying to understand justice in one’s life, it is wise to consider how good fortune may well be the fruits of what ancestors have given, and so one’s own generosity may be simply paying back an indebtedness.

3. Commitment to Truth

Give and take need be grounded in virtue. Aristotle’s idea of friendship meant that beyond pleasure and advantage, an essential component of all good relationships is a commitment to ethical truth. True friends hold each other accountable to a moral standard, a shared commitment to the good. “Tim is a special person,” Clive says quietly of his college friend and soccer teammate. “I admire him. And he has a good effect on me; I guess I admire myself more when I am around him.” In contrast, false friends flatter and

amuse their comrades while tempting them to betray their better natures. True love involves unconditional caring and acceptance but not to the point of excusing wrong.

Thus, a constructive interaction is truthful in two ways. First, it is honest and without guile. There is no ulterior motive, no manipulation for some personal advantage. Second, it is ethical, grounded in moral truth. We recall St. Paul's description of true love: "it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right" (1 Corinthians 13.6 RSV).

Authentic and honest interactions, of course, are not automatic. They take commitment. Some people hesitate out of shyness or timidity; some are afraid of hurting others' feelings; some are not skilled in tact. Being truthful may sometimes cost a friendship. Yet more often than not, truthful sharing in a respectful and sensitive manner enhances a relationship.

Laurie, a 28-year-old mother of two, was concerned that her children watched violent videos at their friend's house, but was shy to mention her objection. Hillary, the mother of the children's friend, sensed how evasive Laurie was about the children getting together at her home. When she asked the other mother what was wrong, Laurie decided to plunge ahead and be frank about her concern. Hillary was surprised but relieved at Laurie's honesty. "I didn't know all that," she said, when Laurie cited statistics about media and real life violence. The two had a long, fruitful discussion about standards and values and Hillary was happy to prohibit any further violent movies. The truthfulness of this interaction not only deepened the bond between them but also edified both individuals as well.

Being honest does not mean just pouring out raw, unprocessed feelings at one another. In fact, such interaction is usually harmful. Nor is it sharing that which would unnecessarily burden the other, as when a parent discloses too much of her youthful excesses to their teenage daughter. Giving truthfully means to respect the other, the relationship and the truth enough to bring thoughts and feelings to light and get to the bottom of things, for the sake of true love.

Setting boundaries

This means sensitivity as to when to set limits or withhold something from another—for instance, if one is enabling the other to keep bad habits or behavior, as in co-dependency. “I was torn up inside; it was really really hard.” Boris, 16, remembers clearly that awful moment when he refused to steal any more liquor from his Dad’s cabinet or otherwise get a drink for his best buddy, Vance, who was no longer managing a day without alcohol. “I had no choice but to tell Coach about his drinking, and listen to Vance cursing at me and calling me ‘traitor.’ I realized that if I really cared about him, I had to help him stop, even if we’d never be friends again.” Fortunately, Vance was able to thank his friend later, but it is not always that way. “Tough love” like this tests one person’s commitment to the other person’s welfare.

As always, God is the exemplar of truthful giving. Not only is He unfailingly honest, He will never indulge our immaturity and give what is not good for us. Like any caring parent, He is careful to give to his children only what they need, not always what they ask for.

Receiving Well

We have been elaborating on the qualities of giving but the other side of any interaction is receptivity. Being able to receive well—gracefully and appreciatively—is an art and skill as vital as that of giving. What receiving well means is clear from anyone’s experience of having someone appreciate a gift. “It’s a pleasure to sew my mother something,” Alicia says. “Her eyes light up, she oohs and aahs and shows it off endlessly. She’s an expert in sewing so she really understands what I put into it.” Such a reception inspires the giver to want to give again. At the same time, it renews the recipient’s capacity to be able to give in return. “Her friends at the nursing home say my mother gets a lot more outgoing and friendly every time I bring her something nice to wear,” Alicia adds. “She’s even started a sewing circle with the other ladies.”

There are two common missteps people make regarding receiving. The first is to fail to sufficiently receive what someone is giving, to not fully value it and therefore be appropriately responsive. The other is to not let themselves be in the receiving position in the first place.

Receiving Well

1. Appreciation
2. The attitude of gratitude
3. Receptivity

1. Appreciation

To receive a gift seems easy and passive, but in fact it does require effort. Receiving is a creative act, because we have to exert ourselves to find a way to identify and empathize with the giver so to appreciate the heart and effort invested. This is why, for instance, wandering through an art museum for an art lover is exhilarating yet it is also exhausting, because appreciation of each painter's emotional and technical investment requires an investment on the viewer's part as well. Consider the energy it takes for busy parents to stop what they doing and fully take in their young child's awkward story telling or musical offering. Or contemplate how much effort is required to really listen empathetically to one's spouse or colleague in the midst of a disagreement.

At times the recipient simply cannot grasp the fullness of what is being given because of having little in common with the heart of the giver. A wealthy tourist may take his meal for granted, unable to fathom all the sacrifices involved for his impoverished host to serve such meat. The motorist is annoyed by the police checkpoint slowing traffic, just as he is also oblivious to the hardships the cops are enduring to protect him.

Sometimes it takes time and a change of circumstances to gain enough resemblance to appreciate what someone has invested for

our benefit. This is the basis for the universal experience of understanding one's parents' sacrifices only when becoming a parent too. "Only now, in middle age, do I begin to understand what kind of sacrifices my father made for me," notes one middle-aged man. "For example, I'm surprised how much it costs to feed my three kids, and my wife works. But my Mom stayed at home and Dad somehow paid for all of us five kids by himself, including a lot of college expenses. And I remember how he even bought me a fancy bike for my high school graduation. He must have been sweating it out, like I am now, but it never showed."

2. *The Attitude of Gratitude*

Gratitude is an automatic response at times, but it is also a discipline to learn to enhance the ability to receive well. The practice of gratitude is vital because it means adopting a stance of positive, anticipatory receptivity. It is like wearing a "blessing filter" that opens our eyes to the gifts we are receiving and already have. Gratitude alone can transform an impoverished looking situation into an abundant one. "I had nothing to live for, absolutely nothing, after she died," remembers an elderly man who survived a tragic car accident but his wife did not. "But then I realized that if I had died first, my dear wife would have been as lonely as I am now. So now I thank God every day, that she could go before me, that I could have the hard time, not her. And I'm finding other things to be thankful for too."²²

In the book *In This House of Brede*, the head of the Abbey trains herself to say, "Thank you," whenever someone comes to her office and interrupts what she is doing, even if the visit is inopportune or from a person she has a hard time dealing with. Practicing gratitude, even for the things we are not grateful for at the time, helps us to see and receive the gifts God is trying to give us.

Gratitude takes humility. We have already mentioned the self-centeredness that can prevent people from even recognizing another's generosity. Another side of the humility needed is to rec-

ognize when something possessed is undeserved—a gift, not an entitlement. “When I was a kid, I’d brag about my father’s position and its privileges,” recalls a diplomat’s daughter who grew up in a third world country. “But as I got older I realized that it was our great good fortune, a blessing. I didn’t deserve it and had a responsibility to use it to help others less lucky.”

3. *Receptivity*

Receiving itself is an inverse way of giving. Embarrassed by his uncle’s generous and frequent monetary gifts, a young man protested that he was giving him too much. “No, no, no,” the older man said to him. “You give to me by letting me give to you.” Receiving another’s gifts with appreciation, whether they are material, gifts of time, or gifts of expertise or kindness, is a present in itself to the other.

Particularly in the mature years, people have a need to be needed. Walter, a retired cook, found little motivation to prepare his favorite dishes just for himself, so he often made quantities of soups and stews and brought them across the street to a younger family. This was a good arrangement for both. The older man found it satisfying to cook for someone who appreciated it; and the younger family, low on time and money, benefited too. The children of the family would always return the cleaned and polished pot or pan to Walter with a warm “Thank you” note inside and sometimes a little handmade gift. These visits and notes and gifts, he said, “make my days.”

Sometimes people have a hard time letting go of the giving role to allow themselves to receive. They may enjoy always giving partly because it keeps them in control; they can determine the nature of their transactions with others. They can avoid being vulnerable, dependent and having to recognize their own weaknesses and needs. Rachel, a mother and customer service representative, is well-known in her community as the one to call when something is needed. She is active in various committees at school, at temple,

and the block association. Other parents go to her for advice and she spends many nights on the phone checking up on her aging Dad or other family members or friends, as she bakes something for her co-workers or a school reception. Yet she feels uncomfortable asking for help herself. "It took me years to notice that my annual collapse with the flu was my body's way of getting a rest," she confides. "And I know my 'self-sufficiency' makes my family feel useless. Now I am working on noticing when I need something and asking for assistance."

Considering these matters of receiving helps us to recognize how humble and receptive the Creator is. He always seeks to receive our offerings graciously, despite their inadequacy, their timing usually based upon our convenience and our frequently mixed motives.

In conclusion, giving and receiving well are the lifeblood of loving relationships. Just as one empties us and makes us receptive, the other replenishes and prompts us to give more. Giving sets up a cycle of more giving, because the joy it generates is its own reward. With this in mind, we may not hesitate to be generous, take the initiative, give truthfully, and graciously receive the soul-satisfying rewards. Yet the interaction that generates and sustains love comes more readily and flows more smoothly as participants know and fulfill their proper roles.

Chapter 11

Subject and Object Partnership

*Any relationship of love exists through the relationship
between subject and object partners—we cannot have
love by ourselves.*

—Sun Myung Moon

In all societies throughout all time, customs have arisen to smooth the interaction among people of different positions, whether the dissimilarity relates to age, authority, education, expertise or other qualities. Families may reserve the head of the table for Papa, students may address their teacher only as “professor,” the young may wait to be spoken to by the aged before speaking, citizens may bow before the monarch of their nation. Effective managers are careful to clarify the responsibility of each member of an organization and respect those positions. Such regard for rules of protocol and etiquette is one component of respecting the relational norms that foster harmony. This recognizes a fourth principle for loving relationships that Reverend Moon emphasizes, that of keeping to one’s proper role in the Subject and Object Partnership.

Whenever people interact, this automatically establishes distinct and relative positions. An individual in any given moment occupies either one complementary role or another—initiator or responder, helper or helped, leader or supporter. These functions can be fixed or momentary. Using terminology from grammar, these

roles can be called that of subject and object partners. (English sometimes denotes subjects with the suffix “-er” and objects with “-ee” as in employer and employee.)

People in the subject mode may provide leadership or impart knowledge. Those in the object mode may offer support or receive instruction. Parents are in the subject partner role and children are the in object partner position. The physician is subject, the patient object. The quarterback is often the subject partner role in a given football play while teammates are his object partners. A manager and his hires are another example of this relationship. The ultimate subject and object partnership is between the Creator and His creation—God initiates; humanity, His object partner, is to respond. This is the import of the Christian declaration, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3.16). God inspires prophets with His Word; humankind responds by heeding it.

As a variation on complementarity, subject and object partners create and delineate one another. A speaker has no reason to talk if no one is listening; an audience has no reason to gather if no one is performing. A teacher is incomplete without her students and students are at a loss without a teacher. Parents and children ache without one another. Subject and object roles grant us identities. Hiring a helper suddenly makes one a boss. A man’s commitment makes a woman a wife. An infant turns a plumber into a “Dad.”

Examples of Subject and Object Partner Relationships

<i>Subject Partner</i>	<i>Object Partner</i>
Lover	Beloved
Giver	Recipient
Superior	Subordinate
Creator	Creation

As commonplace as these roles are, it is also commonplace to find misunderstandings about them. It is helpful to clarify various issues: Why are these roles valuable? What does equality mean in terms of these positions? What are the tasks and challenges of the subject partner? What of the object partner? Where do the positions of husbands and wives fit in? What is the optimal way to fulfill the subject and object roles? How are problems between subject and object partners best corrected?

Ubiquitous Positions

Subject and object positions are ubiquitous in nature. The sun and planets in the solar system are in subject and object roles respectively; so are the brain and limbs in an animal, the nucleus and electrons in an atom. There are countless subject and object relationships: between hummingbirds and flowers, flexor and extensor muscles, xylem and phloem, cations and anions. Animal communities establish distinct roles that participants respect to avoid conflict and help the group prosper. The queen bee, drones and worker bees and the alpha male and subordinate males in the wolf pack are two examples.

There are other kinds of subject and object partnerships that are not the focus of this discussion but might be helpful to mention. One kind is that between aspects within a being. Mind and body have a respective subject and object partner relationship, for example, and there is a comparable connection between the inner and outer aspects of all things. Relationship between male and female is another kind of subject and object partnership whose particular characteristics will be discussed in Chapter 12.

Required for Love and Joy

The proverb, “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another” (Proverbs 27.17), highlights the truth that through such relationships we are defined, refined and revealed. What is in a person lies fallow if lacking active subject and object partners.

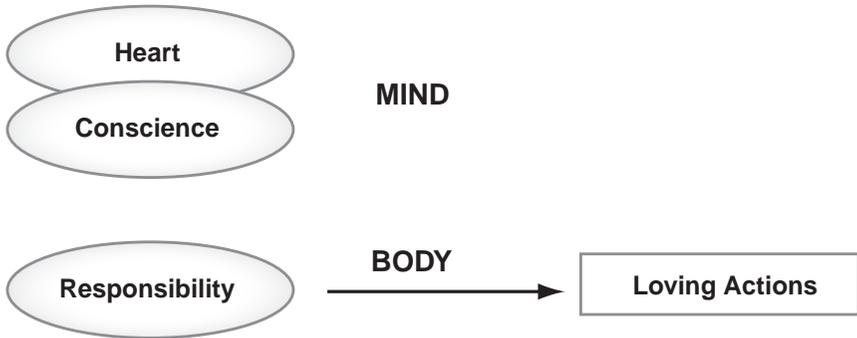
Without caring about someone and being moved, challenged, and mirrored back, a person remains unknown, even to herself. One's opinions become crystallized—or their contradictions revealed—when having to explain them to someone else. Noting another person's achievement stirs ambition in oneself. Individuals may discover a personal flaw by noticing what traits irk them in others. A loved one's need pulls out extraordinary qualities in a person that he would not have imagined he had.

Subject and object partners need each other for more than just identity, stimulation and feedback, however. They require one another if they are to know love. Filial love, fraternal love, conjugal love and parental love—and all their derivatives in society—how could they be possible without a complementary partner? If interaction is the substance of love, then partnership is the context. The yearning of a young man for a wife, the ache of a childless couple for a baby, the longing of the homesick traveler for her best friend—these are simply the cravings for a subject or object partner to complete the circuit needed for love.

As love is the heart's greatest pleasure, so the subject and object roles are also prerequisites for joy. Without a substantial response from someone or seeing one's idea manifested in tangible form, a person in the subject role, for example, can have but limited pleasure. The author's long years of research are rewarded with glee when he grasps the published book; the cook sweats and fusses in the kitchen, anticipating his diners' accolades; the father's hours of poring over the repair manual are forgotten when he sees his boy's delight over the resurrected bike.

Even the Divine is not exempt from this principle. Though God be the Source of all power and love, God too is no Creator without a creation, no Heavenly Father without His children. And He too desires response. Yes, God holds nothing back in His benevolence—as the Psalmist declares, “The Lord is gracious and merciful . . . abounding in steadfast love” (145.8 RSV). Yet He still seeks filial love in His children—“For I [God] desire steadfast love and not sac-

rifice, the knowledge of God, rather than burnt offerings” (Hosea 6.6 RSV). Even the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent and almighty God cannot experience the fullness of love or joy by Himself. It is simply impossible without a relationship with a beloved, and a beloved who responds.



Interaction of Love and Beauty Creates Joy

Reverend Moon explains that God created humankind to be His beloved object partners, beings to whom He could pour out His loving heart and who could appreciate and respond. He endowed His children with an infinite heart and eternal existence so to be the objects upon whom to visit His own infinite and eternal loving nature. In the words of Rumi, the Divine declared: “I was a secret treasure of kindness and generosity, and wished the treasure to be known, so I created a mirror; its shining face the heart.”¹

This explains God’s extraordinary tenderness and vulnerability to His children. As a man can be a king while being almost slavishly devoted to his child, so God is beholden to humankind. Time and time again in the Bible, an indignant God turns away from humanity, sometimes yearning to destroy everyone and everything on the earth, only to soften and turn back to the object of His heart again, giving humankind another chance. Consider the example of the Creator heeding Abraham’s appeals on behalf of corrupt Sodom and

Gomorrah, eventually allowing merely ten righteous men to be reason enough to spare the cities (Genesis 18).

Dynamic of Love and Beauty

The infinite number of subject and object positions—both inner and outer—in the created world stimulates endless circular interactions. These ensure that the vibrant dynamism of the universe shall continue eternally. In human relations, the exchange between subject and object partners can be described in a simple way as that between love and beauty. The assertive stimulation that the subject partner gives to the complementary partner is a kind of love, while the response of the object partner is experienced by the other as a form of beauty. The mother gives attentive service to her young son, and he responds with grateful affection. This innocent response is so beautiful that the mother is moved to give more. Likewise, the tender care he receives from his mother seems like such all-encompassing love that the boy can only smile adoringly all the more. The loyalty of a team member is beauty to the coach, while the coach's steadfast investment is love to the player. The wife finds her husband's capable care to be an expression of love, and her sweet response is sheer beauty to him. In response to God's infinite love, human faith is beautiful to the Heavenly Father. Love begets beauty and vice versa in an ever-renewing cycle.

Complex Interrelationships

The interconnections among people in families and other kinds of relationships are complex, as each person may be both a subject partner to one and an object partner to another, and be part of many different groups—extended family, workplace, faith community, neighborhood, nation—at the same time. As a result, each person participates with every other natural being in the interdependent network that comprises the entire universe. These simultaneous partnerships are themselves ordered in various horizontal and hier-

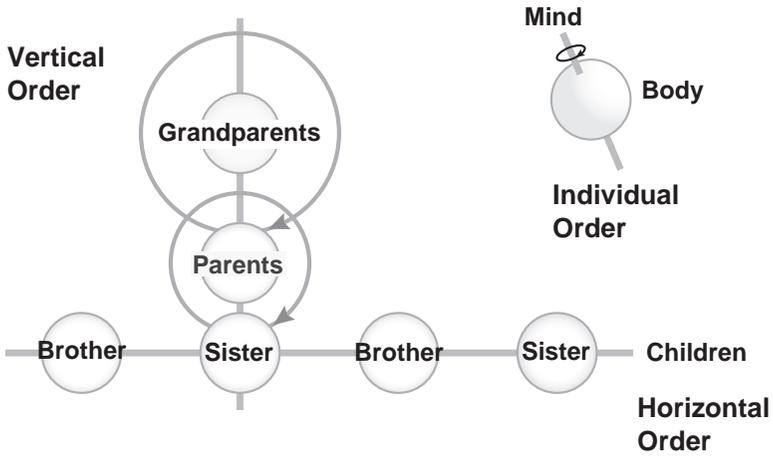
archical arrangements.

The solar system is an example of these arrangements. The Sun is the subject partner for the Earth as our planet is the subject for the Moon. This hierarchical relationship among the Sun, Earth and Moon comprises a vertical order. The planets themselves, Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter and the others, are part of a horizontal order, all object partners to the Sun and “peers” to one another. At the same time, each planet establishes its individual order as it rotates on its own axis, thereby setting up the cycles of day and night, heat and cold that shape its environment.

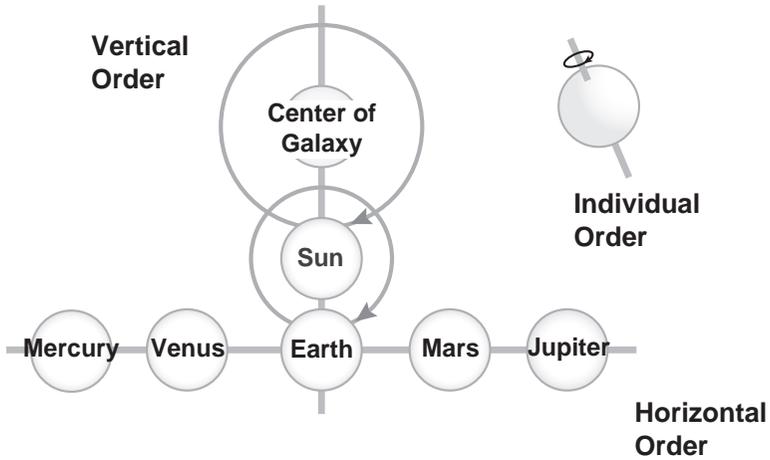
Similarly, the order of subject and object roles in the family has three dimensions. There is a vertical order from elder to younger, a horizontal order among peers, and an individual order by which individuals govern themselves. In the family, vertical order refers to relations between generations: between children and their parents, grandparents and great grandparents. Horizontal order refers to relations between peers, those of the same generation: brothers and sisters, cousins, husband and wife. Individual order, by analogy, refers to the vertical relationship between the mind and body within a person, expressed in the priorities and values by which a person organizes his or her life.

The richness and beauty of family life arises from the harmonious integration of these dimensions of order. Parents and children form a vertical relationship. Brothers and sisters form horizontal relationships—though there is a vertical “pecking order” because of their differences in age status among them. Spouses have a horizontal relationship in which age is meaningless. The give-and-take within these relationships differs accordingly.

Natural Order in the Family



Natural Order in the Universe



Order in Human Life Corresponds to the Order in Nature

Permanent or Temporary Positions

As noted above, subject and object roles may be permanent or temporary. Family love and lineage creates positions that are fixed forever. The parent and child relationship is an instance of a fixed vertical partnership role, as is God and humanity. Siblings and spouses represent horizontal partnerships that are either permanent or meant to be. Other partnerships, such as those between an employer and employee, are temporary.

Regardless of the permanent or temporary status of either a vertical or horizontal relationship, in actual interactions the one who occupies a particular position is necessarily flexible. A good illustration is a conversation. The speaker is in the initiating role while the listener is in the receptive one; then the roles change. A game of catch is similar.

A young grandson initiating a conversation with his grandfather and the servant surprising her boss with a birthday gift are examples of this flexibility in vertical relationships. Similarly, there is the professor being shown how to use a computer by his student, or the mother asking forgiveness from her daughter. A horizontal variation on this theme is the instance of joint leadership. A young couple may cooperate in raising their children. Likewise, two friends may co-lead an aerobics class, alternating between center stage and a supporting role.

Reverend Moon describes the inherent purpose of members of a family, regardless of position, is to act as both subject and object partners to one another and to the Creator.² The father is not only the guardian of his wife and children, but at times can be in the object role when receiving their love. The same is true of the mother and each child—the subject when giving love, the object when receiving it. It is easy to understand how the parents and children are all object partners to God, but the divine Parent too is in the objective position when receiving the family's love (see Chapter 13). The interconnectedness of the family and God as complementary partners in this way is what allows the family to be deeply united and strong.

Fulfilling the Subject and Object Roles

The key to success in the subject and object roles is appreciating their interdependence and reciprocity. The mind and body relationship is analogous and instructive. The mind and body are so interdependent that it is virtually impossible to isolate one influence from the other. In a similar way, the interplay between the subject and object roles is so pervasive and often subtle that it is perhaps just as impossible to separate out cause and effect.

Thus, how one role is fulfilled shapes the quality of how the other is carried out. A caring subject partner tends to invite a responsive object and bring out his or her best, and a supportive object partner does the same for the one in the subject position. "When there is someone in minus position, the plus appears," Reverend Moon has said. This principle holds especially true within deeply committed relationships as in the family. "I kept running away from her but she outlasted me," admits a 30-year-old teacher, thinking fondly of his mother. "I raised hell in high school. I quit in junior year, got picked up by the police for drug use, totaled my mother's car and moved three states away with a girlfriend. But all that while, my Mama was praying for me, always believing in me and telling me so. When I finally got tired of what I was doing, I realized she had never changed. I came back home and tried to make it up to her." His mother acted as a true subject partner whose steadfast faith in and devotion to her son held open the space for her son to return to her as a good counterpart. By maintaining her rightful position, she set up a magnetic attraction for her son to resume his. True love has this power.

The dynamic of love and beauty described above suggests another way in which the power of the subject and object relationship can bring out the best in a person. This is illustrated by the saying, "You don't love a woman because she is beautiful, but she is beautiful because you love her." There is a story told that elaborates on this.

Johnny Lingo lived in the South Pacific. The islanders all spoke highly of this man, but when it came time for him to find a wife the people shook their heads in disbelief. In order to obtain a wife you paid for her by giving her father cows. Four to six cows was considered a high price. But the woman Johnny Lingo chose was plain, skinny and walked with her shoulders hunched and her head down. She was very hesitant and shy. What surprised everyone was Johnny's offer—he gave eight cows for her! Everyone chuckled about it, since they believed his father-in-law put one over on him.

Several months after the wedding, a visitor from the U.S. came to the islands to trade and heard the story about Johnny Lingo and his eight-cow wife. Upon meeting Johnny and his wife the visitor was totally taken aback, since this wasn't a shy, plain and hesitant woman but one who was beautiful, poised and confident. The visitor asked about the transformation, and Johnny Lingo's response was very simple. "I wanted an eight-cow woman, and when I paid that for her and treated her in that fashion, she began to believe that she was an eight-cow woman. She discovered she was worth more than any other woman in the islands. And what matters most is what a woman thinks about herself."³

Love is so powerful that partners tend to become what the other sees in them. People tend to rise to meet the level of expectation that loved ones have for them. Love reveals beauty even as beauty inspires love.

On the other hand, there is a destructive side to subject and object interdependence. Low expectations and a lack of belief in someone tend to hamper their performance. How often have we seen a talented person unable to contribute within a given responsibility because of lack of appreciation among his superiors? How

frequently has a gifted leader been frustrated by too little support from her subordinates? Jesus is a striking example of a leader who was so largely disrespected and misunderstood in his lifetime that much of his profound wisdom and insight was never voiced. "I have much more to say to you," he said, "more than you can now bear" (John 16.12-13). Jesus had no object partner to receive all he had to give.

The Power of Maintaining the Right Position

This interdependence of the roles means that it is possible for only one person to improve the relationship and correct an imbalance. For example, in the marital relationship, if the husband changes what he does, the wife is liable to change her behavior and vice versa.⁴ One woman tells of her early years with her husband. "I was impossible. I'd fly into a rage at the smallest provocation and say the vilest things to him; I didn't know why. But he would just do kind things for me and never retaliated, a real gentleman. I finally woke up one day to what a gem he was and became a wife instead of a witch." The maxim, "The only person you can change is yourself," is true but it is also sufficient to frequently bring a shift in a relationship.

This is why maintaining one's proper position in a challenging situation can be a powerful corrective to a bad or broken relationship, as noted above. If only one person maintains the correct stance, a force is generated that exerts a pull to bring the other person into greater alignment. "By the time my dad married my step-mother, our family was a wreck," recalls one 36-year-old man. "I was the last kid at home, just waiting to get out, and I had a pretty bad attitude. My new stepmother however insisted on respect for my father and herself, and made sure we all sat down to dinner and had civil conversation. I hated her at first. But she put up with me and did things for me, and I began to secretly like having some order in the house. I don't know how it happened but one day I realized I really loved her, and our family was going to be all right."

History presents countless instances of people who stood in the truthful position in society despite persecution and lack of support, and later they were vindicated and acclaimed. They stood as leaders in their own various ways and eventually the world came to follow them.

Conversely, a reversal of positions—where the rightful object partner dominates the one who should be in the subject role—invites evil to work, to the destruction of all involved. The child who lords over his fawning parents, the church board who tells their pastor what to preach, the developer who controls his mayor with bribery—these are illustrations of corrosive subject and object reversals. In the Islamic, Jewish and Christian traditions, the primordial human Fall is the classic example of this, where God's creations refuse to obey and show deference to Him.

Creating Harmony

It is always wise for people to notice whether they are in the subject role or the object role to each other, to clarify the terms of the relationship, thus facilitating communication and interaction. This is why military personnel display their rank on their uniforms and why members of some cultures will even inquire about a new acquaintance's age. Nevertheless, the defining task of both these roles is essentially the same—to serve the other's best interests for the sake of a greater good. In practical terms this means finding the way to create a successful circuit of interaction, a dynamic and fruitful relationship.

In a respectful and caring relationship, participants approach each other with an attitude of respect and care, recognizing how they need one another and how deeply intertwined the well-being of one is tied to the other. They recognize their partnership warrants greater allegiance than their immediate individual concerns.

From another perspective, those in the different roles complement and offset one another's strengths and weaknesses. The limitations of one bring out the assets of the other. Elder siblings use

their superior strength and maturity to protect younger siblings, while younger siblings' vulnerability engenders the elder's sense of compassion. The wife's nurturing instincts helps her husband manage family relationships and his competitive savvy helps her navigate work relationships. The subordinate's verbal skills combine with the boss's innovative ideas to help their department succeed.

Traditionally the distinction between elder and younger and their roles has been codified in the norms of culture and impressed upon the young from an early age. Andre and Sandra, a New York couple, invited a Vietnamese co-worker's family, the Vinh DENGs, to dinner. The Vinh DENGs' twelve-year-old daughter was helping her serve and Sandra offered her to select some meat for her younger brothers and herself. The girl hesitated and then said softly, "It doesn't seem right for the children to choose first. I would prefer it if the elders did." The girl respectfully helped Sandra serve the food to the adults and then took her place with the children for dinner. Throughout the meal, she could be heard gently admonishing her younger brother, "Don't be so noisy," yet she also joined in merrily as the children joked and teased one another, giving herself over to the joys of being a child. This young girl knew that as a child she should defer to her elders, and as the eldest child she should guide her juniors as well as participate in their fun. Her understanding of her position and the proper behavior expected made the evening more harmonious for everyone.

The Object Partner

The object partner is in a position to follow, support, inspire, obey and assist his or her superior. Unity of heart and purpose is the goal. The kinds of qualities celebrated in this role are most easily understood in relation to great causes that elicit heartfelt gratitude and commitment. On the family level, there is family loyalty or filial piety, fidelity to one's parents. On the larger level there is patriotism, allegiance to one's nation. Beyond this is dedication to humankind or saintliness. Greater still is devotion to God as a divine

son or daughter: Jesus declared he had come “not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me” (John 6.38).

The object position is a study in humility and submission, a recurrent theme in religious tradition. Islam itself means simply, “submission.” Submission represents the freedom to “give way to others,” in the words of Christian philosopher Richard J. Foster, to surrender having one’s own way and participate in a larger reality, a greater good.⁵ It denies the petty self in favor of a larger one. The statesman who gives his life for his country partakes of the nation’s greatness. The missionary who surrenders herself to God’s providence participates in His glory.

The Power of the Object Position

Taking the right object partner position empowers the subject partner and helps both achieve their joint goal. For example, an effective teaching assistant helps the university professor more effectively impart her knowledge and experience. As a result, both of them enjoy a more productive class. “When they dragged me up to the front to receive the award,” remembers one man, who won a company prize for his advertising concept, “I realized I had to call up my young assistant to acknowledge him. His willingness to listen to me think out loud and to question me when I doubted my own idea were invaluable—though he probably did not even remember doing it.”

In addition, being a receptive and a supportive object partner facilitates inheritance of gifts from the subject partner. In the instance of the teaching assistant, he is in a position to possibly pick up extra information from the professor and learn some practical skills about teaching a class. If love and blessing are indeed like water, going “under” the central person makes it easier to inherit these, like standing under a waterfall. This bestowal may come without the other’s participation or even awareness. Thus, there is the story of the woman who received divine healing as she touched Jesus’ garment (Matthew 9.20-22). Her faith brought the blessing

because it enabled her to stand in the correct position, as object partner to her Master.

Challenges of the Object Role

Taking the object partner role is not always easy. When one thinks of how hard it is to trust, truly listen to another, or to receive well, one gets some inkling of the difficulties inherent in the object partner role. The object partner seems more vulnerable to hurt and exploitation. He or she may be reluctant to submit to the other out of fear of being used, humiliated or lorded over.

It is easier to follow another when his or her superiority is evident; the conscience readily understands, as Reverend Moon says, "He whose heart is warmer than yours is your subject partner." However, often someone is a superior due solely to seniority, greater expertise or other external reason. He may well lack kindness and sincere interest in his subordinates. Indeed, he may resort to authoritarianism when his subordinates are sluggish in going along, or when they question decisions or complain.

Still, there must still be respect for the position of the subject partner. The young David is a striking example. Though his king, Saul, became corrupt and even tried repeatedly to murder him, David never ceased to revere Saul's role as the representative of God and His chosen instrument. Honoring his king was for David a matter of honoring the Divine. As a result of his faithfulness, David inherited his leader's position. When the object partner of a bad subject partner maintains his principled position, either the superior comes to change or the subordinate eventually takes his place.

The Subject Partner

The subject partner role, typified by the parent, teacher and leader, is one of directing, guiding, nurturing, providing for and protecting the complementary partner. The subject partner represents the central person of the task or relationship. Like a rudder on

a ship, he or she is the one that God wants to work through to guide that interaction, whether it be with one other person or a group, and to bless both the task and the object partners.

As soon as someone enters that role, like lightning to the highest point, he or she attracts a certain degree of divine attention and a certain kind of energy from the universe. This parallels the shift within that people feel when taking on such a responsibility. "My parents were counting on me," recalls a young man of his last year in high school, when his parents had to leave the country for special medical treatment for his mother. "Dad told me that for one whole month I was in charge of my younger brother who was 14 years old at the time. It dawned on me that I'd have to lay down the law and he'd resent me. We wouldn't be able to fool around the same way. Whatever my brother needed I'd have to take care of. It felt heavy, but I also felt I could somehow handle it. Strength and answers came to me when I needed them." Because God Himself is the subject partner of all, He comes to the aid of all those in a similar position.

At the same time, this position is a magnet for certain predictable temptations. Once in this position of power, the individual confronts the temptation to selfishly use and abuse those in the object role. It takes wisdom and experience to learn that real influence and joy comes from unselfish love. As Reverend Moon puts it, "If you would be the king of power, you must be the king of heart."

Love and blessing are like water; they tend to flow "downward" most readily from vertical type relations, from senior to junior, superior to subordinate. Parents can usually barely resist giving all they have to their children, investing to make them better and better off than themselves. Likewise, the retired executive is often only too happy to mentor the aspiring young man new to the company, finding great satisfaction in sharing the benefits of his experience. The same kind of generosity moves less easily horizontally towards peers.

Being a Good Object Partner First

Ironically, the first qualification of a good subject partner is to be a good object. This means on one hand knowing how to assist a leader oneself. Based on this experience, the successful leader knows to ask of her subordinates only what she can do herself, and also she can sympathize with their difficulties. "I'm hard on my kids," admits a father of five. "I demand obedience at home and I insist that they become part of a cause that helps other people, whether it's at church or at school." He smiles. "Do they always like it? No. But they can't complain too much because they see me respecting my elders and being active in my service organization. And I know they can do it because I did the same thing when I was their age, though I try not to forget how hard it was at times."

On the other hand, the effective leader is also a good object to the higher cause; that is, she actively submits herself to the greater purpose and authority. This has the effect of getting ego out of the way, and representing an inspiring vision worthy of the subordinate's allegiance. People want to support a more public purpose, whether it be the welfare of their family or a good company or their nation. "I know he cares about the school as much as or more than any of us," remarks a teacher about his new principal. "It is easy to get behind him." To the extent the subject partner embodies that greater purpose, he will motivate the object partners to lend their support.

Submitting to a higher authority also means answering to someone else as a check on one's power. Ideally a good subject is devoted to God, which helps keep her authority disciplined and righteous.

Joseph in the Bible is an extraordinary example of a leader who learned the object role well and thus could become a good subject partner. Favored among his brothers by his father and thus predisposed to arrogance, he was brought down low when sold as a slave. Yet he embraced the role wholeheartedly and served his Egyptian master loyally and well even as he remained faithful before God

despite hardships, persecution and false imprisonment. His unselfish service even in prison caught the attention of the Pharaoh himself and he was eventually rewarded with the position of prime minister of Egypt. He became one of the most powerful men in the world, yet he was compassionate towards the weak and generous and forgiving even to the brothers who had sold him into servitude.

Challenge of Unresponsive Objects

The duty of the subject person can be burdensome. The challenge of giving one's best and leading with care and responsibility despite difficulties is often compounded by the lack of responsiveness and support from others. "Only in his home town, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor," said Jesus (Mark 6.1-4).

The Heavenly Father, of course, is the finest example of what the subject role should be. In all cases, God's efforts and sacrifices as the subject being far outweigh humankind's feeble response as the object partners. "If you count God's blessings, you can never number them," the Qur'an reminds us (16.10-18).⁶ Thus, He is the ultimate servant leader. The true subject partner imitates God, living, in Reverend Moon's words, "with the heart of the Father, in the shoes of the servant, shedding tears for Man, sweat for Earth, and blood for Heaven."

True leaders know that by keeping heart and persevering, nothing is ever lost and they capitalize on the law of reciprocity to gain an impact. This is the secret behind the power of spiritual giants to deeply affect the world. Though their heart, wisdom and divine connection qualifies them as true leaders, usually others are slow to follow. However, their sacrificial love creates such a potent subjective force—like a strong positive electrical charge—that eventually great numbers—those with a latent negative charge or "hunger for righteousness"—come to surrender before them and take the objective position, possibly even centuries after their deaths. How else can we explain the astounding influence of someone like Jesus,

given the dramatic contrast between his obscure life and humiliating death and his extraordinary influence on people's lives and world culture?

Value of Roles and Positions

In the ideal, subject and object partners operate with a kind of symmetry, stimulating and supporting one another. Everyone, however, has experienced that there can be countless glitches in their interaction. In history, there has been a great deal of mistrust between those in these complementary positions because of self-centeredness rather than true love and other-centeredness. This has happened between men and women; it happens between stronger and weaker nations; it happens in workplace disputes between management and labor.

The sad history of injustices and inequities between those in the subject and object positions have led to the contemporary trend to do away with all distinctions of roles in the name of absolute equality. Vertical relations are to be leveled as much as possible. For instance, it is common in America for even young children to address adults by their first names so as not to draw too much of a distinction between the positions of adults and children; to emphasize cooperation, equality and mutual respect. Such a trend has obvious appeal for those in the subordinate position, and those in the superior position enjoy lowered expectations and the relaxed collegiality of peer relations with their subordinates. Managers find a more egalitarian style of leadership to bring positive results.

Roles Are Indispensable

However, neglecting the reality of subject and object positions leads to problems. One consequence is an unclear chain-of-command in ordinary situations. Those younger are less receptive to learn from their elders and less respectful of wisdom and authority. It is only too easy for the younger or novice to judge the elder or expert on appearances and miss his or her true worth. Most

teachers have had the experience of trying to teach a wise-guy student who always insists on his ideas and thinks he knows more than the teacher. Such a student sets himself up in the role of another subject in opposition to the teacher.

Socializing those in the subordinate position how to adopt the attitude of the object role facilitates the receptivity and respect that is helpful for harmonious relations and for the transfer of wisdom from senior to junior. "I was raised in the deep South in the U.S.," explains a middle-aged waitress, "and I still find myself saying 'ma'am' and 'sir' to my elders. It's an instant attitude adjustment when I'm talking to older folks that reminds me that they have much to show me." In this way, the typical contemporary approach of "I treat you as a peer until you earn my respect" wastes time, energy and precious opportunities for learning, not to mention making unprincipled reversals of position much easier. Having a sense of automatic respect for those in the senior position as well as a heart of concern to help those in the junior position promotes tolerance and patience in human relations.

Though individuals take on different roles to one another, both positions are indispensable. In this sense, they are symmetrical and equal in value. Healthy family relations illustrate how basically permanent inequality of position does not diminish equality in value. Parents will never cease to be in the subject role to their offspring and "kid sister" will always be in an object role to her elder siblings, though the distinctions soften as individuals mature. In the spirit of true family love, those who are elder, younger, leader and follower are all equally cherished.

Indeed, leveling all positions and roles is an impossible goal. In the United States, for instance, there is growing resistance to dispensing with certain roles. Author Wendy Shalit describes the irony of sophisticated teenagers—whose parents treat them like fellow adults, giving them all the freedoms they ask for—ending up envying their peers whose parents deal with them more protectively.⁷

Roles are simply indispensable. They facilitate the flow of communication and interaction. They allow the smooth functioning of society. They establish mutual obligations: leadership and obedience, protection and loyalty, benevolence and gratitude. Roles enable harmony, and harmony invites greater care and concern.

Recognizing positions also protects society from chaos and dissolution. Returning to the analogy of the solar system, we can only imagine the chaos if the Earth changed its axis from day to day—some days north-south, some days east-west—or if it suddenly changed its center of revolution from the Sun to Jupiter. Recognizing positions and keeping to them is an important, if under-appreciated, factor in maintaining orderliness in human relationships, be they personal, social, or national. For example, in a democracy, citizens are required to obey the president as their leader even if they did not vote for that particular person. The orderly transference of power over to a person whom significant numbers of citizens may dislike and distrust is one of the triumphs of the liberal democratic political system.

Thus, inequality of position is inevitable in countless situations in daily life, and certain distinctions of age, experience, ability and gender capacities are real and permanent. That is why there is much wisdom in the norms of traditional societies the world over that honor the natural distinctions among roles. Learning the right heart and practice in both the subject and object roles is a valuable and lifelong endeavor.

Love Equalizes

Indeed, distinctions among roles become a cause for complaint only when genuine love is lacking. Love is the great equalizer and harmonizer. When those in the subject position give true and sacrificial love, people in the object position do not complain. When people feel that their needs and goals are being addressed by the subject person, they respond by following the subject's directions well, even surpassing expectations. Parents' downward benevolence

and affection for their children induces obedience and genuine respect in return, and encourages them to be more caring towards one another as well. The star athlete on a baseball team tutors and encourages the rookies, creating solidarity and team spirit among all the players. Similarly, if object partners can swallow their pride, smooth over a leader's faults and shortcomings, overlook discrepancies and weaknesses and keep believing in the leader with true and sacrificial love, the subject partner will often rise to the occasion and become more effective, moved and influenced by the good graces of those in the object position. The prayers and encouragement of his congregation gives the young and inexperienced rabbi the strength to admit his mistakes and seek advice from his elders. The eager admiration of the kid brother motivates his teenage sibling to give up smoking to set a better example. When these roles are fulfilled with a loving and steadfast heart, those in every position are blessed.

There is one subject and object partnership that is foundational to family love and social accord. This is that of husband and wife, man and woman, masculine and feminine. Next we will explore the implications of this relationship.

Chapter 12

Masculine and Feminine Harmony

*Man symbolizes heaven and woman
symbolizes earth. Man and woman are to
come together and realize harmony.*

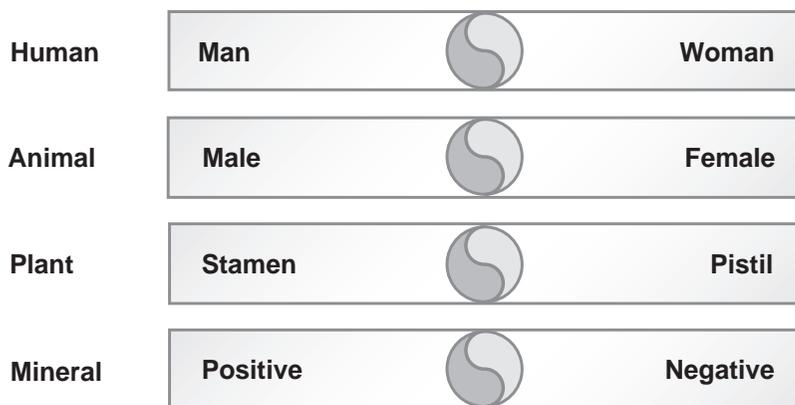
—Sun Myung Moon

Opposites attract, especially masculine and feminine. The big, muscular Dad is mesmerized by the tiny frailty of his newborn daughter. The petite, refined teenager memorizes every detail of her heartthrob's rugged face, strong dark eyes, thick hands, and angular physique. The simple, home-loving woman catches the eye of the sophisticated, worldly-wise man.

This tendency of masculinity and femininity to find and balance each other is an expression of complementarity—a principle running throughout all existence. Indeed, the harmony and vibrant tension of these polarities fills the universe with energy, structure, life, beauty and joy. Frosty mountain peaks overlook green, verdant valleys. The peacock carries around his heavy tail feathers to make the colorful display that will attract a peahen, who will in turn bear his young. An electron weighs less than a thousandth of a proton, yet they precisely balance to comprise an atom.

Reverend Moon has said, “Beauty arises from the fusion of extremes into a harmonious oneness.”¹ We delight in the harmony of masculine and feminine in the things around us—the rugged

stones amidst the delicate blooms in our rock garden, the soprano voices in counterpoint to the alto in an opera—and we intuitively understand their complementarity. In the human world, there may be nothing more beautiful than a man and woman holding hands in the park or a graceful *pas de deux* in ballet.



Masculine and Feminine Complementarity Pervades the Universe

The ancient sages in Asia discerned a universal polarity whose operation is responsible for the changing and flourishing of all existence. These polarities encompass male and female, inner and outer, high and low, hot and cold, hard and soft, light and dark (but not good and evil). These are not antagonistic or in conflict. Neither can one exist by itself apart from the other. Ever in motion, these subject and object partners flow into each other, inhere in each other, and balance each other. A Hindu Tantric text puts it, “All life, all pulsation in creation throbs with the mighty declaration of . . . the eternal He and the eternal She at play in manifestation.”² Their interplay drives and sustains all dynamic movement and spawns all new things, including love. Valuing the union of male and female is inherent in the Biblical blessing and imperative to “multiply,” (Genesis 1.28) ordained by the Creator (see Chapter 3). Thus

Masculine and Feminine Harmony is a fifth principle for loving relationships in Reverend Moon's teaching.

Yet actual men and women can remain a mystery to one another and certainly can find it hard to get along. What exactly is masculinity and femininity? What does one need from the other? How can men and women harmonize and make unity?

For the Purpose of Love

The parents' familiar speech about "the birds and the bees" starts out with the obvious fact that all of nature is set up in a pair system. The male and female animals have their counterparts in the male and female parts of plants. The parallel in the inanimate world is the positive and negative charge among the particles of matter. The polarity of masculine and feminine, positive and negative not only allows for multiplication, but also provides the stimulation for countless other kinds of interactions that sustain and enliven the universe.

The poets among us along with the great philosophical and religious traditions have tied the complementarity of male and female to the purposes of love. The Muslim mystic Rumi said that by "fore-ordainment, every part of the world is paired with its mate."³ The Bahai tradition is in accord; complementarity is evidence that God wanted each creation to know love. The Judeo-Christian tradition has the Creator noting His first man's loneliness and taking action to make a perfect counterpart: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2.18).

To be sure, humans feel incomplete without a counterpart. They cannot even define themselves without one—"man" has no meaning without contrasting itself with "woman." As the sexes interact, they are defined, refined and revealed even to themselves. More essentially, though, a person needs a partner to love, someone who will freely love in return. Nothing—even unlimited power, wealth or fame—can compare to the magnetism of one's mate and

the allure of love. This is why even a powerful monarch will weigh carefully the words of the small, soft-spoken woman who is his wife and the celebrated beauty queen will cancel her press conference for a quiet dinner with the plain fellow who is her husband.

Genesis dramatizes the mutual need of the sexes in its depiction of the moment when Adam sees Eve. The man exclaims in wonder, "bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh;" she is closer to him than his own body yet no doubt different enough to fascinate and challenge. Even the most pronounced differences between a man and woman can provide a mystique that makes for a powerful, insatiable attraction. "Yes it can be exasperating," says Joachim, a German, of his 12-year marriage to Yukimi, a native of Japan. "I want to talk and get everything on the table. She tends to 'speak' through hints and gestures and she expects me to read them. And that's only one difference. But at the same time, she is so intriguing she captivates me."

Love leads men and women to live for each other. Each approaches the other with an attitude of respect and care, recognizing how they need one another and how deeply intertwined the benefit of one is with the other. In nature, complementary opposites exist in symbiotic relationships as a matter of course. When people honor and serve their opposite sex counterparts, this recreates in human relations the harmony and balance of the larger universe. Author D. H. Lawrence described an ideal love as partners "balancing each other like two stars."⁴ In the Genesis tale, so precious is Adam's companion that she is described as "helper," the same word used at times for God in relation to His people.⁵

Further, masculine and feminine harmony mirrors the greater relationship between Creator and creation. The theme of Father God and Mother Earth is a familiar one. If the Heavenly Parent created His children as His objects of love, then there is what one Christian author has called a Sacred Romance between God and us.⁶ This is easily recognized in the Bible's reference to Christ's love for believers as towards a Bride. "Husbands, love your wives," St. Paul writes, "as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for

her” (Ephesians 5.25). Indeed, the prophet Hosea described God as betrayed by His people as if He were a jilted lover, calling it an adulterous act: “For you have played the harlot, forsaking your God” (9.1). Thus, if our fidelity and devotion to God is important to Him, so is the unity and faithful love between a man and a woman.

Masculinity and Femininity

Tradition has always assumed that men and women are profoundly different. In manners, dress, roles, and other areas, culture has usually accentuated the differences and put the sexes at opposite extremes from each other. Men go to war, women care for children. Men wear functional clothing, women wear decorative. Men lead, women follow. “In the family women’s appropriate place is within; men’s, without” states the I Ching (37.)⁷

In reaction to often rigid gender roles that do not allow for individual differences, the feminist movement has emphasized the similarities between men and women and sought to open opportunities especially for women to occupy traditionally male roles as well as to equalize rights. This effort has corrected many inequities and enriched society by bringing feminine strengths into leadership and other positions previously denied to women. It has also revealed many concepts of female limitation to be false. At the same time, however, even as scientists verified the overarching similarity of the sexes, they also have found more divergence than many anticipated. Brain structures, perception, reasoning, speech patterns, reactions to medicine—in myriad ways research has confirmed that men and women have significant differences.

What Design Reveals

Physical design suggests many things about masculinity and femininity. Men have 30 percent more overall physical strength than women and 20 percent more red blood cells for quick energy. Women’s hips are larger than men’s to accommodate a baby, but they also allow women to sit still longer than men. Men have thicker

skin and facial and bodily hair that allows them to withstand the elements more readily than women. Women's arms curve in a way different from men, so that boys can throw a ball more easily and they hold their schoolbooks at their side while girls tend to hug them to their chests. But the difference allows females to be more comfortable holding a baby and nursing. Women have a greater vocal range than a man, allowing more nuanced and softer speech. Men have less sensitive senses than a woman, making them less aware of details in their environment but also more able to tune them out when necessary. Women have stronger immune systems, to allow them to protect a child in the womb.⁸

Mentally, women have greater awareness of and facility with words. They also have a greater emotional vocabulary than men. Together these traits permit women to more masterfully note their children's needs and facilitate interpersonal harmony around them. As with physical stimuli, men's lesser awareness of feelings and greater powers of concentration mean they can function undistracted by personal and interpersonal concerns when necessary. Men have greater aptitude for abstract reasoning as in mathematics, and greater visual-spatial intelligence. This makes them good at zeroing in on the root of a problem and designing and building things to solve it.⁹

Implications of the reproductive organs

But perhaps the design most revealing—in a metaphoric way—about masculinity and femininity are the reproductive organs themselves. The female organ receives the male organ, so masculinity is active and initiating while femininity is receptive and responsive. The male organ angles upward and away from the body when erect. It is often aroused by inspiration solely within the mind. This is symbolic of the masculine propensity towards “heaven,” the world of ideals and vision. In contrast, the female organ is like “earth” in that it opens deep into the body and is subject to monthly cycles. This represents the feminine concern for immediate, practical

matters. The internal structure of the female organs represents the feminine tendency to emphasize the world of feelings and human relations and to solve problems by changing something within herself. In contrast, the outward thrust of the male organ symbolizes the natural inclination of masculinity to focus on manipulating things in the outer world. In communication, masculinity tends to be direct and assertive, as the male genitals symbolize, while femininity is apt to be more indirect and round-about, like the female organs.

Apart from physical design, observation of the tendencies of men and women suggest other distinctions between masculinity and femininity. Femininity is concerned with context; masculinity is focused on content. Masculinity emphasizes rules and standards; femininity is mindful of individual differences. Femininity is egalitarian and cooperative; masculinity is hierarchical and competitive.

It must be said in the end that differences notwithstanding, men and women are far more similar than not, of course. Both genders have personality, the fruit of the interaction of mind and body. Both are spiritual and material beings. Both have heart and conscience. What masculinity and femininity do is to impart a certain slant to these universal human components, creating only a difference of style and emphasis.

Complementary Virtues

The diverse characteristics of masculinity and femininity can be reduced to certain strengths or virtues. These are reflected in the qualities that are universally prized in men and women. In all the various family roles of men—son, brother, husband, father—and their social counterparts, among the key virtues celebrated are strength, leadership, courage, justice, discipline, self-sufficiency and providing. In their roles as daughter, sister, wife, mother and the like, there are also certain qualities that are celebrated in women. These include beauty, support, surrender, mercy, modesty, nurtu-

rance and resourcefulness. The Bible provides a succinct description of the virtuous woman when St. Paul says, “train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be sensible, chaste, domestic, kind, and submissive to their husbands, that the word of God may not be discredited” (Titus 2.4-5). These various virtues are complementary to one another, paired in subject and object partnership. One stimulates or inspires the other and either can be much more difficult to generate or maintain without the other.

Frequently the virtues are masculine and feminine dimensions of the same quality. In any case, the masculine dimension tends to be intrapersonal, that is, related to vertical mind and body unity. For example, chastity in men traditionally is a testament to self-control, for the purpose of being single-minded, able to serve God or otherwise realize a worthy purpose. In contrast, feminine virtue is more often than not an interpersonal quality, related to horizontal, person-to-person unity. Chastity for women has more connotations of fidelity, keeping love undivided for the sake of its fulfillment.

Complementary Virtues

<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>
Strength	Beauty
Leadership	Support
Courage	Surrender
Justice	Mercy
Discipline	Modesty
Self-Sufficiency	Nurturance
Providing	Resourcefulness

Strength and beauty

Strength encompasses physical power, stamina and the ability to endure physical and emotional pain to provide for and protect others. It means keeping one's own counsel when necessary and eschewing easy comfort. Strength is "beauty" in a man, as reflected in a recent song defining manhood as being as "swift as the coursing river, with all the force of a great typhoon, with all the strength of a raging fire, mysterious as the dark side of the moon."¹⁰ In the same way, what we call beauty—being a source of pleasure and inspiration—is an important feminine "strength." Beauty encompasses grace and graciousness, creating comfort and harmony. A woman's beauty stimulates love in her husband even as it cheers and encourages her children. Beauty also involves creating splendor around oneself, drawing out the attractiveness of other people and things and harmonizing them.

Both of these virtues are often distorted in the world, interpreted in exaggerated, external terms that become oppressive. The truth of Francis Bacon's words, "The best part of beauty is that which no picture can express," is readily forgotten. Women are prone to obsessively focus on their appearance. Likewise, men are likely to forget that real strength is a character quality, as the saying goes: "The strength of a man isn't in the weight he can lift. It's in the burdens he can carry."¹¹ In their true meaning, strength and beauty encapsulate all the good qualities that distinguish masculinity and femininity. That is, all masculine virtues are regarded as enhancing a man's strength while the feminine virtues are seen as making a woman more beautiful.

Leadership and support

Leadership involves taking command of a situation, being assertive and taking initiative to get something done. Leadership demands sacrificing oneself to protect and provide for others. It means making decisions in spite of uncertainty and others' disapproval. It sometimes requires taking a stand that disturbs the peace.

Support, on the other hand, is the ability to facilitate leadership, to respond to what is required, fill in what the leader lacks and influence the situation indirectly. Just as leadership is a kind of support, giving support often involves taking leadership, rallying others and harmonizing them with the leader's purpose and direction.

The male capacity to zero in on the root of a problem and detach from feelings to make more impartial decisions suits many men to be like the CEO and public affairs director of their families, accountable for their direction, protection and overall function. At the same time, the female sensitivity to relationships and capacity for detail makes most women the ideal person in charge of day-to-day family matters and connections to the neighborhood—the director of personnel and head of public relations, the one to oversee the health and happiness of the home.

Courage and surrender

Courage and surrender are counterparts to one another. Courage is acting despite fear, which means to surrender to what needs to be done regardless of risk. Its close cousin is heroism. A prerequisite to courage is confidence, the trust in oneself and in one's God-given strengths. Conversely, surrender is the willingness to trust in others and in life, to be vulnerable and yield oneself to a person or situation. This also demands considerable courage to put one's fate in the hands of someone or something that is as yet unproven. Women are called to surrender in countless ways, just as men need to be courageous to exhibit leadership and other qualities.

Justice and mercy

Justice is promoting fairness through establishing and enforcing standards, rules and boundaries. It involves making distinctions, passing judgment and discerning right from wrong. Justice is to be impartial, "blind." Mercy, on the other hand, bends rules and permits special consideration for individual cases. It softens the

dictates of justice to allow for the complexities of the heart. Of course both are vital and depend upon one another for balance: “And what does the Lord require of you,” says the prophet Micah, “but to do justice, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (6.8).

Discipline and modesty

These virtues represent restraints upon both strength and beauty, respectively. Discipline involves self-control and moderating one's passions. It also includes the humility to submit to a superior's correction and direction. Both are essential if a man would exercise authority over others. St. Paul bids older men to “be temperate, serious, sensible” and younger men to “control themselves” (Titus 2.2, 6). Modesty is the feminine form of self-restraint. It is reserving one's beauty and sexuality for one's spouse alone, guarding what God has entrusted. Both are encompassed in chastity, as mentioned above.

Self-sufficiency and nurturance

Self-sufficiency is the ability to handle one's own needs and solve one's own problems so as to be available to be of service. This is related to independence; men are expected to be strong in themselves so others can depend upon them. The complementary virtue of nurturance means to actively attend to that which is young and undeveloped, believing in its potential and patiently awaiting its full unfolding. It includes relieving distress and providing comfort. Patience and gentleness make this possible. Nurturance also connotes an acceptance of a measure of dependence; generally women are more willing to admit their needs and be cared for.

Providing and resourcefulness

These virtues relate to dealing with things. Providing refers to the masculine trait of acquiring what is needed for the people and

causes one loves. “The best of men are those who are useful to others,” reads a hadith.¹² The traditional requirement for a boy of the indigenous peoples of the arctic North was to slay a seal as a feast for his community, representing this male virtue. Resourcefulness on the other hand involves carefulness in dealing with what has been entrusted, shrewdly conserving resources to meet the needs of those under one’s care. Traditional recipes and quilts are but two examples of the ingenuity of women to make utility and beauty out of limited resources.

Men and Women Combine Both Principles

Masculinity and femininity as principles or archetypes are one thing; real men and women are another. It must be remembered that all people have both masculine and feminine sides to them. This common base allows women to understand men and vice versa. Real people are a blend of masculine and feminine traits—the virtues just described are celebrated in individuals of either sex. Men may have their feminine side quite developed, just as women may have ready access to their masculine traits. The roles that individuals play will demand sometimes more masculine traits and sometimes more feminine ones. For example, a male kindergarten teacher will require qualities that may come more naturally to most women, while a policewoman will need to draw upon dispositions that probably are easier for most men to access. All men and women have the capacity to develop the traits that are the strengths of the opposite sex. A male orderly in a senior citizen facility can learn to pay more attention to details, just as a female manager in a large company can learn to tune certain details out.

Yet at the same time, the greater masculinity within men means that they have certain natural strengths as well as limitations that suit them for certain tasks, just as the greater femininity of women gives them certain advantages and disadvantages. Either gender can take on just about any role, but the fit may not be as perfect. Author Patsy Rae Dawson offers an analogy: A six-inch brush is

better for painting large surfaces and a two-inch brush is ideal for trim. Either can be used for either task, but it may take more effort to do so, such as painting trim with the larger brush. So it is with the sexes. Either can fill in for each other's duties but it may take more exertion to do so.¹³

Men and women need each other

Thus for every male or female gift, we can understand there is also a corresponding weakness or shadow. The male penchant for achievement sometimes leads to neglect of relationships; the female sensitivity to feelings can spell difficulty in overlooking negative experiences. Thus, boys and girls, men and women need each other's companionship and support. One side of this is humorously expressed by Rogers and Hammerstein in the musical "South Pacific":

"There isn't one thing wrong with any man here
That wouldn't be cured by putting him near
A real live, womanly, female, feminine dame!"

The needs—or "weaknesses"—of a man only serve to draw out and accentuate the strengths of a woman, just as a husband's unique assets are revealed and highlighted by the needs of his wife. By investing their strengths into each other as a team, the sexes create a powerful and beautiful whole greater than the sum of its parts. This is symbolized in mythology by androgynous figures that combine masculinity and femininity and as a result have extraordinary abilities, like the blind Tiresias in Greek mythology who can foresee the future.¹⁴ "A woman is half of the universe," states Reverend Moon. "When a woman unites with a man, 180 degrees and 180 degrees come together. In marriage they form a sphere equal in value to the universe."

Submit to one another

This is why the marriage partnership, though tradition speaks of well-defined roles, comes down to the interplay of the husband and wife augmenting each other's strengths and compensating for one another's weaknesses. The spouses' horizontal subject and object partnership means that though there is a certain stable nature to their positions, there is also dynamic movement in which roles stretch and switch according to shifting conditions. A husband's masculine way of living for the sake of his spouse will naturally define his role and likewise with the wife's feminine way of serving.¹⁵ Instead of concern about "manly" or "womanly" tasks, the spirit of mutual service and sacrifice carries the day.

Reverend Moon puts it this way:

In true love, both spouses must be obedient to each other and be willing to be united with each other. We may say, "Why do I have to obey my husband or wife? I want to be free." But in true love, obedience, loyalty, surrender—everything is possible, and you are not humiliated by it. You want to be controlled by your love. In true love then, there is a heavenly dictatorship of one to the other, and you want to live that way throughout eternity.¹⁶

The New Testament asserts both spouses are to "Submit to one another" out of respect for God (Ephesians 5.21). The husband submits to his conscience and the needs of his family as a true servant leader, especially to respect and care for his wife. The wife surrenders to the needs of her husband and family. The man's heartfelt care for his partner will tend to elicit the response he desires, just as the woman's wholehearted support will tend to elicit the qualities she wants from her mate. Thus there is the call for each husband to "love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband" (Ephesians 5.33). Web designer Peter Brown says of he and his wife Kim, "We just tell ourselves that, 'True love is the boss.' Although it sounds simple, it has a very real impact in

our lives [Both] the wife and the husband must bow down to the ethic of true love."¹⁷

Fathering and mothering

An effective father and mother partnership demonstrates masculine and feminine strengths in beautiful harmony. Mothers tend to provide comforting, nurturing love. Maternal affection seems to be given without condition, for who the children are as persons rather than for what they do. "He'll always be my baby," a mother may say, even on her son's wedding day, and that's more than enough reason for her to adore him. A mother's arms are comforting and healing; she will tend to be less strict and more forgiving. A mother's instincts are to protect her child, urging the child to be careful rather than to explore too much and experiment with independence.

A father's love, on the other hand, tends to provide challenge. Paternal affection looks more conditional, since it may be withheld until the son or daughter meets certain expectations. Fathers are inclined to be stricter, but they also encourage a child to take more risks and to try more things. A child about to climb a tall tree may hear his or her mother's caution, "Oh, don't! Be careful!" while the father says, "Go ahead and see if you can do it. Just stay on the thicker branches." As would be expected, fathers tend to model and draw out the masculine virtues while mothers demonstrate and cultivate the feminine ones.

Of course, mothers and fathers slip in and out of these two kinds of love, and circumstances sometimes force one parent to try to give both kinds. Generally, however, "hard" paternal and "soft" maternal loves balance each other well and provide enriching contrast. Both kinds of love provide a safe haven for the son or daughter from which to venture out and achieve.

Investing Towards Oneness

Despite inherent complementarity, in real life, men and women do not easily get along. In fact, sometimes they can seem to be like adversaries. Pick a random group of men or women with time to talk, and the conversation is likely to turn at some point to a discussion about puzzlement if not outright frustration with the other gender. “Women talk too much,” “men are so insensitive,” “females are just a heap of emotions,” “all men think about is sex”—the complaints are predictable. There is a long history of misunderstanding between the sexes, not to mention mistrust, abuse and exploitation. Each gender has taken advantage of the other’s need and dependence and has used their gifts against the other for eons. Men have bullied women with their greater physical strength; women have controlled men using their sexual allure and superior relational savvy. This kind of clash and abusiveness between the sexes is an evil legacy of the same in the very first family at the beginning of history, according to the great traditions (see Chapter 20). On the other hand, the general tendency for men and women to misunderstand each other is due to the different “culture” each gender shares. These distinct cultures arise naturally during the course of each gender’s development.

Separation in Preparation for Harmony

From the moment the sex of a newborn is discovered, his or her world will relate to that child in a distinctive way and his or her response will also be filtered through gender. A daughter will find her father relating to her differently than her mother does, and probably differently from how they would be treating a son. She also relates to her Papa and Mama in a way other than what a son would. Her brothers will interact with her differently than her sisters will, and her response to her male and female siblings and friends will not be exactly the same as a boy’s.

The impact of gender on the development of boys’ and girls’

changes at different stages of life. The path towards healthy and virtuous manhood and womanhood and then oneness as wife and husband is characterized by three general phases: Mixing, followed by separation and finally unity and harmony.

In the very early years of life there is a superficial unity between boys and girls. Infants and very young boys and girls are happy to play together. By age 7, however, few have friends of the opposite sex. Indeed, there is a positive repulsion between the genders—boys and girls take pains to distance themselves from one another and eschew any resemblance, becoming what sociologist John Gagnon calls the “Gender Police,” scrupulously enforcing rigid gender norms, much to their parents’ amusement and occasional frustration. This period of division between the sexes continues until adolescence when conjugal attraction begins. The youthful separation time is a critical one for each gender to identify with the community of their sex. As boys spend time with their fathers and girls with their mothers, as well as with their same sex siblings and friends, both genders absorb the standards expected of them, in preparation for bonding with the opposite sex.

Phases of Gender Relations

Early Childhood	Mixing
Late Childhood, Early Adolescence	Separation
Late Adolescence & Adulthood	Unity & Harmony

Identifying with their gender community

Traditional societies had rites of initiation into manhood and womanhood to help young people solidify their gender identity. In contemporary society, boys and girls still participate in single-gender team sports, clubs like the Boys and Girl Scouts, and summer camps to provide challenge and opportunities to win respect among same-sex elders and peers. Military service still serves in this way for young men.

Even after marriage, both men and women continue to receive comfort and empowerment in the company of their same-sex friends. Behind the jokes and “shoptalk” that characterize the banter of male buddies, the silent respect and honoring of one another renews them. Likewise, the “girl talk” of women is a soothing reinforcement of a sense of connection and support. This is why both sexes need and enjoy same-sex company on a regular basis, to “retreat and regroup” among their own gender to strengthen their ability to give to the opposite-sex individuals in their lives.

Unification through Marriage

The ultimate unification of masculine and feminine takes place in marriage and in making a family. Through the husband and wife’s embrace of one another and their children through many years and experiences, ideally they come to the consummate understanding and appreciation of the opposite sex. To the woman, her husband and sons represent masculinity in all phases of development. Similarly, the man embraces all femininity through his love for his wife and daughters. Thus marriage and family life provide the fascinating ongoing adventure of bonding and integration between masculinity and femininity (see Chapter 17).

Marriage and family life thus makes men and women into a better mirror of the divine. “In the image of God he created him; male and female he created them,” the Bible reminds us; man and woman together echoes the Creator’s own “wedded” nature (Genesis 1.27). Hindu scripture speaks of the original Self, the Creator, splitting in two to make man and woman. Thus each is “like half of a split pea” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.4.3).¹⁸ Such a couple is a full mirror of the Godhead. Indeed, Reverend Moon characterizes the married couple as the smallest unit of humanity, in the sense of fulfilling the purpose of human creation as God’s complete reflection and love partner.

This is why the love between a man and woman can be uniquely edifying. Because they are complementary in physique

and psyche, they can feel “as one”—knit together in mind, heart and body—in a way that same-sex friends never can. Through their marriage in heart and body, the man and woman’s “humanity is rejoined and fulfilled,” in the words of philosopher Michael Novak. The result is a certain “distinctive honesty, realism, and wisdom taught by each sex to the other.”¹⁹ A man and woman learn through their union things about themselves, humanity and the Creator that can be known no other way. “Man is born to meet woman and woman is born to meet man,” says Reverend Moon. “And man and woman together are born to combine with a higher level of love, God’s love. Neither man nor woman can touch God’s higher love by themselves.”²⁰ In this sense, a man’s wedded woman is a kind of savior in countless ways, just as a woman’s husband is like her personal messiah. This is the basis of the inexpressible gratitude spouses often feel towards each other.²¹

Potential for oneness

Because men and women are indeed made for each other, given sufficient time and effort, the unity of heart between a man and woman is to be expected. The magnetism between masculinity and femininity can overcome differences. Since their Origin is an integrated whole, they too can integrate into wholeness. Even though such an idea is hard to reconcile with popular notions of romance, it is the ordinary experience of the millions of couples over countless generations who were strangers when married and who grew to deeply love each other. This is captured in the memorable lyrics of the song from “Fiddler on the Roof,” when Tevye reminisces about his arranged marriage to Golde, his wife, and says to her,

But my father and my mother said
we’d learn to love each other
And now I’m asking, Golde, ‘Do you love me?’

After protesting that for “Twenty-five years my bed is his; If that’s not love, what is?,” she concedes that indeed she does. And so

does he love her.²² Love can be awakened and cultivated over time between two people who may not have been attracted to each other at first. Recalls Ann Meara, half of the long-married comedy team, Stiller and Meara, “Was it love at first sight? It wasn’t then—but it sure is now.”²³ This may not be the self-conscious and passionate ardor of young lovers, but it is a deeply rooted, comfortable kind of caring and unity not unlike the attachment a person has to his or her own arm.

Continual devotion

For this reason, a sixth principle for true love is Investing towards Oneness. Reverend Moon teaches that patient, steady and devoted efforts put into a fundamental relationship create a dynamic that tends to yield the closeness that love naturally seeks.

This is because of the nature of God and how God creates. For example, since God unites masculinity and femininity within Himself, creation begins when His wedded masculine and feminine aspects interact based on His purpose of true love. This generates a force that projects itself as substantial beings that are either masculine or feminine or positively or negatively charged, but each with God as their center. These entities then likewise interact with one another based on a greater purpose, thus producing a new unified entity that reflects the Creator in a unique way. It is as if the origin, God, divides Himself into separate manifestations that then reunite in oneness to form a new creation that symbolizes Him (see diagram 13.4 in Chapter 13).

Thus when spouses believe in and respect each other and strive to forget themselves in attending to one another, there tends to be a strong magnetism between them despite the vicissitudes of their relationship. Divine beauty, power and productivity manifest in the couple’s harmony. They are a pleasure to behold. “My parents together were like a force of nature, that could rise to any occasion and come up with what was needed—gentle, strong, funny, philosophical, whatever,” recalls one woman. “You could tell they loved

each other deeply, even though they had some serious conflicts over the years, and dry spells. But they knew each other was a good person and that that they needed each other to grow.”

At the same time, it must be conceded that oneness between a man and a woman is a relative matter. First there is the inherited legacy of conflict between men and women. Then there is the inherent contradiction between word and deed within each partner that makes true love itself a great struggle. For these reasons, masculine and feminine harmony remains almost as great a challenge as uniting mind and body.

Though the most complete oneness is possible only between husband and wife, any subject and object partnership that reflects the same within God has a potential for great unity. The father who estranged his son through years of neglect reawakens the deep bond between them as he patiently and respectfully makes overtures to the younger man. The middle-aged musician friends who have performed together since their high school days possess an almost telepathic connection with each other on stage. The faithful and attentive protégé of the brilliant anthropologist over time comes to feel as if her mentor lives inside of her and that her life is but an extension of that of the older woman. Steady investment over time yields a profound connection.

In the natural world, the oneness between male and female and positive and negative is assumed to be inevitable, though the investment and connection are not nearly to the same extent. Once a male and female cardinal find each other, for instance, they can be counted on to stay together to build a nest, mate and support one another as their family life demands. On the chemical level, once an electron comes into proximity of a proton, their interaction is as inexorable as it is intense, bonding in such a way as to make a new substance.

Dividends of Commitment

In the relationship of husband and wife, research supports the power of continual investment. One study found that among distressed couples who had reported being very unhappy in their marriages, almost eight out of 10 reported being quite content after persevering only five more years. Those who had decided to divorce were typically no happier than their still-married peers, even those who had remarried.²⁴ This reveals the importance of commitment—it keeps people connected through the ups and downs so that the investment can yield its fruits. “One advantage of marriage,” notes author Judith Viorst, “is that when you fall out of love with each other, it keeps you together until maybe you fall in again.”

Even the heartbreaks and hardships that accompany any long-term relationship can turn into elements of deep bonding. “I did not even want to deal with all the difficulties in my marriage. It was easier just to put on a game face, have a few drinks and dive deeper into my job,” one man remembers. “But my pastor forced me to say some things to my wife that needed saying, and to face what I was doing wrong too. Now I look back at that time as a period that made us a lot closer.”

The Bible encourages spouses to love each other in a proper way as “joint heirs of the grace of life . . . in order that your prayers may not be hindered” (1 Peter 3.7 RSV). Thus the harmonious oneness of spouses in this way is a lightning rod for divine blessing. At the same time, when a man and woman are united in deep and abiding love, the joy and prosperity they share is a blessing in itself—to their children, all who know them, the greater human community and the Creator Himself.

Chapter 13

Unity Around a Higher Purpose

Unity is the beginning point of love, the point where love can come to abide [But] one person does not have to go to the other to unite with him or vice versa. When both come closer and closer they can meet at one point between them. In other words, by both of them denying themselves for a greater purpose, they can unite with each other. That is the standard of true love.

—Sun Myung Moon

“For one priceless moment, in the whole history of man, all the people on this Earth are truly one. One in their pride in what you have done. One in our prayers that you will return safely to Earth.” These were the words of the American president, Richard Nixon, to Neil Armstrong, after he landed successfully on the surface of the moon. It was an extraordinary moment. Not only were people of all lands indeed united in celebration of and concern for what this earthling had done, but also that project had yielded images of those lands as never before. We could see what before only mystics and visionaries could see, that we are all passengers in a jewel-like spaceship alone in black, cold space. There was something profoundly moving and gratifying about that moment of oneness with all inhabitants of Earth. Unity, the sense of belonging to something greater than ourselves, is something we deeply desire.

Unity is explicitly a focus of three of the principles of true love

described in the previous chapters—Mind and Body Unity, Masculine and Feminine Harmony, and Investing towards Oneness. The other three principles—Maturation through Responsibility, Giving and Receiving, and Subject and Object Partnership—are describing conditions that promote unity. Unity is the quality of all things that are good, true and beautiful. Is it possible to imagine a pleasing painting that is discordant, an eloquent essay that lacks cohesion, an effective team that is disunited? Consider the stunning grace of an orchestra or drum and bugle corps or dance troupe performing in perfect unison and harmony, and the pride one feels to be part of such an achievement. Unity has all the benefits of synergy: Three sticks bundled together can be ten times stronger than one alone. Thus, it is a source of strength and protection, not to mention greater efficiency in getting things done. Disunity, on the other hand, spells weakness and defeat. “Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined,” warned Jesus, “and every city or household divided against itself will not stand” (Matthew 12.25).

Unity is morally neutral; both the softball team and the street gang can be united but to different ends. It is the vertical dimension of purpose that determines if unity is constructive or not, and whether it ultimately attracts the blessing and protection of the universe. “He whose ranks are united in purpose,” the Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu said, “will be victorious.” This victory is not only in war but also in love, because unity in purpose facilitates closeness and connection, both components of love. For this reason, Unity Around a Higher Purpose comprises a seventh principle for true love. This is another essential teaching of Reverend Moon.

If unity is desirable and conducive to love, how is it attained? What is the meaning of higher purpose? How does this principle combine with the others?

Shared purpose builds love

Aristotle recognized “sharing a common conception and pursuit of a good” as one of the two central features of a quality friend-

ship—or any relationship. True friends want to edify one another, help each other grow in heart and character and contribute to improving the world. Sharing a constructive common goal, friends want good things for each another and act for one another's benefit. This creates trust and security. He asserted that the emotional attachments and feelings of pleasure—what people sometimes take to be the defining feature of friendship—are instead a by-product of this more fundamental bond.¹ First comes the respect and trust, then comes the closeness and fun.

The same is true for marriage, according to marital counselor Blaine Fowers: “Happiness and love . . . are at least as much an outgrowth of the spouses' partnership as the origin of it.”² When participants in any relationship experience each other's dedication to what is meaningful to them, they cannot but admire one another.

It also helps to keep lesser problems and tensions in perspective. “I wanted as little to do with my supervisor as possible,” recalls a medical technician. “But when I saw how hard she worked to throw a Christmas party for the kids in the critical care ward, I just had to give up my grudge and help her.” In addition, giving oneself to a greater good feeds each person's self-respect, which supports his or her ability to love and invest in the relationship. Thus, unity centered upon a greater purpose is the best context for lasting love.

Interdependence of Dual Purposes

The greater purpose is one of two parallel purposes that everything in existence possesses. The other is for self-preservation. These complementary intentions can also be called whole purpose and individual purpose. Relative to mind and body, the former can be identified with the mind and the latter is favored by the body. For instance, in the case of a mother coming to the end of her workday, her mind reminds her to pick up her son after soccer practice and her body reminds her that she has not yet had dinner. Her mind then translates that into concern that her son has to eat too and she leaves early to pick up some sandwiches. Recalling the idea of

subject and object partners, the whole purpose is in the subject position to the individual purpose and these purposes are interdependent.

A perfect illustration of exquisite harmony between the parallel purposes is within the physical body. Comprised of countless cells and organs, it is engaged in infinitely complex systems: The lungs inhaling oxygen and exhaling carbon dioxide, the heart pumping blood into the arteries and receiving it from the veins, the nervous system gathering information from the brain and relaying it to the muscles and so on. Yet all parts work harmoniously for the common purpose of maintaining life. This is because lesser entities serve the greater ones. Cells give themselves to support organs that in turn support the greater systems.

Yet the service is not only one-way, of course. The body itself is just as committed to the health of the cells, organs and systems as these are to the whole organism. Consider how the body is fiercely protective of even the smallest part; a mere pinprick can earn the complete focus of the body's attention. This is true of any healthy organism or relationship; favoring the higher good over self-interest wins protection and support for the individual from the whole. This explains something of Jesus' cryptic words, "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it" (Luke 9.24). Serving the higher purpose is highly enlightened self-interest.

Cancer is a disease in which the tumor cells cease to honor the greater purpose of the body and act parasitic, feeding on the body for the sake of its own growth. Eventually the cancer saps the body of its vitality, and the body dies. This is analogous to what happens in a relationship when one side pursues personal gain while disregarding the good of the other or the relationship itself. Like a cancer, selfishness saps a relationship of its strength and cohesion. This sacrifice of the whole purpose for self-interest constitutes another definition of evil.³

Family and Social Unity

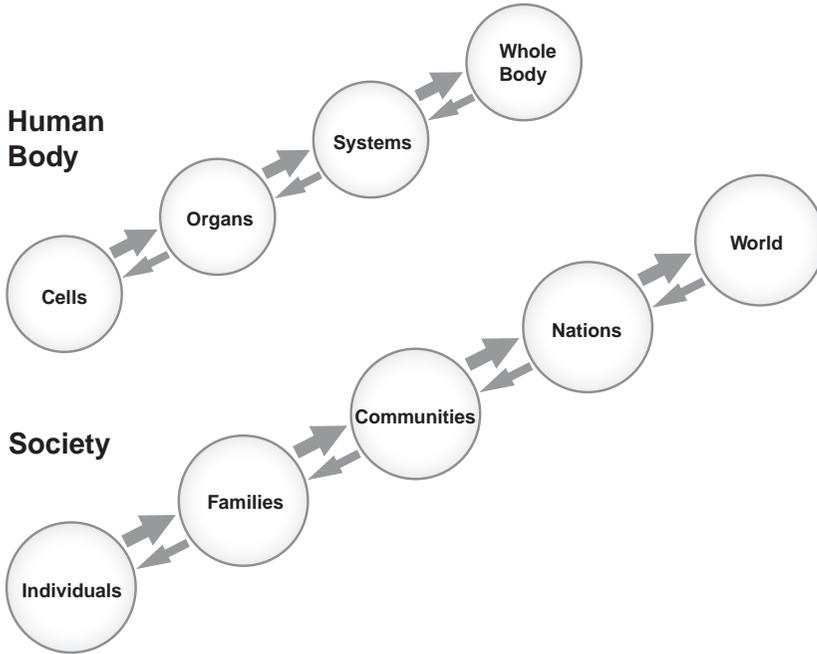
The synergy of whole and individual purposes is familiar to us in everyday family experience. Dinner will only get later and later if no one chips in to help Mom finish the salad and set the table; Kevin needs to take over the yard work so that Dad can work extra hours on Saturday to make the money needed to refinish the basement.

The same is true in the larger society. Workers labor for their company, and the company rewards workers in the form of higher wages, bonuses and stock options. Retailers who are honest and provide good service build customer loyalty that ensures the future of the businesses. Citizens give of themselves for the sake of their country's development, creating the capital that eventually results in a higher standard of living. Thus, the whole supports the welfare of the individual, and prosperous individuals are better able to contribute to the whole—a virtuous cycle in which both are winners.

In groups and organizations, a wise leader knows he must become the embodiment of the whole purpose if he is to sustain unity. If he exploits his position and betrays the purpose for personal gain, it would only cause resentment and breakdown. Instead, he willingly sacrifices more, takes on greater responsibilities and works harder than his subordinates do. “Every time I wanted to get mad at my coach because of the insane practice schedule,” recalls Barry of his high school basketball days, “I realized he was there longer than I was and he really cared about us winning the championship. He was doing it for me, the team, the school. What could I say?”

The public and personal purposes are interdependent and support one another, yet cultures tend to stress one or the other more. Traditional cultures emphasize responsibility and duty to the whole purpose. In contrast, contemporary Western society pays more attention to individual rights and personal purposes. Each type has valid insights and seeks to protect itself from the excesses of the other. Modern society offers lessons on equality and freedom that are correctives to abuses of the duty-bound systems of the past

while the traditional orientation helps prevent the chaos and excessive competition so prevalent in Western society. Combining the strengths of both in balance is the ideal.



The Interdependence of Whole Purpose and Self Purpose

Resistance to Serve Versus Need to Serve

It must be conceded it is not easy to live for the sake of the greater purpose. Though it makes perfect sense that family members should favor the family, employees put the company first, citizens defer to the needs of the community, communities give preference to national interest and countries put the whole of humanity ahead of themselves, it is obvious most of the time we are not rational beings governed by the impulses of the original heart. The harmony of purposes so evident in nature is too seldom seen within human life; in this sense people are self-destructive. Fears for oneself and one's own are strong. Self-seeking instincts are more

than a match for the conscience. Abuse of the individual by the collective only aggravates the fear. People need many reminders and incentives to maintain the right priorities.

Yet the impulse to give oneself to a greater good is strong too. The fear of giving too much and being used is counterbalanced by the fear of being useless. How wretched it is to perceive that one is not needed, not being used by beauty, goodness and truth to enrich the world. Being of service to others, being allied with an important end is a fundamental need. In general, a person's sense of value is derived not only from a sense of personal integrity and the affection of loved ones, but also from having "objective worth," a value that comes from benefiting the public good. As Eleanor Roosevelt once said of citizenship, "When you cease to make a contribution, you begin to die." Many people know this from experience, and combat sadness or stagnation by actively reaching out to help someone else. They know that as long as they seek happiness or personal growth in themselves, they will elude them; only when given over to service to a greater goal do these blessings find them. This is why the heart and conscience push each person to offer up one's time, energies and heart for a worthy purpose, to be like the wax of the candle given up to sustain the light and warmth of the flame.

On behalf of a humanity that has too often denied God's concerns and the welfare of the whole for its own petty interests—and to reverse these excesses—sometimes the heart and conscience call individuals to deny themselves to an extraordinary degree. Who could readily explain, for instance, the course to which Mohandas Gandhi gave himself? Such sacrifice confounds conventional thinking. Yet there is clearly a deep joy that rewards those who have died to their smaller selves to become part of a great endeavor.

Relationship as Higher Purpose

The most basic of shared projects is the relationship itself. Family members, teammates and business partners may often wisely make substantial sacrifices for the sake of their alliance,

what psychologist Terry Hargrave calls “we-ness.”⁴ The vitality of this “we-ness” depends on how much the participants can favor the interest of the relationship over their own interests, and seek to reach their personal goals and meet their individual needs through the relationship instead of around or in spite of it.⁵ Any good sports team knows this. “In order to have a winner, the team must have a feeling of unity,” says legendary University of Alabama Coach Paul “Bear” Bryant. “Every player must put the team first—ahead of personal glory.”⁶ Long wed couples know this too and make many sacrifices for the marriage. Lovemaking within a caring marriage is a metaphor for this idea: Each partner seeks to satisfy the other and ultimately comes to surrender to their union. Rather than losing anything in this surrender, each self gains deep joy and meaningful connection.⁷

In resilient families, researcher and counselor Ross Campbell finds that there is invariably some sort of overarching moral or spiritual purpose that binds them together.⁸ It is a paradox that centering on something higher than the family strengthens the bonds within the family itself. The family that belongs to benevolent organizations, hosts guests, helps out neighbors and volunteers for community causes finds that the rapport with one another is bolstered by the time and energy they give to others through altruism. Such families also build what Harvard University’s Robert D. Putnam calls “social capital”—the connections with and good will of neighbors which in turn enhances the family’s well-being and helps, supports, and gives strength when they are in need of it.

A patriotic purpose is what binds Daniel and Lai-Cheng’s family together, even though they are often hundreds of miles apart. Daniel is in the British Royal Air Force and is gone for about nine months out of the year. Though Lai-Cheng struggles like all military wives to care for their three young children on a limited budget and often alone, she shares her husband’s commitment to her country. She is proud of the example Daniel is setting for the children, to live for something beyond themselves. Besides, she says, if she is to have a

happy family, it is important that her husband have the kind of work he loves. When Daniel is home, he cares for the children and gives his wife a break from the daily routine. He also stays in regular contact while away. Lai-Cheng remarks, "I think it works because even though we are often apart and do different things, I know we are both willing to do whatever it takes to achieve what we want: a family that cares for each other and serves our country."

Such a view of family and interpersonal relationships runs counter to contemporary trends that favor connections based on mutual enjoyment and advantage. The family has become for many an island haven set apart from the wider world, a position that impoverishes both home and community and places impossible demands on the nuclear family to meet all their members' needs. The Western notion of romantic love is likewise too thin a basis for lasting love and care for children. The excessive focus on questions of "Am I happy? Is this meeting my needs?" strains the bond and places the cart before the horse. When the relationship itself and ideally more public purposes are honored first, this nourishes and fortifies the participants' attachment to one another.

Generating Connection

Often individuals and groups that disagree in many other ways cooperate regarding a common concern. This alliance-making is familiar territory to diplomats, politicians, managers and parents. The best shared purposes are constructive and noble, though self-interest figures in as well. "The house fire on our block brought everybody out, because of concern for the unfortunate family and probably mixed with a little fear that our own homes might burn," remembers one resident of a suburban neighborhood. "It was the first time we all met and talked. From that point on, we made a block association and that led to a crime watch and babysitting coop. People in general look out for each other a lot more."

This is why, when seeking how to generate greater connection and affection among persons—whether they are complete strangers

or those who have known each other for many years, whether they are estranged groups or old allies—finding a shared purpose to invest in is a time-honored strategy. Fowers tells of being baffled by one couple that came to him so at odds that they could not even speak to each other directly. After a few months, despite scant improvement in the communication skills that the counselor prescribed, they demonstrated a dramatic improvement and recommitment to one another. It turned out that they had found a new and higher focus for their marriage, a joint commitment to promoting indigenous people's art that deeply inspired them. Finding new purpose revitalized their love.⁹

Reverend Moon recommends that families strengthen themselves by making a verbal commitment to the greater purpose of serving one's clan, community, country and Creator on a regular basis. For some families, this can be an affirmation derived from their faith tradition. For others, as Stephen Covey suggests, this can be generated through discussion among the family itself.¹⁰ This statement of the family purpose can be prominently displayed—on the wall, on the refrigerator, or even on tee shirts—as a reference to keep the family on course. Some families make a weekly ritual of reading their family purpose and renewing their pledge to fulfill it.

Depth of purpose is depth of bond

An altruistic purpose has the power to fortify and even transform a relationship because it calls participants to a greater vision of themselves and inspires the level of sacrifice that creates bonds. The higher and more meaningful the shared purpose, the deeper the bonds created. Drinking partners can't expect much resilience in their relationship. Conversely, war buddies who once protected each other from death on the battlefield while fighting for their country share a connection that can last forever. "I belong to them and they to me; we all share the same fear and the same life, we are nearer than lovers, in a simpler, harder way"—these are the senti-

ments of a soldier for his comrades.¹¹ From love of country to love of the environment, public-spirited concern is a powerful bonding force that inspires all manner of close and rewarding relationships among like-minded people.

There is a reason why the more unselfish the common purpose, the more enduring the connection. Noble alliances are better able to marshal the protection and sustenance of the universe, and God Himself. The world's scriptures speak of divine visitation where people come together focused on worthy ends. "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18.19-20). Jewish and Islamic texts agree that when believers gather to honor God and study His word, He comes down among them.¹²

Oneness Reflects the Creator

Unity attracts God because, as with any good, it enhances one's resemblance to God. He is perfectly One and united within, a Oneness centered upon the purpose of true love. In addition, as the Origin and Parent, God and His love is the unifying point for all creatures and things, just as the parent's love can bind siblings together in a family. Scriptures exhort the faithful to stand one with another, like members of one body. St. Paul likened believers to members of one body: "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it" (1 Corinthians 12.25-27). The Qur'an urges believers to "Hold fast, all together, to God's rope, and be not divided among yourselves" (3.103-5).¹³ Elsewhere St. Paul expresses a sentiment that no doubt echoes that of the Heavenly Father: "Make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose" (Philippians 2.2).

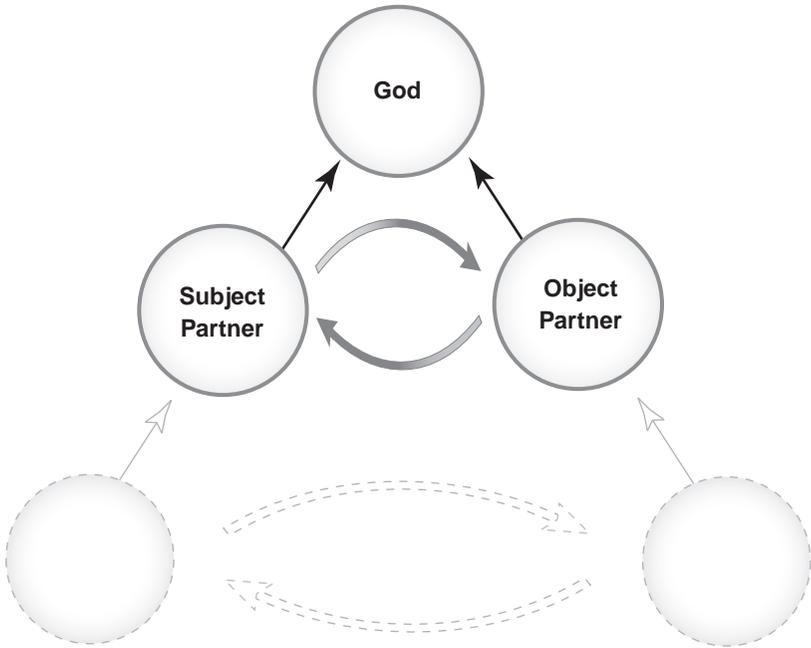
God sees us as a parent does his offspring; only brothers and sisters one in heart can fully reflect the parents' image and allows parents to stand in their rightful place. United children properly reflect the spirit in which the children were conceived and nurtured, as equally loved and equally born out of the unity of the

parents. Harmony among the children is more comforting to the parents than their disunited devotion to them. This is why Jesus taught us to hold off worship until one has resolved any breach with another: “First go and be reconciled to your brother, then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5.22-26).

Reverend Moon has said that God desires human unity so much that heaven is meaningless unless all His children are there. Indeed, how could a parent enjoy a family gathering, knowing that even one of the children is suffering? The very presence of hell makes heaven incomplete. As the shepherd leaves his flock to track down the missing sheep in the famous parable, so those who know God’s heart cannot but leave His peaceful presence to struggle with bringing back His estranged sons and daughters, “that they may be one as we are one,” in Jesus’ prayer (John 17.22). This is the beauty of the Buddhist bodhisattvas and the Christ, and Abraham’s pleading on behalf of Sodom. God loves anyone who works for reconciliation and harmony; “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Matthew 5.9). Only upon this fraternal unity can God ultimately stand as a proud Parent and the center of His world.

Unity with God

At the same time, relating to the Creator is a naturally binding common purpose. This is illustrated by imagining the triangle in which the horizontal interaction comprises the base side, and each person’s vertical connection to God comprises the right and left sides of the triangle, with God represented by the apex (see the following diagram). As the two individuals get closer to God—effectively shortening their respective lines on the triangle—then they simultaneously get closer to one another.



Closeness to God Brings Closeness to Each Other

“Let your aims be common, and your hearts of one accord,” urges a verse from the Hindu Vedas, “and all of you be of one mind, so you may live well together” (Rig Veda 10.191.2-4).¹⁴ This is why pastor Rob Ruhnke recommends two simple prescriptions for family strength: Prayer together and family meals.¹⁵ One reinforces the vertical bond while the other fortifies the horizontal. It is also why author C. S. Lewis points out that when a man loves God more than he does his wife, he does her no disservice. “By loving Him more than them, we shall love them more than we now do.”¹⁶ At the same time, distancing from or even severing that connection to the apex of the triangle alienates the two people accordingly. “What ever disunites man from God,” wrote British statesman, Edmund Burke, “also disunites man from man.”

The hope of the ideal world where the Creator alone reigns—whether it is called Heaven, Paradise, the Kingdom of God or any other name—has sustained people of faith throughout the ages. Such an ideal is predicated on this: Through the vertical union of each individual in heart with God, practical horizontal harmony is possible. God becomes the “brain” of society, binding all the individual “cells” of the social body together in ready oneness and flowing efficiency through the “nervous system” of spiritual connection and empathy. Heart and conscience reduce the need for coercive laws and meddling governments. All persons share the experience of a common and profound reference point, Someone of great love and wisdom. Tensions over rights and values are reduced, replaced by the adjustments and negotiations that characterize relations among siblings who know they are cherished and safe. Conversely, the deep disconnection and strife that typifies the world at present—what might be called hell on earth—is due to the loss of that common, personal link to our Parent. The work of religion has been to restore the vertical and hence horizontal connections.

Structure of the Principles of Loving Relationships in Action

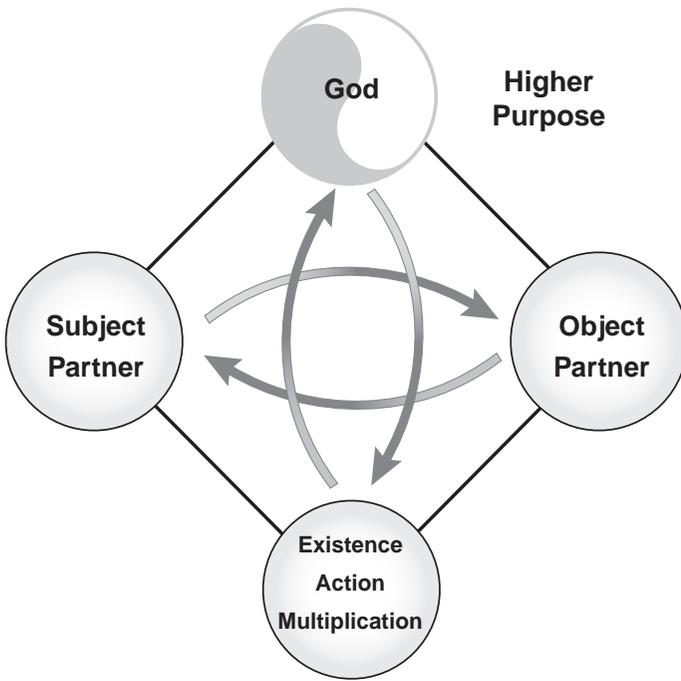
Looking more deeply into the dynamics underlying Unity Around a Higher Purpose yields greater insight into the other principles of true love relationships. When any beings in Subject and Object Partnership roles find a greater purpose to share and come into a harmonious Giving and Receiving relationship, they create something new that reflects their common purpose. This creation could be anything from a meal or a dance to a family or a business, but it makes tangible their intangible purpose. In the case of Mind and Body Unity, it yields a person of integrity. In the case of a husband and wife making Masculine and Feminine Harmony, it produces a strong marriage. Further, this creation is a manifestation of the quality of unity between the participants, that is, the depth and breadth of the purpose that is at the center of the rela-

tionship. Ultimately the Creator represents the highest and original purpose. Those who center their relationship upon God invite Him to manifest Himself and His beauty, truth and goodness in the partnership and its fruits.

Examples are endless, since this is the dynamic behind *all* productive relationships, even in the inanimate world. Protons and electrons have opposite charges that attract each other. They interact as subject and object partners, driven by atomic law that contains a higher purpose, and create a new existence, a hydrogen atom. A professor as the subject partner engages in give and take with her students as object partners, based on the curriculum as their shared purpose, resulting in an enriching learning experience for all. A band comes together to express their common vision of music, and the members interact with one another in lead and backup roles. Their degree of unity is directly reflected in their music. A coffee shop manager in the leader position hires counter help in the supportive role. The manager treats the workers well and the counter servers are diligent and loyal, resulting in a productive business that realizes the shared goal of profits and service to the community. A pastor prays with his youth ministry staff as his helpers and together they craft a marriage preparation ministry that leads many young people through purity into matrimony and a deeper commitment to God.

Implicit in this observation is that whenever any relationship is unfruitful—or destructive, as is possible in the case of human relations—certainly there is a problem with the nature of the purpose or the interaction or both. “My high school football team was undefeated in our state,” one young man recalls. “But sorry to say, the victories went to our heads. We lost our focus on doing our best and got complacent. At the same time, a lot of us starting worrying about showing off for the college scouts and we forgot about the team. When we got to the regionals, we blew every game.” In other words, the team lost its vertical purpose and the horizontal interactions also deteriorated.

This paradigm of relationships, Reverend Moon's discovery, can be seen as a model of interaction among four different positions. First there is the common purpose or God; this is the only metaphysical element occupying a position. The subject partner and object partner occupy the second and third positions, respectively. In the fourth position is their union representing a new development. This model is termed the four-position foundation. It describes the dynamic underlying the very existence of people and things as well as their ability to act and to multiply themselves.



**The Four-Position Foundation Model for Existence,
Action and Multiplication**

The family is the perfect illustration of existence, action and reproduction within the four-position foundation model. With the intention to honor God and true love—representing higher purposes—and to care for and serve each other, the husband and wife interact and maintain the *existence* of their marriage through time. In this case, their ongoing marriage is the fruit of their interaction and the manifestation of their common purpose. It is also the basis for the couple to *act* as a constructive force in their larger family and community. When they create a child, this represents the *multiplication* of their love and that of the divine Parent through the same basic dynamics. This is the dynamic underpinning a family of true love.

Yet the four-position foundation model can also illustrate the dynamics sustaining an individual person. When the mind and body have a proper relationship with the focus on what is true and good, the result is a strong, virtuous and loving individual.

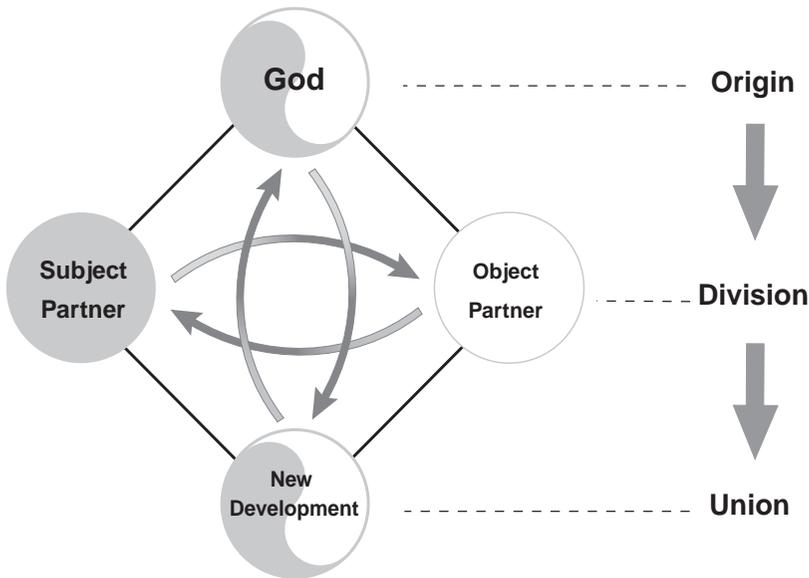
Purpose Manifested through Time

The unseen purpose at the center of a relationship can be counted on to manifest through time. This process proceeds in three stages. First there is the invisible shared purpose, God-given in most cases and sometimes chosen. The second stage is comprised of the interacting partners, the elements of which are implied by the common objective. Third, there is the resultant fruit of that interaction that manifests the first purpose.

A researcher, for instance, is caught by an idea for a medical cure, in the first stage. She assembles the various elements needed—colleagues, information, material, equipment, funding—and brings them into interaction during the second stage. Finally, in the third stage, after much time and effort she discovers the right process to realize her original intention.

A deeper understanding of this process emerges from contemplating God's creation and how the invisible Creator comes to manifest Himself into the created world. God represents the first

stage, His purposeful Heart and Word being the source of the universe (origin). The second stage represents the unified origin manifested in diverse variety in His created things and human beings, each a partial and incomplete reflection of the Creator (division). Through the principled interplay among His children and things, His unified nature of truth, righteousness and justice are revealed (union) in the third stage.



Manifestation of Purpose through the Process of Origin-Division-Union

The stages can thus be seen as first, the insubstantial unified cause (origin) that second, becomes substantial yet divided elements that give and receive elements with one another (division). Third, these produce the harmonious outcome (union) that manifests the origin. This illuminates something of the mystery of how, as the Bible says, in God “we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17.28).

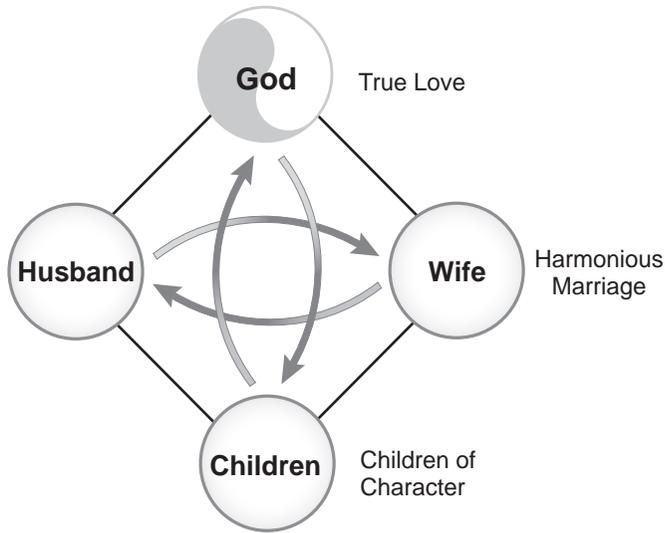
Two examples can help to illustrate this. The first one was discussed in conjunction with the principle of Investing Towards Oneness (See Chapter 12). God is the source of both male and female

in perfect harmony (origin). In the world, a person is either male or female (division). A man and woman marry and make oneness in love (union). From a less metaphysical perspective we can see these three stages in the relationship of the individual with her parents. The young child is born from her parents and identifies with them as her whole world (origin). As she grows, she asserts her individuality and finds her separate identity (division). Later in life, the young woman learns to better appreciate her parents' efforts on her behalf; she becomes filial and close to them in a more mature way (union).

Insight into Family Love

Let's examine the family four-position foundation paradigm more closely in terms of other lessons to be learned. A strong, loving family is a harmonious and integrated unit with God or other worthy purpose at its center. On the horizontal axis is the give and take between the couple. Naturally they want to enjoy congenial relations with each other so they invest vertically in their marriage, guided by their shared vision of principled love and augmented by their prayer and acts of faith and service to the greater good. Honoring and appreciating their complementarity and practicing good interaction—giving first and continually, giving truthfully and receiving well—further strengthens their partnership. Such healthy interaction generates its own force of commitment and affection that enlivens the marriage and family.

Ultimately, the spouses' exchanges come to manifest their shared purpose, creating a whole that is greater than both of them together, and fulfilling the vertical axis. This outcome includes the sustenance of their marriage over time, and their fruits of caring contributions and service to kin and community. The most substantial manifestation of their partnership is the children. As they grow and mature, they come to reflect their parents' love and values, thus embodying the legacy and vertically passing it on to future generations.



The God-Centered Family

The Divine Presence

Let us reconsider God's presence in the dynamics of the family four-position foundation. When the husband and wife are themselves individuals of integrity and faith—whose minds and bodies are united—then God is drawn to reside within each of them and use them as His instruments. Moreover, since the man and woman represent the masculine and feminine complementarity within the divine Heart, their loving interplay and unity then reveals His likeness in a yet more beautiful and powerful way in the world. Through their physical union, God is permitted to create a new eternal being, a child in His likeness. Further, through each position, a unique facet of divine love is revealed—that of parent's love, spouse's love, child's love and sibling's love. The divine Presence thus permeates the synergy of care and concern that animates such a family and in it one may witness the fullest mirror of God possible on earth.

Reverend Moon describes it this way:

God's definition of goodness is total giving, total service, and absolute unselfishness. We are to live for others. You live for others and others live for you. God lives for man and man lives for God. The husband lives for his wife and the wife lives for her husband. This is goodness. And here unity, harmony, and prosperity abound.¹⁷

Indeed, this further elaborates the basis for the promise of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. It is simply the world where each family and by extension all human relationships abide by the principles by which all natural things already interact—within the four-position foundation paradigm centered upon God and His ways, or in other words, true love. The next section explores how this principle illuminates the dynamics of family life.

Part IV

The Family as the School of Love

Chapter 14

Love in the Family

The ideal family alone can serve as the building block of the Kingdom of God.

—Sun Myung Moon

The family is the primary means through which most people learn about love. Martin Luther said, as does Reverend Moon, that the family is the “school of love.” Cultivating true love over a lifetime involves establishing loving relationships and family. The family packs a double punch in a life of love. A person’s family of origin cultivates him or her in love as a child and sibling, leading to his or her own personal development and maturity. He or she then goes on to cultivate love in a new family with a spouse and children. All of these experiences educate a person in true love.

Many religious and moral traditions equate honorable and loving relationships in the family with a template for a person’s right relationship with God. In the Talmud, for instance, it is written, “When a man honors his father and mother, God says, ‘I regard it as though I had dwelt among them and they had honored me’” (Kiddushin, 30b).¹ Jesus encouraged his followers to think of God as a loving father and to relate to Him thus. Confucius said, “Surely proper behavior toward parents and elder brothers is the trunk of goodness,” (Analects 1.2)² and “Filial piety is the root of all virtue” (Classic of Filial Piety).³ These sentiments are echoed in Hinduism, Buddhism, Shinto, Islam and traditional Native American and African faiths.⁴

Family life may be seen as a vocation for growing closer to God and allowing Him/Her to manifest and dwell in true love. As a Buddhist master said, the family is as demanding as any monastery. Conceived of so, the family may be seen as a vehicle of holiness and an instrument of salvation.

Spiritual communities affirm the importance of the family structure in the protection and nurturance of their members' spirituality by conferring family titles. People accepted into a community of faith become "brothers and sisters" or "brethren." In the Catholic Church, the faithful are led by priests who are called "Father," and the title of the head of the Catholic Church is the "Holy Father." Communities are guided by nuns who are referred to as "Sister" and sometimes "Mother."

The importance of the family in raising good human beings is corroborated by the findings of social scientists. The family enhances human development in numerous positive ways, not the least of which is in moral development. More and more social scientists and policymakers uphold the family as being crucial not only to the physical well-being of children, but also to their mental, emotional, and moral well-being. Because of this, the family is the backbone of a viable social order (see Chapter 22).

In modern times, the notion of what a family is has come into question. Yet even when people reject, are denied, or bypass the traditional configuration of father, mother and their biological children, they tend to follow its patterns anyway, showing the fundamental need they feel for its structure. Couples live together and raise children, even if the children are from previous relationships. Same-sex couples assume masculine and feminine roles and demand legal recognition of their unions; many seek to adopt children. People form surrogate and substitute families. A young man at the second "Woodstock" concert said that he didn't feel as though he were among strangers because "the family" was there. Young people often join gangs because they get familial feelings of solidarity, strength and protection from their "home boys." Cody Scott,

the convicted criminal leader of the notorious gang, L.A. Crips, said in an interview that he had turned to the streets because he never had a proper family.⁵ Homeless children often band together on the streets in little “families.”

None of these substitutes, however, provide the same benefits as the basic family of father, mother, and their biological children. Anthropologist Margaret Mead affirmed the centrality of the traditional family in human affairs. She said:

As far back as our knowledge takes us, human beings have lived in families. We know of no period where this was not so. We know of no people who have succeeded for long in dissolving the family or displacing it Again and again, in spite of proposals for change and actual experiments, human societies have reaffirmed their dependence on the family as the basic unit of human living—the family of father, mother and children.⁶

The Four Realms of Heart in the Family

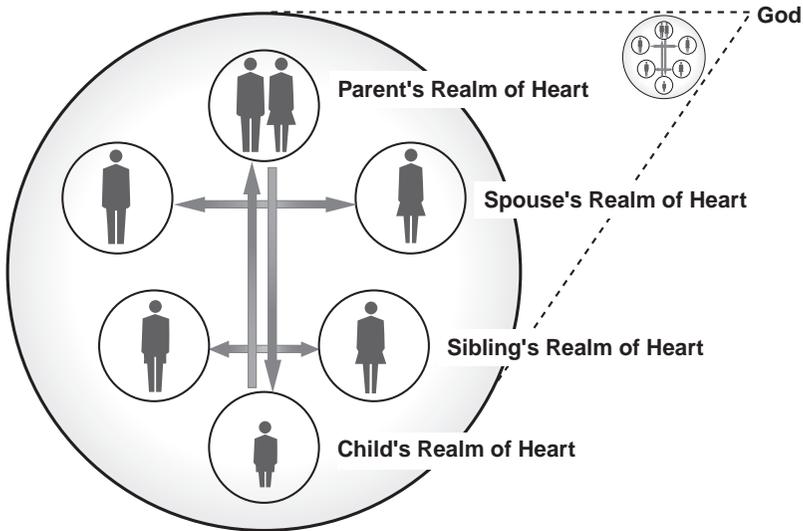
From all of the above, we can conclude that there is something important for human development in the very structure of the family. One of Reverend Moon’s unique contributions is to elucidate the idea that family roles create certain “realms of heart” that school people in love. People learn about love through being sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, mothers and fathers. As educator Gabriel Moran put it, “The family teaches by its form.”⁷

Aspects of God’s love are reflected in each of the realms of heart, as Reverend Moon has taught:

God is the Parent of all parents to man. He has the absolute love that surpasses the love of even model parents. With that love He can embrace all the parents of the world. In fact, God created man from His parental love. Without that love we die.

God is always ready to give the type of love that is best suited to and most wanted by the person seeking a relationship with Him. If we wanted parental love from God, He would be prepared with it; if we wanted brotherly love or conjugal love, or the love of a friend from Him, He is ready with these Isn't it wonderful that the God of love is protecting us in every possible relationship?⁸

As people fulfill each realm of heart—the child's realm, the sibling's realm, the conjugal realm, and the parent's realm—they grow in resemblance to God's many-faceted love. Each type of love in the family forms a world of experiences and responsibilities that is a matrix for the growth of heart.



Complementary Partners in the Four Realms of Heart

Lessons in Loving Others

Each realm of heart involves relating to significant others—partners in love. The family works to school people in other-centered love by providing these crucial relationships. In the child's realm of heart, the parents are the most significant others. In the sibling's realm of heart, siblings and peers are increasingly significant. In the spouse's realm of heart, it is someone of the opposite sex to whom one is emotionally and physically committed for the rest of one's life. In the parent's realm of heart, children become the significant others.

True love begins with the infant responding to a parent in the child's realm of love. The infant is not alone in the universe—there are these others, with whom he or she feels impelled to bond by all the forces within. Widely recognized by theorists, attachment to a parent is the building block of empathic relating to others for the rest of life. In this essential love relationship, a lifelong perspective on others is forged through the quality of the interactions between parent and child.

The sibling's realm of heart offers new territory wherein the growing child must accommodate others. He or she now shares the parents' universe with siblings. He must not hurt them, she must wait her turn, and he must share. In turn, siblings furnish the joys of companionship, expanding the child's love into new dimensions. With playmates and schoolmates, issues of fair play, justice, and honesty come to the fore as she learns that there are yet others who require respect and accommodation. Through the sibling's realm of heart a child begins to relate to the world of peers, and his repertoire of relationship skills expands dramatically, as does his heart.

Maturity brings the world of the opposite sex into sharp focus. Young newlyweds often have the feeling they are the only two people in the world. This is the vividness of the world or realm they occupy together—an exclusive, intensely exciting, deeply affecting circle of relationship in which each will learn to love someone

who is truly “other”—different in emotional and mental make-up and in physical accoutrements.

Becoming a parent means entering a realm of relationship with a child that opens up whole new spheres of loving and caring. The parent's realm of love is perhaps the most transformative one of all, resembling most closely the heart and love of God. The parent has as his or her partner in the realm a particularly helpless and dependent “other” who needs and demands more than anyone else has demanded in a lifetime. The attendant growth, reward, and blessings are enormous—as are the anxieties and emotional taxes. Here the heart's growth in other-centered love takes place in earnest. An extension of the parent's realm of heart is grandparental love, which has its special gifts to bestow and receive.

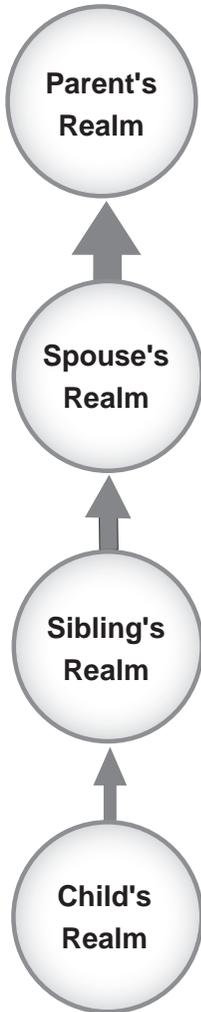
To understand the family's inner workings through the four realms of heart is to grow in appreciation of this brilliantly designed vehicle of emotional, moral, and spiritual growth. The family's impact does not stop within its own relationships either. The family's lessons are profound and far-reaching, extrapolating into a person's orientation toward the rest of the world.

Ethicist James Q. Wilson said, “The family is a continuing locus of reciprocal obligations that constitute an unending school for moral instruction We learn to cope with the people of this world because we learn to cope with the members of our family.”⁹

Seasons of Life Reflected in the Four Realms of Heart

The four realms build one upon another as other-centered love grows throughout life. Partners are added to a person's constellation of “others,” yet the partners of the earlier realms are not lost. Each realm includes the ones before it, and success in earlier realms lays a foundation for success in later ones. Yet passing into the next realm of heart does not mean previous ones are static. It simply means that each realm has its “season” wherein there is a certain relational focus. The realms impact each other in a dynamic way. Significant developments in one realm can deepen and refresh the

other realms. Thus, after marriage, a woman may find herself with a broader perspective on life that helps her to empathize with both her mother and her married siblings in new ways. Experience in the spouse's realm has enriched her participation in the child's and sibling's realms.



Each Realm of Heart Builds Upon the Previous Realm(s)

The realms of heart can be seen as representing relational—and moral—milestones in the human life span. The person grows in heart through assuming and fulfilling the responsibility inherent in the realm. When the individual commits to a given role (consciously or unconsciously) he or she can be said to be taking up the moral challenges of the realm and working to rise to the level of love it requires.

Perhaps this is why so many cultures and traditions honor life's passages with special ceremonies. Traditional societies had rites of initiation into manhood and womanhood to help young people solidify their identity. For boys, this usually involved severe tests of courage and resourcefulness that, when passed successfully, would result in public recognition of their adult status. For instance, hunting down a large beast on one's own is the test among the native people of North America and certain tribes of Africa, a rite imitated by many Euro-American fathers who take their sons out for their first deer hunt. In religion,

rituals like the bar mitzvah served this purpose. Girls likewise might be secluded from male society for a period of time and taught the insights and skills needed to be a virtuous and effective wife, mother and member of the community. For Native American girls, the ritual lasts for several days—from sunrise to sunset the girls dance nonstop to bring spiritual protection to the whole community—while in parts of Africa, girls are kept apart for several months or even years.

Family experts emphasize the importance of rituals to mark special passages with ceremony. Some of the anomie felt by young people in developed societies is because such rituals have been done away with as the pace of life quickens and traditions founder. They do not know who they are—or, more accurately, *where* they are—on life's spectrum. Nor do they know what is expected of them. The absence of universal initiation rites has led many groups of boys in particular to fashion their own tests of courage and proofs of manhood, sometimes with destructive results. Loss of virginity and binge drinking are familiar instances of this. Hazing and initiations into “fraternal” organizations are extreme examples of the need for wholesome rites of passage accompanied by moral expectations.

A major contribution faith communities can make to society is to share the richness of their ceremonies and rites of passage, as well as the meaning and expectations behind them. The bar mitzvah in the Jewish faith and Confirmation in the Catholic faith help mark the transition from the child's into the sibling's realm of love: impressing upon the child his or her growing responsibility to the brethren of faith as a fledgling adult in the community. The ceremony of marriage marks the transition into the spouse's realm with all its new joys and obligations. Baptisms, ceremonies offering the newborn to God, and thanking God for the gift of the child—congratulatory gifts, cards, and other birth celebrations—help usher adults into the parental realm of love and inaugurate the child's realm for the newborn.

The four realms of heart model is helpful in this because it

helps define and recognize transitional points to celebrate. It is based on family roles recognized the world over, and therefore may foster appreciation of the unity underlying diverse cultures.

Vertical and Horizontal Relationships

Reverend Moon emphasizes recognition of the vertical and horizontal in relationships (see Chapter 11). There is a vertical order in relationships between elder and younger, for instance, calling for special respect. In the family, vertical order refers to relations between generations: between children and their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents. Researcher Willard Hartup calls these kinds of relationships “asymmetrical or vertically structured” and recognizes their need for special approaches.¹⁰

Horizontal order refers to relations between people of the same generation: brothers and sisters, cousins, husband and wife. Hartup calls these relationships “symmetrical or horizontally structured.”¹¹ Horizontal order among peers creates a great deal of fellow feeling and camaraderie. There is also an individual order by which individuals govern themselves, which is significant in how they relate to others. The harmonious ordering of all these relationships affects the functioning of the realms of heart.

Vertical and horizontal relationships impact upon one another. The vertical love between mother and child, for instance, stabilizes, nurtures, and harmonizes the developing horizontal relations between the child and his or her siblings and peers. Thus, the intactness of the child’s realm of love affects the intactness of the sibling’s or peer’s realm of love. For example, on a Saturday afternoon, Erica’s 8-year-old son, Tim, and a friend were playing with Lego blocks. Although Tim usually got along well with this friend, it seemed they had spent the whole afternoon quarreling. When a dispute over a coveted Lego piece arose with his friend, Tim did something uncharacteristic. He tore apart his friend’s construction and threw the pieces all over the floor.

Erica realized that her child was running on emotional empty

due to the busy week's toll on his relationship with her. With a mother's instinct, she took him aside and spent some time alone with him, holding him on her lap, speaking to him gently, asking him questions, and getting him involved in funny little finger plays. After a short while, Tim was calm and happy again. He went back to his friend, apologized for the Lego mishap, and offered to help his friend rebuild the destroyed construction. Tim had needed the vertical connection with his mother in order to relate smoothly with a peer on the horizontal plane.

Often, a family's problems involving children can be remedied by improving and solidifying the marriage. If the vertical center is intact, the horizontal order tends to be rectified. Psychologist John Rosemond testifies that when he and his wife shifted the center of their family life from the children to their marriage, getting the vertical order right, their children were more obedient, more respectful, more compliant, and—importantly—happier. He likened a healthy family to the solar system: “The marriage was the nucleus of the family, the children were satellites that revolved around the nucleus like planets to a sun.”¹²

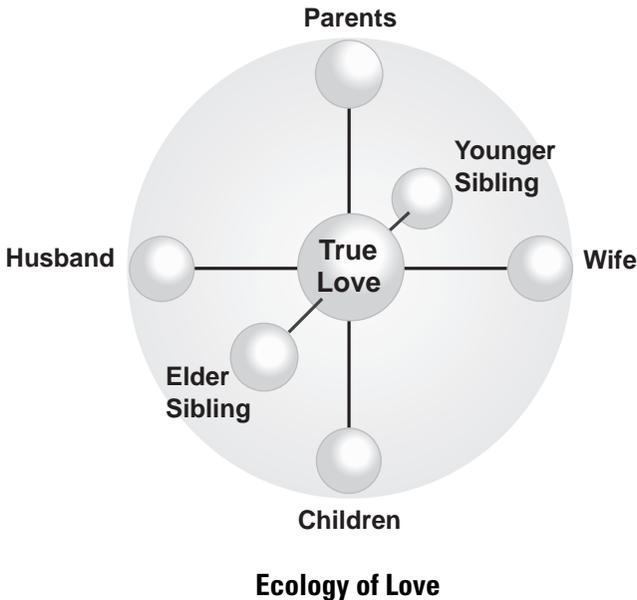
A Healthy Ecology of Love

The vertical and horizontal relationships taken together create a greater ecological system that encompasses all four realms. They surround the individual with the support and stimulation he or she needs to internally grow. When this ecology has an imbalance—when one or more relational direction is empty—individuals are left vulnerable and often try to fill the need in a substitute way. This is why the only child latches onto her cousin as her “older sister,” the widower joins a dance club, the infertile couple adopts a son, and the “empty nest” seniors find themselves welcoming children into their home and acting as substitute grandparents.

Which realms comprise this ecosystem depend upon the age of the individual and his or her stage of life. For example, 14-year-old Elena is in the child's and sibling's realms. When she has a good

number of complementary partners for these realms—parents, grandparents, and other elders on the one hand, and brother, sisters and perhaps cousins on the other—she enjoys a wealth of possibilities in terms of giving and receiving love and developing her character. These are growth-enhancing relationships for Elena's stage in life.

Jon, 27, is likely to have different relational needs than Elena. He may be more fulfilled and challenged to grow by being fully involved in the spouse's and parent's realms. He would thrive by having a good mate and a child or children as reciprocal partners. This would be in addition to the parents and siblings with whom he continues to have a relationship. Thus Jon's ecology of love includes all four realms, and the absence of any of them may be felt as emptiness in his life.



Dysfunction and Solution

In an ideal world, people would progress naturally from realm to realm, nurtured by their partners in the realm and nurturing them back in turn. The necessary level of heart and love would be

achieved in one realm before moving on to the next. Real life, of course, is far from ideal. Forces within and without one sometimes seem to conspire to keep people from attaining the growth of heart they need in each realm. A father struggling financially turns to alcohol just as his daughter is entering adolescence and needing his reassurance and support more than ever before. A wife cannot stretch her love resources to cover her husband as well as her newborn twins, causing breakdown in the marital relationship just when she needs her partner the most. An older sibling makes cutting remarks that stay with the younger sibling for years afterward, affecting the child's self-image. A child acts out at the wrong moment, causing the parents to come down upon him with force, humiliating him and filling them with guilt all at the same time. People are imperfect in their ability to love, yet the march of the realms of heart goes inexorably on.

The imperative of physical maturation brings many individuals into the sibling and especially the conjugal and parental realms while the inner maturity and abilities in other-centered love are still too underdeveloped to cope with the demands of the realms. This causes many difficulties. Divorce, domestic and child abuse may result. More subtle problems emerge as well—the mother who prefers to be her daughter's best friend or to live vicariously through her, or the husband who treats his wife like a kid sister instead of like a spouse. Lack of development in the earlier realms may cause the adult daughter to yearn to be her aging dad's little girl rather than a caregiver. Even if they responsibly do all the "right" things in the adult realms, people may find themselves lacking in the heart's resources of genuine concern and compassion, lacking in the ability to be refreshed by the giving of true love. They find themselves depleted, and their relationships become increasingly neurotic.

The pattern of relationally immature people raising relationally immature people has multiplied since the disastrous interruption of the love relationships in the Garden of Eden. Reverend Moon has said, "The Fall was initiated when one person claimed self-centered

love. That person denied the value of all other relationships in his desire to make himself the center of the universe. He sought to bring benefit only to himself, and when his desire entered the realm of love, the disease was begun.”¹³

Cut off from God and from one another, the first parents started perpetuating negative patterns out of their own brokenness and immaturity. These patterns persist and proliferate to this day. People trapped in lack of fulfillment in the earlier realms of heart must nevertheless perform in the later realms of heart, and they do so predictably badly. Psychotherapist Arthur Janov writes, “The major reason I have found that children become neurotic is that their parents are busy struggling with unmet infantile needs of their own . . . In this way the sins of the parents are visited on the children in a seemingly never ending cycle.”¹⁴

The family needs great infusions of God’s love in order to repair the brokenness and restore health. The social extrapolation and logical result of families of true love would be a world of peace and harmony—a kingdom of heaven on earth. The history of religion has been the history of God and humankind desperately seeking to repair and restore the original love relationships so that individuals and the families and societies they form, can be healed and made whole. Therefore, it is helpful to understand how the four realms of heart in the family work.

Chapter 15

Growing in Love as a Child

*The most basic and central truth of the universe is that
God is the Father and we are His children.*

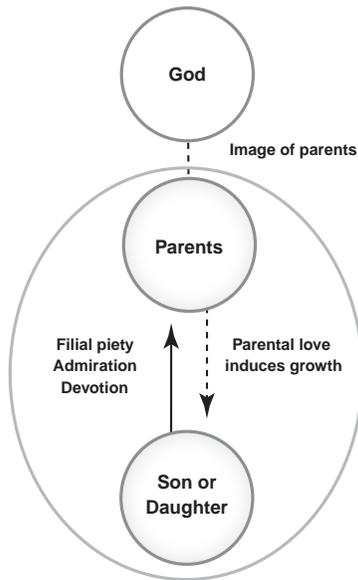
—Sun Myung Moon

Learning to love as a son or daughter involves the development of heart that begins as a very young child and matures throughout the lifetime. The adoring toddler who clings trustingly to his or her parents' hand is decades apart from the weeping adult who puts his or her parents to rest in their graves and vows not to let their wishes go unfulfilled. Yet the essence of the heart is the same: a heart of attachment, veneration, appreciation and love toward the parents that has only deepened and become more conscious and responsible over time. Growth in love as a child determines the person's relationship not only toward his or her own parents but toward society in general, and ultimately toward God.

In the East, a child's devotion toward his or her parents is called "filial piety" and is considered the root of all goodness and morality. Confucius taught that responsiveness to one's parents is the root or fountainhead of *jen*, a synonym for empathy. Mencius taught that if a person loved his parents, he would be kind to people in general and caring toward everything in the world (7A45).

Jesus demonstrated the importance of a child's heart when he told his disciples not to send children away from him. "Such are

the kingdom of heaven made of," he said. Saint Paul said that a Christian's right relationship to God was to cry out trustingly like a child, "Abba!" which means "Papa" or "Daddy." The child's realm of heart is foundational to a life of true love. Success in this realm puts a person in a position to receive and respond to the love of parents and the love of the ultimate Parent. On that firm foundation, a person is well-placed to learn to love others as oneself.



The Child's Realm of Heart

The Formation of a Loving Child

Years before it became acceptable to say so, religious leaders like Reverend Moon were pointing to family breakdown as the main culprit in society's ills. Such assertions are now widely accepted among social scientists. Developmental psychologists widely agree that early loving relationships with caregivers (usually a parent or parents) promote the development of empathy with others and impact a person's relationship to the world at large over a lifetime.

The lack of such loving relationships leaves a person bereft of a proper heart of compassion toward others, leaving the growing young person crippled morally and prone toward all sorts of risky and destructive behaviors.

The natural facial interplay between a loving mother and her child is the beginning of being able to “read” other people’s facial expressions and glean what they are feeling—it is training in empathy.¹ The ability to empathize—to recognize and feel another person’s pain, suffering or joy as one’s own—is the basis of the capacity to give love, take responsibility, and have fulfilling relationships with others.

Early loving relationships also successfully resolve what Erik Erikson called the first “crisis” of life—attaining trust over mistrust. When the baby cries, someone comes. When the baby is hungry, someone brings food. When the baby needs warmth and dryness, warmth and dryness are provided. When the baby needs holding, someone’s tender arms are there; someone’s soft voice reassures when the child is lonely or frightened. Thus, the world is perceived as a benevolent, helpful place, setting the stage for the child to grow up to be a benevolent, helpful actor upon the world.

Impressions of the larger universe and of God are imprinted firmly upon the young psyche by these early interactions. James M. Barrie, author of *Peter Pan*, said, “The God to whom little boys say their prayers has a face very much like their mother’s.”² If that face is a loving, smiling, sympathetic one, the child will respond in kind and turn a similar face to the world outside the family.

“We learn how valuable and worthy of love we are almost exclusively through interactions with attachment figures, especially parents,” observes Stephen Stosny, a psychologist.³ The loved child assumes others are similarly lovable and worthy and will behave in a manner that is just and kind toward them, treating others as he or she has been treated. Operating from a core of being loved, the child is able to love others.

Studies of people of unusual altruism—rescuers of Jews under

Nazism, for instance—reveal one common characteristic: The rescuers all had very warm relationships with one or both parents, causing their empathy for others to reach maximum proportions. Convinced of their own worthiness as human beings, it was not hard see others as similarly worthy and to take a stand for others' human rights.⁴

The sad histories of neglected and abandoned children have testified to the moral impairment that can result from an impoverished relationship with parents. In the 1940s, psychologist William Goldfarb did a study of seventy children who had been raised for the first three years of their lives in institutions. He found that they were inordinately cruel to one another and to animals and were severely lacking in impulse control, especially of aggressive impulses.⁵

Researcher Selma H. Fraiberg studied abandoned babies, children raised in institutions, children shifted from foster home to foster home, and children torn from their families by war. She remarked, "These children who had never experienced love, who had never belonged to anyone, and were never bonded to anyone except on the most primitive basis . . . were unable in later years to bind themselves to other people, to love deeply, to feel deeply, to experience tenderness, grief, or shame."⁶ Deprived of the pivotal relationship in the child's realm of heart and love, such children's hearts never grew into hearts that could empathize with and love others.

Ambivalence in the Love Relationship between Parent and Child

In average families, there is enough ambivalence in the love relationships to produce ambivalence in a child, placing him or her in a roughly midway position morally between the extremes of great altruism and great cruelty. The average person is not cruel and will not consciously hurt or oppress others. On the other hand, he or she may not feel enough compassion for others to actively work

to alleviate suffering in the world either, and may be full of rationalizations as to why poor people, for instance, are responsible for their own fate.

Freud uncovered the ambivalence of the child's relationship to the parents in his explorations of the human psyche. The relationship to the parent "contained not only impulses of an affectionate and submissive nature, but also hostile and defiant ones."⁷ In fact, Freud thought that humankind related to the all-encompassing Father, God, with the same ambivalence felt toward parents in general, creating in effect, belief in the evil figure of Satan. If Freud is turned around as far as cause and effect go, it may be surmised that the child's "hostile and defiant" impulses toward the parent may be because the parent reflects a relationship with Satan and evil as well as a relationship with goodness and God. The ambivalence of the parents' heart, divided as it is between goodness and evil, raises children who are similarly divided in heart.

There is, then, a great need for parents of true love—parents whose love reflects the selfless love of God and hence are able to love their children in a healthy and totally beneficial way. In that way, children can be raised who are true to their parents' ideals and expectations; they can become brothers and sisters who are true to one another and who support one another's growth and successful entry into the spouse's realm of love. There, marriages of peace and harmony become shelters for the new generation as they are guided by true parental love.

The more parents' love reflects the love of God, the happier, healthier, more productive and empathic a child will be, and the more benevolent will be his or her impact upon the larger world. The need for Godly parents of true love is thus a pressing social need—perhaps the most pressing social need—in order to successfully guide and nurture the child's realm of heart.

Growth in the Child's Sphere

The family school of love works naturally to pull people out of self-centeredness into other-centeredness. Step by step, throughout all of the four realms of heart, a person is required to give up more and more love of the self and to give more love to others in order to experience fulfillment. This process begins in the child's realm. Out of love for the parents and a strong desire for their approval, a child learns to obey and control impulses (especially aggressive ones). He or she learns to take care of things, clean up and prevent messes, dress, do schoolwork, and behave respectfully toward others and property. As Fraiberg writes, "There are obligations in love even for little children. Love is a given, but it also earned. At every step of the way in development, a child is obliged to give up territories of his self-love in order to earn parental love and approval."⁸

Part of augmenting the loving approval of his or her parents is relating well and kindly to siblings and playmates. A young child learns that his or her good vertical relationship with the parents depends in part on how well he or she treats brothers and sisters, schoolmates, and friends. As the child grows, these "horizontal" relationships take on a life and significance of their own, though they are never fully separated from the vertical relationship with the parents.

Adolescent Children

A young child's accommodation to parental authority may give way to stormy and difficult relations as youth seek to define their identities, emotional boundaries, and ideological vistas during the adolescent years. Adolescents are forging their own relationship to the larger society and world, and influences outside the family—especially peers—begin to hold sway. As their family moorings loosen, individuals may become emotionally tossed at sea, experiencing great dips and heights.

While recognizing the growing importance of peers and the emerging independent identity, it is also important for parents to continue to nourish and assert the primacy of the vertical bond and the values it represents, even at the sacrifice of peers and some of the child's decision-making power, in order to keep growth in the child's realm of heart on course.

"Our son was succeeding academically and socially in public school," recounts Mona, a mother of three. "It was the social success that worried us! He's sweet and smart and a good athlete, and girls called him, asked him for dates, and to go steady with them. Our son knew our standard on early dating, and he tried hard to withstand the peer pressure, but it was definitely confusing for him during this vulnerable time of his life. When we told him we were enrolling him in a religious school where students' families and the faculty shared our values, he was upset at first. But soon he underwent a transformation. He became more and more responsible and, in this supportive environment, his faith grew and grew. I thank God, for many reasons, that we as parents made that tough decision."

A pastor, Dave, is in favor of parents taking a strong stand with their kids. "Taking a kid out of school and finding him a new one, grounding him or doing whatever else you need to do to pull him up short—that might look like shutting him down," he says. "But in fact, it's giving him the possibility of a whole new life. In almost every case I've seen where the parents took a strong stand, it worked."⁹ Dave also comments that children sense the deep love beneath such actions on the part of their parents and often respond with gratitude.

This story illustrates two points about the child's realm of heart during adolescence. First, as mentioned above, it shows that the vertical relationship with the parents remains the primary one, superseding and directing relationships with peers. During this time when the identity and values are being formed, the child's relationship with his or her parents and their values remains crucially important. The story also shows that adolescence is a time when the

young questioning mind needs to be directed toward God. The tasks of adolescence from a spiritual point of view are not only differentiation from one's parents and identity formation and individuation in psychological terms. They involve expanding the sphere of child's love to include the ultimate Parent, God. The fulfillment of the child's realm of heart is to relate to God with filial piety. This means to respond to God with the love, faith, and obedience of a loving, trusting, and increasingly responsible child.

Mature Children's Love

"We never know the love of the parent till we become parents ourselves." This observation attributed to Henry Ward Beecher highlights how filial love evolves through growing and facing the responsibilities of an adult. New comprehension and sympathy for the parents may come as the son or daughter becomes a spouse, a breadwinner, a parent, a middle-aged caretaker of others, and a responsible community member. As the son or daughter takes a place in the more advanced realms of heart—the conjugal and parental realms—he or she grows in appreciation of those who have occupied those realms before and the responsibilities they faced. This appreciation is expressed in increased devotion, understanding, and service to the parents. The long accumulation of a child's debt to his or her parents begins to be repaid with gratitude.

The moment may come when the grown-up child becomes the caretaker of his or her own parents: changing the diapers of the infirm parents, clearing up old debts, settling the family estate, and taking on the role of patriarch or matriarch of the family while urging the parents to rest and do less. Some parents become quite child-like in their old age, leaning heavily on the strength of their sons and daughters. At such times, the son or daughter assumes an almost parental role toward his or her own parents. The child's realm of heart has come full circle and has done its spiritually maturing work. As one woman said:

As a young Catholic I was inspired by the saints. I had always wanted to do things like work with Mother Teresa in India, but most of my life has not been so glamorous. After college I became a teacher in an elementary school. And then my mother had a stroke and I had to drop out of teaching and help her for two years; bathe her, care for her bedsores, cook, pay the bills, run the house. At times I wanted to complete these responsibilities and get back to my spiritual life. Then one morning it dawned on me—I was doing the work of Mother Teresa, and I was doing it in my own home.¹⁰

Mature children's love also may involve taking up the unfinished tasks and unrealized dreams of the parents and making them the child's own. Sculptor Korczak Ziolkowsky, who created the portraits on Mt. Rushmore, accepted a commission in 1947 offered by Lakota chief Standing Bear to carve a massive tribute to the great Native American chief Crazy Horse out of a mountain in South Dakota. Knowing how much the project meant to the Native Americans who had had their sacred Black Hills violated by the Mt. Rushmore project, he determined not only to do a bust, but to do a full figure of a man on horseback. It was to be ten times larger than the Mt. Rushmore monument.

Ziolkowski devoted decades to the project, enlisting the help of his family, but was able to complete only a portion before he died in 1982. However, his family comforted him before his death by committing their lives to carrying out his life's work. Seven of his ten sons and daughters, and some of his grandchildren, now labor to bring this formidable project to completion.¹¹

This is child's love in its optimal form—becoming a person who makes his or her parents proud. Confucius said, "True filial piety consists in successfully carrying out the unfinished work of our forefathers and transmitting their achievements to posterity." This was echoed in the Western poetic tradition by Thomas Macaulay when he wrote: "And how can man die better than facing fearful

odds for the ashes of his fathers and the temples of his gods?"¹² The person the child becomes as an adult is a gift laid at the altar of his or her parents' love.

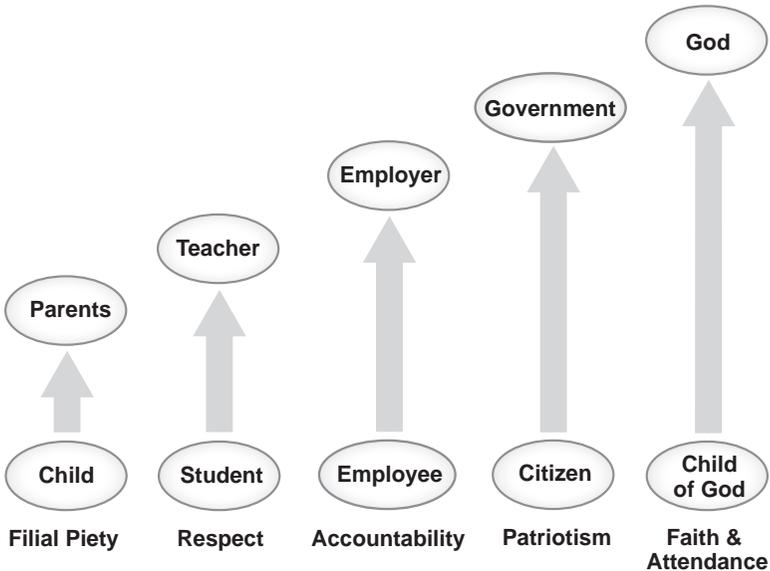
The mature child's heart is reflected in a person's relationship with God. There is a common saying, "What you are is a gift from God. What you become is your gift to Him." Returning appreciation and devotion to God for all He has done for us throughout life and history, working to develop our characters and reflect His nature more and more, and especially making His dreams, concerns and tasks our own are hallmarks of filial piety and a true child's heart toward our ultimate Parent.

Extensions of Children's Love

"Without a strong, healthy love-bond with his parents," observes psychologist Ross Campbell, "a child reacts to parental guidance with anger, resentment, and hostility."¹³ Power used without an appropriate amount of love can produce a person who eventually resents all authority. To such a child, authority is linked with exploitation. A child who knows she is deeply loved, on the other hand, will readily accept her parents' directions, identify with them and make their values her own. A positive relationship with parents predisposes a child to respect legitimate social institutions and civil laws and the just authority they represent. Thus a good child/parent relationship extrapolates into a harmonious society.

Paying honor to one's parents and to God schools a person in the ability to relate in societal roles which require one to be subordinate to someone else's authority. This may include student/teacher relationships, employee/employer relationships, worker/manager relationships, and even citizen/leader relationships in politics. A person's ability to follow instructions, humble himself or herself, receive guidance, and support legitimate authority was first learned in the relationship with parents. Those who have developed a trusting rapport with their parents do not fear that being supportive and serving will diminish them. They are the

ones who often bring out the best in their teachers, bosses, and other superiors and become their “right hands.” They may even come to inherit their positions.



Social Extensions of the Child's Realm of Heart

Dennis, a technician who makes dental molds, put himself in the position of a good son to a very cranky senior technician while in an apprentice relationship. “Wow, could he be moody! Still, I knew if I just obeyed him for a few years and didn’t talk back or smart off, I’d learn my craft well, because he was really good. I just appreciated what he had to teach me and concentrated on that and did just what he said without complaining. I knew if I did that I would be free—financially free for the rest of my life. And I am. I work my own hours, I work how much I need or want to. There’s plenty of work in my field. What’s more, when he retired, he referred all his contacts to me. It was like that with my dad. The more I did just what he said, the more privileges I got, like getting to use the car.”

The Ultimate Extension

As has been pointed out, the ultimate extension of the child's realm of heart is in relationship to God. In front of God, everyone is a child, and everyone needs to become like a child in order to take the first steps toward trusting acceptance of grace. Realizing our dependence upon God for everything, we learn gratitude and submission to His will and ways. We grow in faith through making offerings and taking responsibility, much as a child grows in relationship to his or her parents by learning to take care of possessions, to help around the house, to fulfill the duties of a child to do well in school and to treat others well. Whatever forms it takes, growth in faith involves surrendering areas of self-love, just as a growing child must surrender areas of self-love, and transforming them into areas of love for God and others.

Thus, the family is the school of love in that it evokes the potential of the child's heart to respond more and more sacrificially and responsibly: first, toward the person's own parents, extrapolating to parental figures in society, then toward the ultimate Parent who is God, and finally to God's other children—a person's brothers and sisters in the family of humankind.

Chapter 16

Lessons of Sibling Love

Your parents' wish is for you to love your brothers and sisters more than you would your own parents.

The same thing is true with God. God as the parent would want you to love your brothers and sisters more than you love Him.

—Sun Myung Moon

The moment a sibling arrives on the scene, the dynamic of a family changes dramatically and forever. There are some major adjustments to be made. The child who used to be the sole focus of his parents' attention now must share the parents' time, resources, and affection with another: "No, we can't go to the park now. The baby's asleep, and I don't want to wake her. You're going to have to find something else to do." When the sibling's realm of heart opens, it naturally and necessarily pulls any older children in the family toward greater other-centeredness. Indeed, it is designed to do so.

While the addition of siblings involves its stresses on a family, it may also be seen as a great blessing. Ten-year-old George told his mother that the first time he experienced God was when he beheld his younger brother upon the latter's arrival home from the hospital. "I felt God was saying, 'Here's a new little friend for you.'" Each child is a gift and a blessing, not only because each is precious in his or her own right, but because each child expands the family's parameters of other-centered love. Hence, the more siblings there are,

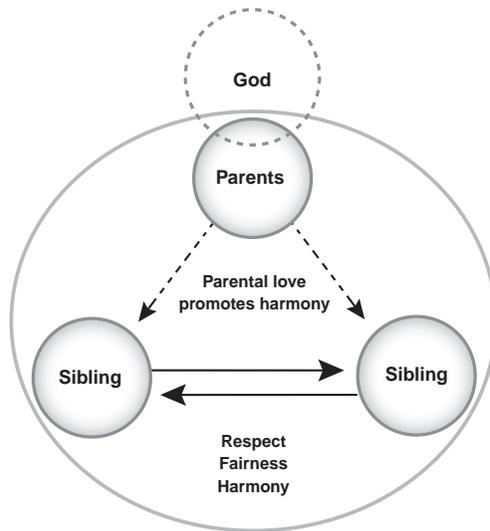
the greater is the potential for growth and the more reason for celebration and gratitude. Expanding love is the will of God. As Reverend Moon has said, "God likes 'familyism.' Grand, big old familyism."

The older child in a family has had to shed degrees of self-centeredness to respond to and keep the approbation of the most significant others in his or her realm of heart—the parents. Now his areas of self-love are further impinged upon by the presence of another on the scene. He must learn many of the most important lessons of the sibling's realm—to share, to give, to forgive. These lessons will be of major importance in later life, especially in marriage. They have implications for social relations as well (see "The Sibling's Realm in Later Life").

Parents can help an older child become more other-centered in the early days of having a sibling by including the older child in the baby's care, thus activating altruism and its rewards in the child's heart. Many children respond with alacrity. They are eager to be of service. The new sibling's helplessness and babyishness can be emphasized as opposed to the older child's competence. Older children can experience pride, glow with the praise of the parents, and get a sense of accomplishment by helping out even in little ways. Their hearts become filled with the joys of altruistic love. These good feelings spill over onto the source of them: the new little brother or sister, causing them to want to give and help more.

Pediatrician Benjamin Spock explains that, "One of the ways in which a young child tries to get over the pain of having a younger rival is to act as if he himself were no longer a child, competing in the same league as the baby, but as if he were a third parent." By encouraging the older child in this, "the parents can help a child to actually transform resentful feelings into cooperativeness and genuine altruism."¹ Many older children go on to the "helping" professions because of their benevolent experiences in caring for younger siblings. They have already been trained in other-centered giving and love through the sibling's realm of heart.

An artificial construct that helps achieve the same purpose is to encourage school children to mentor ones in the younger grades. Many schools pair older elementary school children—fifth and sixth graders, for instance—with kindergartners or first graders as reading partners. There are enough differences in abilities and development between the two that the older children find their little partners appealing in their helplessness. They experience feelings of competence, power, and benevolence in relationship to the smaller ones. To the younger children, on the other hand, the fifth and sixth graders are awesome in their power and maturity, and they are thrilled by attention from them. Fifth grader Peter was as delighted as a parent when his kindergartner partner, Sebastian, entered the school talent contest and sang a solo to thunderous applause. Peter marveled over Sebastian’s performance for days afterward, like a pleased and proud parent.



The Sibling's Realm of Heart

The Subtle Hierarchy Between Siblings

The inequalities and differences between siblings, their abilities, and their positions in a family may be seen as constructs to further the growth of the sibling's realm of heart. For instance, an older sibling must learn to share. The older sibling has had a head start on garnering the attention of the parents and has greater command of how things work in the family, as well as the physical resources of the home. Now he or she must learn to give a portion of these advantages to the younger one. A younger sibling, on the other hand, is born sharing. He or she necessarily becomes other-focused very quickly in order to form an affiliation with the more powerful older sibling(s).

Parents are the primary influences on a son or daughter's moral development. However, development is also spurred on by the issues that arise between siblings—disputes over the use of possessions, taking turns, physical and verbal aggression and other moral issues. A bad older role model will have his or her effects, which the parents must seek to ameliorate, but it is possible that the younger one will choose to go about life differently, too. A good older role model will almost always have a positive effect.² Aided and guided by the parents' love, the sibling's realm of heart teaches its lessons of love and life.

In the family setting, parents have to understand how to affirm each child's value in a manner consistent with the naturally unequal positions of elder and younger. They see to it that while the older siblings command more respect and have more privileges commensurate with their greater maturity, they also have more responsibilities.

There is already a hint of pride in the term "my older brother," and older siblings can enjoy this natural respect as well as the extra "perks" that come with their position. They may have considerably more freedom, a larger allowance, and may be in charge of their own study and recreation time. They may be allowed to go more places alone or accompanied by friends. Often, extra privileges and

stature will encourage an older sibling to take better care of young siblings. For, in addition to their extra privileges, older siblings shoulder more responsibility. If the older sibling takes on duties commensurate with his status, the younger ones feel protected and secure.³ They are also likely to respond with the adoration only a younger sibling can bestow.

Recognizing Age Distinctions Builds Harmony

In Asia, a distinction between elder and younger siblings is codified in the norms of the culture. Such family norms create a context for harmony. Sharon Goodman, the principal of a small private school in New York, once worked overseas at a middle school for the arts in Seoul, Korea, where she served as a houseparent in a dormitory that mixed Asian and Western youngsters. The performing arts being what they are, there was a great deal of jealousy and competition.

The staff recognized the need to instill a “brother-sister” mentality in the children. They adopted a policy that all students had to address each other based on age, using the honorific titles for older brothers and sisters embedded in the Korean language and used in Korean households. The Korean language provides a more formal way of addressing an elder than addressing a peer, even if the age difference is only slight. Elder boys are called “Oppa,” which means “respected older brother,” and elder girls are called “Onni,” which means “respected older sister.”

The policy worked almost as soon as it was instituted. Peace came to the dorms. Rather than needing to lord it over their younger classmates, the older students felt secure in the respect shown to them. They began to coach and protect their juniors, even acting as mediators for them. Feeling shielded and cared for, the younger students felt less need to assert themselves aggressively.

In Western culture, which is based on equality, it is hard to believe that recognition of differing status could create harmony. Absolutely equal treatment of all children would be expected to be

the solution to sibling-like quarreling in the dorms. However, it is clear that the Eastern solution worked. Of course, all children should be treated with equal respect and love. However, the subtle hierarchy between siblings is conferred by God and by nature. To recognize it and appreciate it is to begin to use it for the purpose of facilitating true love and growth of heart in the sibling's realm.

Sibling rivalry—the norm?

Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon, the wife of Reverend Moon, has said, “A family of true love, where the children are loved utterly and selflessly by the parents, will know no sibling rivalry, no seeds of hatred. The children might compete only to see which one can give the most to the parents and to the family as a whole—a competition in other-centered love.”⁴

While sibling rivalry is accepted as a “given” by many experts, the question does arise: How much sibling rivalry is a natural part of the growth process, and how much is a product of the lack of true love in families—even a product of the original human Fall? Here are the voices of some parents frustrated by the sibling quarreling going on in their homes. They suggest that sibling rivalry is not a natural or desirable state of affairs:

“It’s wrong for my children to be so deliberately cruel. This is not what I expected when I decided to have three children. I wanted them to love each other, and I don’t know why they don’t.”

“Why do they resent each other so much? Why are they always mad at each other? As their mother, it is my responsibility to guide them, to teach them kindness to others. When I see them being unkind to one another, I feel I have to step in.”

“It depresses me that my sons might be enemies for life. In private, my husband and I refer to them as ‘Cain and Abel.’ It’s a joke, but not a very funny one.”⁵

Indeed, there is nothing funny about the rivalry between siblings that started in the first family and continues on until this day. Although fratricide is a rare crime, most people feel at some times in their lives jealousy, competition, judgment and criticism toward their siblings.

The power of brotherly rivalry, inherited from the Fall, is well-depicted in the novel, *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles. This somber story tells of a “golden” schoolboy, Phineas, who is powerful, athletic, hearty, generous and kind and his best friend, Gene, who is far less golden, far more insecure, and who feels far less gifted than his friend. The two are as close as brothers; yet little by little, Gene’s jealousy of Phineas grows. One day Gene gives in to a destructive impulse while he and Phineas are playfully balanced on a high tree branch. Almost without thinking, eaten alive by envy, Gene bends his knees and jiggles the branch. Phineas falls and is hurt badly on the ground beneath.

The symbolism of a tree reminds the reader of the Garden of Eden story of the Fall where the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil figure prominently. The emotion of jealousy is also classically associated with both the fall of humankind (Lucifer was “jealous” of the human position and thus plotted their downfall) and its immediate aftermath (Cain murdered his brother Abel out of jealousy over Abel’s offering being accepted by God while Cain’s was rejected). The analogy with the Cain and Abel story becomes complete in *A Separate Peace* when later, during an operation to repair his beautiful but broken body, Phineas dies on the operating table. Gene has re-enacted the Cain and Abel murder; he has killed his “brother” out of jealousy. Set against the background of World War II, the novel opens up questions of where killing and murder start—where war starts. The answer it provides is that war starts in each human heart, manifesting itself even and

especially in the closest of human relationships—between friends, between brothers (see Chapter 24).

Parents as Mediators

The parents' love is ultimately the most important factor in mediating rivalry that occurs between siblings. Loving parents are absolutely essential to the development of love among their children. The parents' love endows each child with value and equality. A son's respect for his sister stems from the fact that she is loved by their parents. A daughter learns to love her brother because her parents love him.⁶

The parable of the Prodigal Son contains a moment of sibling rivalry that is instructive about parental love mediating between siblings (Luke 15.11-32). One son in a family asked his father for his share of the inheritance and then went off and squandered it on riotous living until he was reduced to beggary. Resolving to ask his father's forgiveness and to be taken back, the son walks toward his father's home. Spotting him from a long way off, the father runs to him to embrace him. The father orders the fatted calf killed, dresses his son in fine robes, and places a ring on his finger.

The father's other son, who has been loyal all along, is displeased. Why should such a fuss be made over the family deserter? He himself has been plugging along all this time, without such rewards. He absents himself from the feast in protest.

The father runs after this son too. He notices him missing from the feast and goes out to find him. When the son expresses his feelings of jealousy, the father says to him, "My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours" (Luke 15. 31). This is a deep affirmation of the father's love, regard, and generosity toward this son too. One can imagine the son rather shame-facedly going back into the feast to celebrate the return of his brother, perhaps with his father's arm about his shoulders for support.

Not all parents are able to be this exemplary. Most fall short in their abilities to love their children so well that there is no sibling

rivalry or quarreling between them. Reverend Moon said, "We experience the love of parents over us. Our parents kiss us on the cheek, embrace us and console us in times of sadness. We have experienced these things, but not to the full extent, and not in the true sense, because every sensation can come in its fullest degree only from God."⁷ The answer is for parents to root and center themselves as much as possible in the love of God and attempt to both invite and model this love.

The Love of God the Father

Christian singer and songwriter Stormie Omartian tells how she entreated the intervention of the ultimate Parent, God, when her children were going through a period of distance and dissonance. Tired of being a referee in their battles, grieved to see their closeness being torn apart, she realized she needed to turn to the Parent who had the most love for her children:

Because everything had been going so well between Amanda and Christopher, [in their earlier years] I had stopped praying about their relationship. So I began praying about it again, wishing I had never stopped. It took some time, but little by little I observed a softening in their attitude toward one another. I know that if I had done nothing there would most likely have been the same permanent breach between them as there have been in too many relationships in my family's past."⁸

This story makes the point that ultimately it is God's love that helps people get along. While parents strive their best, they still fall short in many ways. It is impossible for limited parents to keep up with all of a child's needs for love, especially when there are several children in the home and the parents are burdened with all the responsibilities of marriage, adulthood, making a living, keeping a home and transportation running, caring for their elderly parents, etcetera. With the love of God pouring down through a

parent's intercessory prayers, sibling rivalry can subside and be healed.

Further, sibling rivalry may be caused by problems rooted in the lineage, or ancestral problems that never got resolved in previous generations and have been passed down in spite of the best efforts of the parents to love their children. Certain family problems may "skip" generations only to crop up again until a new generation finally conquers them for good. In these kinds of cases, the intervention and help and support of God are crucial.

Faith and a faith community may fill in many gaps and provide sustenance in the sibling's realm of heart. Under the parentage of God, the sibling's realm of heart may be fulfilled through the surrogate brother and sister relationships in a faith community. "My sister and I never got along," recalls Madeline. "She used to get on my nerves, especially before school, always wanting to borrow my clothes. Then while living in the dormitory at a seminary, the other women's voices in the mornings used to get on my nerves too. I wanted to be silent and meditative before morning prayers, and there they all were, talking away while they got ready. It irritated me day after day. Then one morning I woke up and realized I had forgotten my laundry in the laundry room the night before. I bolted out of bed, thinking all my stuff might have been scattered, when I saw a basket with all my clothes in it, all dried and neatly folded. On it was a note with a smiley face and the words: 'Love, Your sister in faith.' I was so grateful and moved. As I listened to the morning chatter, a very gentle voice spoke in my heart: 'Don't you like to hear the voices of your sisters in the mornings? I do.' I knew it was the voice of God."

From then on, Madeleine knew more peace in the dormitory and her appreciation of her fellow women of God grew. After some growth in the sibling's realm of heart through her faith community, she was able to approach her biological sister and renew their relationship.

A Bridge to the World

Good sibling relationships serve as a bridge between the protective vertical relationship with parents and the need to explore horizontal relationships with others in the world. Sibling relationships retain some slight vertical structure and are directed more closely by the parents, yet they resemble peer relationships in many ways and serve many of the same functions. Without the practice of sibling relationships, young people may find it hard to graduate from the strongly vertical, protective relationship of parent and child to the strongly horizontal and independent relationships of friendships and eventual marriage. The sibling's realm of heart, segueing into friendships and good peer relationships, serves to prepare a young person for relationships outside the family.

Friendships are an extension of sibling relationships; only they involve more choice, independence and equality. Friends take over where siblings leave off. Like sibling relationships, they offer ample opportunities for conflict and the building of conflict-resolving skills. Willard Hartup writes:

“Peer relations contribute substantially to both social and cognitive development and to the effectiveness with which we function as adults. Indeed, the single best childhood predictor of adult adaptation is not school grades, and not classroom behavior, but rather the adequacy with which the child gets along with other children. Children who . . . cannot establish a place for themselves in the peer culture are seriously at risk.”⁹

Friendships in childhood have at least four functions that strongly resemble sibling relationships. They provide (1) emotional resources for having fun and adapting to stress; (2) cognitive resources for problem-solving and knowledge acquisition; (3) contexts in which the basic social skills of communication, cooperation, and group entry skills are acquired or elaborated, and (4) they are forerunners of adult relationships, including relationships in

the workplace. They also prepare a young person for marriage—the “passionate friendship.”¹⁰

Living with a roommate, creating camaraderie on the job, joining teams and group activities are all extensions of the sibling’s realm of heart. Clubs, service groups or religious youth groups can lead to friendships and foster cooperative skills. The club or group serves rather like a “parent”—it is the overarching context for the peer relationships and directs their growth. People working for a common purpose form special bonds that resemble those of siblings. Such experiences may even connect them to the interrelatedness of all people—a sense of the brotherhood of humankind.

Training to Embrace Diversity

Sibling relationships are training for living in a world of diversity. Though born of the same parents, siblings often differ from one another widely in temperament, personality, tastes, preferences, talents and even political leanings. Living amidst a large or extended family provides training in tolerance, charity, and acceptance of differences. It helps engrain the lesson that although people differ, they are fundamentally related and may still treat one another with respect, appreciation, and love based on their common bonds.

Marykate Morse comes from a military family, but she became a Quaker who works for peace. One of her daughters is a peace activist, while one of her sons enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. Marykate is proud of both of them, and the choices of the others in her family. She says:

All of my children have thought deeply and carefully about the tensions and paradoxes between military action and pacifism. They have chosen to actively live in a way that reflects their values. As a family we feel blessed and enriched because we have learned to hold both these worlds together with love and respect.

I wish my fellow citizens would treat each other the same way. It pains me when I see pacifists burning the American flag or hear war supporters accuse pacifists of being unpatriotic. I hope more Americans realize what my family has: the more we stretch the stronger we are.¹¹

Pre-teens and teens who understand the value of the sibling's realm and its friendships improve their chances of enjoying better relationships later in life, including and especially an intimate and rewarding marriage. Too intense peer relationships hamper development in this important realm of heart. The unfortunate trend of modern times is to jump from the child's realm of heart right into a physical relationship that more properly characterizes the spouse's realm—a sexual relationship—without reaping the benefits of the sibling's realm of heart and its extensions, peer friendships. The onset of sexual relations is occurring at ever younger ages, among children as young as ten, eleven and twelve. However, such sexual love is by definition love between two undeveloped people who are constitutionally unable to answer one another's needs. People do themselves a grave disservice by skipping realms of development. Unprepared for the emotional depths unleashed by a sexual relationship, underdeveloped children and teenagers flounder, hurting themselves and others (see Chapter 20).

The Sibling's Realm and Later Life

Most siblings form or sustain good relationships later in life. What is more, sibling relationships tend to increase in closeness and meaning over time. In later life the very existence of a sibling, even if geographically far away, is a comfort and a boon.¹² Research affirms that a link with siblings preserves a sense of well-being in middle and late life, even if actual contact is infrequent. Strong feelings and shared memories remain emotionally significant.¹³ Most siblings feel that in times of emergency at any time in life, they can call on their siblings for help.¹⁴

As time goes by, many siblings honor their relationships by labeling them relationships of choice: “You’re my sister but also my friend,” they tell each other; or they compare relationships of choice with this obligatory relationship: “I love my friend like a brother.” One brother, after years of financial difficulty in a family-owned and -operated business, said, “Still, after all, if I had to be in a tough situation with anyone in the world, I’d want it to be with my brother, Lance. If he weren’t my brother, I’d still choose him to be my partner.”

Jack, a man from Kentucky who had been a pest of a younger brother to his two older sisters matured considerably through them. He said, “My sisters taught me what unconditional love was. Sometimes they were so kind, even after I’d done something awful to them, like put a frog in their room or read their diaries. Oh, they complained to my parents a lot, but when you’ve done that many bad things to someone and then the next Christmas they give you a super present signed ‘Love, your sister,’ you sort of melt. They taught me what forgiveness is. I never forgot it. It made me a better adult.”

Perhaps the most important effects of the sibling’s realm of heart are those that affect the later realms of marriage and parenting. Marriage experts comment upon the amount of anger that is generated in marriage due to the incessant need to share. Like living with a sibling, living with a spouse requires constant sharing of the family’s resources. Some degree of privacy and autonomy is always sacrificed; some degree of self-centeredness has to be given over. The foundation of the sibling’s realm can help one have a tolerance for the day in and day out sharing of marriage in the spouse’s realm of heart. As was mentioned above, “parenting” a younger sibling is a step up toward parental love, and the experience is invaluable.

Pursuing education, marriage, and a career often pulls brothers and sisters out of contact with each other in later life. Sometimes parents provide the main link, giving news about the siblings to each other and facilitating reunions. More fortunate are siblings

who stay close geographically and maintain warm friendships. They provide invaluable support, extra financial reserves, and the kinds of allegiances and alliances that make responsible adulthood easier. Being part of a network of giving and receiving among their siblings gives people pride, a sense of connection, and challenges them to meet the needs of others in unique adult ways.

Serving as Aunt and Uncle

Adult siblings are the aunts and uncles of one another's children—important if underrated roles. Anyone with teenage children can attest to the need for good avuncular figures in their sons' and daughters' lives to do what they cannot do. They are grateful to their siblings who play this valuable role in their children's upbringing. Teenaged Derek appreciates his uncle's intervention between him and his father. "My dad was driving me nuts with all his self-righteous garbage—'Do this, don't do that, why'd you do that, I told you not to!'" he remembers. "When I went fishing with my uncle, I vented about it a little, and he told me some of the crazy stuff my dad used to do—I'm an angel compared to him! It relieved me to know my dad wasn't so perfect after all. Then my uncle said, 'He's scared to death you'll mess up and have to pay for all your mistakes like he did. He'd like to spare you that.' When my dad found out, he said to my uncle, 'You didn't tell him all that, did you?' But we all three wound up laughing. Now when Dad bugs me, I say, 'Remember when you . . .'" and he just says, 'You're too smart to be as dumb as I was,' and he doesn't yell any more."

Uncles and aunts can help adolescents fulfill their particular need to differentiate from their parents and assess them objectively, weighing their opinions against those of other trusted adults. Psychiatrist Frank Pittman observes, "Aunts and uncles are called to offer alternate realities to children."¹⁵ Because they do not have the full burden of the parents' responsibility, uncles and aunts have less anxiety about outcomes. They can be freer about their honest feelings and thoughts. "With my nieces and nephews I could be

myself rather than try to be whatever I thought a parent should be," adds Pittman. "At times I have liked them better than I have my own children; I've often felt I was a better friend to them."¹⁶ The famous saying, "It takes a village to raise a child," may be true, but in the absence of a whole village, people definitely need their siblings to support their parenting efforts.

After the Parents' Death

Once their parents are gone, siblings are the sole survivors of the childhood family. They are the corroborators and keepers of family memories—photos, stories, heirlooms.¹⁷ In these cases, the oldest sibling often assumes a patriarchal or matriarchal role over the extended family, and the allegiance to them and sense of protection from them the younger siblings felt as children is augmented. At the same time, the older siblings feel the welcome relief of fellow adults' support and insights, where the differences in age become minimized.

Siblings' relationships often grow closer later in life as it is borne home to them that they are the sole and final repositories of their family of origin's emotional legacy. They share a unique history that they alone are the curators of after the parents' death. They are the repositories of the family's legends and lessons, the guardians of the family's lineage. They are even the possessors of the family's genes.

There is only one person on the horizontal level who comes to share as much life history as a sibling does. This is the person the sibling's realm of heart has provided practice for in loving, sharing, and valuing. This is the person who will reap many of the benefits of good sibling relationships in a family. That is a person's spouse.

Chapter 17

The Blessing of Marriage

We need marriage because it is the true way to develop our love Our entire life should be centered on true love. We should be born in true love; we should grow in true love; we should live centered on true love, and we should return to true love when we die. The way of true love is life for the sake of others. This is the purpose of a holy marriage.¹

—Hak Ja Han Moon

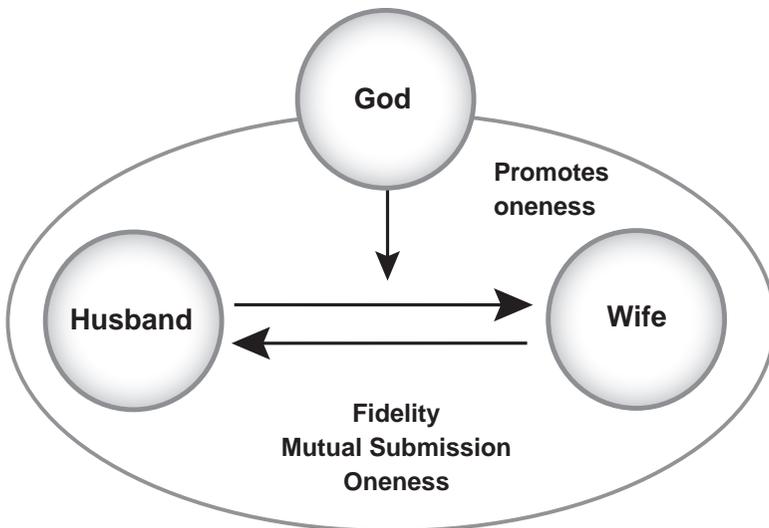
Marriage is a culmination point of God's family-based plan to help individuals grow toward perfection of heart through other-centered love. Marriage lifts a couple into a whole new realm of spiritual and physical being called the spouse's realm of heart. In this realm, a couple has the potential to ascend toward closer resemblance to God in heart and love than ever before and to extend that love to the world around them.

No relationship prior to marriage has the same potential for human oneness, and thus no other relationship entails the same demands for surrender of the self. In this way, marriage promotes true love, which is to live for the sake of others. As marital expert Judith Wallerstein said, "A marriage that commands loyalty . . . requires each partner to relinquish self-centeredness."² Catholic psychologist Marshall Fightlin asserts that it is the daily task of a husband to "mortify" the impulses to act like a single man and to concern himself with his other—his wife. The blessings of marriage

appear only when there is renunciation of the self in favor of the other.³

The term “renunciation” is familiar to religious believers. Many things must be renounced in order to embrace God wholly in a religious life, and marriage is part of this process. Marriage involves renunciation of all others in a romantic or sexual sense in favor of the spouse; it means renunciation of many aspects of one’s own habits and attitudes that interfere with a life shared with someone who is physically, emotionally, and mentally “other”—a member of the opposite sex.

Paradoxically, renunciation of the self in favor of the other enriches and enhances the self. Joy and excitement are increased. Theologian Karl Barth says, “It is always in relationship to their opposite that man and woman are what they are in themselves.”⁴ People become whole through marriage.



The Spouse’s Realm of Heart

The God-Centered Marriage

Marriage also brings a couple closer to God. The rabbis taught that the union of a man and a woman into one person or one flesh is the only full representation of the image of God.⁵ Barth sees a theology of marriage in the Trinity. God exists in a community of three persons, so a solitary, isolated human being without a counterpart is necessarily incomplete.

Mrs. Moon says, "We marry in order to resemble God. God exists as a being of dual characteristics. In God, the dual characteristics are completely harmonized as One. When God's dual characteristics manifest in our world, they do so as man and woman. Accordingly, at the proper time, a man and a woman are like a seed. They unite to become one. Thus, husband and wife return to God."⁶ Marriage resembles God in that it embodies the universal attraction and "propensity to unite"⁷ vested in the creation between yin and yang, positive and negative, masculine and feminine (see Chapter 12). A woman represents the feminine aspects of the universe, and a man represents the masculine aspects. They yearn and need to unite. A person's spouse is his or her gateway to intimacy with the opposite half of the universe. Providing this access, it may be said that a spouse has a value equivalent to half of the universe and is an indispensable part of intimately understanding the total nature of God.

As a pivotal point in life's journey toward God, marriage clearly has implications for spiritual life. Mrs. Moon states that if we take any other path besides one of true love in marriage, we will adversely affect the path of our eternal life. A holy marriage, one that is centered upon God and focused upon true love, is instrumental in the process of salvation.

So significant is marriage to life both temporal and eternal that Reverend Moon and Mrs. Moon feel it is their special calling to make it the central part of their ministry. They promote a sanctified, God-centered covenant of marriage called "The Blessing." The Blessing is sacramental in nature in that it symbolically cuts a couple

off from the past and engrafts them onto a new future with God and others at the core. In the Blessing, a couple's marriage is not only for themselves. It is significant for their ancestral lineage, their descendants, and for their part in the human community. It connects them to the body of humanity.

Blessed marriage is a highly responsible venture, far removed from the modern notions of marriage being solely for the pleasure of the couple involved and able to be abrogated when pleasure ceases. The Blessing echoes and takes to greater heights sentiments about marriage such as author Jo McGowan's:

To marry, to celebrate a love and a commitment publicly . . . is to say that the meaning of one's life can only be found in the context of a community. It is to acknowledge one's part in the human family, to recognize that one's life is more than one's own, that one's actions affect more than oneself. It is to proclaim that marriage is more than a private affair between one woman and one man . . . [It is] to be part of the human community, to start building the kingdom of God here on earth.⁸

To signify marriage's role in human community and in the building of the kingdom of God, Reverend Moon holds Blessing ceremonies as public gatherings of thousands of couples—both those newly married and those rededicating their marriages—to make the statement that marriage is not only for oneself and one's own; it is for God and humanity.

Love that Partakes of Divinity

As a task of moral becoming, we may agree with author Antoine de Saint-Exupery, "Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking together in the same direction."⁹ It is here that the trinitarian and community nature of marriage becomes most apparent.

When husband and wife unite in a Blessed marriage, consciously centered upon God, they form a trinity. Through actions of

giving and receiving, the flow of love between all three—God, husband, and wife—is perpetuated. The couple radiates benevolence to their children and to their friends, acquaintances, and communities. The Catholic program “Marriage Encounter” likewise sees the true love of a couple, focused upon God, as being salvific for the community.

Love like this expresses the authenticity that Fromm described when he said true love affects how a person relates to the world. “If I truly love one person, I love all persons, I love the world.”¹⁰ One husband of over thirty years described marriage as touching the “love that includes everything and everybody, the love that’s universal . . . everything that is good about connectedness and caring for others.”¹¹

Further, men and women experience glimpses of all the possible family relationships between them in marital life together. A husband will at times be a friend or like a brother or an uncle, a father or a son, or even a wise old grandfather to his wife. A woman will sometimes be like a sister or an aunt, a mother or a daughter, or grandmother toward her spouse. Conjugal love encompasses this constellation of relationships with others, helping couples to understand various aspects of the heart of God.

A couple’s love and oneness becomes substantially and eternally embodied in the creation of a child. God creates by reuniting the disparate elements of masculine and feminine into one and creating a new being from that unity (see Chapter 13). Therefore, we can say that marriage leading to family is the complete reflection of God in all His glory. Marriage and family are the embodiment and full representation of the image of God.

Holy matrimony

Marriage is a major and indispensable step toward knowing God. It is holy because it mirrors and partakes of the Creator’s nature and the creative process. It is a divinely ordained blessing and eternal covenant. It should be treated, therefore, as a sacred insti-

tution and undertaken with serious, binding vows and promises. Divorce, infidelity, and sexual relations without marriage have traditionally been frowned upon as abrogating that which should not be breached, profaning sacred ground.

Marriage propels people into a whole new realm of spiritual and physical being—the spouse’s realm of heart. In this realm, a couple has the potential to ascend toward closer resemblance to God in heart and love than ever before. To try to live in the spouse’s realm of heart without God’s blessing and principles is a risky business and fraught with difficulties, as evidenced by the high divorce rate in most developed nations and the incredible pain people bring upon one another when they try to love without God.

Marriages do best centered upon God, connected to the very Source of love. Otherwise, they erode all too easily. God’s love empowers couples with the true love men and women need to see them through the vicissitudes of life together. Without tapping into this Source of love, men and women come up short on the ability to give and forgive, serve one another, and be steadfast and faithful throughout the years.

Loving as God Loves

Marriage calls us to love as God loves and experience the concomitant growth of heart. The traditional wedding vows reflect the unconditional aspirations of marital love: “To have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part.” If a person can love another person day in and day out, under good conditions and bad, in all aspects of the other’s being, the love they live out approaches the unconditional love of God.

Psychologist Lori Gordon describes conjugal love as “to feel that you can trust another person with your whole being, your laughter, your tears, your rage, your joy . . . Its essence lies in total certainty that your partner is . . . open to you in body, heart and mind—and knowing that you are accepted and loved for what you

really are, and knowing that you don't have to pretend."¹² Loving a spouse in good times and bad stretches a person's character and capacity to love. As one husband in a long-term marriage said, "You've seen each other in every possible light, the very ugliest and worst and the most evil as well as the most divine and compassionate."

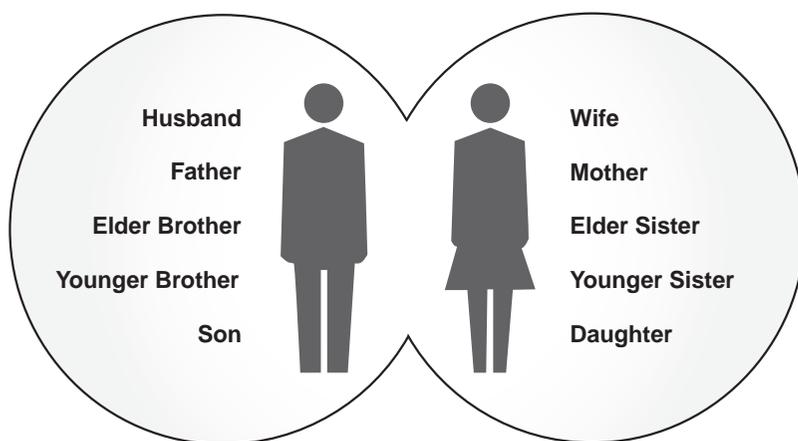
Marriage is a microcosm of and a metaphor for God's relationship to humanity. Marriage means to "be open to the call of another without qualification."¹³ It calls for a love which is "the steady gaze on another that does not withdraw simply because they fail to please"¹⁴ This is God's heart of salvation toward humankind. Indeed, in the Old Testament, God likens His relationship with His people, Israel, to the marriage of Hosea. In the New Testament, St. Paul said that Christ relates to the church as a husband or bridegroom to his wife. The culmination point of salvation history in Christianity is to be a marriage—the Marriage of the Lamb (Revelation 19.7).

Loving as God loves is crucial in the close quarters of marriage, where strong emotional and psychological forces are unleashed. Sometimes the spouse may seem like one's worst enemy. A person's deepest needs are left unfulfilled by the very one in whom he or she had such hopes. Forgiving another his or her trespasses 70 times 7; being faithful when it seems impossible to go on; acting lovingly when feelings of love are nowhere in sight; being kind and merciful enough to evoke kindness and mercy—all these things school a person in the qualities of divine love. This is how God loves vulnerable, flawed human beings. He is always seeking to restore them with His love, set them on their feet again, and encourage them forward toward the realization of their full potential as His children.

True Love Is Built, Not Born

Love in these terms is a far cry from the Western cultural mythology of romantic love that has grown up throughout the centuries. Love, in Western eyes, is a force outside of oneself and one's

control: It is mysterious, grand, and has a logic of its own. It is an overpowering visitation upon two people by forces outside of themselves.



Marriage Encompasses All Family Relationships

Other cultures and other epochs in Western culture have maintained that love is built, not born. It depends upon virtues such as sacrifice, commitment, and faithfulness. Marital love, in these views, has a strong moral component. Often, it is believed that if husband and wife adhere faithfully to the precepts of their moral or religious tradition, they will naturally grow together in love. The Jewish and Hindu traditions are particularly strong on this point, advocating that love can be built even into an arranged marriage through the virtues of the husband and wife. Modern marital therapists such as Stephen Wolin recommend that society take a second look at arranged marriages and the process of building love into a marriage in order to improve people's chances at marital satisfaction. Wolin's research on resilient marriages indicates that there is always a strong spiritual element in successful marriages.¹⁵

Love and Virtue

In the Old Testament, the perfect wife described in Proverbs is a woman of virtues. She is trustworthy and benevolent, diligent, prudent, charitable and provident. She is kind and well-spoken and becomes beloved by her children and husband. They rise up and praise her after time has proved her worth. Her husband's public stature is due, in part, to her good offices. Such a woman is the reward of and should be the treasure of a man who heeds the advice toward virtue that runs through the Book of Proverbs. It is the fear of the Lord, and a fear of straying from His paths, that keeps good marriages intact. Buddhist scriptures likewise describe the virtues of a good wife, who in one text is called to be to her husband as "a mother, a sister, a companion and a servant" (Anguttara Nikaya iv.91).¹⁶ Of course, as the Hindu author Ved Mehta points out, it is also the husband's duty to earn his wife's respect through his sacrifice and good character.¹⁷

Virtues of character attract God and His love to a marriage. Reverend Moon says, "A noble man and woman are necessary for the sake of making a noble couple. We need a noble couple in order to achieve God's noble love."¹⁸

The view that virtue or good character is the bedrock of happy marriages is backed up by modern psychological research. Wallerstein found that virtues of character played a large role in the enduring and happy marriages she studied: "For everyone, happiness in marriage meant feeling respected and cherished . . . based on integrity. A partner was admired and loved for his or her honesty, compassion, generosity of spirit, decency, loyalty to the family, and fairness The value these couples place on the partner's moral qualities . . . helps explain why many divorcing people speak so vehemently of losing respect for their former partners."¹⁹

Another highly respected marital theorist and therapist, Blaine Fowers, has said, "As I have observed many different couples, I have become convinced that strong marriages are built on the virtues or character strengths of the spouses. In other words, the best way to

have a good marriage is to be a good person.”²⁰

What is more, people who have failed in their marriages intuitively know that character strengths or virtues would have given their relationships a better chance. When asked at a relationships website what they would have done differently to make their marriages better, people responded by naming improved traits of character: “I would not have been unfaithful,” said one. “I would be more patient, loving and forgiving,” said another. Yet another said, “I would make more effort to be affectionate, supportive, loving, cheerful, and a better friend.”

Godly persons make good marriages

In the Letter to the Ephesians, love in a Christian marriage is described in terms of virtues of character, likened to the love of Christ for the church (5.25). It is, first and foremost, a giving love, a sacrificial love that resembles the love of Jesus. Author Michael G. Lawler characterizes Christian marital love: “It is a love that seeks to give way to the other whenever possible.” Lawler goes on to say that in a Christian marriage both are bound to be servants to one another, as Christ came to serve not be served. He says, “Marital love exists only inchoately on the wedding day . . . marital love, as mutual giving way, as mutual service, as mutual fidelity . . . is not a given in a Christian marriage but a task to be undertaken.”²¹

Theologian Stanley Hauerwas warns that Christianity must not yield to the popular cultural notion that emotions and feelings are the measure of a marriage. “What the church cares about,” he says, is not love per se, but “whether you are a person capable of sustaining the kind of fidelity that makes love, even in marriage, a possibility.”²² Hauerwas contends that the early church had no illusions about “love” creating or legitimating marriage. The assumption was that those called to marriage would, through following the church faithfully, develop the character strengths or virtues necessary to be married lovingly. Hauerwas notes the ongoing nature of virtue development: “I do not pretend that any of us ever have a charac-

ter sufficient for marriage when we enter a marriage, but I am contending that at least some beginning has to have been made if we are to have the ability to grow into the kind of person capable of being called to undertake . . . the vocation of marriage."²³

This religious view tallies with psychologist Erik Erikson's definition of marital intimacy as, "the capacity to commit oneself to . . . partnership and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments even though they may call for significant sacrifices and compromises."²⁴

Two modern-day churches, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Unification Church both recommend a period of missionary service prior to engagement or marriage for just these reasons. In serving others, sacrificing for their sakes, giving up entertainments and comforts, and dedicating themselves to the commandment to love God and love others, these young people develop character strengths or virtues that will stand them in good stead when they embark upon the spiritually demanding vocation that is marriage. Theravada Buddhists in Thailand require a six-month period of monastic life prior to marriage as well. The missionary or service period helps the young people make a start at developing the virtues necessary to succeed in married life.

True Love in Marriage

True love is virtues-based and virtues-driven. True love is other-centered; it is principled, serving and sacrificial, and unconditional. Unchanging, unique, faithful and obedient, and forgiving, it is a reflection of God's love. True love is the fuel of all good relationships; even more so in marriage because of its intimacy and close quarters. In this section, we will explore several cardinal attributes of true love that apply most powerfully to the spouse's realm of heart.

1. Other-Centered

Reverend Moon defines true love as living for the sake of others. Living for the sake of the spouse is the overarching principle of love in marriage. Author and marriage counselor Dr. Larry Crabbe has come to the conclusion that virtually all marital problems boil down to self-centeredness.²⁵ Dr. Scott M. Stanley, a prominent marriage researcher explains, “Love is that which will require you at some point to put aside self-interest in favor of the good of the other and the relationship.”²⁶

True love is to act for the sake of another. Dr. Judith Wallerstein found that the happy couples in her study “were not envious of what they gave to the other. They did not dole out kindness with the expectation of immediate reimbursement. They did not weigh their gifts or keep records. Supporting and encouraging the other was a given. They accepted this major task not only as fair but as necessary to make the marriage succeed.”²⁷

In an interview with BBC anchor Katie Couric, former First Lady Nancy Reagan revealed that the secret to her fifty years of happy marriage to Ronald Reagan was the way they gave to one another. She mentioned that her husband was never self-centered, never egotistical, never talked about himself, his stardom, or his accomplishments. It was selflessness on each of their parts that made their marriage a joy year in and year out.²⁸

2. Serving and Sacrificial

Of course, love is easy when the exchange is mutual, but it requires maturity and character strength to deal with the periods in a relationship when one partner has to “carry” the other, when there is no emotional return. This is sacrifice. Honing the art of loving when the personal benefit is not immediately felt is a valuable individual goal for the sake of the partnership and is absolutely necessary to the growth of love. Researcher Stanley said, “Love is not remotely possible without sacrifice.”²⁹ As Mrs. Reagan noted in the interview mentioned above, 50-50 giving is simply not a realistic

option. There are always times when one has to give more than the other in order to carry the marriage along.

Sacrificial giving in marriage ideally comes on a foundation of spiritual development through the practice of virtues, and it is also a spur to further spiritual development and the growth of the relationship. Giving to the other should not negate the self or bring about a loss of autonomy; nor does it mean becoming the other's doormat. Giving of the self for the sake of the other implies having a self from which to give. A true love relationship is not one of co-dependency or dependency. Rather, it is a relationship between two people who are developed and developing in their relationship to God and therefore capable of sacrificing for one another without a loss of identity or dignity. People are enriched through this right kind of giving, becoming bigger, better and more whole in the process.

Further, serving and sacrifice bring down the abundant love of God. As Reverend Moon says, "God is creator and the originator of the two basic principles of service and sacrifice."³⁰ When a person lives in that way, he or she attracts the love and energy of God to any enterprise he or she is engaged in, including the enterprise of marriage.

3. Forgiving

Forgiveness is an important part of love, for all people fall short of one another's needs and expectations. Inevitably, one spouse will hurt and neglect the other, be unable to answer all the other's needs or desires, or fail to live up to the other's expectations. Without the balm of forgiveness, marriage becomes an accumulation of grievances, hurts, and accusations.

Forgiveness often stems from considering the other person's situation and difficulties and putting oneself "in the other's shoes." It arises from empathy. Marital partners may have faith in the old adage: "To know all is to forgive all." If they can see into the reasons behind their spouse's less-than-perfect behavior, they may find their

hearts filling with forgiveness.

Forgiveness also stems from being humble about one's own faults and failings. Remembering their own faults and humbly acknowledging their need to be forgiven themselves makes spouses more prone to forgive their erring partners.

4. *Unchanging*

A marriage based solely upon changeable, romantic feelings of love is hard put to weather the inevitable storms that are characteristic of all marriages and of life itself. There are times in every marriage when the partners need to persevere through the challenges that arise. Only steadfast commitment can see people through the times when they no longer "feel" like going on, when disillusionment sets in, when conflicts are hard to resolve. Unchanging love is the determination to remain truly loving no matter what, taking responsibility for what one puts into the marriage, good or bad, and seeking to enrich the love within the marriage by following God's ways.

To desert one's marital partner is, in essence, to desert God and to foreswear the grace available through living out this sacrament. Religions of the world condemn the breach of the marital covenant. "I hate divorce . . . do not break faith," declares the Creator through the prophet Malachi (2.16). When someone asked Muhammad about divorce, he said it was "the lawful thing that God hates most" (Hadith of Abu Dawud).³¹ When Jesus was asked about divorce, he said that God only allowed it because of people's hardness of heart, that it was not His way "from the beginning" (Matthew 19.8). He cited the words of Genesis 2.24, "for this reason a man will leave father and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." Then he added, "What God has joined together, let man not separate" (Matthew 19.5-6).

This is not to say that divorce or separation may not sometimes be a painful necessity, but the overwhelming proportion of divorces take place under far less serious circumstances than, for

example, desertion or adultery. The vast majority of marriages can and should be saved.

Researchers have found, in fact, that unsatisfactory marriages do not poorly affect children. Children thrive on their parents' mutual presence in their lives, regardless of how much satisfaction the parents are feeling or not feeling. The only cases where children do not thrive in marriages are when there is high conflict. The risk factors for children in high conflict homes are close to those of children in broken homes. However, this does not mean that high conflict couples should therefore divorce for the sake of the children; rather, they should work to resolve their conflicts more amicably, seeking spiritual and professional help if need be, and arrange times to discuss hot issues when the children are not present or listening.³² Gallagher and Waite have pointed out in their research that many marriages change in nature over time. Couples who reported that their marriages were unhappy reported five years later that their marriages had changed; they were happier. Some were much happier. Commitment saw these couples through and rewarded them with satisfactory marriages—outcomes well worth waiting for.³³

Investing time, creating safety

Maintaining an unchanging commitment requires giving to the marriage the time it needs in order to keep it thriving. There are many subtle ways to escape in marriage, from preoccupation with work or children to indulgence in too much television watching, or other hobbies. People sometimes do these things to avoid facing difficult emotions or subjects or to avoid intimacy itself, which many people find threatening. Sometimes they do not invest in their marriages out of sheer inertia. Escaping may bring temporary joy, but it will not bring long-lasting marital satisfaction. Faithfulness requires that couples make the time and conserve the energy to face one another consistently and creatively and continue to invest in their relationships, including sexually.

A marriage built on unchanging, steadfast love provides emotional safety, which allows relationships to thrive. Commitment soothes relational fears and opens the way for intimacy. The partner who fears abandonment, for instance—a common relational fear—will be soothed by the other partner’s commitment and will gradually feel secure and will thrive within the marital bond. A partner who feels threatened by a loss of autonomy in such a close relationship—another common relational fear—will also be soothed by commitment. Commitment allows for freedom—the freedom to let go and explore new horizons because the home base is secure.

Unchanging devotion is the practical condition needed by the unconscious mind for the achievement of maximum personal and mutual growth. Marital therapist Harville Hendrix says, “I want couples to know that, in order to obtain maximum psychological and spiritual growth, they need to stay together not for three months or three years or even three decades, but for all of their remaining years.”³⁴ Commitment is the ground that marital love needs in order to blossom.

5. *Faithful*

Unique to the marital relationship, of course, is sex. With sex added to the picture in marital relationships, faithfulness takes on new dimensions of meaning and significance.

To attain oneness, men and women need to be sexually faithful to one another. The reasons for this are many. The sexual act, becoming “one flesh,” establishes a unique bond between a man and a woman. Therefore, people cannot become one with one person, then one with another, then one with another physically without tearing themselves apart psychically. Catherine Wallace, author of *For Fidelity*, maintains that a deep psychological and emotional union is physically enacted in sexual intercourse. Not only the body is involved. “We cannot split ourselves into parts,” she says. “Body and heart or soul are one.”³⁵ Certain depths of a person’s emotional and psychological being simply cannot be revealed to

anyone other than the spouse. Since the sexual relationship symbolizes and embodies the intimacy of marriage, a person's sexuality should not be revealed to anyone but a person's spouse (see Part V).

"With my body I thee worship," say the Anglican wedding vows, putting sexuality in marriage within a framework of worship and holiness. Indeed, Reverend Moon sees the sexual organs of husband and wife as representing the Holy of Holies in the Jewish tradition (Hebrews 9.3). As such, they are inviolate, belonging only to one's spouse and no other. One's marital partner is the only "high priest" or "priestess" who is qualified to come worship in the temple of one's body.

The sexual act is an irrevocable bonding between two people, which therefore has no place outside of holy matrimony. Theologian Derrick Sherwin Bailey calls sexual intercourse "the psychophysical seal" of marriage.³⁶ He maintains that when sexual intercourse occurs "falsely"—that is, not under the aegis of marriage—the seal is still irrevocably made, bonding two people who have no intentions of fulfilling the other portions of becoming one. This interferes with their ability to become one with the person they eventually choose to share their life with.

From God's point of view, sexual intercourse with anyone besides one's lawfully wedded spouse, either before or after marriage, results in difficult entanglements of soul and psyche and possible interference in what should be a clear lineage. This is why His laws about it are so stringent.

Only if the marriage bed is inviolate can two vulnerable beings meet and become as one. The intimacy and oneness that people long for in life is available only on the foundation of deep and abiding trust. Trust is built upon the virtues inherent in true love—other-centeredness, service and sacrifice, forgiveness and unchanging commitment to one another.

Marriage and Redemption

Reverend Moon has called a person's marriage partner his or her "second Messiah." Both spouses participate in the very work of God and become instruments of His restoration as they strive for true love in their relationship. Marriage reveals each to the other in a way that no other relationship can. It has the potential to redeem them as they practice true love that penetrates into the innermost being of the other person and helps heal the undeveloped or wounded places.

The relationship between a man and a woman was at the core of the human Fall (see Chapter 20). Hence, relations between men and women have been visited by difficulty and misunderstanding ever since. The centering of marriage upon God and the striving to practice true love—divine love—within marriage may transform it into an instrument of His healing. This basic truth has caused psychologists like Harville Hendrix to sense the value of marriage in bringing people to completion through a redemptive, understanding love that seeks to "re-parent" the other and restore the wounds of childhood. In Reverend Moon's view, the Blessing of marriage restores the very first wounds between God and the first ancestors, reaching into a history and a future that includes but is greater than the couple themselves.

If a couple focuses upon God and they practice and adhere to the virtues needed to make a marriage flourish, marriage can be salvific. As love advances toward the unconditional through the special potential available in the spouse's realm of heart, it provides the basis for launching into the most advanced realm and the one which most closely resembles the heart of God: the love of parents for their children.

Chapter 18

Parents as the Image of God

The love between parents and children is closer to the qualification of the truth—that is, unchanging and everlasting—than the love between husband and wife The love going from the parent to child is the trunk line of love, the central point which does not change from age to age.

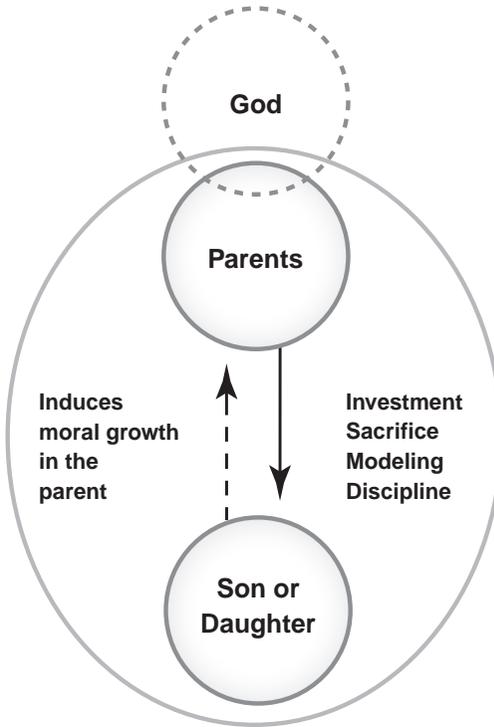
—Sun Myung Moon

Reverend Moon has said that the fundamental relationship between God and humankind is that of a father and his children. Using a parent's heart as a key, we may know much about the heart of God.

Parental love reflects the heart of God most fully. God is a parent before anything else. The Judeo-Christian scriptures clearly depict God as a father. In explaining the heart of God in the New Testament, Jesus frequently used parental examples: the father of the prodigal son, the father who takes care of the lilies of the field who will surely take care of human beings; the father who will not give his child a stone when asked for bread, nor a serpent when asked for a fish. Saint Paul said that our faith makes us cry out to God: “Abba!” which not only means “Father,” but which is a familiar and warm term akin to “Papa” or “Daddy.” In other faith traditions, God is depicted as a parent as well. In the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha is called the father of the world. In Confucianism, traditional African

faiths, and Hinduism, God is referred to as being both a father and a mother to humankind.¹

Parental love resembles God's in that it is the very definition of the unconditional. Parents give and give and forget what they have given, compelled by their love to give some more. Even though fathers and mothers cannot anticipate how their children will turn out (experiencing with God the breathless anticipation involved in having children who have free will), their continual caring is the surest lifeline for even the most incorrigible child.



The Parent's Realm of Heart

Experiencing the heart of a parent while on earth is an important part of becoming one with God, resembling God, and knowing God. The need and desire to have children is more than a fact of biology. It arises from the heart's deep yearning to extend and multiply, fulfilling one of life's great purposes (see Chapter 3). Instinctively, people know they need this life experience for the greatest fulfillment. They have a built-in need to give love on this level, and they will experience some frustration and emptiness if they do not.

Edifying Impact of Parenthood

When they become parents, people feel a sense of life-altering transition. "The birth of our first child was one of the high points of my life," said one young father. "There was something about Jack's birth and the things that happened around it that was really a passage." A young mother said she felt she had been given the keys to an exclusive club she had not known existed until parenthood made her a member.

Parents even constitute a kind of subculture all their own. One survey found that the most marked differences of attitudes on cultural issues are between those who have children and those who do not. These differences transcend economic, political, racial and other demographic factors.² Parents' attitudes on social issues take into account how those matters will affect the lives of the next generation, specifically their children, for whom they want the very best. This illustrates that parenthood marks a passage into a new way of looking at things that is powerfully focused on the welfare of another—powerfully focused on true love.

In less dramatic circumstances, parents give their lives daily for their children. The former model who never left the house without her makeup sits happily with tousled hair, a stained shirt, and a face she hasn't even had time to wash as her children bound around her. The former hippie takes a night job on top of his day job to be able to buy a house with a yard for his children. The heating systems

repairman who never finished high school salts savings away so his children can go to college. In these ways, every day, ordinary parents sacrifice themselves for the sake of their children.

Parental love sometimes calls forth the noblest and most unselfish emotions and actions from otherwise ordinary people. Jesus said that no greater love existed than the willingness to lay down one's life for others. Rare is the parent who would not sacrifice his or her life for the sake of the child. Travis, a father from Georgia, said that when he got a clean bill of health on a cancer test, he didn't care so much for himself. "If I had it, I had it, I figured. The only thing that concerned me was I didn't want my kids growing up without a dad."

Moral Growth

Indeed, children call forth this response in parents' hearts. Brian Volck, a successful pediatrician, chose to adopt a Central American girl in addition to his own two healthy children. He reflected on his motivation for doing so. Children, he finds, "present me with opportunities to love when I would rather be alone, to be gentle when I would rather be efficient and to surrender when I would rather be in control."³ Children require a person to give of themselves, to tax and expend themselves, to be patient and nurturing in regard to another person's vulnerabilities. This, in turn, spurs on the parents' growth in heart.

Attending to children's needs often comes at a personal cost—the sacrifice of the parent's interests, plans, and desires. Most parents recognize that on the deepest level it is a joy to make sacrifices on behalf of their children. Nevertheless, being a good parent means putting up with the mess of an art project on the kitchen table. It means answering the fiftieth question in a row while trying to prepare dinner. It means resisting the impulse to resort to "Because I said so, that's why!" when confronted with a defiant 15-year-old demanding to know why she is not allowed to stay out late when everyone else in school does it. It means forgoing that new car

to pay for a son or daughter's college expenses. More than any other activity in life, parenting means self-sacrifice. David Elkind, a child psychologist at Tufts University, said, "If it is to be done well, child-rearing requires, more than most activities of life, a good deal of de-centering from one's own needs and perspectives."⁴

Parenthood also can open up whole new ways of looking at things and spur one onto greater moral responsibility. One well-known actor gave up alcohol when he came into his home drunk one morning and found his infant staring at him in pure amazement. He realized that he was out of sync with himself, with his child, and with any natural state of being. He roused himself up to start taking more responsibility. Eldridge Cleaver, a former Black Panther who was trained as a communist in the former Soviet Union, experienced transformation when his daughter was born. Surely, he thought, this beautiful child, and the love he felt for her, were not products of an economic system. Experiencing true, other-centered love, Cleaver began to know there must be a God, and that the scheme of things must be significantly different than Marx or Lenin made it. He went on to change his life.

These are the kinds of impetuses toward moral growth the parent's realm of heart provides. The parent's realm is most conducive to moral growth. No other role in life expands the heart and strengthens character like the experience of being a parent. Every step in raising children brings new challenges, demands more investment, and thus opens up new dimensions of heart and love. This is why the experience of parenting is crucial for a person's overall growth as a human being. The parent's realm of heart is the fullest, most profound and encompassing expression of the true love that has been developing throughout the previous realms.

Parenting as Gateway into the Heart of God

Parenting is, as one mother said, the decision to "have your heart go walking around outside your body."⁵ To love as a parent loves carries risk, for there is always the possibility of loss. This

vulnerability, this new access the world has to one, stretches a person's heart in a way no other experience can approximate. The heart of a parent beats for another. It is the epitome of loving truly. As such, it is the best instruction and experience in understanding the heart of God, who let His heart out at risk when He vested it eternally in the hearts of humankind.

The parent tastes the feelings, thoughts, and impressions the Parent God has gone through in relationship to His children. God was overjoyed at the time of the creation of human beings. All of His creation prior to that point was "good"; the creation humankind was "very good." Then He could rest, having achieved the crowning point of all He had striven for. The parents of a newborn may experience this greatest of all joys in a similar way. After much labor and concern, the child is born healthy, functioning, bursting with potential and vested with all the best wishes and hopes of the parents. Bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, dependent for his or her very sustenance on the nutrients provided by the mother's body, dependent for his or her very life on the parents' good offices, the child enraptures the parents in a web of intense caring. Parents find themselves making vows that they will do anything—conquer any foe, scale any height, do whatever is required all the days of their lives—to nourish and enhance the life of their child. This total giving and sacrifice brings with it an indescribable joy.

When God's children rebelled against him in the Garden of Eden—and all cultures have some sort of story of "paradise lost" based on a human mistake—God's suffering began. He had been betrayed by the ones He had loved and hoped in the most. His dreams were shattered; hell was created; He foresaw untold suffering for His children cut off from His love as they were. Reverend Moon has said, the human Fall "can be condensed into one sentence: Human beings lost their parents. Therefore, the history of man has been a search for parents . . . [E]veryone is like an orphan living in an orphanage." Strife and murder in the next generation, and the multiplication of many crimes, the agony of a history of

warfare, the general estrangement and mistrust between those meant to love each other as brothers and sisters—God's parental heart has been tried sorely again and again and again. Yet His love holds; He cannot abandon His children to the destiny they have created for themselves.

Earthly parents experience similar feelings. When a child rebels, disobeys, gets into trouble, or is defiant and accusing, the parents' dreams of love and harmony are sorely tried. Even good children who go on to become successes in life give their parents gray hairs sometimes with the mistakes they make, the attitudes they adopt, the friends they seek out. Parenting can feel like walking a tightrope, with the relationship of a lifetime hanging in the balance. Sometimes the parents' dreams are shattered by the actions of the child. The promise of the very early years has turned into a potential nightmare of regret.

Ever Believing, Ever Hopeful

Yet, like God, most parents find deep in their hearts a reservoir of love for their children that cannot be denied and from which hope springs up ever new. The murderer's mother cries out to the court, "But he was always such a good boy!" and continues to believe that someday her boy will be kind and good again. The delinquent boy's father decides that he will cut back work time to spend more time with his son, trying to build and rebuild. The mother, frustrated by her daughter's poor performance in school, nevertheless hauls home stacks of remedial books from the library and sits down with the child to painstakingly go over them with her. Parents' never-give-up hearts toward their children and their willingness to work to improve things echo God's heart of restoration. As Reverend Moon has said, "true parents are God-centered parents."⁶

They reflect His determination and labor to save His children, shown in Him by giving revelations, creating religions, raising up prophets, sages, and teachers—inspiring, exhorting, teaching and helping throughout the long course of history. In fact, it is in the

parental heart alone, centered upon God's, that humankind's hope for the resolution of its difficulties lies. "Only with parental love can the problems of the world be solved," said Reverend Moon.⁷

The Masculine and Feminine Sides of Parenting

Parents also reflect the heart of God through their masculine and feminine love. This is why harmony in the spouse's realm is foundational to good parenting. A united husband and wife balance and integrate the different strengths of motherly and fatherly love. Research has shown that a balanced approach to parental authority pairs high levels of compassion and care with an equally high degree of firmness. Psychologist Diane Baumrind calls this "authoritative parenting." She found that children of authoritative parents are the most well adjusted and well-behaved.⁸

Interestingly, the two sides of authoritative parenting—high levels of both warm supportiveness and fairly strict control—seem to be embodied in the different types of love a father and a mother bring to parenting. A harmonious partnership allows the parents to integrate the complementary dimensions of parental love—the "soft" maternal side and the "hard" paternal side.

These two kinds of love reflect the love of God. God is Mother and Father together, perfectly suited for the good nurturing of human beings. The love of God is eternal, absolute, unique and unchanging, reflecting feminine and masculine elements of true love (see Chapter 12).

God Is Merciful Yet Strict

God is faithful when we are unfaithful; forgiving when we are undeserving; healing when we have inflicted wounds upon ourselves and others; willing to cleanse us when we have dirtied ourselves again and again and again. This feminine side of God is always ready to see the reasons behind our wrongful behavior—to our underlying need and outcry for love. No matter what we do or have done, this love comes to us and cradles us in a warm, white,

bosom of love, sometimes thought of symbolically as a gentle white dove with healing, enveloping wings. This is the abiding, feminine aspect of God's love. God as Mother always sees the potential goodness in the person. She sees the original child, Her own creation, whom She labored to bring to life.

At the same time, the masculine or paternal side of God's love enjoins and exhorts us to do well. He does not give grace in the same measure whether we are good or bad. This is manifestly so. Good people radiate the spirit of God. Other people recognize something "special" about them and are naturally drawn to the love their spirits are charged with. People who are more sinful tend to repel others: the dishonest glint in the eye, the selfish curve of the mouth, the edge of sarcasm in the voice tends to make other people back away. These people are not imbued with the grace and love of God to the same degree that more righteous people are. God as Father has no condition upon which He can bless them.

As Father, God commands us to live up to certain non-negotiable standards and warns us of the natural consequences that will follow if we do not. He sends prophets to challenge us to justice. He calls believers to courage and sometimes to extraordinary self-sacrifice in order to be loyal sons and daughters. He asks for faith, charity, kindness, love, tithes and offerings, prayers, fasts, and vigils as conditions for His blessings to pour down. He enjoins us to go out and transform our world in His name.

Foundations in the Earlier Realms of Heart

It is clear from the above that parental love is enhanced by success in the spouse's realm of heart. The parent's realm of heart is supported by success in the other earlier realms as well. A good parent often was a well-nurtured, responsive and aware child. Remembering when he was a child, he can identify with his own children's experiences and empathize with their feelings.

Remembering the love he received in the child's realm from his own parents, he imitates what they did for him and tries to improve

upon it. Gillian, a mother in her thirties, says, "My mother always remembered from day to day whether I'd had a headache or stomachache the night before. She knew if I'd had a test that day in school and always asked how it had gone. I wanted to be as attentive a parent as she was, so I practiced remembering those little things about my kids' lives and asking about them. They were amazed that I remembered, and they felt cared for because of it."

The sibling's realm of heart also provides valuable lessons for parenthood. Shifts of childcare for younger siblings when the parents are busy or tired, babysitting, interacting with younger children in a neighborhood, and contributing to the family welfare through chores all develop a youngster's heart in a parental way.

Teenaged Andrea became a "big sister" to a little boy named Michael through a school-sponsored service project at a home for disabled children. Michael was a crippled and sickly child who was always off by himself, unresponsive to everyone around him. The paid staff of the home had little time to play with or cuddle individual children, so the students took care of this. Every day Andrea held Michael in her lap. She pressed her cheek on his and rocked him for ten minutes before her leaving time.

Michael showed no visible interest in either the cuddling or in Andrea. Yet, one day as she was rocking him in her lap, she absent-mindedly lifted her cheek from his. To her surprise, Michael's hand reached up and pressed her cheek back to where it was on his, and he began rocking furiously. She felt his smile. Andrea realized that her care was reaching him, and communication between the two was established.

From then on Michael began to change. His face grew full of expression. He laughed and played with other children, squealed delightedly when Andrea showed up and crawled exuberantly to her. Andrea felt she had witnessed a miracle, and she never forgot the experience.

Now grown-up with children of her own, Andrea muses: "Sometimes when my own kids are driving me crazy, I think about

Michael and how love changed him. Then I'm able to be more patient and loving with them." Andrea's experience in the sibling's realm of heart helped to make her a better mother.

Opportunity for Healing and Restoration

Lack of emotional and social development in the previous phases of life is key to understanding disabilities in the parental realm. Many a parent has tiptoed into their child's bedroom and felt sorrowful when they looked down at the small, sleeping face after a conflict-ridden day. They may regret yelling at or punishing the child, realizing that they acted more out of their own fears, frustrations, ignorance and lack of experience than serious fault in the child, and they begin to reflect on their own emotional stability and inner life. A reflective moment such as this often spurs a renewed sense of determination to invest and give more, thus expanding the parental realm of heart.

The parental realm of heart also has the potential to heal and restore wounds and shortfalls from the previous realms. Wallerstein found that members of "rescue" marriages—marriages where the partners "rescued" one another from the pain of abuse or neglect in their childhood pasts—derived some of their greatest satisfaction from being good parents to their children and earning their respect and regard.⁹ It seemed to reverse the miserable cycle they had experienced in their own child's realm, which they had feared perpetuating.

An interesting remediation of the child's realm of heart through marriage and later parenthood is depicted in the movie *Shadowlands*, based on the true-life experiences of novelist C. S. Lewis. Lewis lost his mother when he was nine years old. Because of this event, he insulated himself emotionally from then on, carefully constructing a world for himself where he never lost anything, not even an argument. However, a woman came into his life later on who was courageously bearing her own losses. She was raising a nine-year-old son by herself; her husband was a chronic adulterer

and alcoholic. Lewis grew to love her, but his love was tinged with the knowledge of loss—she had terminal cancer. Still, he chose to love her, entering the conjugal realm of heart and reversing the self-protective decision he had made as a young boy never to risk loss again. When the woman died, Lewis was able to reach out to love the woman's son—a boy who must have reminded him so much of himself at that age, having lost a mother. Through parenting the boy, Lewis experienced healing and reconciliation of his current and past losses.

Challenges as Children Grow

Theodore Reik expressed poetically, “Romance fails us—and so do friendships—but the relationship of mother and child remains indelible and indestructible—the strongest bond upon this earth.”¹⁰ Even so, this profound connection requires continual investment to keep it strong. As new parents can testify, parental love deepens as they care for the child. The first feedings, first bath, the first time the crying child is successfully comforted all augment a bond that is essentially unbreakable. As the son or daughter grows in independence and will, the parents' investment and commitment must grow likewise.

Psychologist M. Scott Peck comments on the large numbers of women who are unable to love their children beyond the children's infancy. During the child's infancy, they are ideal mothers, adoring their babies, taking excellent care of them, blissfully contented in their motherhood. Yet when their children turn two and begin to assert their own wills—in short, begin to show themselves to be separate individuals who will not always utterly submit to the mother's will and desires—then the mother becomes uninterested in the child and begins wanting to have another so that she will have an utterly compliant being around to “love.” Or such a woman will pursue the infant children of neighbors, neglecting her own maturing ones. Peck says that the “love” the mother feels for her infants is “parental instinct” but that real parental love is a great

deal more complex and difficult. “It is judicious giving and judicious withholding as well. It is judicious praising and judicious criticizing. It is judicious arguing, struggling, confronting, urging, pushing and pulling in addition to comforting. It is leadership . . . it requires thoughtful and often painful decision-making.”¹¹

Setting Limits and Providing Adversity

One aspect of parenting is educating children to shoulder responsibility, with the objective of raising them to be productive and sacrificial adults themselves. This means setting limits and having requirements. Psychologist John Rosemond recommends that parents give children all of what they need, but a small—very small—amount of what they merely want.¹² Giving a frugal allowance, limiting TV and video game hours, limiting treats and entertainments, and enforcing rules and responsibilities, letting a child bear the natural consequences of his or her behavior—all these things benefit a child enormously in the end.

“Sweet are the uses of adversity,” said Shakespeare. Indeed, the child who faces no challenges, who has every path cleared, who always wins and never loses and always gets his or her way, is unprepared for life as an adult. This type of education is particularly necessary in developed societies where many hardships of the past no longer exist. A wise grandfather wrote a letter to his grandchildren:

We tried so hard to make things better for our kids that we made them worse. For my grandchildren, I'd like better: I hope you learn to make your own bed and mow the lawn and wash the car. And I really hope nobody gives you a brand new car when you are sixteen. I hope you get a black eye fighting for something you believe in. I hope you have to share a bedroom with your younger brother. And . . . when he wants to crawl under the covers with you because he's scared, I hope you let him. These things I wish for you—tough times, disappointment, hard work and happiness.¹³

Coupled with the certainty that he or she is deeply loved by the parents, a child is thus well-nurtured. He or she begins to gain the self-esteem that accomplishment and shouldering responsibilities bring. Such a young person looks forward to adulthood with confidence of reaching the goals he or she has set.

Once a child has reached adulthood, the parental realm changes. Parents continue to guide, aid and advise their adult children as well as they can, and their words and opinions continue to have power. Yet they must exercise greater wisdom and caution as to when to hang on, when to let go, when to advise and intervene, and when they must honor their adult child's decisions whether they agree with them or not. It is particularly important to recognize and support the grown child's marriage and parenting responsibilities and autonomy in these fields. Wise parents are accessible, yet they let their children lead their own lives. Less skillful parents either intervene too much or are consistently unavailable. The most effective and loving parents find that however far the umbilical cord stretches, it never really breaks. The sons and daughters come willingly back, and return to the parents' orbit. This is a source of increasing mutual affirmation, comfort and support.

Modeling

Parenthood is a form of "discipling" as well as disciplining children. Imparting the parents' values and beliefs in a way that persuades and wins the child over is an art, a science, and an undertaking of faith. Parents are able to share more deeply with older children as their powers of understanding, reason and empathy grow. It is truly satisfying to parents when their child fully ingests a lesson. Sharing what they have realized, enjoyed and treasured in life, and seeing their child respond, helps validate the parents' life and experiences, enriching their sense of their own journey and legacy.

The most powerful teaching is by example.¹⁴ Children are more likely to do as a parent does than what a parent says. According to

psychologist Joseph Pearce, the greater part of the child's mind-brain structure is imprinted with the character and example of significant people in their lives. Only about 5 percent is available to respond to words and instruction¹⁵—thus the expression, “Who you are speaks so loudly I can’t hear what you are saying.”

Of course, parents are children’s first and most significant role models. Children closely observe their parents’ interactions with each other, other family members, friends and neighbors. From this they learn how to treat other people. Likewise, families with parental conflict and unresolved anger tend to have children who are more aggressive.¹⁶ Parents teach respect through modeling respect, caring through modeling caring, responsibility through modeling responsibility. A virtuous example is the most effective moral education.

Thus, one of the greatest challenges of the parent realm of heart is the continued, active and effortful moral striving that is called for on the part of the parents to be good examples. A child’s growing ability to notice and comment upon his parents’ lapses and inconsistencies challenges parents to examine their own values and whether they are living up to their own preachments. Psychologist Robert Coles points out that moral guidance is often a mutual experience between parent and child.¹⁷

Loretta, a parent of four children, agrees:

“Just as I began to tell my kids how important it is to be honest, I remembered the time I told a little white lie to a friend about my schedule being too busy that week to get together. Actually, I just didn’t want to drive so far out to her house. After our honesty lesson, I called up my friend and said, ‘You know, the drive discourages me, so we don’t get together as often. Can we meet halfway and go out for coffee?’ She was so glad because she’d seen through my excuses and thought I just didn’t like her any more. Giving my kids moral guidance keeps me on my toes too.”

Examining one's motives

Good parenting requires continual examination of one's own motives, to make sure right examples and right actions are done for the right reasons too. It means asking: "Am I doing this for fear of what my friends at church will think of my child—and consequently of me? Or am I doing it because I truly love and want the best for my child?" These kinds of moral musings lead to growth in the parents' heart as well as contributing to their parental effectiveness.

True love is the surest guide to discipline. If the parents' heart is in the right place, the child will sense it. According to Stosny, regardless of what they do, if parents have compassion for their children, almost anything they do will turn out all right.¹⁸ Compassion is an expression of love that means literally to feel strongly with someone, and includes a willingness to share his or her difficulties. A father or mother's compassion for his or her children means patience and understanding of their developmental limitations, a benevolent outlook on the child, and relying on support and encouragement rather than shame or harsh punishment to awaken the heart and conscience and reestablish good behavior. It means that admonishment and punishment are always given for the sake of the child, never to vent the parents' worries, fears, or frustrations.

The power of example, of course, does not mean parents have no need to impart firm and explicit ideas of right and wrong. Moral instruction is one of the greatest investments a parent makes in a child. It is like planting a seed that bears fruit later in life. While a young person may not seem to appreciate or absorb moral instruction, in fact, parents may be assured that a significant amount is sinking in. By explicitly passing on rules and morality, often through the use of scriptures, the parent informs the child's conscience and reaches the child's heart. These inner faculties will set off some alarm bells when basic values are being transgressed away from the presence of the parents. Children want and need moral guidance from their parents; adolescents are often crying out for it.¹⁹

Discipline

The foremost purpose of parenting is to produce righteous young men and women who are a blessing to themselves, their families, their neighborhoods, communities, and world. This requires a certain amount of discipline, on the part of the parent toward the child and on the part of the parent toward him- or herself.

While it is tempting to overindulge children and give in to them on many fronts because of parental love for them, keeping the long view in mind—the purpose of parenting mentioned above—helps stiffen parental love into the disciplinary mode. The parent will also grow through taking moral stands with the child, enforcing and following up on decisions, and enduring the child's discomfort with certain requirements and consequences, knowing that the pain will result in growth as surely as the child's growing "limbs" will sometimes ache with the "growing pains" associated with sudden spurts of growth.

A spoiled, irresponsible child is not a child who has been loved truly, for he or she has not been equipped with what a person needs to get on in the world. The world will not love the child as the parent does; the world will expect performance. It is more truly loving to equip a child with the competencies and values he or she needs to make his or her way well in the world, being a benefit to others rather than solely to the self.

External conscience

Parents' precepts serve as a sort of external conscience until and as the child's internal conscience develops as a guide. The laying down of precepts, prescriptions, rules, and consequences is all a part of raising a child with true love, and the follow-through of punishment for transgressions is extremely important.

One couple tells of a long-promised trip to Disneyland coming like a dream come true to them and their two children. In those days, there was no law about seatbelts, so the children, in their excitement, were bouncing up and down and hitting the ceiling of

the car with their heads. The parents gave them a warning or two, and at last told them that if they continued the bouncing, the trip to Disneyland would not take place. Sure enough, the children bounced their heads against the ceiling again, leaving the parents with a painful choice.

Most parents would be tempted to allow the transgression “this time” because the trip was so important to the family. However, these parents opted to enforce what they had said. They dropped the children off at a relative’s and went to Disneyland themselves—by their own testimony, one of the longest and most miserable days of their lives.

However, they said that in the end the pain was worth it. Though their children still chide them lightly over the decision, in fact, the parents testify they never had a serious problem with their children after that. Their children knew absolutely that they meant what they said, and the children toed the line very carefully from early childhood on through the stormy adolescent years and into their own adulthoods.²⁰ This practice in willpower and taking of the long view of true love paid this family a handsome dividend—giving them a much richer family and more peaceful and fruitful family life than one day at an amusement park would have.

Grandparent's Love

Psychologist Abraham Maslow labeled grandparental love, “The purest love for the being of the other.”²¹ Grandparental love is an important extension of the parental realm of heart. Character in children is formed more completely and securely when three generations interact, and older people fulfill their potential to gift the younger generations with their wisdom, experience, and knowledge.

Grandparents are an invaluable source of rootedness for a child. Children who have relationships with their grandparents are more trusting, calmer, and quieter than those who do not.²² Grandparents are the link to all that has gone before and they give a sense of con-

tinuity and reassurance. They represent the past, while the parents represent the present, and the children represent the future. Grandparents help children to know what life was like long before they were born—where they have come from and the kind of people they have sprung from. They are the family's link to the chain of human history.

“My grandparents gave me a deep sense that things would turn out right in the end,” says one husband.²³ Grandparents can provide a “safe haven” when their children and grandchildren are experiencing turbulence in their relationships. Certain of who they are, grandparents stand for verities of the human experience that go beyond current fashions. The perspective of another generation, given with wit and candor, enriches and enlivens all.

The grandparental heart has an innate need to give from their lifetime storehouse of knowledge and experience to nurture and enrich the younger generations. Erikson and his colleagues have characterized the primary challenge in old age as one of “integrity versus despair” with the possibility of culminating in a profound awareness or higher sense of self.²⁴ In this last stage of physical life, individuals have the capacity to experience their personhood as that which “transcends time-bound identities.”²⁵

To fulfill their growth potential in this realm of heart, grandparents need and want opportunities to give. “The real point of having kids is to get the grandchildren,” jokes a retired restaurant proprietor. “Half the time I find myself thinking about how I can either help them or see them.” Grandparents' hearts go out without reservation to their grandchildren, whom they commonly describe as “wonderful” and “perfect.”²⁶ As they watch their grown children shoulder the responsibilities of adulthood, most are moved to help as much as they can. It is not unusual for grandparents to provide hours of free childcare, help with meals and laundry, monetary loans or gifts. It is their joy to give to their children and their grandchildren and to aid them in life's journey.

Those who do not have grandchildren will often seek surrogate experiences. Teresa, a mother of two in Nebraska, met an elderly widow, Belinda, in her small town. Belinda was lonely and delighted to get to know Teresa and her two young children. She brought over jars of homemade jellies and jams and fresh vegetables from her garden. She gave the mother her phone number and told her to call any time she needed to. Belinda babysat for free and even offered to help Teresa clean house. One day Teresa couldn't help asking the elderly widow, "Why do you give us so much?" Belinda replied, "You give to me by letting me give to you."

For what they give, grandfathers and grandmothers in turn receive affirmation and comfort that their legacy will live on. The curious grandchild who absorbs their stories, their insights, and their values becomes a keeper of the family's—and even the community's and the nation's—flame. In that way, they know they have made a difference and left some influence on the world. This is their link to immortality, and it is deeply gratifying.

The Royalty of Love

Reverend Moon asked, "Who is the oldest grandparent of all—the father and mother of all the generations?" Of course, the answer is God. To look down over three generations from a position of love is to know on a smaller scale the heart of God gazing at His generations of children. Grandparents stand almost in the position of God in a family. They are retired monarchs full of wisdom, experience and advice to support the reigning monarchs, the parents, in the day-to-day running of the kingdom. The children are like princes and princesses—young and free of many responsibilities yet being groomed to someday assume the mantle of the family themselves. When three generations live and interact together, it is like a royalty of love: a small kingdom where each has his or her own role and place of honor.

Nurturing a child from infancy to adulthood entails tremendous sacrifice and skill; it is an exercise of the heart second to none.

Therefore, it is conducive to the most expansive moral growth. The parental realm of heart, which includes the experience of being a grandparent, is the summit of the moral growth dynamic embodied in the family, for it is the realm that most resembles the heart of God.

Part V

Love and Sexuality

Chapter 19

The Meaning of Sexuality

*The most important education is instruction in how to
deal with sexual love.
—Sun Myung Moon*

Of all the awesome powers of love, sexual love is perhaps the most formidable. It is inextricably intermingled not only with the impulse to bond for life but also the creation of life, and the passing down of genes and lineage. Indeed, sexuality itself taps into the deepest aspects of being human. It is a power as deep and elemental as the wind or the sea and just as impossible to tame or even fully comprehend. For this reason, educating for true love necessarily involves imparting insights about sexuality and coaching in directing this marvelous force.

Sex within its rightful place of marriage is an expression of deepest trust and affection, bonding the two partners together in deep communion and joy. Spouses' physical communion is the origin of families that in turn are the schools for learning love and what it means to be human. Sex outside of marriage, however, is like a fire outside of its hearth, a threat to all concerned. As both a primal urge and one of the highest possible pleasures, unless well disciplined, it is uniquely prone to compulsiveness that overrides the conscience.¹ For these reasons, religious traditions and societies throughout history have provided strong guidelines for sexual expression. Its importance cannot be overstated. "The moral man,"

reads a Confucianist text, “finds the moral law beginning in the relation between man and woman” (Doctrine of the Mean 12).²

Yet keeping sexuality only in the service of true love represents a formidable challenge. Because sexuality promises great pleasure, it invites every manner of misuse. Because it involves the whole person, distorted sexual attitudes and behaviors are particularly deeply rooted and hard to change. Celebrating sexuality while channeling it away from selfishness has always been a difficult task both to each individual and to society, but never more so than amidst the permissive standards of the present age. What is the true significance of sexuality? What is its meaning within marriage? What responsibilities are inherent in sexual love? What is the original standard for sexual morality? How can this address contemporary beliefs? We will explore these issues in this and the following chapters.

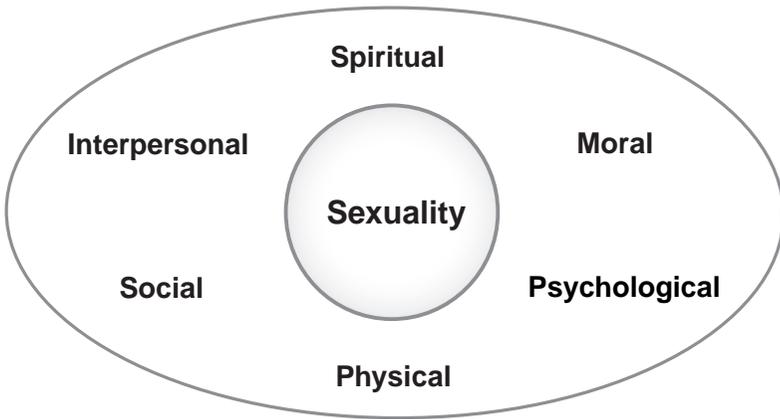
Sexuality and Its Significance

Sexuality of course is more than sex. It includes all that an individual possesses in mind and body that is male or female; it is the “aspect of our being that lies behind, produces and is given expression by our physical sexual characteristics and reproductive capacity,” in the words of Christian ethicist Stephen J. Grenz.³ One’s masculinity or femininity is “not operative in one restricted area of life but is rather at the core and center of our total life response,” as the Catholic Church has put it.⁴ This is why it is also fundamental to one’s sense of identity. We can no more imagine being neither man nor woman than we can comfortably tolerate not knowing the gender of another. Personhood itself is inescapably a sexual matter.

Because sexuality permeates personhood, then sexual relations have all the dimensions of a whole person. An individual has a material body, thoughts, feelings, conscience, connection to higher meaning, interconnections with the family, community and beyond. So it is with sexuality. There are the physical as well as the psychological aspects. There are interpersonal, social and cultural

factors too, as well as certain important moral and spiritual implications. Thus, sexual union is necessarily a person-to-person encounter, even when the intent is only for a body-to-body one. Much of the moral dimension of sexual expression has to do with these whole-person realities. It explains also why it is much more than just a private matter between partners.

Traditional ways of regarding the self and sexuality favor this more holistic view. “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh,” Genesis declares (2.24). Since “cleaves” represents intense bonding of the two partners, it suggests there is more than oneness of flesh as a result; some say a better translation is closer to “one person.”



Sexuality Reflects the Dimensions of the Whole Person

Reflects the Heart Impulse

Because male has no meaning apart from female, and vice versa, sexuality also means incompleteness (see Chapter 12). In this sense, the sex instinct is the biological counterpart to the spiritual heart impulse. Ethicist Lewis B. Smedes describes sexuality

as the “human impulse towards intimate communion.”⁵ It impels us towards a close connection with another person, in defiance of contemporary beliefs in individual self-sufficiency as well as our defensive reaction to isolate ourselves after yet another painful encounter.

Not only the sexual urge and act but also the very organs themselves all give obvious testimony to the principle of living for another and with another. This is at the core of what Pope John Paul II called the “nuptial meaning of the body,” that is, its capacity for union and communion through selfless giving.⁶ Rabbi Shmuley Boteach observes that sex is “simply the only human activity that physically necessitates another human being.”⁷ In this sense, the genital organs symbolize the desire of the heart for conjugal oneness. The sexual parts of the body are the only organs that cannot fulfill their fullest function without their counterpart in a member of the opposite sex; they are almost useless otherwise. It is the same with the spiritual heart; it cannot find fulfillment without the beloved either. Indeed, the heart and the sexual parts are connected. One moves the other; there is a mysterious link of reinforcement between the communion of lovers’ hearts and union of their genitals.

Thus, the man must offer his body to the woman for her to experience the meaning of her own physical sexuality, and vice versa. This primal, inescapable need thus draws the two sexes to bridge the divide and lend their strengths and concede their weakness for one another. In this way, the sexual urge embodies the innate push of masculinity and femininity towards oneness, towards greater love and completeness.

Sanctuary of the body

Moreover, it is this correspondence between the spiritual heart and the physical reproductive organs that is the basis for the universal regard for sexual modesty, even among peoples who do not wear clothes. Just as individuals show self-respect by revealing their heart only to special people in their lives, so people honor the sexual parts of the body by hiding them from public view. If the body is the

temple of the spirit, then this area represents the innermost sanctuary, the holiest place, the shrine and palace of love. A sense of the sacredness of the genital organs may have been behind the ancient Roman custom of men making oaths with their hand on their private parts. Certainly it helps to explain why Yahweh asked of Hebrew males to be circumcised and bear the mark of their special covenant with Him there.

Sacredness of Sexuality

The link between the heart and sexuality also implies its spiritual dimension. The way that partners utterly lose themselves during physical union has always suggested its transcendent side. This is one of the reasons people have historically posited sex as a spiritually elevating force in itself, heedless of its moral context, and even worshipped it. This kind of perennial fallacy coupled with the pernicious power of sex in general—not to mention the ease with which even spiritually based personal relationships can become sexualized and destructive—have all contributed to why some of the world religions tend to scrupulously separate sex from matters relating to God.

Thus, sex and spirituality are not commonly discussed together. Yet it is simply a further reflection of the unique and paradoxical position we humans occupy as spiritual yet embodied beings, the microcosm of heaven and earth. Sexuality in many ways reflects this most dramatically. The sex urge is an instinctual drive yet it allows participants to co-create an eternal being with God. It is a spiritual impulse towards oneness, even as it craves bodily expression and sensual play. It is a fount of carnal delight, while at the same time inviting a person into the vast possibilities of moral and spiritual growth present within the spouses' and parents' realms of heart.

God and Human Sexuality

The sexual act has great and unique significance to the Creator. This can best be grasped by considering lovemaking between a fully mature husband and wife. Such individuals would have achieved unity of mind and body, word and deed, each standing as a living mirror of the fullness of the Divine Parent's heart and character. As this resonates with the greater integrity within God, each would also be in communion with Him and attracting His joy and blessing. His interest would be amplified however when they came to the marriage bed. At the moment of conjugal union between them, the spirit and flesh join in their deepest oneness. Thus, the couple would be an even greater reflection of the Divine at this moment than before. This is not to mention the celebration of self-giving that their lovemaking represents. God naturally wants to participate in such a beautiful tribute to His own nature of unselfish love.

At the same time, their sexual intercourse also signifies the unity of the couple's masculinity and femininity. This is yet another facet of resembling the Creator, the origin of all the masculine and feminine natures in the manifest world. God delights in the dramatic interplay of opposites represented in the man and woman's sexual play that echoes the same harmony of extremes within Himself.

Finally, as yet another magnet for the Divine Parent, the marvel of spirit begetting spirit through the flesh is an inherent potential in the couple's intercourse. The union of husband and wife creates the context for God to give rise to a son or daughter, an eternal spiritual being through them—the greatest miracle of all. Thus God is captivated by the multidimensional beauty, fecundity and power of human sexual union, perhaps the most singularly sacred phenomenon in earthly life.

Vertical force of love

If the husband and wife's passionate embrace represents the most complete and potent kind of horizontal love, then divine grace

can be likened to a perfect vertical force of love that interpenetrates the couple at a ninety-degree angle. Through marital coupling, God's vertical love expands horizontally on earth. It also extends into the future through the power of conception and lineage.

Reverend Moon emphasizes that God is the third partner in the marriage bed of a true husband and wife; it is the most sacred place where heaven and earth merge and rejoice. Such a view is echoed in the Jewish writings that declare that the feminine aspect of God is present in marital relations. Islam has couples consecrating their lovemaking by offering a prayer. The Tantric yoga tradition speaks of sexual union as clearing all the body's charkas and opening a person up to higher energies.

The holiness of sexuality is the reason behind many of the religious traditions' prohibitions against fornication, adultery, homosexuality and lesser offenses. This negative emphasis invites charges of sexual repression. Yet one can readily argue that the purpose of these prohibitions is to highlight the sacredness, the unique importance and beauty of sexuality, and therefore it is a tribute to a fundamentally positive view of sex. In the Bible, even the older man is reminded, "Let your fountain be blessed and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer—may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love" (Proverbs 5.18-19). Traditional prohibitions also recognize how readily sexuality is corrupted and misdirected into idolatry and abuse of power. Undisciplined sexual desire reduces people to things to be exploited, consumed and possessed. Sexuality is also highly vulnerable to becoming compulsive. This is why the joys of sexual love are to be bounded by the moral responsibilities of marriage.

Sex in Marriage

Sexual relations are so bound up with the conjugal relationship that until recent centuries it was the defining and irrevocable act of marriage itself. What had begun as a promise between the partners and the families involved was now "consummated"—made

complete. Through physical union, it was believed that a blood bond had been established between the man and woman. Pressuring an unwed couple that had already engaged in sexual relations to marry was simply to formalize what had in some essential way already occurred. In this regard, earlier societies were more in touch with human realities than the contemporary world with its preference for contractual relations and recreational sex.

Just as conjugal love is unique in that it seeks to be shared with only with one partner, so genital sexual relations are its unique physical bonding process, shared only with one's mate. Within the context of the unselfishness, commitment and faithfulness of marriage, sex crowns the relationship with its own special glory. Since sex encompasses the partners in their totality, it is the very language and embodiment of commitment between two people who have pledged to join their lives and create a new family. This is one reason why the sexual relationship reaches its greatest fulfillment in married love. "Marriage is not just for the control of sex," writes Smedes, "it is for the liberation and fulfillment of sex."⁸ Just as the restrictions of the Japanese haiku form yield poetry of striking beauty and depth, so sexual love likewise reaches its zenith of power and beauty within and indeed because of the structure and boundaries of marriage. Let us explore in more detail eight aspects of the special role of sexual union in marriage.

Role of Sex in Marriage

1. Strengthens the bond and sense of exclusivity
2. Helps mend rifts and revitalize the relationship
3. Substantiates love for perpetuity
4. Symbolizes the expansiveness and fruitfulness of love
5. Represents the harmonizing of opposites
6. Encapsulates the moral work of marriage
7. Represents mutual submission to a higher purpose
8. Invites God to participate in the marriage

1. Strengthens the Bond and Sense of Exclusivity

Sex intermingles hearts and minds in a powerful bond. It is both the manifestation and the reinforcement of the couple's covenant with one another. Physical union fortifies the unique oneness of the spouses' lives in all the other aspects—emotionally, financially, as parents and in destiny. When daily life pulls the attention and energy towards children and other people in the home and community, sexual relations can reaffirm the central place the partner occupies in each spouse's life.

Physical intimacy calms and reassures in a way that complements verbal expressions of caring and gestures of thoughtfulness. Because it is an exclusive experience, a secret shared between spouses, it fosters a potent sense of intimacy and emotional security. Sexual relations create a deep-seated, nonrational attachment that grounds the marital commitment. Even at times when there may be little else in common during the shifting seasons of marriage, sex can be a reassuring point of connection until emotional closeness can be reestablished.

2. Helps Mend Rifts and Revitalize the Relationship

Sex is uniquely relaxing. The intoxicating feeling of togetherness and physical release, the all-absorbing sense of time standing still and being at the center of the universe provide a welcome relief from the stresses of daily life and the sadness of inevitable losses. Genesis speaks of Rebecca consoling Isaac after his mother's death by making love in the same way that the Book of Samuel tells of King David comforting Bathsheba after their child's death.

Further, the nonverbal physical communion of sex can help defuse heated arguments and petty divisive issues by reminding the couple of their essential commitment and mutual need. The playfulness of physical intimacy dispels the sense of threat that results from discord and nourishes the sense of friendship. Especially in the beginning of marriage when the spouses are learning to accommodate one another and many conflicts are arising,

the excitement of exploring sex together can be a grounding experience that carries the couple through hard times.

3. Substantiates Love for Perpetuity

Through sexual union, the love that otherwise would remain largely an emotional and spiritual bond between the husband and wife can be made substantial in two senses of the word. On one hand, there is the simple bodily oneness. On the other hand, there is the more important manifestation: through bearing children and perpetuating lineage. Sexuality is the means of participation in the circle of life, the great ongoing creativity and generativity of the universe and the legacy of one generation to another. Lineage is the aspect of sexuality that allows love to endure for more than one generation, notes Reverend Moon, and to have its imprint on eternity. From the viewpoint of a spiritual afterlife, the interdependence of mind and body means that conjugal love is anchored and rendered more complete through physical substantiation into lineage. Speaking from a physical standpoint, posterity represents material immortality.

As this instrument of lineage, sex represents the hope of ancestors for their love and life to have continuing presence on the earth. If a spouse's body represents the culmination of all his or her ancestors' bodies, and the reproductive organs represent the culmination of that individual's material and spiritual existence, then conjugal union is the means by which entire ancestral lines meet and mix in a fundamental way. It is here where hope finds its most potent focus. Through the mystery and miracle of love transmuting into new life, every generation looks to its newborns to represent a fresh beginning for the world, and hopes that somehow the distilled nobility of countless ancestors—and the grace of God—might bring forth one or myriad saviors. Thus, sexual relations always hold this lineal significance and promise.

4. Symbolizes the Expansiveness and Fruitfulness of Love

This same possibility of creating a new life—and perhaps many such lives—means that sexual intercourse represents the public quality of marital love that extends beyond the spouses themselves. Parents celebrate each child as a blessing and opportunity to demonstrate the fruitfulness of their love. In a similar way, a couple's sexual embrace symbolizes this basic receptivity to be used by providence to nurture the potential for goodness in the world and leave a productive legacy. This is not to mention the simple fact that sexual bonding is the very real underpinning of society and the nation, since this coupling is the very substance of marriage, and thus is the foundation of the family and the sustenance of the next generation.

5. Represents Harmonizing of Opposites

The act of sex is the most obvious way that man and woman combine their complementary powers. Plus and minus energies come together in explosive joy, like lightning and thunder that seizes the spouses and ripples through them. In Earnest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the lovers say that they feel the earth move when they make love. Certainly the heart is moved; couples are left as refreshed and revitalized as the earth after a summer storm. The union of opposites is also potently conveyed in the fruit of sex—the offspring. Nothing so dramatizes that two genders have become one as seeing the parents' faces blended into that of the son or daughter.

Moreover, sexual union is the object lesson in how to adapt to and support the opposite sex spouse in daily life. Intercourse is experienced so differently by men and women that it requires both genders to act contrary to their natural inclinations in order to accommodate one another. For example, the husband must learn to resist his urgent and focused arousal to wait until his wife is aroused. He has to learn to expand his focus beyond the genital act. The wife must learn to respond even when emotional connection is

limited or other conditions are less than ideal. Both sexes have to give up the notion that the other is like themselves or should be. A satisfying sexual relationship means they have to learn to understand each other's differences, appreciate the value of these differences and see from the other's perspective.

6. Encapsulates the Moral Work of Marriage

The deeply vulnerable, intimate and personal quality of sexual union brings out all the complexities of learning to love and be loved by one another. Practicing true love in marriage has many mundane manifestations, but sex is a special way. In the words of Grenz:

[The] most expressive symbol of the willingness to give of self freely and totally for the sake of the pleasure and well-being of the spouse, is the sex act. In this act a person gives fully and unashamedly and becomes fully vulnerable and open to the other.⁹

There must be humility and self-forgetfulness to learn how to satisfy the mate, yet there must be self-awareness and assertiveness to express one's desires. Tensions within the larger relationship must be brought out regularly and resolved or they interfere with erotic feelings. Communication must be frank yet sensitive. Differing needs and desires must be negotiated. Shifting moods, health and aging factors and the many seasons of the relationship itself must be taken into account, as do the changing duties of parenthood, work, caregiving and so on. Accommodating each other in lovemaking in all these ways over the years teaches countless lessons and develops character in one another. In this way, sexual relations encapsulate all the moral demands and rewards of the spouse's realm of heart.

7. Represents Mutual Submission to a Higher Purpose

Sexual intercourse is a physical and spiritual experience beyond one's control. Neither the husband nor the wife can fully manage either the sensations or the outcome. In this sense, both partners ultimately surrender to being used by forces greater than themselves, to fortify love, to create life, to perpetuate lineage. This is a metaphor for the Biblical exhortation that partners "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5.21). Further, it represents a certain vulnerability and naturalness with one another, like children before their parents, since both lay aside all facades in the moment of sexual climax. Perhaps this is a sense of the Biblical meaning of to "know" one another through making love.

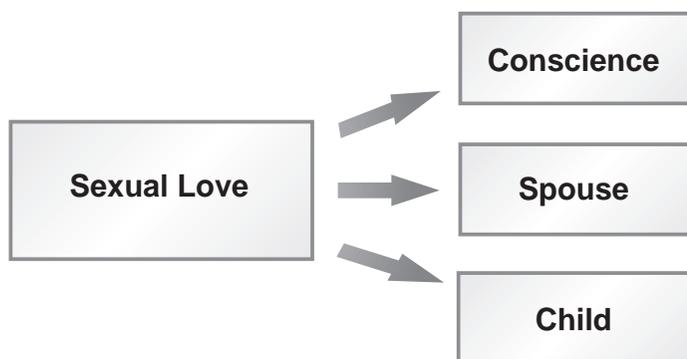
8. Invites God to Participate in the Marriage

Sexual relations hold a special allure to the Creator, as described above, for its unique potential to symbolize so much of His nature at once. The coming together of spirit and flesh, male and female, joy and fecundity magnetizes Him to the marriage bed. God enjoys the love and lovemaking between husband and wife so much that according to the Talmud, when God instructed the Hebrew people to build the temple, He specifically asked for the brass basin for the priests to be made from the metal mirrors that wives used when they groomed themselves for their husbands, because such humble objects that promote intimacy between husband and wife were most precious to Him.¹⁰ Thus, sexual union invites God to participate in the marriage.

Responsibilities of Sexual Love

The uninhibited freedom that spouses may enjoy in conjugal relations and its abundant beauty and goodness are derived from the fulfillment of responsibility that marriage represents. Sexual love like any other aspect of true love means it is dedicated for the sake of others. Who are the "others" to whom lovers are responsible?

There are three principal focuses of responsibility: to one's conscience and Creator, to one's present or future spouse, and to one's existing or future children. Let us explore each briefly.



Three Responsibilities of Sexual Love

Responsibility to the Conscience

The first responsibility is to be true to one's conscience, that which helps direct the expression of our heart's desire to find joy through love. Being responsible to the conscience encompasses several aspects. It of course represents living by the moral truths regarding the larger meaning of sexuality. It is honoring the sacredness of one's heart and body, and the power of sexuality to merge these with another's. It is respecting the gifts of love, life and lineage and the potential of sexuality to enhance or compromise these gifts. Ultimately these represent veneration of God.

In addition, respecting the conscience encompasses responsibility to the individual's parents, grandparents, clan and ancestors and to the larger clan and community. One aspect is upholding the family honor. "I've gone a little farther than I intended to sometimes," Cal, 21, admits. "But my fiancée and I have basically held the line at just holding hands. Partly it would be against what I believe

in, that lovemaking is for marriage. But partly I'd be ashamed in front of my parents. My father's first and only woman was my mother and he was pure and inexperienced when he married my Mom. It was the same with my grandparents. Dad once told me he had been really tempted one time during his marriage, but one reason he didn't give in was because he did not want to set that kind of example for me. Times are a lot different than they were for my father, but I still feel I want to uphold my family's principles."

Another aspect is acting in a way that ensures that one's sexuality is a force that blesses one's community and nation and not the opposite. Clearly there is a public dimension to the private sexual act. The possibility of conceiving children who become partly the responsibility of the community, the legal and other ramifications of the devastations to families wrought by extramarital affairs, the link between sexual morality and all other morality—these and many other reasons mean that, in the words of ethicist Raymond J. Lawrence, "what happens in any bedroom is always potentially the business of the whole human family."¹¹

Furthermore, being responsible to the conscience involves the determination to achieve maturity of heart and character, to become a person of sufficient mind and body unity to be worthy of the privilege of sexual love and able to fulfill its other two responsibilities. It follows that if we compromise our chastity in any way, that we heed our conscience in making amends and rededicating ourselves to the original standard.

Responsibility to the Present or Future Spouse

This second responsibility of sexual love recognizes the obligations of a lasting marriage. The potential for conjugal love is destroyed if shared with anyone besides the spouse. For married couples, this responsibility means a commitment to cherish and care for their husband or wife and dedicate their heart and sexual expression to them alone. This is preserving trust—the bedrock of love—by being faithful to each other. For single people, this means

to be mindful of their future husband or wife and practice fidelity to them in advance. "I imagine it's my future wife," explains a high school student about an empty picture frame near his bed. "I've had it there since I was 13, and I sometimes write letters to her when I get lonely. When my friends tell stories of fooling around with their girlfriends and I start to feel left out, I think about my future wife and how I want to save the excitement for her."

Responsibility to Existing or Potential Children

Entering into sexual union implies this third responsibility, the commitment to the possible fruits—a new person, with long-standing material and spiritual needs. The parents have a responsibility to lovingly nurture to maturity the child they have chosen to help create. This is a right that children fervently claim; how many cling to even neglectful or abusive parents rather than come under another's care? Without the sincere shouldering of this responsibility, parents do their children and their society a grave disservice.

A loving marriage is the most secure foundation for the nurturing of a child. There is little in social science that has been more repeatedly demonstrated.¹² Children not only want and need the attention of both of their parents, but they also naturally long for their parents to love each other and to be together. This is not only for their physical and emotional nurturing but also as an affirmation of their identity and value. Children want to know that they were born of enduring love. Thus, marriage is the most worthy anchor for the lineage being created.

Furthermore, it passes on a sound legacy and a healthy tradition for the descendants to inherit, imitate and build upon. "As a father of four," says author Daniel Gray, "I am reaping the dividends [of investments made] years earlier when I heard and put into practice the message of abstinence before marriage," a key dividend being his moral authority in guiding his children.¹³ All children deserve to be proud of the quality of love that conceived and raised them.

These three responsibilities of sexual love encompass the deep dimensions of sexuality: The first to conscience, the second to love and the third to life and lineage. Only the practice of committed, life-long, mutually faithful monogamy and purity before marriage can fulfill these three inherent responsibilities. This is reflected in the words of one young adult, a male virgin, who gave these common sense conditions for beginning a sexual relationship: “a willingness to spend a lifetime with my partner and/or the children we create.”¹⁴ Such a standard allows the nurturing and cohesive power of love to bind individuals, families, and ultimately a society together in strength and safeguard their futures.

The Original Moral Code

These inherent responsibilities translate into the most basic and universal of sexual codes: An individual's sexual expression is reserved solely for his or her spouse. The only priest or priestess allowed to enter the Holy of Holies in the temple of the body is the married partner (see chapter 17). “The owner of a husband's sexual organ is his wife, and the owner of a wife's sexual organ is her husband,” teaches Reverend Moon.¹⁵ “Marriage is finding the rightful master of one's most holy place of love.” The Qur'an concurs: “The believers are . . . those who guard their private parts except with their spouses” (23.5-11).¹⁶

It is a peculiar characteristic of conjugal love that lovers have a sense of belonging to their beloved. “You own my heart,” they say to each other. In the Song of Solomon, the young woman says, “My beloved is mine and I am his” (2.16). Thus they make promises of undying commitment and share their fortunes and futures, all they have and ever will have with one another. The most treasured gift is their exclusive affection and trust, and implicit is exclusive sexual involvement. This is why a husband and wife feel a natural claim on both their beloved's love and his or her sexual expression.

Legal codes have historically recognized this expectation as “conjugal rights.” St. Paul, for example, speaks of this standard when

he states, "The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does" (1 Corinthians 7.4). It is as if each individual is only the caretaker of his or her reproductive organs, attending to them as a treasure for the sake of the true owners, the spouse and the Creator. This sense of entitlement or proprietorship, of course, is necessarily in the spirit of respect and care. Again, the Bible goes on to say that, "Even so, husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself." Indeed, spouses are to love each other even as God loves and sacrifices for them. The duty to satisfy each other sexually is just part of the larger promise to care and deny themselves for each other, to be one in true love.

The world's religious traditions since antiquity have been remarkably consistent and of one accord in affirming this norm. All share the strict prohibition against sex outside of marriage, especially against infidelity within marriage. "You shall not commit adultery," is among the Ten Commandments recognized recognized by Christians and Jews (Exodus 20.14), and affirmed by Muslims (Exodus 20.14) (Qur'an 6.151-53).¹⁷ Among the ten precepts recognized by Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism is the charge of chastity.¹⁸ This uncompromising norm will never change or become outdated. It is everlasting, having originated in the Creator and conforming to the very design and purpose of human creation. Reverend Moon calls it the absolute sex standard. This is the standard "in the beginning" to which Jesus was referring when he commented about matters of marriage (Matthew 19.8).

The gold standard of sexual morality

This norm is indeed latent within people's consciences and "written on their hearts" (Romans 2:15). Common sense tells us abiding by this simple standard establishes the safety and security necessary for the greatest sexual satisfaction for both partners, and only these conditions will contain all the potential consequences of

sexual union for the partners, their families and society. Those involved with public health policy call it the “gold standard” of sexual morality, because it averts all the myriad negative health, social and other consequences of sexual behavior (see Chapter 20).

Confronting the Permissive Standard

However self-evident this original standard that links sexuality to marriage might be, reaffirming and reinvigorating this is sorely needed in contemporary times. The developed nations remain in—and developing countries continue to fall under the thrall of—the sexual revolution that broke down traditional taboos in the 1960s. Men and women relate in a “low-commitment culture of ‘sex without strings, relationship without rings.’”¹⁹ Popular sexual morality has evolved since the blatant hedonism and promiscuity of the early days of the sexual revolution, but the basic “free sex” ideology still persists among many people of influence. This is an outlook that sees sex apart from marriage as an act of liberation against unfair restrictions and that physical involvement is no one’s business except the partners. Fun is considered justification enough for sexual relations; lovers should expect to be discarded when someone new comes along, and marriage and parenthood are unnecessary constraints on personal freedom.

In the aftermath of rampant unwed pregnancies, divorce, disease and heartbreak, this “free sex” philosophy of sex for pleasure has progressed to what is called the “ethic of intimacy,” the belief in sex for love. Warm feelings are now the acceptable reason for men and women to enter into a physical relationship. “Loveless” or “meaningless” sex is the only kind that might be condemned. Sexual activity itself is still regarded as morally neutral; it is its motivation that determines whether it is good or not.

Such an ethic of intimacy represents a moral advance in the many cases where sexual relations are brutally selfish and exploitative. Yet it is a far cry from the authentic standard and remains just a variation of the older idea. Mutual consent, tolerance and a loose

definition of love and intimacy easily legitimate temporary liaisons based on fickle feelings. "We were crazy about each other," recalls one young man. "I thought, 'This is the one.' We even discussed marriage. I gave my virginity to her. Well, so much for 'undying love.' Now I don't even know where she lives." Such an ethic does not protect partners from agreeing to use each other and inflict harm on one another and innocent parties beyond themselves, however this might go undetected at the time.

Whether the old free sex perspective or the newer ethic of intimacy, sexuality is regarded as a domain with its own rules, a unique impulse that cannot and must not be overly controlled. Sex is seen as a need to be addressed like that of food and sleep, and thus vital to mental and physical health. More than this, it is an entitlement, a right that cannot be denied.

In popular culture, sex is the universal gateway to joy, love, wisdom, transcendent experience, personal growth and discovery, worthy of endless participation, depiction and discussion. It has taken on mythic dimensions, like the Holy Grail or fountain of youth, and is almost an object of worship, as mentioned above. This is a well-worn detour from the truth. History abounds with examples of societies exalting sex out of all proportion and outside its rightful boundaries. Fertility worship in ancient Israel is a Biblical illustration. History also testifies to the fact that whenever a society allows this to happen, destruction follows. Anthropologist Carl Zimmerman and others have discovered that the acceptance and practice of adultery and other aspects of sexual license are reliable predictors of the disintegration of a civilization.²⁰

Addressing Flawed Premises

The original sexual norm represents the enlightened and responsible standard, because it respects the realities of the heart and conscience as well as the body and harmonizes unselfish love and passion according to the human nature endowed by the Creator. The absolute sex standard confronts the flawed premises of the old

“free sex” ethic:

Absolute Sex Morality

The primary human motive and need is to give and receive love. Sexual love is one dimension of this need and, while conjugal companionship and sexual intimacy are both good and healthy conditions, neither is a necessity, especially genital sexual relations. Sexual restraint is expected of any mature person.

Sexuality has intrinsic moral, spiritual, psychological and social dimensions.

Sexual love is a feature solely of the marital relationship. It is responsible only in the context of this commitment and it is enriching only when accompanied by both love and commitment.

Sexual expression is a responsibility and both a personal and public matter.

“Free Sex” Morality

Sex is the primary human motive and need. As such, regular sexual outlets are a necessity. Too much sexual restraint is unhealthy and destructive.

Sexuality can be simply physical pleasure; it has no necessary moral, spiritual, psychological and social dimensions.

Sexual love can be a feature of any relationship; all sexual behavior is either normal or a variation. Sex can be enriching free of love and commitment, while mutual consent and the use of birth- and disease-control make it responsible.

Sexual expression is an entitlement and a wholly personal matter.

Contrasting the Different Standards of Sex Morality

To give credence to the timeless ethic in the present world, the prevailing permissive sex mindset needs to be refuted with arguments based upon sound reasoning and contemporary research. Let us con-

sider and address five major myths of the old “free sex” perspective.

1. Is Sex a Need?

The first myth is: Sex is a need and an entitlement. All the other assumptions of the permissive ethic rest upon this premise. This idea is central because it carries a certain moral imperative: If people need sex to be physically and mentally healthy, then it is unfair and uncaring to deny them. Marital status, age and other concerns are simply not as important. More specifically, if a person claims he needs sex while the other simply does not want it, then there is moral pressure on the second person to yield to the first, since needs have priority over mere desires and having sex is after all always “healthy” and “normal.” The past situation of sexual aggressors having to justify why their partners should give in is reversed. Now those who want to resist sexual advances have to explain themselves. Still, the belief in this need means single people and even children resist less; they pursue earlier sexual involvement and in more insecure situations than they would otherwise be inclined to do.

Yet there obviously is no such sexual “need.” There is not a shred of scientific evidence that sexual inactivity in itself is a threat to well-being. No one has ever received medical treatment because of celibacy. On the contrary, people are treated for sexual excesses and sometimes directed to be abstinent as therapy. The real need being confused with sex is for genuine love. Though the body may desire only another body—any body—the heart needs to connect with another heart, to love and be loved as a unique, irreplaceable person. This is essential for mental and physical health. We know, for example, that infants perish for lack of attention and touch from caregivers, and spouses often die of a broken heart soon after their partner passes away. The specific need of adults is for the experience of marital love. The human spirit craves marriage for its many emotional and spiritual rewards. Sex is only one dimension of what is actually needed and desired.

This belief in sexual need and thus entitlement is a dogmatic notion arising from distortions of Freud's ideas and the discredited claims of Alfred Kinsey. Research in the United States, for example, shows three percent—representing hundreds of thousands—have remained celibate throughout their lives and millions worldwide have waited to begin sexual involvement until age thirty and beyond with no proven ill effects. Over 80 percent of Americans under age 60 have had either one or no sex partner in a given year. Among married couples, infidelity is the great exception. When opportunity for sex is not available for long periods of time as in military service, interest in it has been known to drop off to zero. Many married couples find themselves needing to schedule time for lovemaking because they otherwise become so busy they forget. This is hardly on par with the need for food or sleep, which asserts itself within a matter of hours if neglected and becomes stronger, not weaker, the longer it is deferred.

Some experts question if sex is even a drive at all since it is so dependent upon learning and will. "Sex is a natural urge, but the role it plays in your life and the importance you attribute to it . . . is a matter of free choice," concludes psychologist Peter Koestenbaum.²¹ Sex researchers Masters and Johnson have stated, "In one respect, sex is like no other physical process . . . [it] can be denied indefinitely, even for a lifetime."²² Sexual abstinence then, rather than signifying a state of unhealthy frustration, can simply represent a redirection of erotic impulses. This is obviously what most people must do most of the time. Even when a partner is available as in marriage, circumstances such as illness, work, pregnancy, menstrual cycle and the demands of parenthood dictate a large measure of self-control.

Sex as a "need" is oppressive

The belief that people need physical gratification more than they do creates its own oppression. Sexual compulsion and exploitation become much easier; it is harder for the immature and the

weak to refuse their own or someone else's sexual "need," as mentioned above. In addition, single and married people and even children begin to doubt themselves if they do not desire sex as much as they hear they should. Thus the vulnerable push themselves into sexual involvement earlier and in more insecure situations than they would otherwise be inclined to do. Teenagers may speak of their virginity as something they are relieved to get rid of, as if it is a burden. How tragic that innocence and the authentic need for quality and committed love are so often sacrificed at the altar of a trumped-up physical "need."

2. Is One Partner for Life Unnatural?

The second mistaken notion that follows from the first is: Having many sexual partners is only natural. This argument is made on the basis of comparing humanity to animals, particularly nonmonogamous primates, and speaking in evolutionary terms about the need to propagate the species through many sexual liaisons. Thus monogamy and marriage are seen as almost impossibly difficult, even contrary to our genetic makeup.

Yet humans differ from these and other animals in obvious ways. First, sex among animals is a seasonal matter driven solely by instinct for the sake of reproduction. However, men and women enjoy physical union far more frequently than any animal and for far more reasons than reproduction alone. This freedom implies certain important responsibilities, as outlined above, as well as certain higher capacities that animals do not share that allow us to fulfill those responsibilities. Second, animal coupling can be indiscriminate in regard to the partner. In contrast, we are spiritual beings with a compelling need not only for meaningful and lasting love but also to be loved as a specific and whole person and to return love in the same way.

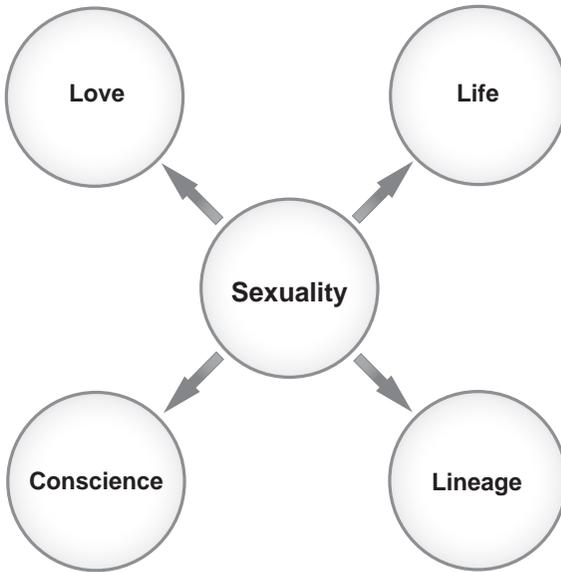
Third, human offspring require many years of parental investment to thrive, unlike primates. Moreover, the quality of the love that spawns and sustains a child affects his resilience and capacity

for making a quality contribution to society. Giving birth to children that are not properly cared for does not make sense even from a materialistic species-survival mentality. Therefore, what is truly natural for men and women to do is bond for life to care for each other and the children they produce. Even many other mammals do that, too. The human tendency to get involved in temporary sexual liaisons is the result of immaturity, bad conditioning and fallen nature—especially the tendency of the body to dominate the mind—not God-given or even evolutionary traits.

3. Is Sex a Natural Expression of Love?

The third flawed premise is: Sex is a natural expression of love. It is indeed instinctive for romantic love to want to express itself sexually. Yet it is also natural for true love to want the best for the beloved and for their relationship, and to avoid jeopardizing either one in any way. People of true love sacrifice themselves to this end. Since marriage is the optimal context for pleasurable sex and bonding that can contain any potential drawbacks, to wait until pledging this type of commitment to one another is the most authentic expression of love.

Speaking of what is natural, when a man or woman anticipates a gift from the one they love, they are repelled by the idea of receiving something used by a prior lover. How many women would rejoice at receiving a ring that had already made the rounds with five other girlfriends before her? Most men who have remarried don't delight in photos of the spouse's ex-husband around the home. These are all expressions of an innate desire for exclusivity. If sex is a natural expression of love, it only makes sense that it should be reserved as an exclusive gift for one beloved special enough to be chosen as a lifetime mate.



Sex within Marriage Honors the Intrinsic Moral Aspects of Sexuality

4. Does Sex Promote Maturity?

The fourth falsehood is: Having sex only in marriage restricts growth and creates sexual inhibitions. People commonly tout a wide range of sexual experiences and partners as evidence of growth and “exploring the farthest reaches of love and the self.” Yet lifelong monogamy is clearly more demanding of self-honesty and maturity and a deeper adventure in loving. To wait for and invest in one person in such a way as to sustain and replenish love over a long time—what one rabbi calls vertical renewal²³—is precisely the context that stretches every faculty and promotes the greatest personal growth. It is only too convenient for individuals to run to another partner instead of facing the deeper issues that real and enduring intimacy demands. “It is easy to associate multiple sexual partners with personal change,” writes human potential philosopher George Leonard, but it is “far more likely to be associated with

the avoidance of change."²⁴

Moreover, physical intimacy within the love and commitment of marriage maintains the fundamental integrity of the body as an expression of the mind. It keeps the outer expression congruent with the deepest heart and conscience. The body has its own symbolic language: a fist means hostility; a smile signifies good will. If a smile conceals malice, it is a deception, a misuse of the language of the body. In this vein, sexual coupling represents the total union of hearts, minds and lives. When physical union is merely for pleasure or as an expression of only warm feelings, this can be considered a false message. Such deceit is incompatible with moral maturity and authenticity in a relationship.

Finally, the issue of inhibitions is ironic. Those who are engaged in nonmarital sex routinely speak of performance anxiety, guilt, feelings of being cheap, fear of being compared to previous partners or embarrassment over making comparisons during sex, fear of pregnancy or disease and other experiences that can only negatively complicate their sexual response. On the other hand, research indicates that highly religious wives report the greatest number of orgasms—a clear sign of freedom from neurotic inhibitions.²⁵ Further, evidence suggests that those women who were virgin brides have the greatest sexual satisfaction.²⁶ This is to be expected, given the great significance of emotional and psychological factors in sexual experience. These married women have security, trust, time to accommodate themselves to their partners, and for those who are religious, the vehicle to find great meaning and freedom from guilt that their faith provides.

5. Is Sex Liberating?

The fifth myth is: Sex only within marriage oppresses women. Some claim that the notions of purity and fidelity are based solely on protecting men's property rights over their women. Though this is an exaggeration, there is some truth to the assertion that traditional morality is linked to male exploitation of women. Certainly

there has been a double standard; chastity has almost universally been enforced for females but not for males. Boys and men have often been free to indulge themselves at the expense of girls and women, who would seldom find sexual satisfaction yet would surely pay the price for any illicit liaisons through stigma and punishments as well as pregnancies and other burdens. Yet it is foolish to abandon an intrinsic and protective moral code because of this injustice; it is far better to correct the injustice.

It is even more foolish for women to claim the “right” to the shallow pleasures of casual sex, as is now taking place, and seek to join men in exploiting their partners and using sex for domination. This amounts to abandoning the double standard in favor of a lower standard for both genders. Instead of passing on feminine strengths to men, this means women are trying to inherit men’s typical weakness—the penchant for separating the body from the heart and sex from responsibility and true love.

Further, the permissive standard has hardly been liberating to women. Females are now expected to want many sexual partners and males are expected to treat them as such. The result is that women also have to deny their natural instincts of self-protection: Females carry the greater burden of the consequences of sex outside of a secure relationship. Sexually transmitted infections ravage girls and women much more than males, and of course unwanted pregnancy, abortion and other liabilities belong only to one gender. Ironically, regarding contraception, the double standard still prevails in the “safer sex” world; females shoulder the greater responsibility.²⁷

The double standard extends in another direction, too. Women are unfairly expected to still be “feminine”—soft, yielding and undemanding—while at the same time being sexually independent and self-sufficient.²⁸ To meet this demand, girls and women have to suppress their more relational and monogamous inclinations. This is frequently unsuccessful; studies confirm that even women who have no qualms about sex outside of marriage desire far fewer part-

ners than comparable men do.²⁹ It is almost universally the women partners who end up in the awkward position of trying to negotiate commitment in the midst of a physically intimate relationship.³⁰ Worse, they are often already pseudo-wives, living together with a man, offering domestic services and ready sex while having none of the emotional and material security of marriage. And time is notoriously crueler to women. Many find out too late that they traded playing “house” with various partners for the ability to experience real marriage and motherhood. Committed partnership becomes a more elusive goal for women after a certain age; male peers often prefer more attractive younger women and can readily marry them. In addition, after age 28 or so, female fertility begins to decline rapidly.³¹ This is not the case for men.

One standard for both genders

The absolute sex standard applies to both men and women equally. Males degrade themselves through misdirected sexuality as much as females do. Obviously, men cannot be rewarded for promiscuity while women are penalized and held solely accountable for controlling them. Nor can female sexual desire or capacity be denied. Christian tradition, for example, insisted on male monogamy, and both the Jewish and Christian scriptures teach that husbands have just as much of a duty to sexually satisfy their wives as vice versa (Exodus 21.10, 1 Corinthians 7.3).

That said, also the pretense cannot be maintained that males and females are the same in sexual response and desires or in bearing the consequences of sexual acts. Intrinsic gender strengths and weaknesses require consideration. This has been reflected in the traditional codes of male and female honor: Men agree not to use their superior physical strength to take advantage of women, nor to exploit the female susceptibility to promises of love and security, while women agree not to use men's vulnerability to visual arousal and emotional manipulation against them. It is also the chief rationale behind the traditions of marriage. In this way, the original stan-

dard protects both men and women from mutual exploitation and use of the opposite sex as an emotional crutch, pawn or object of revenge. As such it creates trust and represents real power, freedom and independence for women as well as men.

Timeless Ethic

The timeless gold standard of sexual ethics—reserving sexual intimacy only for the spouse—recognizes the moral implications of sex and the deeper need for enduring love. It understands that sex in marriage not only heightens the sense of bonding, exclusivity and security between the partners but also it addresses all the responsibilities inherent in the sacred gift of sexuality. It celebrates the freedoms that premarital purity affords young people—reaching personal maturity and preparing for family life and their roles as citizens. It affirms these realities, not only out of tradition, but also out of recognition of the emotional, moral, social and spiritual dimensions of this powerful and far-reaching act.

Fidelity within marriage and purity outside it is a crucial foundation for all ethics, a critical underpinning of civilization itself. Reverend Moon has even suggested that if all humanity were to adopt the original standard of chastity—even without agreeing to other divinely ordained norms—then God's world of goodness, harmony and peace would inevitably be realized. This ethic of sexual love represents the original and unchanging God-given standard. We violate it at our peril.

Chapter 20

Roots of Immorality

Without true love, men and woman cannot trust each other. They use each other to serve themselves.

—Sun Myung Moon

Sexual union is the crowning glory of marital love, symbolizing the mingling of the hearts, blood and lives of the two partners. It is the delight of the Creator as well. Yet, as sacred as human sexuality may be, society and history provide ample evidence of people's difficulty to discipline their sexuality and remain faithful to their partners—lovers unable to commit to one another, partners leaving behind unwanted children and disease, adults preying on children and so on. It is all too easy for the body to subjugate the mind, for instinct to override conscience in this area.

There are many theories as to why this is so. Some keep the explanation in the realm of individual learning and childhood trauma. Others point to social conditioning based on power relationships. Still others have sought to explain such behaviors in light of early social patterns and evolution, tracing them back to the earliest communities. In a related vein, religious traditions and certain schools of psychology find insight in ancient myths, legends and sacred stories that tell of the origins of human suffering in a pre-historic Fall.

Contemporary thinking respects such myths to be revelatory of profound inner truths—too deep for us to readily recognize and explicitly discuss—that are best conveyed by powerful images and narratives. “Myths are facts of the mind made manifest in a fiction

of matter,” asserts anthropologist Joseph Campbell.¹ It is relevant then to note the sexual overtones in several of these sacred narratives. The Genesis tale of Adam and Eve comes readily to mind mirrored in many ways by its counterpart in the Qur’an.

Reverend Moon finds not only the root of sexual immorality revealed in this Biblical story but also the secret of general human suffering and self-destructiveness. These are tied up with the tragic human propensity to misuse love and the harmful patterns of relationships between men and women, throughout all of the history of civilization. What is the insight revealed below the surface of the story? What does it tell us about gender relations? How does the abuse of sexuality impact individuals, relationships and society?

The Human Downfall

The Bible declares that the first man and woman lived in a world without evil or suffering, and intimately knew the Creator. They were intended for one another and lived naked, without fear or shame. The Creator freely gave them everything, but He also gave them one warning: do not eat a certain fruit. A crafty serpent, however—in the Qur’an it is a vengeful angel—tempted the woman with promises of wisdom and divine likeness, and she ate the fruit. She then gave it to the man, who also ate it. As promised, they gained wisdom. But they also took on an unanticipated sense of shame and guilt and hid themselves, covering their sexual parts. Because of their crime, they lost Paradise and humanity has lived in sorrow and tragedy ever since.

This earliest ancestral couple’s reflexive covering of their genitals after their actions of course points to a sexual transgression like fornication or adultery. This was something that was probably transparent to audiences at the time the story first circulated. In the Middle East to this day, “eating of fruit” is a euphemism for sexual relations. So is the expression, “to know” someone, as in “Adam knew Eve and bore Cain” (Genesis 4.1). Thus the Tree of Knowledge takes on sexual connotations as well. In this light, the

Tempter's promise of insight, maturity and transcendent experience as the result of sexual initiation becomes quite plausible; people still expect this from sex. Further, the foretold consequences of their deed—painful childbirth, tensions between man and woman, the difficulty to achieve maturity in love, and profound separation from God, the source of love and life—are natural outcomes arising from a sexual violation.

Milton brought in a sexual component to the Hebrew tale in his "Paradise Lost." Early writings of Jewish and Christian clergy did as well. A historical perspective, according to scholars, makes the meaning of the Biblical account unmistakable—this is a Hebrew denunciation of the fertility cults of that time and place. The tree, the snake, the woman's name and other features allude to the widespread practice of temple prostitution and deliberately parody and denounce it.² After affirming the beauty of ethical sexual expression earlier in the narrative, this story places a sexual sin at the center of all manner of human disorder and misery.

Other myths with sexual implications suggest themselves. A Shinto creation myth has a god and his wife engaging in their first conjugal love improperly—some call it incest—before correctly giving birth to the islands of Japan. The goddess dies, and misfortune befalls their first son and daughter (Kojiki 4.1-6.1).³ Hindu and Buddhist texts have their own tales tying the origins of suffering to sexual indiscretions.⁴ The Greek myth of Pandora has a woman betraying her promise to her immortal fiancé and opening a box that releases every kind of suffering into the world. The box can easily symbolize the woman's sexual parts, suggesting an act of improper sexual initiation or infidelity.

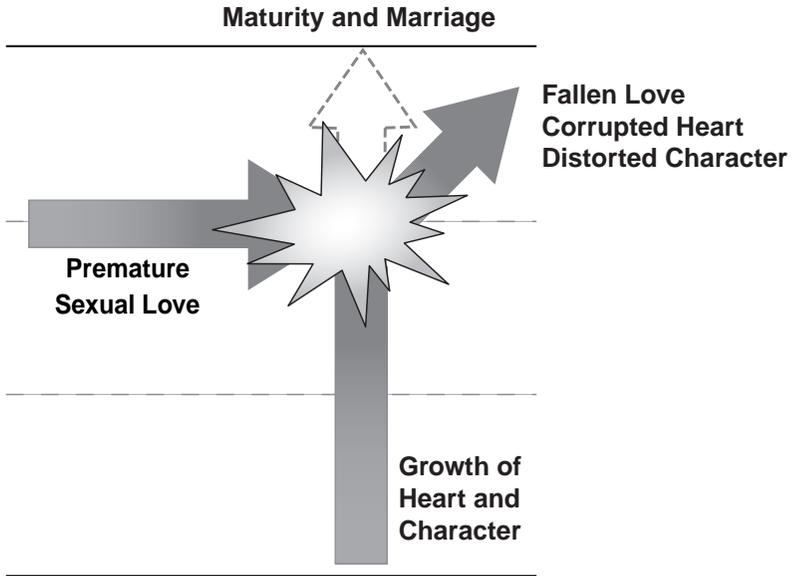
Ambivalence towards sexuality

It is this link—half-veiled yet intuitively understood—between sexuality and the origins of human evil that forms the basis of the mixed messages regarding sex that is evident within certain religions, especially the Judeo-Christian tradition. A distinctive mark

of the chosen people of Israel was circumcision, a mutilation of the male organ involved in the Fall. Christians came to emphasize the non-sexual conception of their Savior. Both Christians and Buddhists have favored celibacy as the path to sanctification and enlightenment. This ambivalence reflects the tragedy of a most sacred gift that has become degraded and dangerous. Wider society reflects this same ambivalence in the way sexuality is honored on one hand— for instance, the poetry and songs celebrating its goodness— and maligned on the other—the vulgar ways people refer to it when expressing hate and aggression.

Subtle Ramifications

The substance of these sacred narratives is the content of contemporary life. Sexual initiation apart from both maturity and marriage is all too common. This has yielded more heartbreak, loss and distortion than we can fathom. Ironically one of its most insidious consequences has been blindness to these very consequences. Thus the supreme and sacred power of sexual love with all of its intrinsic psychological and emotional, moral and spiritual, relational, social and lineal ramifications comes to be reduced to merely a pleasurable physical activity, like eating or sleeping. Its chief risks outside of marriage are seen as physical too—mainly unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, both of which can nowadays be mitigated by technology. Thus the real costs of sexual relations apart from the original moral standard—on the personal and social level, not even to consider its impact on God and posterity—are largely overlooked.



Premature Sex Disrupts the Development of Heart and Character

By pretending sex is basically a physical matter, the deeper levels of harm—even between partners who agree to use each other—can be officially ignored. No harm means no one has done wrong and no one has to be held accountable. No harm also means that if one feels distress after an uncommitted sexual liaison, then the problem lies within oneself—in being too sensitive or having an overactive conscience or outdated religious values—not in the practice. No harm means that the social fallout can be blamed on socio-economics and no one has to question their personal conduct. No harm means the fiction of sex without consequences can be maintained.

Reverend Moon speaks of sexual misconduct as having its gravest consequences on the intangible level. These more elusive negative consequences of nonmarital sexual expression involve the effects upon the individual and personal development, upon the pursuit of loving relationships, and upon the next generation.

Effects on the Individual

The emotional, psychological and spiritual harm of sex in insecure relationships is typically felt only semi-consciously if at all, eclipsed by the pleasure and belief in the supposed benefits of the experience. Often some of the costs are perceived after the damage has been done, sometimes years later. Child psychologist Thomas Lickona relates the story of one woman psychiatrist describing the aftermath of her promiscuous college years. She says, “That sick, used feeling of having given a precious part of myself . . . to so many and for nothing, still aches. I never imagined I’d pay so dearly and for so long.”⁵ Such feelings are hardly uncommon.

The Biblical claim that sexual union means becoming “one flesh” is real, regardless of the partners’ intentions. When the bond is broken, it “works disintegration in the personality and leaves behind a deeply-seated sense of frustration and dissatisfaction.”⁶ There are many facets of this disintegration of psychological and moral health, especially among adolescents and young adults.⁷

Effects on the Individual

1. Stunting of spiritual and moral growth
2. Character corruption
3. Guilt, regret and diminished sense of worth
4. Heartbreak and destructive behavior
5. Spiritual disorientation
6. Degradation of love, life and lineage

1. Stunting of Spiritual and Moral Growth

Learning to be unselfish is obviously the central challenge of maturation. In particular, there is the disciplining of the awakening sexual impulse in adolescence, just as toilet training is a milestone in early childhood. Premature physical involvement in insecure relationships tends to impede development because it compounds self-centeredness, rather than fostering the learning of unselfish

love. In marriage, sexual intimacy supports the partners' mutual love and commitment, while among singles, it is mainly to boost the partners' egos and gratify themselves, to take rather than to give.

Until a certain developmental period is completed, until there is sufficient growth in the child's and sibling's realms of heart, a person is not prepared for the potent power of sex. In terms of the Genesis metaphor, his or her "fruit" of love is not yet ripe. It is also true that especially for males, learning to focus one's sexual desire on one person for life is an essential challenge for moral and spiritual maturity. Premarital sex ruins this; as Sarah Hinckley writes, "a crucial challenge to the man—an essential test of his masculinity—is lost or failed."⁸

This moral and psychological reality has been expressed in traditional stories, such as the European tale of Sleeping Beauty, which has counterparts in other lands. A magic spell befalls the princess of the realm upon piercing her skin and drawing blood, representing the onset of puberty. Falling into a deep sleep she is restrained yet protected until the bravest and most virtuous young man—one mature in heart and character—can overcome the obstacles to awaken her with a kiss and introduce her to the world of true conjugal love. In contrast, the tale of Snow White represents a failing of the test, where the virginal girl succumbs to the poisoned "fruit." Fortunately a pure-hearted prince is able to free her from the consequences of her mistake.

The scars from sexual intimacy in uncommitted relationships all too often cause lasting emotional desolation and a sense of irretrievable loss. Even a very young person can become jaded and cynical, his or her outlook on life clouded by crushed hopes. Allan Bloom of the University of Chicago lamented how early sexual experience impoverishes the imagination. Virginal students are still "fresh and naive, excited by the mysteries to which they have not yet been fully initiated," while those who "have nothing more to learn about the erotic" are "flat-souled . . . unadorned by imagination and devoid of ideals."⁹ Moreover, sex in insecure relationships

drains individuals, especially the young of the attention and energy needed for emotional, moral, creative and intellectual growth. At the very least, anxiety over possible unwanted physical consequences can be an ongoing distraction.

2. Character Corruption

That the residents of Paradise could so quickly turn from innocent transparency to duplicity and deceit illustrates that, worse than hindering character growth, unprincipled sex is a notoriously corrupting influence. People find themselves looking at others not as spiritual beings but as bodies to be used and practicing constant cunning to get sexual gratification. Unlike romantic notions of infatuated lovers spontaneously drawn into lovemaking, most liaisons are in fact the result of one partner deliberately seducing the other. Lust can come to motivate nearly every word or action in regards to others, as one is constantly grooming friends and acquaintances towards a sexual encounter. A recent study reveals dating singles accept “lying, cheating and dumping each other” as ordinary behavior outside of committed relationships.¹⁰ A large number of men admitted that they would even conceal infection with deadly AIDS from would-be lovers.¹¹

Oddly enough, these same people would probably never practice such treachery in their financial or other dealings, nor would they tolerate the same from others; yet they debase themselves in this way when it comes to physical love. How many statesmen, clergy and executives who were trusted for their sterling character and leadership nevertheless allowed themselves this kind of impropriety? Such is the unique blinding power of sex loosed from its ethical moorings.

In the case of infidelity, especially married infidelity, the level of duplicity is particularly profound. There are so many layers of lies—the blatant cover-ups, the silent deceptions where confessions were left unsaid, the wholesale exploitation of trust and violation of promises—to those the cheater loves or once loved that these play

havoc with his or her conscience. The cheater may barely notice the violation of the partner, of any children involved, of relatives and friends, and certainly not how he is using the lover. Self-deceit completes the picture: He frequently has to wall off parts of his conscience with thick rationalizations—about being the greatest victim himself, for instance—just to retain some semblance of integrity. This can lead to dangerous moral blind spots in other areas of his life.

3. Guilt, Regret and Diminished Sense of Worth

The Biblical story has the first ancestors exhibiting shame after their Fall. Given the meaning of sexuality and its link to the conscience, it is not surprising that misdirecting love commonly yields a harvest of guilt and loss of self-respect. When persons have used the most valuable part of their bodies to gain pleasure or love or security, they cannot but feel degraded, even if they are not conscious of the loss for some time. For example, a majority of sexually experienced American teenage boys and girls express regret over losing their virginity when they did.¹² Males both young and old are typically haunted by guilt over the evidence that what had been a momentary pleasure for them was a moving expression of love and commitment to their partner. Females sense something sacred was violated. Compounding this may be shame over violating the mores of one's parents or faith community. Abortions can compound the distress, for both partners.¹³ Marital infidelity can create its own brand of guilt-ridden hell. If the cheating spouse wakes up to the devastation she caused in the lives of her loved ones, the self-reproach can be crushing. One counselor compares it to the guilt of having killed someone while driving.¹⁴ Self-forgiveness can be a formidable challenge.

Further, making sexual attractiveness and sexual prowess an important basis for romantic connections amplifies the tendency to judge people on what they do and how they look rather than on who they are.¹⁵ Thus anxiety is built into insecure relationships:

“Do I still look good enough, perform well enough, please you enough?” When sexual utility instead of one’s whole self is the criteria for attention, there is always the realistic fear that someone else will be more attractive or perform better. This is sad enough for partners in any relationship, but it is particularly tragic when adultery brings this insecurity into the marriage bed, the one place that should be safe and secure.

The result is the undermining of the belief that one is lovable in a unique and irreplaceable way.¹⁶ Jennifer, 30, explains her experience: “The acceptance, even encouragement of premarital sex makes it very difficult to sustain the fantasy that we are the sole object of love.”¹⁷ Victims of infidelity in particular often feel utterly trashed. Sometimes the lowered self-esteem leads a person into further sexual involvements to prove their desirability, which only leads to further loss of self-respect. It becomes a vicious cycle of reaching for affirmation through sex, failing to attain it, and thereby compounding one’s desperate need.

4. Heartbreak and Destructive Behavior

All infatuations or romantic involvements of some duration are painful when they break up. When sex is introduced, the emotional ties as well as expectations are intensified. Studies have highlighted the role of certain brain chemicals in sexual bonding.¹⁸ Given its original purpose, sex acts like powerful glue that has no way to easily release its grip. Hearts that have bonded through sex, even in a casual encounter, are unlikely to disengage without being torn in some way. For some, the trauma can resemble divorce. For others, the pain is denied and numbed, often with the help of alcohol. The result is similar in any case. Men and women alike admit that they are so afraid of being hurt again that they withhold their hearts even as they yield their bodies to others for the fleeting comfort sex provides.¹⁹ This explains the peculiar indifference that characterizes sexual activity even among the young, what one commentator called “oddly disengaged—emotionally cool while physically hot.”²⁰

This heartbreak, compounded with the sense of having given themselves so completely for so little return—not to mention the fallout of a pregnancy, abortion or sexually transmitted infection—can help drive young men and women to the brink of despair. One tragic reflection is the rate of teenage suicide, which has tripled over the past 25 years in the U.S., the same period during which the rate of teenage sexual activity rose so sharply. Statistically, non-virginal girls are six times more prone to suicide than are virgins.²¹ They and their male peers are also much more likely to be involved in other self-destructive activities: Running away from home, using drugs and getting arrested, to name a few.²²

Finally, the emotional explosion over sexual betrayal can veer to the extreme of rage, leading to violence against former girlfriends or boyfriends and their new lovers. Stalking, assault and homicide at the hands of jealous lovers are daily events; countless people live in fear of retaliation by an ex-partner.

5. Spiritual Disorientation

Uncommitted sex encourages a distorted spiritual outlook, whether or not one belongs to an organized religion. It does this in several ways. First, it reflects a belief in the supremacy of the individual ego. Having multiple sex partners implies that the solitary ego is the ultimate reality, and that other people are “accessories” who come and go, undeserving of commitment before being used for gratification or even “growth.” In this same vein, entering into such a bonding involvement while seeking to remain aloof from emotional involvement reflects an attempt to split body and soul. It buys into the fiction of an independent, choosing self that is free to express itself through the body, to “have” sex rather than to “be” in a whole-person union with another.²³ This fragmented way of viewing reality—that denies the inextricable connectedness of spirit and flesh and of oneself, the partner and the community—is fundamentally unspiritual.

Second, it displays pessimism about human faithfulness that in turn, rests on a belief in the capriciousness and unreliability of the universe. Hebrew prophets would point to the absolute faithfulness of God—His covenant and commitment to us—as proof that couples, made in His likeness, should and could be faithful to each other. This is why they tied adultery to idolatry, betraying the covenant with God and “having an affair” with another god (Jeremiah 3.6, Hosea 1.2). Moving from partner to partner displays a fickleness that is a far cry from the steadfast divine love and the dependability of the created world.

Third, treating the profound mystery of sexuality as a play-thing is irreverent in the extreme. All this is not to discuss the fundamentally dishonest maneuvers religious people go through to reconcile their unprincipled sexual behavior with their professed doctrines and perceptions of God. This only intensifies the spiritual disorientation and damage.

6. Degradation of Love, Life and Lineage

In addition, when sex, the power that most readily permits humans to take on divine creativity, is no longer worthy of special respect, then few things remain sacred. The cheapening of sexuality tends to lead to a tainted view of its extensions—love, life and lineage. Indeed, these are seen to be optional components, disregarded when inconvenient. The degradation of love can be seen in the contemporary dating and mating culture where love is rarely even mentioned when discussing sex.²⁴ Even among those who believe that only love is what legitimates physical union, this represents an anemic definition of love, where fickle feelings are the focus, not will and ideals:

The cheapening of life and lineage is evident in the fact that outside of marriage, the conception of a child is more likely to be viewed as a curse rather than a blessing. Perhaps worse, it is reduced to an inconvenience to be dispatched by an afternoon abortion appointment as if it were a dental cavity. Such trivializing of love,

life and lineage is intertwined with the disrespect for the gravity of sexual relations. This both reflects and reinforces a person's spiritual disorientation, and taken together could not possibly be further removed from the Heart of God.

The mental and emotional impact of uncommitted sexual intimacy is summarized well by counselor Carson Daly:

The lowered self-esteem; the despairing sense of having been used; the self-contempt for being a user; the embarrassment of having a reputation that puts you outside the circle of people with true integrity; the unease about having to lie or at least having to conceal one's activities from family members and others; the extreme difficulty of breaking the vicious cycle of compulsive sexual behavior; and the self-hatred of seeking, after each break-up, someone else to seduce in order to revive one's fading self-image.²⁵

Harvest of Selfishness

Though selfishness has an intuitive link to conflict and evil, it is the selfish abuse of sexuality that gives it its most virulent power. In moral development, egoism and self-absorption are the very definition of immaturity. These traits tend to fade as the individual grows up and has character-building experiences. But why do so many people fail to fully grow up to the full stature of human potential? Why do so few reach the sublimely sagacious and generous state of maturity that psychologist Erik Erikson aptly calls "generativity," and otherwise is called saintly? Why is it all too common to find adults with shallow hearts and small minds, enslaved by bad habits and often displaying the most infantile or even animalistic traits?

Though there are of course many apparent factors, the original disruption of the moral development of the first human ancestors through the abuse of sexual love is the most remote yet most critical of causes. This affected not only nurture, as noted above, but also

nature. Anthropologist Richard Heinberg has observed: “People of every culture and age have insisted that . . . human nature is not natural at all because it has been distorted by some fundamental mistake or failure that has been perpetuated from generation to generation.”²⁶ People throughout all lands and times have believed in some inherited tendency towards evil and self-destructiveness in the human heart. This fatal flaw drags human nature down, making full God-like maturation virtually impossible.

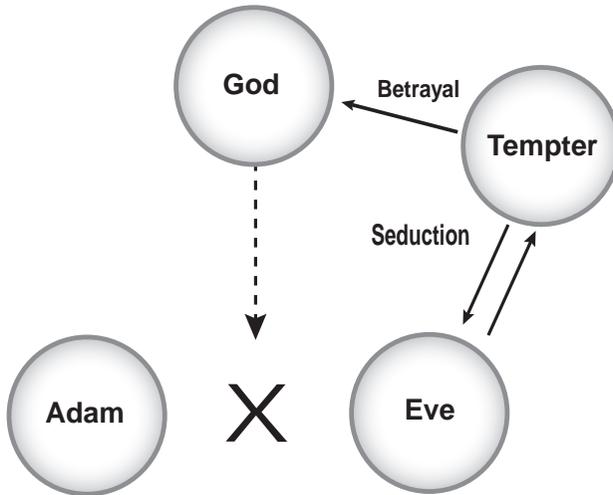
Reverend Moon defines this fundamental problem as descent from a poisoned lineage, a family tree rooted in self-centered love that bears only fruit of self-centered love. It was as if the forbidden fruit in the Genesis story, the metaphor for sexual love, was picked when immature and unripe. As such it was toxic in flesh and in seed. The first ancestors’ unprincipled liaison fundamentally disrupted the matrix of family life. “Humanity lost the standard of true parents, spouses, siblings and children,” explains Reverend Moon.

This is the origin of the inherited hindrance of the capacity to give the truest love, the extreme difficulty of the mind to lead the body, the blindness to realities of the heart and spirit. Catholics call this tendency original sin. Augustine called it concupiscence, the noxious quality of disproportionate sexual desire, and Buddhism similarly attributes it to enslavement to the senses. Judaism calls it simply an evil inclination. Freud deemed it the sexual instinct, the most unruly side of the root of the unconscious. It is this inherited vulnerability—centering on the constellation of forces revolving around the heart and sexual desire—that allows optimal moral and spiritual development to get derailed so universally.

Relational Dimensions of the Tragedy

The corruption of the first family set in motion dynamics that wreak havoc in male and female relations to this day. One of the most perennial and agonizing of sexual problems is for oneself or one’s mate to be attracted to someone else and succumb to infidelity. Being torn between two lovers is the premise of classic lit-

erature and films worldwide, from *Anna Karenina* to “Casablanca,” not to mention a dependable theme of television soap operas and love songs.



- The original love triangle
- Sexual abuse by trusted elder
- Seduction by loyal servant
- Betrayal of the parent
- Rebellion against the king
- Loss of God's blessing
- Family dysfunction passed to subsequent generations

Destruction of the Original Family through Illicit Love

Many of the great cultural narratives suggest more than just illicit sexual relations within the first ancestral couple. They allude to a love triangle as well. In the Genesis account, the woman allows herself to fall under the sway of a Tempter. She first yields to him, and then he instigates her premature seduction of her betrothed. Thus the pattern of cheating and other deceptive games between male and female is established.

But there is more to the Genesis tale, something of central importance to people of faith. This and other ancient myths allude to a double treachery: Beyond one mate betraying the other, they both betray the Creator. In the Genesis account, all three figures act in clear disregard of the God's caution and concern. The son and daughter, Adam and Eve, initiate sexual intimacy and parenthood apart from the Parent's blessing and participation, a heart-breaking scenario replayed in many a family since.

Even worse, the Tempter is depicted, according to some traditions, as God's servant and friend—Iblis in the Qur'an (7.20) or the archangel Lucifer in the Bible (Isaiah 14.12 KJV). The servant has been entrusted with significant authority, yet he refuses to respect his Lord's children, out of jealousy of His unique love for them. His revenge is to bring down those very children by playing on the son and daughter's trust and involving them in a premature and illicit affair. Thus, the human ancestors are seduced by an elder who is also their Parent's friend. This is the precedent for the widespread tragedy of sexual abuse of the young by their caregivers or their relatives or friends. It is also the basis of the ubiquitous practice of using sex as a weapon and a means of gaining illicit power.

Another Kind of Adultery

If we frame the crime among the first ancestors and the servant in a different way, we see the basis of many ancient legends. God can be compared to a King, and the first woman to his bride or Queen, in the sense that He was to be the focus of her greatest love and loyalty. Thus, the seduction of the bride by a younger male

servant is also an adulterous act that betrays the King.

There are echoes of this in the European story of Tristan and Isolde. Heroic Tristan, beloved of the king, comes to bring the princess Isolde to his monarch to become his wife. However, the young man and the maiden take a magic love potion. They cannot resist their passion for each other, and Tristan and Isolde run off together in betrayal of the king.

Similarly, the British legends of King Arthur revolve around a theme of adultery between the Queen and the King's first knight, Lancelot, an act of treachery that brings down the utopian Camelot. A parallel conflicted triad is found among the gods in folk religions around the world, especially of agricultural societies in antiquity such as the Middle Eastern fertility cults mentioned in the Bible.

The Greek myths are replete with infidelities, but the story of Oedipus Rex stands out as not only involving mortals but also incest: A son slays his father to win the love of his mother. This represents the younger man refusing to face the challenges of maturity embodied by his father and seizing the comforting love of his mother for himself. Reverend Moon has suggested just this kind of dynamic behind the fatal dysfunction of the first family.

Crime of Passion

All three figures involved in the first couple's mistake chose to evade the moral challenge before them by misusing love. As mentioned above, the archangelic servant was called upon to attend to the not yet mature children of God, as an elder representing Him. His position called for unconditional love and obedience. As the young Adam and Eve grew, it became clear that they were destined to receive a special kind of divine love and authority beyond what the servant would ever possess. His challenge was to trust that he would find contentment in his role. Like a tutor and caregiver to a prince and princess, Lucifer could look forward to receiving the eternal praise and gratitude of his beloved King after his young charges matured and assumed their rightful position as God's heirs

and Lucifer's masters. This is not to mention the unending respect and admiration of the royal offspring themselves and their countless descendants.

Yet Lucifer became unwilling to trust and remain faithful to his Lord. As he focused only on the apparent unfairness of his situation, he turned away from God and began to solicit the affection of the girl to soothe his hurt feelings and loneliness. She was only too flattered by his attention and gradually lost interest in her fiancé in favor of her older and more fascinating mentor.

As Eve came to replace God as the center of his life, Lucifer came to believe that by seducing the girl he could possess all of her love and beauty for himself. At the same time he realized he would wreak the worst kind of vengeance on his unjust Creator—stealing the Heavenly Father's most precious treasure and destroying His whole purpose for creating the universe. Moreover, as an added plus, he would humiliate and ruin his would-be master and rival, Adam.

For her part, Eve yielded too much of her heart to the charming elder. Once Eve succumbed to Lucifer's wiles, she came to realize what she had done was terribly wrong. Her lover had taken advantage of her. Worse, she had deeply betrayed her loving Father and her mate and violated her purpose. In her guilt and fear she went to Adam for comfort, recklessly carrying out the same self-seeking seduction by which Lucifer had destroyed her. The young man too abandoned his Father's commandment for the allure of premature love, just as his fiancée had done.

Disastrous Template

These corrupted interrelationships at the beginning of history explain why infidelity has such a deep foothold within humanity. It is an archetypal experience, a relational template so deeply embedded within the human psyche and soul that people are inclined towards it as second nature. Reverend Moon teaches that this adulterous relationship in the beginnings of human ancestral family

life has set a pattern for the profound and pervasive disorder of love that we have witnessed ever since. Freud sensed this when he proposed that the personal and family tensions arising from the Oedipus complex were based on a primordial event of disordered family love. Research offers support that infidelity is indeed passed on from generation to generation: One study found more than eight out of ten cheating spouses had a parent who did the same, though it may have been kept a secret.²⁷

As has already been implied, this Fall of the first ancestors proliferated more than infidelity—it is the remote source of all the destructive patterns that plague the interactions between men and women, boys and girls. For example, both Lucifer and Eve refused to find the inner resources of unselfish love to let their infatuations go and remain faithful to whom they were responsible. Instead they sought the immediate gratification of the comforting embrace of the opposite sex. This is a common undercurrent behind contemporary sexual involvements. As discussed above, boys and men frequently bypass the real work of growing up by seeking refuge in the quick fix of female sympathy and sexual comfort. Like perpetual Peter Pans, they flee paternal rules and requirements in favor of maternal acceptance from girlfriends and the reassurances embodied in sexual conquests. Likewise, girls and women commonly overindulge in the intoxicant of sex and romance and play to the nearest male audience at the cost of their development as persons and daughters of God.

The original disorder of love in the first dysfunctional couple led to another ubiquitous phenomenon—the allure of “forbidden love.” This is the insidious attraction to people who are off-limits or out of reach: the other man’s wife, the sister’s boyfriend, the blossoming daughter, the celibate priest, the centerfold girl, the “bad boy,” the same-sex friend. The Madonna/Whore syndrome also comes to mind, one that has men honoring the pure woman—often their wives—while pursuing the fallen one—the loose woman at the bar or the mistress.

Distorted Gender Relations

Reverend Moon is not the only one who sees in the Genesis story patterns of negative male-female interaction that are played out in countless ways in the ongoing “war of the sexes.” Psychologist David Kasbow describes how the three figures involved—Adam, Eve and Lucifer—become archetypes of masculine and feminine forms of irresponsibility, predatory and exploitative on one hand, or foolishly naive and yielding on the other.²⁸

Predatory type

The aggressive masculine figure manifests the Luciferic influence, what psychologist Carl Jung called the animus. This is the philanderer, the Don Juan, the Playboy surrounded by compliant Bunnies, the immature man who uses and discards the opposite sex to prove something to himself. A related dynamic is the male desire to dominate other men by taking their women. Also in this track we find the adulterer, the sexual harasser and the domestic abuser who otherwise professes his love. Its most parasitic form is the Bluebeard, the rapist and the vampire.

What Jung termed the anima is the equivalent influence in females that leads them to imitate the second Eveic figure. This is the seductress who uses sex to dominate men for money, security or simply for malicious pleasure—the gold-digger, the prostitute and the man-eater. Another mythic corollary is Lilith, considered the first wife of Adam in ancient Near Eastern legend, who epitomizes the demonic feminine. Under this influence is the foxy counterpart of the male “wolf”—the Siren, Samson’s Delilah, the femme fatale. She is the woman who keeps a string of “boy toys” for amusement and delights in showing off her power by stealing men from other women. A variation is the controlling wife who conceals her manipulations by feigning deference and submission to her husband or the girl who tries to rein in her boyfriend by getting pregnant.

Another variation of predation is the older or world-weary one preying on the younger or more ingenuous one, in imitation of

Lucifer or the no-longer-innocent Eve after her first liaison. Here is the trusted teacher and parental figure who preys on the fresh and virginal individual of the opposite sex to compensate for his or her own failures, frustrations and inner deadness. Christian writer Sarah Hinckley speaks of the “lightness of heart that is the companion of sexual innocence” that makes the virgin so attractive to the worldly one.²⁹ Among males, consider the incestuous father, the pedophile and the aging executive with his trophy wife.

Passive type

Both genders also can have a passive streak, one that allows them only too willingly to yield to the unwholesome control of the other. On the masculine side, there are the insecure males readily manipulated by females, like the mesmerized boy who empties his wallet for the flirtatious girl or the hen-pecked husband.

Females tend to play out the response of the first Eve who trusts too much and surrenders too much in exchange for attention and promises. Here we see the submissive sex kitten, the Marilyn Monroe. It also includes the battered, co-dependent wife who believes every profession of love because she wants to be wanted. Here too, is the Mafia wife, the woman who allies herself with the man of power no matter what he stands for.

Another kind of passivity is for one sex to fail to help protect the other from his or her vulnerability. Eve's long-term involvement with Lucifer suggests Adam's neglect. Likewise, there have always been men too self-absorbed or timid to commit themselves to their women and girls, to care for them and protect them from harm.

Implications for Relationships

No intimate relationship between a man and woman is immune from these inherited tendencies, but a committed marriage between God-centered individuals serves as a bulwark of protection against the worst of them. Certainly sexual relationships among immature and uncommitted lovers offer no protection—indeed, they invite

the most destructive kinds of interaction. Recall how the guilty parties in the Genesis story reacted to their physical involvement—each blamed each other for what went wrong. “Sex always changes the dynamics of a relationship,” observes educator Josh McDowell.³⁰ The relationship between uncommitted individuals is essentially an extension of a sibling relationship. When they engage in sexual bonding they have the worst parts of both worlds. They no longer or ever will enjoy the full benefits of friendship nor can they reap the complete rewards of married love. Reverend Moon has cautioned single men and women against physical involvement because it depletes the potential for love between them. In addition, their relations with friends, other peers and potential marriage partners are compromised, as well as the bond with parents and other elders. The impact extends even into future marriage.

Impact on the Relationship

1. Stress with parents and friends
2. Problems with partners
3. Negative effect on future marriage

1. Stress with Parents and Friends

Parents have a deep stake not only in their children but also in their grandchildren, as the extension of their flesh and blood and investment of heart. This is not to mention the grandchildren’s claim on their financial and other forms of support. When their offspring, even as adults enter into sexual relations outside the formal process of marriage or in other ways not in their or the grandchildren’s best interests, parents can feel worried, disrespected and hurt, their intrinsic interests ignored. The breach can be as difficult to mend as when Adam and Eve hid from God, unable to face their divine Parent.

Friendships are affected too. Getting obsessed with a partner and reducing attention given to friends is always an issue, but the

addition of sex only intensifies feelings on all sides. Nothing is as divisive as sexual jealousy. Close friends can become bitter enemies overnight. A crowd of sexually involved friends becomes a sticky web of attraction, rivalry, possessiveness, jealousy and betrayal. Intentions behind the most innocent gestures become suspect. Does she want a friend or a lover? Is he just trying to make someone else jealous? When infidelity is discovered, friends join the list of the betrayed. "After the initial shock of his affair wore off," recalls Eugene, 45, a computer instructor, "I found myself dealing with my own anger. How dare he betray his wife, who was my friend! How dare he hurt his young daughters, who are my daughter's play-mates! And then I realized he lied to me too, over and over."

2. Problems with Partners

"Once burned, twice shy" describes many people after the heartache of the breakup of a sexual relationship, as noted above. The remembered pain of betrayal stands in the way of giving themselves trustingly to anyone else. Females may become suspicious of all males, seeing them as only interested in their bodies. Males can also experience fear and mistrust that can last for years, even into later marriage.

Sometimes the introduction of sex disrupts a warm and caring friendship that might well have been a good basis for marriage. "Everyone thought we'd be married, including us," recalls one middle-aged man, about the girl he had known throughout his youth. "We were very close and didn't need sex. But everyone expected it and we thought we were missing something. Finally we slept together. Afterwards we felt different about each other. What we had just faded away." Conversely, the bonding power of sex can lead people to prolong a poor relationship that has no future. After sharing such powerful physical intimacy, it becomes difficult to admit to the lack of emotional closeness.

As mentioned above, sex usually multiplies selfishness in an insecure relationship, increasing tensions and conflict. Its addic-

tive pleasures too readily invite rationalization of expectation and demand. Frequently one partner comes to expect sex at every opportunity and to launch into recriminations or worse if refused. In fact, sexual involvement outside of marriage—especially among live-in lovers—is associated with far more violence and other forms of abuse than among the married.³¹

Because we are beings of mind and body, physical intimacy leaves the heart yearning for comparable emotional intimacy. Yet ironically, the sex makes that longing harder to fulfill.³² Sex can easily come to overpower any meaningful communication or other friendship-building activities together, causing the couple to avoid the effort it takes to understand each other and work out differences. One college woman admitted that ironically, “Having sex is easier than talking face to face and having to deal with all the things that come up.”³³ Deprived of quality interaction, the relationship then collapses from within.

3. Negative Effect on Future Marriage

The effects of premarital sexual experiences do not end when individuals enter into the world of marriage and parenthood. The primary problem is that of self-centered sexual habits. Marital sex is meant to be an uninhibited surrender to the joy of pleasing one another within a safe context of acceptance and commitment.³⁴ However, when those in insecure relationships have repeatedly used sex for selfish reasons—to prove personal worth, to gain a moment of fun and stress release, to hold on to someone’s attention—then it is difficult to turn its purpose around and employ it as a means of giving within the husband and wife relationship.³⁵ In addition, those who were virgins at the wedding learn sexual responses attuned to one another, while the sexually experienced mate already has habits and preferences that may obstruct harmony.

Second, because a person rarely forgets a sexual partner, the sexually experienced frequently find that they are haunted by the images of past partners even in the marriage bed. This involuntary

comparison of previous lovers to their spouse can be not only disturbing to them, but also disconcerting to the spouse, if known. Who likes to have their husband or wife comparing their body or performance to a lover in the past? One young husband observed, “Whenever I kiss my wife or engage in love play, my memory reminds me that this girl could kiss better than my wife, that that girl was better at something else, and so forth. I can’t concentrate on loving my wife with all that I have—there have been too many women in my life to be wholly committed to one.”³⁶

Worse, studies suggest the habit of surrendering to sexual feelings before marriage can prove to be a serious problem later, at some stressful time with their spouse.³⁷ At that point, succumbing to old patterns would be devastating to the mate, marriage and children. Premarital sex may also condition especially males to connect sexual arousal with the thrill of something illicit—the forbidden encounter and the accompanying fear of discovery. Sexual excitement then becomes psychologically linked with risk. Later, the safety and legitimacy of marriage may eventually prove to be too tame to be arousing. Thus, to enhance his performance and pleasure, the husband is constantly drawn to the illicit stimulation of extramarital affairs or similar fantasies by means of pornography.

Weak bonding and predisposition to breakup

Fourthly, after many uncommitted relationships, sex may lose its power to build a strong attachment to the one chosen to be a lifetime mate. Research suggests the chemical bonding power may grow feebler after having already imprinted the heart and mind with previous partners.³⁸ A similar effect results from early disappointing sexual experiences—whether due to discomfort, guilt, performance pressures or other factors—that can lead to an aversion to sex or a feeling of boredom with it. Related to this is the habit of withholding one’s heart in the sexual act, based on experiences within insecure relationships. Instead of the most wholesome and uninhibited giving of mind, body and soul to one another—as vir-

ginal newlyweds can do—the sexually experienced may find it challenging to yield oneself completely in physical intimacy even with their spouses. This too then will impair bonding.³⁹ Even after years of marriage, this can be hard to overcome.

A final consequence of nonmarital sex is the possibility of predisposing of the spouses to divorce. Couples who live together before marriage for example, are more likely to break up their union.⁴⁰ Research suggests that women who were sexually active before marriage have less durable and satisfying marriages than do those who were virgins when married.⁴¹ Those who have a series of sexual relationships learn many things, not the least of which is break-up and failure in relationships.

In the context of a committed marriage and the mutual trust and unconditional love it provides, sexual relations amplify the already present atmosphere of understanding, acceptance and intimacy. In the absence of commitment, sex only aggravates insecurity, lack of trust and misunderstanding, making real intimacy harder to attain. One single 21-year-old woman, a rock musician, agrees: “Leaving sexual intercourse out makes it easier to enjoy a relationship Without sex, you can be yourself—it’s more comfortable. It helps you figure out faster what kind of person they are if they are right for you. You can also get out of a relationship easier—you’re not glued by the sex. Sex complicates things and confuses you. Sex just slows down everything if what you’re interested in is a good relationship.”⁴²

Consequences for Children

In the Genesis story, the first human casualties of Adam and Eve’s mistake were their offspring. The sons, Cain and Abel, clearly did not receive what they needed for individual maturity and mutual good will—one murdered the other and ended up wandering in exile. Thus the primordial infidelity of the parents created a context hostile to the needs of their children.

A healthy, sexually responsible society channels adult hearts and energy in an unselfish direction, particularly towards parenting and investment in the next generation. The needs of the young and the weak take precedence over the adult and the strong, and elders sacrifice their own desires for the sake of youth. Parents constitute a unique subculture within society, one of routine and thoroughgoing living for the sake of another, and the dominance of this ethic creates a high-minded baseline morality for society (see Chapter 18). More than this, such an emphasis ensures that society's very survival; a civilization that does not protect its children rightfully perishes.

Conversely, when sex is loosened from its moorings in marriage and parenthood, then self-centered adult motives dominate. Overall morality declines. "Sex before marriage has proven to be the runaway horse of traditional values," concludes author David Whitman. "Once it took off, all the other old-time mores became more difficult to keep in their place."⁴³ In fact, virtue becomes turned on its head. Abandoning spouse and children to pursue an infatuation, for instance, becomes "courageous" and "honest."

This moral inversion means the social agreement to make sacrifices for the care and nurture of children breaks down. As a result, more and more youth are sacrificed for the sake of adult convenience. One dramatic illustration is that the social climate that supports abortion on demand even in the latter stages of pregnancy now shows increased tolerance for the destruction of newborns, who are after all just a few weeks older than the legally aborted.⁴⁴ Caring parents find themselves battling a whole culture that seems hell-bent on destroying their children's moral, emotional and physical well-being.

Yet more directly toxic than the culture are clashes and separation between young people's parents. Severe parental conflict, divorce or the absence of one parent in the home are negative contexts for children to grow up in. Indeed, research has determined that when the proportion of broken homes in a local population

reaches the level of about 30 percent, that community itself becomes a source of risk for youth. Let us review some of the consequences of the disordered culture and family.

Consequences for Children

1. Impaired development and lowered well-being
2. Depression
3. Ambivalence about family and love
4. Moral and spiritual difficulties
5. Violence and crime
6. Miseducation about sexuality
7. Abuse and exploitation

1. Impaired Development and Lowered Well-Being

Young people growing in single parent households are worse off in every way—financially, academically, psychologically and spiritually—compared to those in a nonabusive, intact home. They are more likely to be poor, to fail to complete high school, to get involved in destructive activities and to become single parents themselves.

Seventy-five percent of adolescent patients at substance abuse centers are single parent children.⁴⁵ These individuals tend to have less self-confidence and self-discipline, more difficulty becoming self-reliant and they are more challenged to set and keep goals.

A classic comment from adult children of divorce is “when my parents broke up, my childhood died.” Too often the absence of one spouse means one of the children comes to take his or her place, becoming a “junior partner” to help meet the custodial parents’ emotional needs and even care for the family. This role overburdens the child and impedes normal development.

2. Depression

Divorce is the greatest cause of depression in the young. In a cross-national study of 34 countries, suicide rates were associated

with divorce rates, especially for boys.⁴⁶

Yet the intact home wracked by chronic conflict between parents bodes badly as well. Youngsters subjected to chronic and destructive clashes between their parents become anxious, angry and depressed. In addition, the offspring often bear the brunt of the parents' discord, as one spouse takes out anger against the other on the children: "You're lazy, just like your father."⁴⁷

3. Ambivalence about Family and Love

When their parents have serious tensions between them, brothers and sisters act more aggressive towards one another and other peers. In response to the usual reduction in the parents' investment in their offspring after a divorce—financially, emotionally and in discipline and supervision—the children often feel less connection, too. Sons and daughters of divorce frequently report feeling less affection for their parents. They make less contact and ask for less assistance. Indeed, many view emotional closeness to their parents as a burden.⁴⁸ The divorce even casts a pall over their relationship with brothers and sisters. Those who experienced divorce in late childhood or adolescence report less fondness for and less positive memories of their siblings.⁴⁹

A subtle but significant loss for a child of divorce or of an unwed mother is that of the image of an intact family. If masculine and feminine harmony is an imperative within each person, parental conflict and especially divorce leaves the offspring without any substantial assurance that male and female integration is possible. Worse, many times the bad relationship between the parents means that sons and daughters internalize a negative image of their own gender or that of the other that haunts them throughout their lives.

Difficulties intensify when the young people reach the age of marriage. Anxiety about relationships is at the core of their personalities, says divorce researcher Dr. Judith Wallerstein.⁵⁰ Bereft of good role models, children of divorce in particular are afraid of conflict, loss, loneliness and betrayal. Paradoxically, those who became

overly bonded with a single parent at an early age may simultaneously experience a fear of closeness later in life. Anxiety over commitment immobilizes many, especially the men, in spite of a desire for a secure marriage.

4. Moral and Spiritual Difficulties

The separation between the parents divides the son or daughter in other ways too. In an intact family, parents strive to create one consistent moral code and home culture that the child learns to understand and within which she can feel comfortable and comforted. The child of divorce is different. She lives between two worlds—or more if a parent remarries—both an insider and outsider in each of them. To be too much like one parent is to be disloyal to or offend the other. Related to this are the losses of extended family, family history and traditions, and sometimes the faith community, neighborhoods and friends, due to relocation and others no longer being able to relate in the same way to the fractured family.⁵¹

Given the incomparable role of parents and family in shaping young people's spiritual lives, discord or divorce between an individual's father and mother or the unnecessary absence of one of them can present a fundamental stumbling block to understanding God's nature and His love and truth. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, for example, the viability of parables such as the Prodigal Son, exhortations to keep commitments and honor one's parents, the image of God as a loving and faithful Father all rest on the premise of having some positive experience of parental presence and unity.⁵² "I've made progress," reports a young man in his mid-30s whose parents split up when he was small and who barely knew his father. "At first I just got angry and cynical when I heard about 'God the Father' in church. Then I gave up the anger and just went blank, especially when it was time to pray. Now I am starting to understand who Heavenly Father is through my experiences with my own baby boy."

5. *Violence and Crime*

Cain's murder of Abel in the Biblical second generation foreshadowed the present connection between the proliferation of children of family breakdown and the rise in crime. Research indicates the connections in various ways. Children from single-parent families are more likely to exhibit anti-social behavior.⁵³ Among certain populations young people living without a father are twice as probable to commit crimes. Nearly 70 percent of juveniles in American correctional institutions come from fatherless homes, as do four out of ten prison inmates.⁵⁴ To the extent that drug use motivates crime, the high percentage of substance abusers among single-parent families has already been noted. Crime rates and the number of single-parent homes in a community are directly correlated.⁵⁵

6. *Miseducation about Sexuality*

A sexually licentious society socializes the young to adopt behavior that harms them and society. Adults in many societies are concerned about unwed teenagers engaging in physical relationships. They know that youth are less equipped to cope with the fallout of premature physical relations than their elders. For example, three out of four Americans disapprove of teenagers having sex before marriage.⁵⁶ Yet they apply a contradictory standard for adults: The majority believes that it is acceptable for adults to engage in such behavior, just like citizens in most Western countries.⁵⁷

Example is obviously the strongest teacher. When adults accept sex outside of marriage among themselves, it becomes almost impossible to enforce a different standard for adolescents. If the conscious decision to marry does not qualify individuals for sexual activity, what does? A guideline like age seems arbitrary, since the negative ramifications are not dramatically different for older adolescents as compared to single adults.⁵⁸

And as teenagers go, so go their younger siblings. Little girls mimic seductive movements they have picked up from watching their elders' favorite recording artist on television. Schoolboys try

to imitate their older brothers' exploits and sexually harass and assault their classmates.

Furthermore, the adult celebration of sex outside of marriage diverts youth from choosing to marry and receive its distinctive benefits. Once sex is no longer one of the defining characteristics of the marital relationship then it only follows that the institution loses much of its uniqueness. "Why buy the cow when the milk is free?" may seem a crass explanation as to why people—especially males—might be more loathe to marry in a sexually permissive society, but certainly it is part of the reason. When the privileges of a certain status are available without the responsibilities, why wouldn't most people sign up for the easier route? The urge towards physical union is part of the need for conjugal companionship—a need fulfilled only in marriage. However, this is readily forgotten when sex is easy to come by. A society that no longer honors marriage and chastity has little basis to guide the young towards lasting satisfaction in love and protect them from the loneliness and hurt that nonmarital sexual relationships can bring.

7. Abuse and Exploitation

Worse, the combination of permissive sexual mores and many single parent homes spells physical danger for the young. Where children are being raised by mothers and live-in boyfriends or step-fathers, the children are more than twenty times more likely to be physically or sexually abused—and even much more likely to be killed—than those who live with their fathers in an intact marriage.⁵⁹ As might be expected, child abuse of all kinds has skyrocketed in the period following the sexual revolution.⁶⁰

The worst example of this depravity is the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. An allusion to this was made earlier in the discussion of Lucifer, who exploited his position as Eve's teacher and guardian. Though it has been long argued that allowing men free access to sex will relieve their frustration and thus alleviate their motive for abusing others, this is hardly apparent in the present

world. For example, one fact conveniently underplayed in the discussion of “teenage” pregnancy and disease is that many if not most of the causal encounters are not between girls and boys but between girls and men. The majority of pregnant girls in the United States began their sexual activity as a result of being raped or abused by men 27 years old on average.⁶¹

Even worse, the legitimization of selfish sexual appetites even among the most educated classes and the globalization of economics, communication and transportation have conspired to fuel a global explosion in child pornography and child prostitution, even the trafficking in young sex slaves. Wealthy adult clients victimize untold millions of impoverished pre-teen and teenage girls and boys every year—a half-million in Brazil alone.⁶² Innocent virgins are sought after as a protection against sexually transmitted disease, and discarded once they become infected and sick. Hundreds of thousands of children are kept as chattel and transported across national borders for this unspeakable purpose.⁶³ At the same time, hundreds of websites feed the perverse appetite for images of children being exploited. This is the darkest part of the satanic underside of “sexual freedom.” The most precious, innocent and vulnerable are cast alive into the voracious jaws of the cold, insatiable lust of the very elders who should cherish and protect them.

Self-Destructive World

The establishment of corrupt ways of loving in this original family thus gave rise to a clan, then community, then civilization that did not learn or understand true love as the dominant way of life. Again this is evident in the Biblical story of the second generation, in which one brother forcibly subjugates the other. Instead of power, prestige and property being naturally aligned with love—entrusted to those with the deepest heart, widest perspective and greatest capacity to use them wisely for the good of all—these became the prizes of conquest, the booty of those who sacrificed others for themselves. In short, self-centered love spawned a self-

destructive world. This is the essence of hell, what has made our earth, in novelist Thomas Hardy's words, a "blighted star" of anguish and suffering.⁶⁴

More specifically the primeval act of adultery is at the root of all the myriad distortions of sexual love that have plagued humanity from the beginning: prostitution, infidelity, rape, incest, fetishes, pornography and sexual addictions. It is at the core of the susceptibility of great individuals and great nations to be brought down low by the power of romantic love and lust. This is the basis for the tensions that tear families apart, which in turn splinters communities and relentlessly works against social cohesion. These in turn leave individuals profoundly lonely, disconnected, spiritually depleted and vulnerable to infinite afflictions of the heart and mind, as is most evident in the industrialized societies—where community, clan and family have broken down the farthest.

Establishing a New Tradition

The misuse of sexual love at the origins of human civilization has disordered the fundamental relations between mind and body, man and woman and God and humanity. The role of religion has been to stop this disorder by buttressing the power of the divine Word latent within, the innate sense of principled sexual morality. In the Genesis story, this is represented by the God's Commandment given to the first man. Violated at the beginning of time, that original message—do not misuse sexual love—has resurrected again and again in myriad ways through the diverse manifestations of religion. This is behind Reverend Moon's words, "When men and women uphold and preserve chastity, they are safeguarding the universe."

Ultimately though these toxic patterns of the past must be reversed, if sexuality is to be sanctified and love is to be fully redeemed, if God is to reside in each family and rejoice in each marriage bed. Reverend Moon's emphasis on the blessing of marriage—linking love and lineage back to God—is to make the foun-

dition for this complete reversal. The dedication of one's union to the Heavenly Father, the practice of chastity, the promise to live for the sake of one another, the family and humanity, and in the case of young people, the selection of a mate in consultation with their parents—these are among the elements in Reverend Moon's practice that counteract the fallen tradition.

An intimation of this appears in the classic narratives. In the Pandora myth for example, after all the plagues were released, the last entity out of Pandora's box—representing the womb—was Hope. This implies the promise that through conjugal love the ultimate answer would come. The Christian tradition has a similar message, with its assertion that a Redeemer is born from a faithful and obedient woman who reverses the first woman's crime. Furthermore, his love for his "bride," the body of believers, serves as the model of true, God-centered marriage.

The restoration of the original ways of entering into and sustaining the conjugal realm of heart has implications for educating the next generation in matters of love, sexuality and marriage preparation, to which we now turn.

Chapter 21

Purity and Preparation for Marriage

When you are nearing twenty, where do you take your clean and unstained pure love, carefully wrapped? To the altar of God, the place where Heaven will be most happy to receive it. Then you join with a man of pure love or a woman with pure love to become a holy husband and wife together.

—Sun Myung Moon

When children are young, the joy of their lives is in seeing their parents' faces. Next comes the deep attachment they develop with their siblings and friends. But as they begin to turn into young men and women, they become intensely fascinated with the other sex, and the longing for conjugal love rises in their hearts. This is the "urge to merge" with a mate and become more complete, the longing for oneness in heart and body with their life companion, to team up with a partner to impact the world in a greater way. These developments are a direct call of the four realms of heart and are necessary to a life fulfilled in true love.

Traditionally, parents and indeed their whole society guided young people along a clearly defined path to meet a mate and come into marriage. Centuries ago in the West and presently in parts of the East, elders arranged marriages while youth were yet teenagers. In the modernized world not long ago, individuals dated to select their own mate for marriage. In either case, sexual love was

expected to be reserved for marriage.

Presently, however, these ways have become all but lost. Dating is no longer with the intent to marry, but simply to have fun and companionship. In fact, there are few clear rules or guidelines to help steer couples to the altar. Sex has become an expression of casual interest with little connection to marriage. It is indulged in at earlier and earlier ages; 16 is a common age to lose virginity in most Western countries. Parenthood is no longer related to marriage and the widespread use of contraceptives and abortion intends to sever sex from parenthood as well. A “divorce culture” in which a high percentage of first marriages fail has broken young people’s confidence to marry and adult confidence to advocate it. This plus the lack of stigma attached to sex outside of marriage has led to the widespread practice of couples living together before or in place of marrying.

Perhaps to an unprecedented degree, a multitude of powerful forces conspire against young people keeping the tradition of giving their bodies and souls to one person for life. Yet this remains the standard imprinted in the heart and conscience by the Creator. “For what reason do we marry?” Reverend Moon asks, “It is in order to realize the purpose of [human] creation.”¹ Nothing else can satisfy individuals’ yearning to live a life of honor and significance, to be loved unconditionally and to give their children the security of their parents’ enduring unity.

Desirable and attainable?

To conform to this norm requires youth and single people to believe in the value and viability of both purity and marriage. Just as importantly, they need to believe in their own capability to be successful in each enterprise. On one hand, they need to be sold on the beauty of reserving sex for marriage. One young woman sums up her sense of this when she writes, “It is sexuality dedicated to hope, to the future, to marital love, to children, and to God.”² At the same time, confidence that they personally can practice it is essential. This is not easy in many societies given the dearth of role

models to look up to.

On the other hand, the idea of saving sex for marriage only has meaning if they view matrimony as desirable. More pointedly, they must see it as an attainable goal for themselves. When so many in society model marital failure, it is common to find individuals who doubt they can succeed in marriage: “I want to be married, but most people I know have divorced or given up on it. I don’t know how I could do better.” In such cases, they may well decide to give up their chastity and dreams of marriage for a live-in lover, the closest thing to marital commitment they believe they can achieve.

For these reasons, helping young and single people to be responsible regarding their sexual desires and to achieve the life purpose of marriage requires support for both goals. This support may encompass many facets—from basic relationship insights and skills to inner qualities and the lessons gleaned from family relationships to considering practical issues of when and how to meet a potential mate.

Education for Character, Abstinence and Marriage Preparation

Guiding young people into matrimony and safeguarding their chastity is a multi-faceted endeavor involving many overt and subtle contributions from the family and community. The disruption of traditional culture in the developed countries has left in many cases a profound vacuum that leaves adolescents and young adults with an unprecedented lack of assistance in this critical task. Families and societies have adapted in some measure to meet the need. The most noticeable developments have been the rise of education for character, sexual abstinence and more recently, the emergence of marriage and relationship education.

Character education has been a rising trend in many societies. Whether in elementary school or at the university, whether in a secular or parochial setting, intentional character education aims to

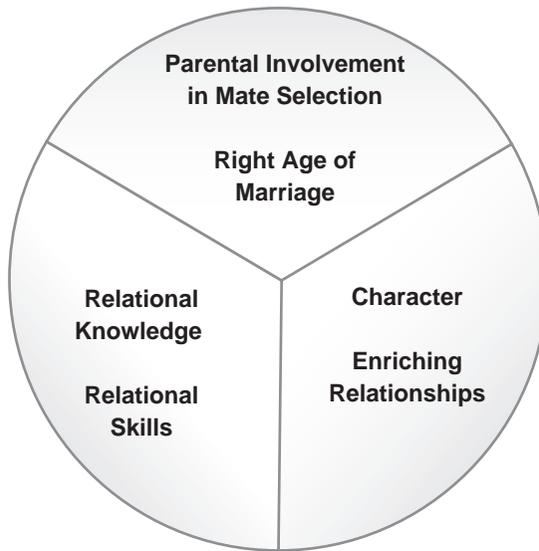
bolster the moral development of students and foster emotional and social learning. Methods include bringing out the ethical dimensions of classroom instruction, creating a more caring school community, conducting service learning projects and utilizing cooperative learning techniques.³ Many view character education as a socializing influence that promotes better interpersonal relationships, including those between the sexes.

Formal education about sexuality has been a growing trend worldwide, especially with the proliferation of sexually transmitted infections. Much of this, however, is focused on control of the physical consequences of sexual relations, not primarily the support of purity. In response, what is called abstinence education has emerged. Whether offered in a secular or faith-based setting, this is formal, research-based instruction characterized by an emphasis on reserving physical intimacy for marriage. Nations as diverse as the United States, Uganda and India have supported this effort with government funding.⁴

The last thirty years has witnessed an explosion of scientific understanding about what makes marriages succeed and fail. This has been translated into programs imparting certain knowledge and skills that are supplementing the traditional premarital guidance offered in faith and family settings to great effect. For instance, in cities where judges and clergy agree to conduct marriages only for couples who have received premarital education and counseling, divorce rates have dropped dramatically.⁵ They are also increasingly being offered in schools and other contexts. In the United States, several states and cities have mandated marriage education for all high school students, and such courses for personal enrichment are increasingly common on college campuses. The hallmark of such programs is training in better communication skills and greater facility in dealing with conflict.

Complementary Education

The three kinds of education are naturally complementary and interdependent. The most effective abstinence programs incorporate marriage and relationship education, just as the most comprehensive relationship education cautions against physical intimacy outside of the context of commitment. This burgeoning formal instruction in the understanding and skills needed for sexual abstinence and marriage preparation is of great value.



Three Facets of Marriage Preparation

Yet for Reverend Moon, there are other components of chastity and marriage support that are equally if not more important. We may consider the great religious traditions and their appeal to and cultivation of personal character. There are also the lessons gained and the wholesome influence of personal relationships with elders, youngers and peers. This is where character education has an important role to play.

Finally there is the question of the age of entering into marriage and parentally involved mate selection; these represent yet another facet of depth and power. If these various facets can be likened to

Olympic medals, knowledge and techniques alone represent the bronze medal level. This combined with character and family relationships compares to the silver medal status. If parentally involved mate selection and right marital timing are added, this represents the highest, gold medal level.

Relational Knowledge and Skills

Ignorance about love and marriage leaves young people that much more susceptible to prevailing myths that undermine chastity and marital success. A lack of social skills too makes lasting love that much more of an unattainable goal and resistance to sexual temptation that much more difficult. Parents, teachers, pastors and other leaders do well to learn this information and these techniques to pass on to the single people in their care and to enhance their own marriages and other relationships.

First Facet of Marriage Preparation

Knowledge and Insight

1. Discernment of true love
2. Realities of marriage
3. Option of intercultural marriage
4. Advantages of chastity

Relational Skills

1. Communication and conflict resolution
2. Setting boundaries of physical involvement

Knowledge and Insight

Social science has only recently turned its eyes to matters of love, sexuality and marriage, yet it has yielded a plethora of hard data that in many cases only tends to reinforce the treasure of classical wisdom from scripture, literature and philosophy. Whether from ancient or contemporary sources, much of this knowledge

and insight about the conjugal realm of heart remains unknown to the average person. Youth and single adults find this material not only fascinating but empowering.

1. Discernment of True Love

Singles benefit from a clear-eyed discussion about the nature of love that helps them distinguish between true conjugal love and its myriad counterfeits. Inspiring examples from the culture and one's own family and neighbors can illuminate ennobling ties between men and women. A most basic distinction is between true love and self-centered love or infatuations. The following table contrasts them.

Contrasting Qualities of Love

Infatuation or Self-centered Love

Prefers to be receiving.

Judges the other according to how well the partner makes one feel loved.

Focuses on the other's—and one's own—external traits, such as looks, income, and status.

Makes the other feel anxious.

Starts up quickly and ends just as quickly.

Weakened by time and separation.

Fosters self-absorption within the couple and exclusion of others.

True Love

Enjoys giving.

Judges oneself and how one might give more to the other.

Cherishes the other most for his or her good heart and character.

Makes the other feel secure.

Grows steadily and ends slowly if at all.

Intensified by time and separation.

Encourages reaching out to others.

Prioritizes the relationship over truth and goodness.	Bases the relationship upon truth and goodness.
Hinders productivity.	Enhances productivity.
Plagued by quarrels of increasing frequency and severity.	Characterized by fewer and fewer quarrels over time, of decreasing intensity.
Poisoned and threatened by conflict.	Deepened and fortified by conflict.

The issue of purity is a direct way to separate selfish love from unselfish. “Ask the partner to wait until marriage for sex,” recommends purity educator Mike Long, “and by their response you’ll know if he or she loves you.”⁶ This is an application of the classic Biblical definition: “Love is patient and kind . . . Love does not insist on its own way” (1 Corinthians 13.3-4).

Love as volitional

One insidious fallacy pushed upon single people from all sides is the myth of “falling in love”: Only an overwhelming, irresistible attraction springing up spontaneously between two people can lead to true and lasting love between them. The only challenge is to find the right person who arouses this feeling. If later on problems arise and the feeling should wane, this means this was the wrong person after all and the relationship should end.

This misunderstanding neglects the volitional aspect of loving, as is suggested by the title of a book by marriage expert Gary Smalley, *Love Is a Decision*.⁷ “While it sounds romantic to ‘fall’ in love, the truth is that we decide who we want to love,” asserts high school relationship educator, Charlene Kamper.⁸ Coming from the Jewish matchmaking tradition and personal experience, Rabbi Shmuley Boteach agrees, “You can actually decide to fall in love

with someone, and your heart will follow.”⁹ While it is true that the feeling aspect of love—as a strong state of liking—is beyond control,¹⁰ the intentional aspect—as a chosen attitude and behavior—is not. The latter can influence the former. In other words, the decision to love can encourage the feeling of love.¹¹

A person of heart and character is committed to being loving whether or not he or she feels loving at the time.¹² This of course is the ordinary experience of parents who actively fulfill the duties of love even in the absence of warm feelings, and find their hearts renewed and affection restored. All religious exhortations to love one’s neighbor and even one’s adversary are based on the idea of love as a decision. Though everyone wants to be fond of their spouse without effort, just as one would with a friend, the reality is that in both marriage and friendship, love demands a large measure of doing what one does not feel like doing.

Understanding love as involving an act of will brings in the element of choice. This can be a source of freedom and security for youth, who often struggle with fears that certain flaws mean no one can love them or that married love will someday vanish. “If we fall out of love,” they wonder, “how can we bring it back?” They can learn it is possible to generate love even when it is not readily flowing. Indeed, if a man and woman follow the principles that facilitate true love—mind and body unity, giving and receiving, subject and object partnership, unity around a higher purpose and others (see Part 3)—a strong and affectionate connection builds or rebuilds between them that only deepens and strengthens over time.

In addition, if it is indeed true that it is not *whom* they love that counts as much as *how* they love, then they don’t have to be waiting helplessly to bump into the “right one.” They can be getting practice and building confidence in becoming loving persons where they are right now. Finally, the notion of love as an active verb helps young people grasp the key difference between maturity and immaturity—the immature focus on being loved; the mature focus on giving love.

2. Realities of Marriage

As popular as weddings may be, contemporary youth and singles can display a remarkable ignorance about the institution of marriage—its benefits, its demands, its realities through time, traits for success and so on. Yet research now validates the advantages of marriage and what it requires to succeed more than ever.

One key yet little known insight is that healthy marital relationships pass through several predictable phases—romance, conflict, recommitment and service—before reaching the goal of deep oneness of heart that is so attractive in couples of enduring love. Singles can be prepared for the stage after the wedding and the initial romantic period, when illusions fall away, warm feelings dry up and they feel as if they are married to a stranger. They can learn that this is a part of growth, not evidence that they have married the wrong person.

At this critical point the spouses face three choices. One is to escape the marriage through divorce or affairs or some other means. Another is stay together but resign themselves to perpetual distance. The third option is to commit to create love between themselves based on acceptance, respect and living for the other's benefit. Those who decide to pursue the third way and forge a real bond between themselves enter into a season of greater discovery, intimacy and maturation than they have ever known. The final stage is that of service when the couple's partnership can bear lasting fruit in the contribution it makes in the lives of others.

Youth can be dismayed by the degree to which even minor issues can generate conflicts in their own relationships and in the marriages they see around them.¹³ However, when they understand in advance that the initial romantic phase will inevitably give way to disillusionment and tension—that in turn presents the opportunity to find union on a deeper level—they can avoid the mistake of giving up when difficulties arise. They also gain the perspective to better interpret what they see in others' relationships.

Expectations brought down to earth

The tendency of contemporary consumer culture is to portray marriage not as a crucible for moral growth and a vehicle for raising children but as yet another means to achieve personal gratification. Especially in highly individualistic societies subject to family breakdown, single people seek a “soul mate,” someone who will meet all their needs for love and companionship. A sad consequence of what psychologist Blaine Fowers calls “the myth of marital happiness”¹⁴ is that single people sabotage themselves by expecting too much. In addition, the needs of children may be sacrificed since the qualities of a good lover can differ radically from those of a good parent.¹⁵ Marriage education can help bring young people’s expectations more in alignment with reality.

3. The Option of Intercultural Marriage

Individuals frequently look among persons who are like themselves when considering a mate, and family and friends tend to encourage this. At the same time, opposites do attract. Unions between partners of different ethnic or religious or other kinds of backgrounds is increasing in many parts of the world, as diverse peoples intermingle. It is helpful for young people and their loved ones to be informed of the many benefits inherent in marrying across boundaries even as they should be prepared for the challenges.

One key advantage of intercultural mating is that the offspring of such marriages have stronger immune systems owing to the merging of genetically disparate lineages. Children of cross-cultural unions also stand to inherit a broader spectrum of gifts from the combined ethnic or religious heritages of their parents. This same cultural mix enriches the two spouses, broadening their minds and hearts to embrace more types of people without prejudice and ethnic arrogance.

Further, such partnerships are dramatic and fascinating to behold, for they encompass a greater slice of humanity—and the

aspects of God reflected in that humanity—than typical unions. Who would be able to take their eyes off a polished, ebony-toned, highly educated African stateswoman receiving a kiss from her rumpled, flaxen-haired, Scandinavian fishing boat captain husband? Love that spans groups that are or were once enemies is particularly poignant. Such unions help to bridge historical rifts and heal their deep-seated wounds. Reverend Moon has said that the Heavenly Father is particularly moved by couples like these.

As rich as these partnerships are, young people need to anticipate the inevitable misunderstandings that accompany them initially. They must be ready to make extra effort to understand and embrace the spouse's background and negotiate their differences. Young people can practice in advance by reaching out to make friends with people dissimilar to themselves.

4. The Advantages of Chastity

“When you enter your married life after keeping your virginity,” Reverend Moon has said, “you will be able to love wholeheartedly.” As sexually savvy as most young people are, few have heard much about purity. Its social, relational, psychological and physical advantages frequently strike them as a revelation. “Why didn't someone tell us?” is a common reaction, especially among those who have lost their virginity and felt alone in their misgivings. Trusted authorities can inform young people about the role of sex in marriage and the destructiveness of sex outside of it before they make costly mistakes.

Further, they can learn about the steps of bonding and how sexual relations represent the final step. Psychologist John Van Epp describes the natural and healthiest progression of bonding as proceeding in five steps: from knowing to trusting, from trusting to reliance, then from reliance to commitment, and only then to physical bonding.¹⁶ These steps were built into traditional courting behaviors and now they have to be intentionally chosen.

Relational Skills

The probability of divorce is disempowering for those contemplating marriage. At the same time, pressures from the partner and peers can be intimidating for those aiming to sustain their chastity. Dealing effectively with problems in both arenas demands certain competencies in relationships. Of course, general “people skills” comprise the bedrock of all conjugal success. For this reason, Reverend Moon recommends that those preparing to marry seek to learn basic relational skills not only at home but also through avenues such as team sports, leadership roles in school, in one’s house of worship and at work, child care, teaching and sales experience and through service projects.

More formal coaching in relationship techniques is also a helpful supplement to these experiences. The careful study of human conflict and communication in close relationships has yielded much hard data as to how to prevent the mistakes that block warm and effective interactions and how to ease discord when it erupts. People of any age can learn these skills to their advantage.

1. Communication and Conflict Resolution

If interaction is the lifeblood of all relationships, then blocks in communication comprise the classic relationship threat. The prominent marriage and abstinence courses all feature training in communication and conflict resolution techniques¹⁷ that are not only invaluable in marriage and parenthood but also with singles’ family and friends as well. Effective talking, listening and tension reduction involve coping with negative feelings like stress, anger, guilt and fear and responding constructively. “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry” (James 1.19), the Bible advises, yet communicating and handling tensions well takes time to learn.

On one hand, there is learning to speak clearly and disarmingly, without personal attacks or exaggerations or vague complaints that don’t specify what actions are desired. On the other hand, there

is learning how to listen mindfully and with empathy, without being distracted by preparations for a retort, and in a way that indicates that the speaker is understood. Developing such habits early on will prevent many harmful marital mistakes later even as they work to smooth all interactions in the meantime.

2. *Setting Boundaries of Physical Involvement*

For chastity, the basic communication and relational skill that effective abstinence education fosters relates to setting and reinforcing sexual boundaries. Reverend Moon teaches that the wise individual clarifies his parameters regarding physical contact and exclusivity before entering into close relationships with the opposite sex. First it is necessary to define purity or abstinence clearly—it represents not just the avoidance of technical intercourse but the discouragement of arousal itself. This decision respects the fact that though sexuality is largely a matter of the mind and heart, the body has a measure of power that is not easy to restrain. This is not to say that sexual instincts are beyond control; they are always responsive to the mind, as any parent interrupted in lovemaking by their children can testify!

At the same time, however, beyond a certain point of touch and arousal, the body's progression towards intercourse becomes very difficult to stop. Those who are serious about maintaining their purity simply do not allow themselves to be in that situation. "It's tough being a musician," confesses 26-year-old Richard Kaweesa, a Ugandan who has maintained his chastity. "You are prone to temptations, with all these girls coming after you. They want to know you, where your hotel room is. [But] it's up to you We are not victims of our environment."¹⁸

Real commitment to the boundaries of purity means fostering resistance skills—anticipating pressures to break those boundaries and preparing a response. It is a smart teenager or single adult who has practiced how to explain her purity standard to her friends and especially to members of the opposite sex who are interested in

her. He also is wise who has planned effective “escape” measures when he finds himself in a difficult situation, such as a house full of peers who are drinking and getting sexually involved with one another or being alone with an aggressive and attractive young woman. Unless individuals have planned how to defend their boundaries when distressed, tired or off guard, protection is illusory.

Challenge for engaged couples

One mistake couples make is determining their boundary according to their level of commitment. The closer they are to marriage, the further they allow themselves to go; “We’re almost married,” they tell themselves, “it will do no harm.” Yet the effect is to dissipate their moral authority and power of their love and certainly imperil their purity. Too many couples succumb to intercourse and later break their engagement, sometimes as a direct result of compromising their promise to themselves, each other and God. “I’m glad that my wife and I never gave in to the pressure to get too physically involved before we got married,” says one young man, 30. “I realized later that because I respected her and our prior agreement, she has no qualms about me going away on business trips. She trusts me. And I trust myself too, though I am still careful. I’m proud of what we did.”

One way of regarding sexual boundaries is using a financial analogy. Typically, as couples begin to talk of commitment, they begin to get thrifter with their money, holding back on their spending so as to invest it in their future together. The same approach can be taken wisely with sexual expression. As couples get more serious about marriage, they are smart to become even more careful regarding physical affection, holding off in order to invest more in the bonding and excitement of their marriage. The highest standard of investment is to avoid touch altogether and let the anticipation mount towards the day of total commitment in marriage. This is the secret behind many of the traditional practices where touch was forbidden once engagement was announced. The purpose was

not deprivation but the enhancement of love and pleasure. In contemporary society where innocence is given little value, the sexual joy that is the fruit of virginity and vows of lifelong love is seldom appreciated. Yet research suggests it is the strongest.¹⁹

Character and Enriching Relationships

The knowledge and skills needed for abstinence and marriage preparedness all assume the simultaneous development of certain qualities of heart and character. Acting on the knowledge about mature love and practicing effective communication, for example, require unselfishness, patience, courage and kindness. The silver medal facet of support for marriage involves character training—developing the heart, conscience and mature character—to mold a person with the inner resources to meet the demands of lifelong love. Faith-based instruction tends to stress this, appealing to higher purposes and employing the language of right and wrong. So does a character-based approach in secular settings.²⁰ Intentional emphasis on character development would also take note of the enriching matrix of relationships with family, friends and others who impart the lessons and cultivate the qualities needed to love (see Part IV).

Second Facet of Marriage Preparation

Personal Character

1. Self-control
2. Faith in God and sense of higher purpose
3. Sense of personal worth

Enriching Relationships

1. Parents and other elders
2. Siblings and friends of both sexes

Personal Character

“In the future, would you like to have a wife with a beautiful face or a beautiful mind?” Reverend Moon has asked youth. “You should have a beautiful and giving mind, and live your life centered on the mind and not on your appearance.”²¹ Since it is usually the pleasing physique and personality in a member of the opposite sex that initially catches the eye, these are the same traits that most young people focus on in themselves to attract love. Yet singles can recognize that in the end it is such inner traits as being caring, kind and generous that they are really looking for in a marriage prospect and so it is with potential partners.

Considering character further, youth can also appreciate that it is unrealistic and unfair to expect a marriage candidate to have qualities that they do not have themselves—“if they were so wonderful, why would they be interested in me?” A good subject partner attracts a good object partner and vice versa (see Chapter 11). Moreover, it takes a good person to appreciate a good person. Reverend Moon has said, “No matter how good your partner is, you will not be able to see his or her value without you yourself being the best.”²² This is why he advises young people, “You should concentrate on perfecting yourself first. Then you can begin to think of attaining an ideal partner.”²³ The best way to attract a fine husband or wife is to become that kind of person oneself. Ovid said, “To be loved, be lovable.”

Daily efforts to prepare one’s own heart and character to be a good and worthy mate will not only pay off in attracting a good person, but also in the future marriage itself. Such an attitude breeds the valuable habit of looking to oneself as the person to improve when difficulties arise, not the spouse.

Furthermore, having good character and looking for the same in a potential mate is a wise investment in the more essential, vertical side of compatibility. Mutual interests and sexual attractiveness comprise the horizontal side and make for an immediate connection, but these can change, while shared values and mutual

respect comprise the more enduring basis for a promising marriage.

The moral strengths and concerns required for chastity and marital success are as wide-ranging as those demanded by any other essential life purpose, but certain key characteristics come to mind. Self-control, faith in God and a higher purpose, and personal worth are among them.

1. Self-control

Self-control encompasses the ability to delay gratification and discipline desire, and forms the basis of mind and body unity. In turn, such integrity is the pre-condition for being able to give true love. Self-control is obviously the central virtue for maintaining purity. At the same time, self-discipline undergirds the capacity to follow through on the commitment of marriage. What could be more necessary for the mother who must work two jobs to support her family or the husband who will care for his ailing wife into their old age?

Self-control begins with practicing obedience to one's parents and submitting to their discipline, until the voice of the conscience becomes strong enough. Will power is the engine of self-control, which in turn is powered by motivation, the fruit of understanding and emotion. This is why many strategies for strengthening the will involve feeding the intellect with knowledge and the heart with inspiration. Fortunately, the same focus and determination needed in any area of life—at school, in the sports field, at work—serves the single person in good stead in her efforts to live a chaste life and ready herself for marriage. At the same time, self-disciplined behavior in applying oneself to studies, to achieve more on the job, to avoid drugs and alcohol, to exercise and gain mastery in a skill all help to promote healthy and constructive choices in love.

One simple measure that is proven to bolster self-control is to make a purity pledge, ideally before God, family, friends and members of the community.²⁴ A purity ring can serve as a visible reminder of their promise, to be replaced one day by a wedding

ring. In a similar vein, it is vital for single persons to assemble around them friends and elders who can help share the struggles, celebrate successes and keep them accountable for their decision. They help serve as an external conscience. "Two of my friends and I, we made a pact," one college senior confides, "so when I feel my resolve fading, I think about my friends and I can't let them down. We call each other up a lot and we check on each other."

For purity, an important yet neglected area for self-control is that of the mind. This is the ultimate sexual organ; sexual expression is profoundly affected by imagination and learning. If the chaste individual seeks to avoid enflaming his sexual desire apart from his future or present spouse, this means controlling the imagination—lapses of self-control in behavior begin in the mind first, as imaginings. "Each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire," the Bible warns. "Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin" (James 1.14-15). There is a reason that Jesus declared, "Anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5.28) and a Taoist text likewise says, "when you meet a beautiful woman in another man's home and cannot banish her from your thoughts, you have committed adultery with her in your heart" (Treatise on Response and Retribution).²⁵ The initial thought cannot usually be helped, but the embroidering of the fantasy is under one's control. Keeping the mind free and pure not only helps the maintenance of purity but it is also promotes the greatest intimacy and sexual joy in marriage.

2. Faith in God and a Sense of Higher Purpose

The strongest ally in maintaining purity and preparing oneself for the spouse's realm of heart is faith in God. This faith has two dimensions. One is giving Him priority; loving Him first. The other dimension of faith is demonstrating that love through trust and obedience.

The centrality of the relationship with God becomes apparent when we consider how the first ancestors were to have been safe-

guarded on their path towards maturity and marriage. The Heavenly Father was to be their primary love. Through demonstrating their faith in the divine Word and obeying the cautionary Commandment—in spite of doubts and inability to fully understand their Father's heart—they were to have been impervious to the power of selfish and illicit love that tempted them. This same trust in God would have also served as the anchor for their marriage and family life.

In the parallel way, single people can find power and protection by trusting in God's truth and His promises, as well as through the guidance of their parents and others representing Him. Only trust in the Heavenly Parent can sustain a person when love from elders or peers is inadequate, when nothing at home, work or school inspires, when emptiness yawns and loneliness seems overwhelming. Only God can console the "restless heart" that Augustine referred to; only He fully understands the pain and struggle.

When faced with sexual temptation during the years before his marriage at age 30, youth pastor Rick Stedman obeyed the Biblical mandate and used prayer. First, he would thank God for his sexual desire that that would lead him into marriage and that reminded him of his need for people. Then one by one, he would pray for all those family members and friends whose love sustained him despite his conjugal loneliness. The frequent occasions of sexual desire would then become moments of strengthening his connection to God and to his loved ones.²⁶

Such faith ultimately means loving God and all He signifies more than one's partner. "Therefore, after [we] love God, love the world and love the nation," Reverend Moon teaches, we may invest our love in our spouse.²⁷ Paradoxically, this ensures that one's love is true, since true love is grounded in unchanging goodness and truth. It also ensures that their commitment to and love for their future spouse can always be sustained, since obedience to the Creator and seeing through His eyes always leads to this. Indeed, trusting the Divine Parent in this manner protects their future marriage in every way, since the strongest unions are God-centered.

Higher purpose and meaning

A healthy faith in God includes within it a sense of higher purpose and meaning. Self-control, perseverance in giving and other character traits vital to purity and preparation for marriage are easier when individuals can connect them to an ideal that inspires them. In a word, there must be enough meaning to be worth the sacrifices. Young people naturally want to see themselves as part of a heroic and romantic story, an ongoing struggle to overcome destructive forces and realize goodness and true love.

The ancient religious traditions provide narratives that connect chastity and marriage with support for God. Reverend Moon's teaching is particularly strong on this point, asserting that purity and God-centered marriage reverse the primordial Fall, strike at the heart of the evil power in the world and comfort the heart of the Creator. "To indemnify and restore what made God unhappy," he says, "young people should work to restore purity with all their hearts and minds."²⁸

Such scope of meaning is certainly motivating. At the very least, all young people can appreciate that disciplining their sexuality and working to establish a strong marital union are powerful correctives to the destructive patterns around them and comprise a most vital and lasting contribution to humanity. Moreover, this is an accomplishment available to anyone, even if unable to excel in other areas of life.

This need for higher purpose and meaning is met also by participating in community and national service, as mentioned above. This is why programs stressing volunteerism have demonstrated such clear success in preventing teenage unwed pregnancy and other negative outcomes.²⁹ Giving oneself to unselfish service contributes to the sense of being used for a great and worthy purpose in the world.

3. Sense of Personal Worth

Faith in God and living for a higher purpose help to bolster the sense of personal value that is crucial to maintaining purity. Why would single persons save themselves for marriage unless they consider themselves—not just their chastity—something precious enough to save? At the same time, self-respect and self-worth are, in the words of one marriage education program, the “indispensable foundation” for personal relationships.³⁰ A deficiency leaves a person vulnerable to manipulation and self-deception. No one can insist on being treated with respect and honor if she does not respect and honor herself. Those who have a strong sense of personal worth and dignity naturally hold out for a partner and quality of relationship worthy of their love and sexuality. Those who do not tend to throw themselves away too readily for any attention the opposite sex can provide or in response to a misguided idea of self-sacrifice for the sake of love.

It is critical that young people do not give their hearts and bodies away cheaply and then expect that they will be treated with dignity and care and retain their own self-respect. After all, the New Testament declares, each of us was “bought at a price” (1 Corinthians 7.23)—God and His representatives have suffered to protect and preserve our opportunity for the beautiful family life, love and lineage He originally intended. Purity and careful preparation for marriage are key ways to honor our priceless value.

Fortunately, the area of self-worth and moral authority is particularly responsive to efforts of restoration. Those who have made mistakes in their relationships with the opposite sex can begin again, lay a healthier foundation and gain much lost ground. In particular, when those who have already lost their purity but want to recommit to chastity—called variously secondary virgins, renewed virgins or even neo-virgins, the name chosen by a group of male university basketball players—they find the longer they abstain from unchaste relationships, the more they begin to regain their sense of dignity and the preciousness of their sexuality. Though nothing can bring

back the full power of true innocence and purity, they often find their wedding night is more beautiful and meaningful than they would have imagined years before they decided to make the chastity choice.

Enriching Relationships

The heart needs connection with others in all directions. For Reverend Moon, the ultimate context for learning the ways of healthy marital love and sexual discipline is in the matrix of relationships with parents, elders, siblings, friends and acquaintances. The qualities nurtured through experiences in the child's and sibling's realms of heart serve single individuals well in the transition into married life. Furthermore, it is in the balance of fundamental vertical and horizontal relations that the individual finds the nourishment and the power needed to resist unconstructive romantic and physical involvements.

1. Parents and Other Elders

The first need is for vertical relationships. Honoring one's parents is encompassed in the practice of putting God first. Reverend Moon has said, "When you reach adolescence, you want to love the other sex, but before you do you must have loved your parents more Before you think of your ideal partner, you yourself must be a filial and pious child to your parents."³¹ Parental love is the anchor for a person's sense of identity, security and value.

A strong tie to one's parents is an essential reference point for wisdom and unconditional love during the stresses of acquiring an education, developing a career and finding a mate. Specifically regarding the opposite sex and purity, a son's mother and a daughter's father are the most important persons through whom a young person receives the affection and the stimulation from the other gender that each desire. When this connection is weak, individuals are prone to seek it in unhealthy romantic attachments.³² The young

woman starved for her father's attention is particularly vulnerable to the selfish sexual advances of men. The boy who is longing for the tender comfort of his mother is more tempted into infatuations with girls and to seek comfort sexually. The contrary is also true. The majority of youth who have maintained their virginity testify to the importance of their connection to their parents and their parents' values, especially religious ones.³³

This is why youth are wise to fortify their relationship with their parents and allow themselves to trust and submit to their guidance. In addition, they benefit from connections with other elders, be they relatives, educators, religious advisors or simply older neighbors, who can offer a larger perspective, the benefits of experience and a grounding and protective influence. One rising trend within religious communities is that of marriage mentoring—pairing an engaged couple with long-married one—to supplement parental support and ease their entrance into married life.

As vital and fulfilling as these interpersonal vertical relationships can be, they are not enough. We have a need for community connection, a sense of belonging to a larger body; otherwise, a certain void remains. This need for belonging can be addressed by membership in clubs and teams, engagement with a faith community, involvement in campus or neighborhood activities and efforts to serve one's country through the military, politics or humanitarian projects.

Giving love downward

At the same time, vertical love is not only to be received; it is to be given. A person benefits from being an elder to another and giving love downward, whether it be to younger siblings, a needy child, a newer colleague at work or even a pet. There is joy, meaning, preparation for marriage and parenthood—as well as protection from self-absorption—in being a source of strength and understanding for another.

Knowing someone weaker is depending on us and someone

stronger is there for us to depend on reminds us of why we want to resist unworthy romantic involvements. Regarding these vertical relationships, Catholic psychologist Benedict Groeschel notes, “Older and younger friends serve the universal need to be ‘children at one time and parents at another.’”³⁴ Vertical relations have the added advantage of being less likely to be sexually tempting, so they provide a helpful reference point for pure peer relationships.

2. Siblings and Friends of Both Sexes

Horizontal relations like siblings and friends meet a need that more duty-based vertical relations cannot: Each person wants to win affection within the arena of conditional love, to be valued by choice because of their personal traits and shared experiences and interests. Conjugal relations represent the pinnacle of this—being specially accepted by someone as a life mate out of all candidates in the world—but horizontal relationships in general help to meet a similar need especially when single. In addition, they are priceless training for the key skills of marriage, for marriage is above all an enduring friendship.

Competency in making and keeping friendships includes learning how to relate harmoniously with many different types of people—introverted and extroverted, older and younger, male and female, from different backgrounds and walks of life. This is why Reverend Moon encourages individuals to make warm connections with a wide range of personalities and backgrounds, the wider the better. The ideal is to embrace those most different from oneself, to bridge all possible extremes.

Friendship broadens a person's heart and mind, enlightening her about the varied strengths people have and the different ways people love and experience being loved. This insight and flexibility is an asset later when married and having to assimilate the varied personalities and viewpoints of in-laws and even one's children. “One of my roommates at college was exactly the kind of person I could not stand,” recalls one father. “I tried desperately to get another

room but for various reasons I couldn't. After about six months of fighting and avoiding each other, we finally got to talking. I came to understand him a lot better and even to like him. I'm glad, because my middle son has a lot in common with him."

Friendships help develop the necessary marriage-building skills that sustain relationships over time. A marriage commands loyalty and sacrifices even if the people within it sometimes do not seem deserving.³⁵ There is value in young people learning how to stick with teammates or a particular friendship despite how the team member or friend may have disappointed them. Any relationship demands regular maintenance, some sort of regular shared activities, whether play, work or conversation. The skills spouses need to keep their connection to each other³⁶—and what parents need to stay current with their older children³⁷—are best honed in earlier friendships.

Teenagers can also notice the greater depth and resilience of friendships forged within the context of unselfish service to others. If the desirable final phase of marriage involves service to others, it is only wise to orient the young in this direction. This is one more reason why Reverend Moon encourages volunteerism as a neglected part of marriage preparation.

Opposite gender siblings and friends

Relationships with opposite sex siblings are of particular significance prior to marriage since they address the need to learn about the other gender. Especially it reduces the mystique surrounding the opposite sex—a man who has seen his sister around the house in bathrobe and curlers is less prone to unrealistic infatuations. Of similar importance are friends of the opposite sex who feel like siblings.

The goal is to relate to all members of the other sex as brothers or sisters, reflecting the realm of heart they in fact occupy. "Continence is to regard the wife of another as one's own sister or daughter," directs a Jain scripture (Anupreksa 337-339).³⁸ Likewise,

the Bible says, “Treat younger men like brothers, older women like mothers, younger women like sisters, all in purity” (1 Timothy 5.1-2). This obviously is not easy, given the ready tendency for such encounters to become romantic and sexual. It can be learned, however. “One trick I use when I am strongly attracted to a woman,” says a 25-year-old single fellow, “is to imagine her as a girl, and I’m her dad or older brother. It takes some time, concentration and repeated effort but it usually works. I see them in a more objective, detached—and unselfish—way.”

It is also made easier by associating with the opposite sex in nonromantic settings, especially in groups. “Two of my grown daughters will get married this year to the only boyfriends they’ve ever had,” writes father Michael Farris. “They have known dozens of guys because [my wife and I] encouraged all kinds of group activities where there have been a mixture of both sexes . . . but pairing off [prematurely] was off limits.”³⁹

Supportive band of friends

In adolescence and young adulthood when friendships are vital and peer influence is at its strongest, singles who want to maintain their purity are wise to assemble around themselves like-minded friends and colleagues. “Those that are good, seek for friends,” advises a Taoist text. “That will help you practice virtue with body and soul” (Tract of the Quiet Way).⁴⁰ Most young people who have successfully navigated the stormy waters of sexual and romantic temptation testify to the invaluable support of friends—just having someone to spend time with on Saturday nights when it seems everyone else is out on a date. It is not always easy to find the relational resources needed to help fill the needs of the heart with healthy social contacts, but it is worth the effort. “I’ve learned enough about myself,” says a 21-year-old female university student, “to notice that whenever I start to crave the wrong kind of attention from guys, it means there’s a ‘leak’ in my ‘love life.’ I mean I need to call my sister or my best friend back at home, or connect with my Mom or Dad or maybe

reach out to see how my little brother is doing.”

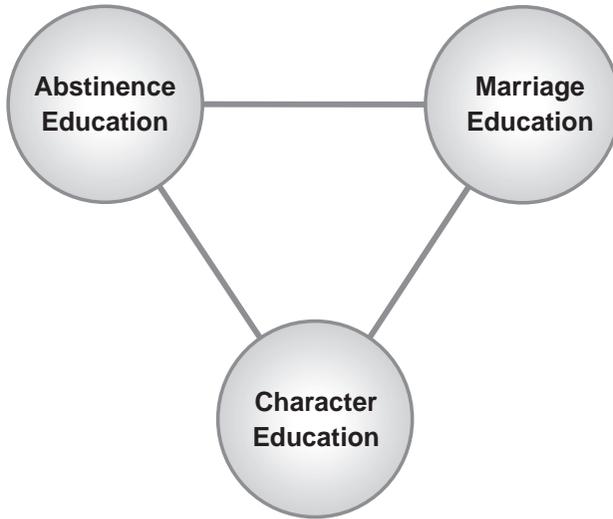
The emphasis on personal character and good relationships is deeper and more potent than the focus only on skills and knowledge. These marriage preparation resources are well summarized in the words of Christian relationship experts, Ben Young and Samuel Adams: “You must become grounded, grouped, goal-oriented, giving and growing.”⁴¹

Character education complements purity and marriage education

This vital connection between true love, personal character and morally edifying relationships highlights why character education is particularly relevant for those interested in providing good purity and marriage education for youth. Effective character education is a critical complement to and foundation for abstinence education and marriage education.

As discussed in Parts I and II, mature character is a developmental imperative that makes a healthy family life possible. Such maturity is the fruit of the cultivation of heart, the strengthening of conscience and the exercise of one’s gift of responsibility—goals of good character education.

Speaking practically, unless youth are unselfish enough and have the depth of heart to connect with a potential mate, a stable marriage may not be possible. Likewise, unless they have the strength of character to resist sexual pressure, they lack the freedom to actually choose purity. Thus, character education works with abstinence education and marriage education to create a protective triangle for the support of young people’s success in love.



Protective Triangle for Success in Love

Parental Involvement in Mate Selection & Timing of Marriage

As valuable as resources are that have been discussed thus far, they still do not represent the optimal conditions for the support of purity education and successful marriage. This ultimate level involves concern with the “when” and “how” of marriage, that is, the timing of entering into marriage and, more importantly, the way a person finds a mate. Wedding at an earlier age and allowing parents to be actively involved in selecting marriage candidates and advising the development of the growing relationship comprise the gold medal level.

Third Facet of Marriage Preparation

Earlier Marriage

Parental Involvement in Mate Selection

Earlier Marriage

A significant factor affecting purity is the age of marriage. If a young person intends to marry in their late 20s, and has begun romantic involvements in middle school—now the standard practice for Western youth—chastity becomes a Herculean challenge compared to the individual who has become engaged at age 18 and married at 20. Yet in the industrialized countries, many individuals are marrying in their late 20s and early 30s, for a multitude of reasons. Education and career preparation are taking longer and young people, especially females, are encouraged to finish education and achieve economic self-sufficiency, to have stronger resources to fall upon once children come or as a hedge against divorce. Waiting seems more prudent too. Since even adults so often fail at marriage, it seems foolish for not-yet-mature youth to attempt the enterprise.

Yet older individuals become less marriageable in important ways even as they seem more prepared. Foremost, as young people age, they are far more likely to lose their purity. Along with sexual experience will come complications regarding commitment and trust. In addition, they also establish set habits and a certain lifestyle as they age and become less flexible, allowing less room for another person in their lives.⁴² One woman in her 30s admitted, “I always talked about wanting to get married someday, but now I’m not sure I want to give up having my life and routines just the way I like them.” Finally, it is a simple fact that the longer people wait, the less likely they will ever marry.⁴³

Viability of early marriage

For these reasons early marriage—in the late teen years or early twenties—has clear benefits for many youth. The couple is at the peak of their fertility. Female fecundity begins to wane in the late 20s and there are significant health benefits to early child-bearing for both mother and child. Further, youth at that age are at the height of romantic and sexual interest. It is most wholesome and bonding for young people to marry their first real love, since it

is the strongest and purest in motive. In previous generations, it was common for people to wed their childhood sweethearts, “the girl next door.” The innocence and intensity of first love is best protected by not only discouraging adolescents from multiple entanglements but also by encouraging marriage at an appropriate age.

Reverend Moon has elaborated on this:

“I am thinking that [youth] should be married at an earlier age because I want them to be certain of marrying their first love. If each of you had been able to be blessed [in marriage] with your first love intact, you would feel so happy and grateful. You would not have such a critical attitude but would be like a baby going after its mother with unconditional love. Such a loving man and woman create an ideal couple.⁴⁴

Further, with this important decision behind them, the couple is now free from the distracting melodramas of romantic involvements to invest their energies in schooling, work and other matters of personal development with the added bonus of each other's emotional support. They may also want to get right to the business of raising and supporting a family. The couple is fresh, eager and adaptable to one another and the needs of the marriage. They have more strength and energy both to bear children and to keep up with them as they grow. Becoming parents in their 20s means that by middle age, they are “empty nesters” and may begin a new life direction while reaping the joys of grandparenting when still relatively healthy. Regarding early education and training, this is less and less relevant in the present age when adults expect to change careers several times and pursue ongoing learning throughout their lives.

Some research suggests the advisability of earlier marriage. One ongoing U.S. study indicates that those who wed in their early twenties had unions no less stable than those who married later and in fact tended to be of higher quality.⁴⁵

Only a short time ago, it was ordinary for teenagers right out of

high school to marry, get jobs and support themselves and their families. Times have changed, but the capacity of youth has not. No doubt young spouses require more support from their parents and the community to succeed, but this is a feasible and worthwhile investment if it can help these individuals preserve their chastity and enhance the quality of the families they create.

Parental Involvement in Finding a Mate

The most crucial issue is how single people go about finding their marriage partner and cultivating that relationship towards commitment. This is not only obviously important for marital success but it also greatly impacts their decision to be chaste. Regarding the latter, as mentioned above, the contemporary dating scene is one in which casual sex is an expectation, an obvious risk. Concerning the former, typical dating is carried out with no necessary link to matrimony, and so the dating culture undermines the intention to marry. This is not to mention the degradation of selling oneself in the dating marketplace—referred to as a “meat market”—based almost entirely on sex appeal and negotiating ambiguous and damaging boy-girl games.

One-on-one dating in its various manifestations—from casual hookups to longer term socializing—is in many ways a flawed paradigm. On one hand, dating encourages a starry-eyed view of the other person that invites undue emotional involvement, infatuation and of course physical intimacy.⁴⁶ The artificiality of dating discourages more natural connections based on shared values and activities—which are also more genuine bases for compatibility. Since on a date people tend to be on their best behavior, it serves to conceal an individual’s real character and makes it harder to evaluate a prospective spouse. On the other hand, dating fosters jadedness and cynicism. Participants easily develop a “shopping” mentality where companions are reduced to a set of traits contrasted against an ideal list. Furthermore, some have characterized this kind of dating as training for divorce since so many involve-

ments are started and ended, leaving hearts toughened against hurting or being hurt.⁴⁷

Parental assistance

Wisdom suggests bypassing conventional dating and enlisting the active involvement of parents and/or spiritual advisors in recommending a marriage partner. This is what Reverend Moon advocates and demonstrates in his own family and ministry. Traditionally, parents or other elders arranged for their son's or daughter's spouse, negotiating with other parents to make a good match in terms of character, spiritual values and context for the future children. In the Bible, for example, Abraham prayerfully found a superlative wife, Rebecca, for his son Isaac (Genesis 24). This stood in contrast to Esau, who took his own wives and whose marriages became a source of ongoing distress to his parents (Genesis 26.35).

Parental involvement in courtship and marriage is not without its abuses, however. Parents' selfish motives and prejudices can poison the process. Newlyweds can also use their prior passivity in mate selection as an excuse to not invest in the marriage. These problems plus the rise of individualism and the ideal of romantic love led to the demise of arranged marriage long ago in the Western world. It persists nevertheless in some Eastern countries and religious communities, to the satisfaction of many couples. "I still remember the year of our engagement. We were discouraged from seeing each other and it was fun and romantic to try to steal a glimpse or send a note," recalls one 30-year-old Pakistani husband. "When we could finally be together, after the wedding, it was exciting getting to know each other. Even to kiss would send me to the stars! Now it's been five years and we have been happy, with the usual ups and downs. My parents and aunts and uncles are always right there to help us if we run into problems."

Ironically, "arranged marriages" are on the rise again in the West, only this time via professional dating and Internet services.

Using computers to correlate common interests and values, perfect strangers are introduced to each other. A comparison may be made with employment agencies that try to match a client with a job opportunity. In reality, such services only account for a small percentage of new jobs, the vast majority arising from connections made through the individual's social network. In the same way, perhaps it makes more sense for parents and other loved ones to serve as matchmakers for young people instead of turning the task over to hired ones who don't know them at all.

In the contemporary version of arranged marriage within various cultures and religious communities, either the parents or the children may suggest candidates. In any case, certain norms characterize the practice. The young people begin dating only when they are ready to marry and they maintain strict chastity—traditionally, the young man and woman would not touch each other. Both sets of parents connect with one another and advise the relationship. The couple spends a lot of time with both families. One prominent courtship-training and singles service in Denver advises, “Instead of going out on dates, do things with your friends and family.”⁴⁸ The couple then marries only with the consent of both sets of parents.

Slowly building love

Inviting one's parents to be actively involved in meeting and choosing someone to marry naturally challenges the myth of “falling in love” to the maximum. This is not to say that a feeling of attraction is to play no part in a match, but it does weigh in considerably less as a basis than usual Western thinking. Yet social science is beginning to question the myth of romantic love more and more and affirm the viability of love developing even between relative strangers. One prominent American psychologist, Robert Epstein, decided to test the proposition that a man and woman who were compatible in important ways but had little attraction for each other could indeed create a loving bond. He not only studied arranged marriages but also attempted to establish a marriage himself with

a woman he did not know. He concluded, "it's clearer to me than ever that people can deliberately learn to love" and that mentors can facilitate that process.⁴⁹

Premarital purity is part of the formula for generating love in a parent-involved marriage because of the potent bonding effect of physical intimacy. The restriction on touch between the mates prior to the nuptials ensures that the wedding night initiates an unfolding discovery of the joys of lovemaking that carries the newlyweds through their challenging first months and years of adjustment to one another and the building of their friendship. The delayed physical intimacy maximizes the attachment they feel for each other at the most important time, after they have fully committed to one another.

An Indian professional describes his experience to an American colleague:

"[Westerners] start out with hot romance like a cauldron of bubbling water, and it doesn't take long before the heat dies down and the water becomes cold. In India, we have the opposite. Our marriages start out lukewarm and slowly as we live together, raise our families, face our disappointments and crises, the water heats up, and gradually it begins to bubble."⁵⁰

Rabbi Boteach puts the formula as simply, "You choose a person who seems worthy and likely, and then the two of you grow together, ever more deeply into love."⁵¹ Given the abysmal failure of romantic love as a basis for marriage, this kind of slowly building yet enduring love represents wisdom. In fact, research notes that that the feeling of love in romance-based marriages tends to decline dramatically over a ten-year period, while the love in arranged marriages surpasses that of the other kind after about the first five years.⁵²

Advantages of parental involvement

Whether elders arrange the match or just oversee the budding

relationship, parent-involved mate selection has many advantages. The single person benefits from the parents' objectivity and experience with marriage and relationships. Parents know their offspring in some ways better than the youth know themselves and they know well what traits in a prospective mate will matter most in the end. "Character is something we can see a little better than youngsters do," says Induben Jasani, the aunt of a recent bride.⁵³ Certainly caring elders could help prevent abusive relationships.

Psychologist Steve Wolin recognizes the value of youth choosing a mate with strong parental involvement:

In a premarital discussion with parents (and other family members) children can think about marriage and about the choice of a life partner realistically. They can learn how their parents successfully weathered the difficult times. They can learn to turn to the extended family for support and connection.⁵⁴

There is also much to be said for having a close relationship between one's parents and one's future spouse. When the couple has won the parents' approval all along the course of their relationship, there is far less chance of tensions between the couple and their in-laws after the wedding.

There are other benefits, too. When young people are freed from the expectation of dating and shopping for a mate, they can enjoy friendships with the opposite sex with fewer romantic complications. Such an arrangement "frees young teens to see each other as potential friends rather than potential dates," says Farris.⁵⁵ In addition, when married and facing tensions, the partners are less likely to doubt the wisdom of their being together and more likely to give each other the benefit of the doubt: "Maybe my parents saw something in her that I don't see." This is not to mention that given the notoriously blinding effects of romantic love, it makes sense to rely on the more impartial assistance of loved ones in looking for a mate.

Beyond these practical rewards, allowing parents a significant role in selecting a partner is an important and substantial way to honor them and the deep significance that their child's marriage has for them and other family elders. It fully acknowledges the fact that matrimony is not simply a private matter between the participants. A marriage weds two families together as it weds two people and it has substantial and lasting impact on the extended family of both sides. Such a practice is in keeping with all faith traditions and certainly attracts the blessing of God.

Indeed, many single individuals look for a "match made in heaven," and ask for divine guidance in this matter. But following one's intuition alone is not enough. Trusting that God works through elders means seeking the blessing of one's parents and spiritual mentors. "I remember a boy in college I was crazy over. He was kind, funny, good-looking, even religious. He really seemed like God's answer to my prayers," recalls one young wife and mother. "My parents had him over our house a few times. I'll never forget my father trying not to hurt my feelings as he pointed out just how immature my Prince Charming really was. I hadn't seen it." Parents for their part need to purify their motives and seek God's wisdom as well.

Intentional Preparation

Fulfilling the great life task of making oneness with the opposite sex demands careful and intentional preparation. Practicing a chaste lifestyle is a critical component of marital readiness, just as guidance and training for conjugal happiness is a vital buttress for purity. They reinforce each other. The young person's chances of success in both enterprises increase as they learn key information about love and marriage and receive coaching in relational skills. Of greater weight than this are character development, living for a worthy purpose and participating in myriad healthy and edifying personal relationships. The greatest insurance, however, comes from marrying at an appropriate age and involving one's parents in helping to find a suitable mate.

Marriage is the bedrock of the family, and chastity safeguards the family by bonding couples together in strength. By extension then, for Reverend Moon, purity and proper marriage preparation advances the peace and well-being of society, which is the focus of the final part of this book.

Part 6

Peacemaking

Chapter 22

The Family as the Cornerstone of Peace

The family sets the cornerstone on the road to world peace. The family also can destroy that road. The family of true love becomes the foundation for creating a society, nation, and world centered on true love.

—Sun Myung Moon

The family school of love has implications for other relationships in society. As noted in a previous section, relationships in the family impart to the child “internal working models” he or she projects onto all subsequent relationships.¹ The beliefs, values, and patterns of relating passed down through the family have particular staying power throughout life. They extrapolate into all subsequent social relationships, impacting the community, the nation, and the world. As the prototypes for all relationships, good family relationships are the very cornerstone of the peaceful functioning of society.

It is not too much to say that the future of human society lies in the quality of the love relationships experienced in the family. Barbara Bush, when she was the First Lady of the United States, addressed young women college graduates at Wellesley. She emphasized the importance of relationships, especially familial ones. She said that more fundamental than what went on in the White House was what was going on in their houses. This point of view makes a good deal of sense when we look more closely at the ways family relationships impact the larger culture.

Family Breakdown

The importance of the family to social stability and peace becomes evident when the effects of family breakdown on people and society are examined. Data overwhelmingly confirms that the family of a father and mother and their biological children, living together and involved in each other's lives, is the optimal condition for the resiliency and success of the younger generation. As Reverend Moon says, "Juvenile problems bring on public confusion. What is the cause of these problems? It almost always has to do with emotional issues that result from not having sound parents and brothers and sisters, and from unsound man-woman relationships. Considering this fact, where do we look for the clue to correct these destructive problems? It is in the family."

The negative social effects of family breakdown are only too well documented. Linda J. Waite, professor of sociology at the University of Chicago, and Maggie Gallagher, with the Institute of American Values, say in their book, *The Case for Marriage*: "On average, children of married parents are physically and mentally healthier, better educated, and later in life, enjoy more career success than children in other family settings."²

Children living with one parent or in stepfamilies are more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems than are children living in two-parent families. Children of single-parent and blended families are more likely to show symptoms of aggression, use of alcohol or other drugs, delinquent behavior, psychological problems, such as depression, low self-esteem, and suicidal thoughts.³ Even spending some time in a single-parent home is a risk factor:

Children who spend some time in a single-parent home are at higher risk for poor behavioral and cognitive outcomes, and among children who spend any time in single-parent homes, children reared in single-parent homes continuously since birth are at greatest risk

Compared with children in continuous two-parent families, children in all other family types . . . have a high level of behavioral problems and lower cognitive test scores.⁴

Another study said, “Compared with peers in continuously married families, students who were in the disruption process scored lower in all four academic tests and in educational aspiration.”⁵

Economically, children in single-parent homes are the poorest of all major demographic groups. Few children raised by their married biological parents experience poverty during childhood, but most children in single-parent homes do. Experts have coined the phrase, “plunge into poverty” that describes what women and their dependent children undergo after divorce. Forty-six percent of families with children headed by single mothers live below the poverty line, compared with only eight percent of two-parent families.⁶

When a society continually puts its children at risk because of family breakdown, that society is, in many ways, signing off on its own decline. Experts from around the world agree that no amount of social spending can do the job of the simple two-biological-parents family. In societies as diverse as England and China, the same conclusions are reached: the family as a social institution is irreplaceable.

Family Breakdown and Crime

Broken families also affect crime rates. Where fathers are absent from the home, more boys grow up to be violent—this link between non-intact families and social pathology can be found worldwide. Studies in England and Germany have shown that family breakdown was the significant factor contributing to the rise in crime in those countries, creating the conditions where young men are more prone to criminality and substance abuse.⁷

Sociologist David Courtwright argues that when men and boys embrace the norm of stable family life, violence and disorder decline, as evidenced by the sustained reduction in violent death

rates during the mid-twentieth century marriage boom.⁸ Other studies have shown that crime rates in general are directly related to the numbers of divorced people, single parents and single people in communities.⁹

Domestic violence and abuse is far more prevalent among cohabiting couples than among married ones. Some estimates place the chances of a woman being beaten by her cohabiting boyfriend as opposed to a husband as nine times greater. Sexual abuse of children by boyfriends of their mothers is also very high.¹⁰

Family life helps channel male aggressiveness into the constructive pursuits of creating, raising, protecting and supporting loved ones. Husbands and fathers restrain aggressive impulses toward other males, learn to cooperate on the job, and form healthier psychological and physical habits, leading to more peace and satisfaction in their lives. Males born and raised within the confines of marriage and family are less violent and crime-prone in society. They also go on to form families of their own, becoming stable society members.

Family Dysfunction

Of course, marital disruption is not the only problem in families that leads to negative social results. Relationships in “intact” families are often so problematic that, for a time, social scientists actually believed that every family was dysfunctional in some way. They saw the institution of the family as so fundamentally flawed that it would perhaps be well for society if it were done away with altogether.

In some ways their conclusions were understandable. As has been mentioned, the disruption of the love relationships in the first family of humankind provided the “fatal flaw” of misdirected love that has plagued the family, society, and the world ever since (see Chapter 20). More recent research, like that cited above, has shown

that the institution of the family is still so fundamentally well-designed that, in most cases it performs beneficent functions no other form of living is capable of providing and is therefore indispensable.

Yet family dysfunction, even without divorce, is a serious detriment to peace. Almost everyone has some mental and emotional scars left over from a childhood spent under the auspices of highly imperfect parents who simply could not love enough beyond their own preoccupations with self to optimally raise their children. These scars take their toll in life, perpetuating and multiplying the original offenses as people almost inexorably re-enact their pain by visiting it upon others.

There is much evidence, for instance, that victims of child abuse often go on to abuse their own children, or other children who come under their power, in a difficult-to-break cycle of violence. When abused children rise to positions of power over many others, they become a menace to whole hosts of people. Alice Miller of The Natural Child Project did a detailed study of the brutal beatings Adolf Hitler received as a child at the hands of his authoritarian father. The beatings often went bloody, and young Adolf sometimes counted as many as thirty-two blows delivered. When Hitler's personal psychological agony and humiliation meshed and became one with the agony and humiliation of the German people after World War I, violent solutions became inevitable. Miller says, "Countless human beings have already been killed in wars whose instigators didn't want to realize they were carrying dynamite which they were constantly trying to get rid of at the expense of other people in order to take revenge for old, highly personal wounds."¹¹

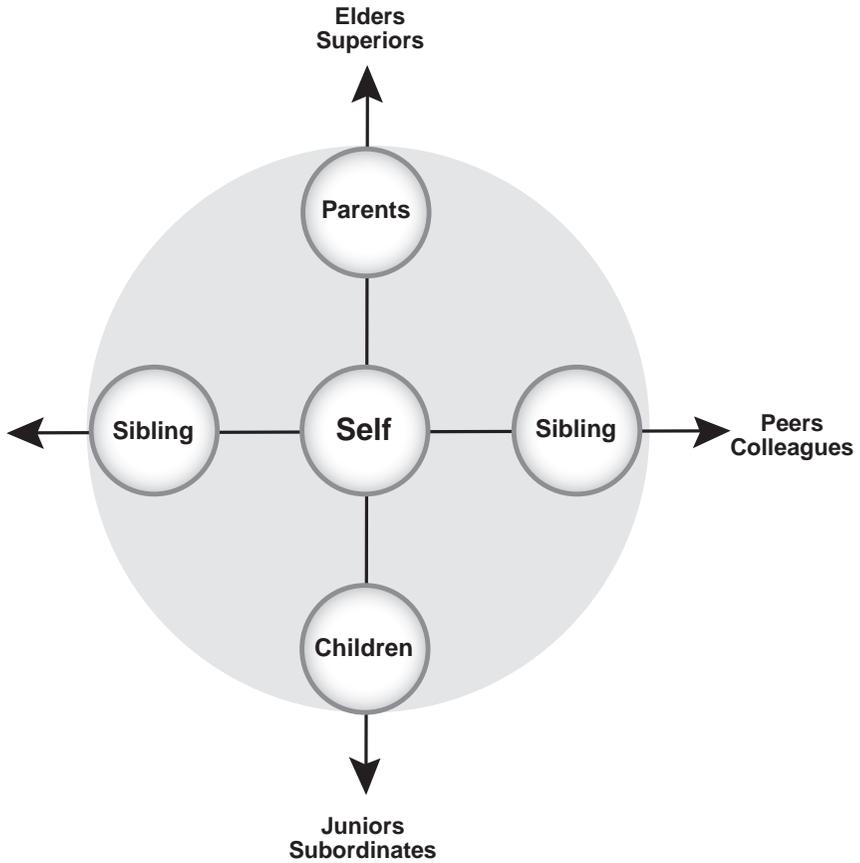
How the Four Realms of Heart in the Family Affect Society

Reverend Moon has observed:

When people who experience their grandparents' deep love in their family come out into society—for example, the streets of New York—they will feel very warm toward the elderly people there, and the elderly people will treat them as their grandchildren. Feeling close to each other, they will communicate with each other using any method. Young people who have served their grandparents will help old people right away whenever they are in need of aid.

When children who have received love from their parents go outside and meet people their parents' age, they will feel very close and will try to talk with them and help them. When people who have a beautiful relationship with their brothers and sisters in their family go into society, they will easily get along with people and have close relationships with their neighbors. They will feel natural even in relating with the opposite sex, regarding them as brothers and sisters without any sexual desire or unsound ideas. The Kingdom of Heaven is built of families where you are able to experience such loving relationships, centered upon God.

The love between children and their parents sets the pattern for vertical or hierarchical relationships. In society, this would be any relationship where a person is in a subordinate position to someone in a position of greater authority. A person's willingness to receive and follow instructions, to obey with good will, to receive guidance from and support legitimate authority are first learned in the child's relationship with his or her parents.



Social Relations as Extensions of Family Relations

Patriotism Grounded in Filial Piety

A positive relationship with parents predisposes a child to the virtue of “filial piety” which translates into respect and support for legitimate social institutions and civil laws and the just authority they represent. A well-loved child approaches authority figures and social institutions with trust and confidence. Such a child knows that submission to a vertical authority benefits them; it does not detract from them. The person’s worth in relation to others with

more power is not in question, for the person has known from childhood that he or she was well and deeply loved. The justice and benevolence of authority is assumed, based on the justice and benevolence of authority exercised in the family. The good parenting of a child thus extrapolates into a person's positive orientation toward being a citizen of a community and nation.

Further, the loyalty toward those who shelter and protect one, engendered in the child's realm of heart, transfers into the larger sphere of the nation. The well-loved child responds to the call of the nation as he or she responded to the calls of his or her parents to take on more and more responsibility out of love for the whole. Such people willingly and voluntarily serve their nations with the zeal and love with which they served their parents as children.

A well-nourished child's heart is also more receptive to willing obedience and joyful submission to the loving Parent, God. In fact, children often form their conceptions of God from the personalities and ways of their parents. A God of harsh wrath, indifference, or even cruelty may come to be worshipped—and internally hated—if parents display this sort of personality. A merciful God full of grace, support, and help may be envisioned and related to if parents display these qualities. The child's ability to trust God and others in authority stems from how much the parent's love reflects the love of God.

A child who has received optimal and balanced parental love grows up to love and serve a God who unconditionally forgives and supports, yet challenges the person onward to ever greater spiritual growth and true love for others. Such people form the moral backbone of a society as they willingly give themselves over to God's will and God's ways and seek to make this world for Him a more pleasing place in which to dwell.

A World of Brothers and Sisters

The relationships between siblings set the pattern for horizontal or symmetrical relationships in society—relationships between peers. A person who has fulfilled the sibling's realm of

heart is predisposed to be a good friend, a good co-worker or colleague, a good neighbor, good community member, and a good person to do business with. In the myriad events in human life that call for horizontal cooperation, the person who was well schooled in the sibling's realm of heart is better prepared to cope.

An interesting note on this is the so-called "little emperor syndrome" in modern China. Because of China's long-standing one-child policy, the vast majority of children grow up without siblings. The only child is then the center of the family's attention and the sole recipient of their resources. Although Chinese children clearly feel special because of this, the Chinese have noticed an unhealthy side effect—the children are becoming spoiled, imperious and demanding, like little rulers. The ameliorating effects of having siblings to share the family's resources of time, money, attention, housing, transportation, etc., are lost.

Learning to share equally is one of the most important aspects of the sibling's realm of heart, and it has tremendous social and political implications. Studies show that issues of equal sharing between siblings train them morally early in life.¹² What is more, issues of equal sharing remain very significant for siblings throughout life.¹³ It is this family-based learning that lays the foundation for fairness and equality in society.

The seminal document of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, refers to how men and women should treat one another based on their common parentage in God: as siblings, in other words. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Human rights are derived from common origins in the love of God, the Parent of all. This common parentage makes all men and women siblings in the human family and therefore equal in claims to fair treatment. Those who affirm God as the Parent of all feel this sense of kinship with others and refuse to hurt or oppress others because of the filial love they feel for

others out of respect for their mutual Father.

Harmony with God linked to harmony with others

Jesus enjoined people not to come to the altar of God while in a fight with someone else—referred to as a person's brother—but to go first to the brother and make up, and only then present the gift at the altar (Matthew 5.23-24). Unless one is right with one's "brother"—and that includes all people—one cannot be right with God, the universal Parent.

A Biblical story is told of a man who was forgiven his debts, but who was unforgiving toward his debtors. His master, who had forgiven him, then turned on him, angry that the man who had been shown mercy had shown so little mercy toward others. "In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart" (Matthew 18.23-35).

In these passages, a person's ability to receive God's love is contingent upon his or her ability to get along well with other people—his or her "brothers." When parents enjoin their children to share their toys, to be fair, to wait their turn and to say, "I'm sorry" and "I forgive you" in their relationships with their siblings, they are affirming a larger vision of a peaceful world in which as Gandhi said, "All men are brothers."¹⁴

Reverend Moon has said, "If you see a poor people in an underdeveloped and underprivileged nation, you should feel the zeal swelling up in your heart to make that nation see the sunshine some day. You would want to elevate the standard of living in that nation, because you hate to see your Father in anguish over the suffering in that nation. You would be eager to make it equal to other nations. You would desire these things without reservation."¹⁵ Sons and daughters who love and are loved by the Father cannot help but want to serve and comfort their brothers and sisters whose anguish is causing the Father grief.

The Social Impact of the Spouse's Realm of Heart

More than an agreement between two people, marriage asks people to relate responsibly not only to one another but to all the others they are connected to by virtue of the marriage. It is a joining of multiple lives, introducing entirely new networks of support, friendship and relatedness among people who would not even know one another otherwise. It merges two separate lineages, providing a tangible link between all who have gone before and all who will come after on both sides. As author Jo McGowan has observed, marriage is a community-building act from the start: "To marry, to celebrate a love and a commitment publicly, in the presence of family and friends, is to say that the meaning of one's life can only be found in the context of a community. It is to acknowledge one's part in the human family."¹⁶

Marriage brings people together across international and racial barriers. When American professor Richard Rubenstein expressed his delight with his Chinese daughter-in-law and his grandchildren through her, a visiting Chinese scholar was inspired. He rose to propose a toast: "In the future, our countries will not only be friends—we will be in-laws!" It is hard to remain distant or to harbor enmity toward people to whom one is related by marriage and via descendants, by blood.

Golf pro Tiger Woods struggled with being touted as the first African-American to achieve the kind of stature he has attained on the golf course. The reason? Woods has Thai, Chinese, American Indian and European as well as African blood, all through the diverse marriages of his lineage. In many ways, such diversity is the face of the future as men and women of different national, racial and ethnic lineages blend together in marriage. If people like Woods are any example, the face of the future is a bright, talented, and beautiful one.

The role of marriage in forging bonds of peace and friendship between nations has been recognized for centuries. Alexander the Great consolidated his empire by encouraging marriage between

his Greek officers and the vanquished Persians. He knew that marriage was the most effective way to make diverse peoples into one. Marriage was used “as an instrument of peace,” according to historian Beatrice Gottlieb in her book, *The Family in the Western World*:

The invasion of the Spanish Armada was preceded, some time before, by marriage overtures to Queen Elizabeth by Philip II of Spain . . . In the seventeenth century two French kings in succession married Spanish princesses of the House of Habsburg, which was related to the Habsburg rulers of Austria, while a French princess was married to one of the English Stuarts, another of whom was married to the German king of Bohemia . . . ¹⁷

Marriage has the power to bring together peoples of different faiths as well. In an assembly of members of the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations of the U.N. and the International and Interreligious Federation for World Peace, Reverend Moon spoke on the topic, “Loving Your Enemy in the Face of Terror.” As he noted the wide diversity among the attendees—Jewish, Islamic, and Christian, among others—Reverend Moon took the occasion to recommend a mass international and interreligious marriage ceremony, encouraging men and women of different nationalities and religions to unite in marriage as a major step toward world peace. Ultimately, he believes the love in marriages between people from different backgrounds and the love of their clans for the ensuing children can impact the peacemaking process.

Since marriage affirms a person's responsibility to and belonging in the whole human family, Reverend Moon's vision of marriage is as a blessing of communal significance for human relations, and he feels it is his special calling from God to facilitate such marriages. With such a vision in mind, marriage truly becomes an instrument of peace.

Rooted in God

In order to be an instrument of peace and to wield power for goodness in society, marriages must not only exist; they need to be successful. Couples need to radiate love and stability to each other, their children, and in their neighborhoods. Since men and women are so different from one another, the softening factor between their differences must be love. They must treat each other with the tender care that can only come from selflessness, respect, and other virtues.

To strengthen these virtues and to keep love flowing, couples must root their relationship in God. Reverend Moon says:

A man and a woman from two totally different cultural and environmental backgrounds become one with the love of God When two people digest each other's complicated life contents, they make a beautiful harmony. As a result of digesting each other, you will grow bigger and bigger and you'll have great hope for the future.

As the Source of love, God beams His benevolence and grace down on a God-centered marriage, helping the partners to sympathize with one another, forgive one another, and give the loving support that is necessary for a marriage to flourish. Indeed, without divine love energizing it, marriage is a particularly challenging endeavor, as evidenced by the high divorce rate in secularized societies.

The Parental Heart in Society

Reverend Moon teaches that good leadership and education in the deepest sense spring from the true parental heart. Parental love is the prototype of mature love for others, an appropriate model for those in social roles where they are responsible for others. Parental love resembles God's. The parental heart is another way true love can become immanent in common human relationships

such as employer to employees, government leaders to citizens, teachers to students, military commanders to those on the lower echelons, priests and pastors to parishioners and congregants—any relationship where one person has broader experience and seniority over others.

Structures of authority are pervasive in human life. Everyone has to deal with people in positions of authority, beginning in the family and school. Learning to relate well with people in authority is the key to connect with the higher levels of the social order, and to receive the corresponding benefits. These gains include the knowledge gained through apprenticeship and training, and the wisdom obtained from working closely with people of greater maturity and experience, as well as good professional relationships in the workplace later in life. The child's realm of heart is a person's school for making a success of such relationships involving authority.

Just as the child's realm of heart is impacted by the parent's realm of heart and how well the parents represent authority to the young person, people in positions of authority in the world require maturity and wisdom in order to fulfill their responsibilities to raise and bring out the best in the people under them. A parental heart is best nurtured within a person by taking God's perspective on others and asking for more love and wisdom from the Parent of all in order to be a parent to a few.

True parent

The ideal of a true parent describes the qualities and behavior of parents, caregivers, and people in responsible positions who consistently and continually invest true love in raising those in their care. It describes people who nurture those beneath them with love that springs from a compassionate and benevolent heart. Such parents make themselves available to discuss problems with their children and give them guidance and loving support. They enforce rules and discipline, with the children's character and potential for growth foremost in mind. They are not afraid to make and enforce

unpopular decisions that they know will benefit the child or the purpose of the whole. At the same time, they help the child every step of the way, with a love that never wavers. Taking the long view of the child's life, they are also able to stoop to the child's level of development and aid him or her on the path.

The true parent has leadership qualities because people are naturally inclined to follow them in order to bask in their love and in order to accomplish goals with justice, balance, and foreseeable good outcomes. The person with much experience and expertise in raising children is a person well-equipped to deal with the children of God in whatever capacity he or she meets them.

True leader

Parental love and authority is primary and archetypal for other leadership roles. The heart that a parent brings to raising his or her own children extends naturally to the approach of a caring leader. A parent's heart is naturally oriented to investing for the sake of the children. Leaders who bring a parental heart and a parent's experience to the task of managing people have a more mature perspective on life and more versatility in dealing with the subordinate's diverse situations.

The best leaders display a parental heart. Some great historical leaders came to be recognized as parents to the people. Common folk called Lincoln "Father Abraham" as he led them through the moral and physical battle against slavery during the Civil War. In fact, in Walt Whitman's famous poem, "O Captain! My Captain!" written shortly after the assassination of Lincoln, Whitman at first addresses Lincoln as a leader—the captain of the ship of state—but soon his love for the man calls him to change to calling him "father": "Here Captain! Dear father! This arm beneath your head! It is some dream that on the deck, You've fallen cold and dead."

Lincoln embodied parental authority in his sternness against slavery and secession—he would not let the South, whom he considered brothers, leave the Union or continue the national scourge

of slavery. He would fight if he had to. Yet his stern authority was tempered with a deep love—"We must not be enemies" he called out to the South in his first Inaugural Address. "I am loathe to close," he said, feeling his speech was one of his last available efforts to cry out to the South for reconciliation. When the war was won, it was Lincoln who urged mercy for the Southern leaders. Because of his sense of kinship with the South, the leaders of armed insurrection against the Union finished their days on their own farms and teaching benignly at Southern universities.

Other leaders who became veritable parents to people were Gandhi and Mother Teresa. Gandhi's close followers referred to him as "Bapu," which means "Papa," as he led them in their conscientious struggle for independence from colonialism. Even non-Catholics are comfortable with calling Agnes Gonxha Bojaxniu "Mother Teresa" because of her loving and caring parental heart toward the poor.

Although such people are admired for their social impact, Mother Teresa often made the point that her work was not social work, and Gandhi's love for humanity certainly transcended social concern. Both of these great parental figures rooted their activities in the love of God. There are many agencies to do social work, but the transforming power and social impact of such people comes from God's parental heart. To Mother Teresa, every poverty-stricken and hurting person was Christ wearing a "distressing disguise."¹⁸ Her love for Jesus awakened in her a God-centered love for each cast-off person, and a yearning to take care for them the way a parent would. Leaders with the most sweeping impact are usually found to be people deeply rooted in the love of God who transmit that love to others.

True teacher

Like a good parent, a true teacher guides his or her students to bring out their personal best, treating each child individually. The scope of the teacher's education is not only the specific subject matter; it encompasses the whole human being. Many people

cherish the memory of a good teacher they had, one who cared about them and regarded nothing as more important than developing in them wisdom, compassion, and virtue and bringing out their special gifts. Such a teacher impacts lives.

An exceptional teacher becomes more than an instructor in academics; he or she becomes like a second parent, helping a child to mold and fashion his or her life. In the Orient, teachers are venerated because they are in a similar position to the parents: they help raise a child and affect forever his or her young and malleable life. They point out and light the path he or she will walk.

An example of such a teacher is “Mama Hawk” Hawkins of Chicago, who works with difficult inner city children everyone else has given up on. Her philosophy is that “Every child is gifted.” She teaches the children in a room she has furnished herself as a home-like setting. She sews clothes for them, haunts bargain stores for them, and raises donations for school supplies. She doesn’t hesitate to hug and affirm them. In fact, she has adopted several of the abandoned children that she mentors, and wishes she could adopt them all. To her, they are all her children.¹⁹ Mama Hawk has turned around the lives of dozens of children and been recognized on the state level.

The three roles of parent, leader, and teacher are intertwined, but the foundational role is that of a parent. Society would benefit enormously if its leaders and teachers and persons in authority adopted the heart of a true parent as their role model, gaining their love for others from the Ultimate Parent, God. As Reverend Moon has said,

If we are children of God, we need to become True Parents first, just like God. We should also follow the way of the True Teacher, just like God. And we need to follow the way of the True Leader, just like God. This is behind the ideal of the three primary positions; the ultimate model is God.

The Parental Heart and Peace

James Q. Wilson states that the common human trait found throughout history and in all known societies is the love of parents for their children.²⁰ All people can identify with this. All over the world, the sight of an infant in a mother's arms can melt the heart and draw people together in shared emotions and mutual understanding. During times of war, people are moved in their hearts by pictures of suffering children on the enemy side, and they want to call for an end to the carnage. The parental heart has the power to unite disparate peoples out of love for children.

The parental heart has even spawned a peace movement to address one of the most intractable conflicts in the world: that between Palestinians and Israelis. Yitzhak Frankenthal, an Israeli orthodox Jew, founded a group known as the Parents' Circle after his 19-year-old son, Arik, was murdered by the terrorist group Hamas in 1995. The Parents' Circle embraces parents from both sides who have lost children in the conflict. They have banded together in mutual sorrow and empathy over their losses to call for an end to the killing. Hundreds of Israeli and Palestinian families have joined his campaign to end the bloodshed so that parents can breathe easier about the futures of their children. Together, Israeli and Palestinian parents plead for an end to the suffering of families.

In Argentina during the military dictatorship of the 1970s when suspected dissidents were tortured, killed and "disappeared" in the tens of thousands, no one dared to protest. Finally, desperate mothers began to appear in the Plaza de Mayo. Each day they came, unarmed and grieving, advertising their poignant message that their sons were missing, imprisoned, or kidnapped by the government. They pled for an end to the injustices. When Cortazar, the great Argentinian writer, heard about it in Paris, he said, "The mothers are out; the military has already lost."²¹

Thus we may see how the realms of heart impact society. From the children's realm of heart through the sibling's and spouse's realms, to the realm of parental love, family relationships set the

tone and patterns for how people relate to society. As the common, worldwide, transcultural human experience, family roles wield a great potential power for peace—especially when they are imbued with the true love of the Parent of humankind.

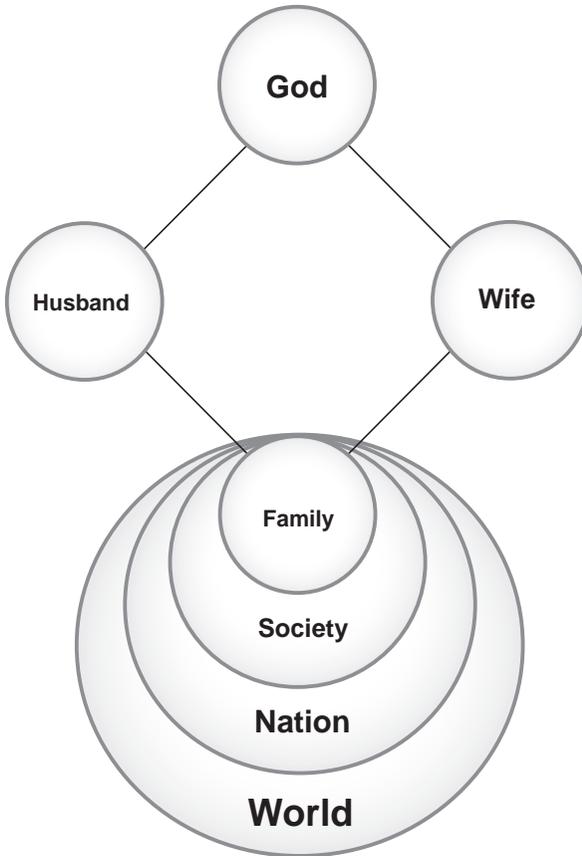
The Family and Culture

Research affirms that the stable family is the root of a prosperous and civil society. Sociologist Brigitte Berger of Boston University maintains that the microstructure of husband, wife and child impacts the macrostructures of culture and economy more than any other force or institution. The family is, Berger says, “the culture-creating institution *par excellence*.”²² Berger sees the family as generating the kinds of practices and virtues needed for successful civil and corporate life—for liberty and prosperity. She says:

A wealth of studies demonstrates definitively that the cardinal virtues of civil society and a well-functioning market society are of family origin . . . the nuclear, individualistic, proto-bourgeois family was the only institution sufficiently dynamic to spontaneously engender social processes that made for both the development of a modern market economy and the rise of civil society.²³

Families also build “social capital” in a culture through their interaction with the community. School-aged children require that a family interface with school personnel and other parents in the community. Children’s participation in organized sports makes parents attend events and interact with other parents, organizers, and community boosters. The family’s material needs cause it to interact with others beyond the family.

The social system conforms to the ecology of nature, in which all creatures are constantly giving and receiving in the interconnected web of life. As families participate in community life, the community prospers.



The Peaceful Family as the Basis for World Peace

The family's presence benefits society naturally, contributing to peace. It is designed by God to do so. However, as noted earlier, dysfunctional families contribute to social problems and can even impact peace on the national and international scales. In order to live up to its potential to wage peace, the family must be centered upon God so as to optimally live up to its original design.

Families who participate in religious communities visit others more, entertain at home more, attend more meetings and belong to more non-religious groups and organizations than do people who are

not part of a religious community.²² Most of America's volunteers for various charity duties come from church populations. Religious communities school families in other-centered love—true love—which encourages families to reach out to their communities to spread love beyond their families.

The loving, God-centered family raises good individuals and sets the pattern for relating to the larger family of humanity as brothers and sisters, children, parents, and married couples. The family is key to a loving and peaceful world. It is a jumping off point for loving in the larger sea of humanity. As Reverend Moon has said:

The way to heaven is to broaden the scope of our love by loving the people in our homes, by loving our neighbors, by loving our friends, relatives, clans, nations, and the whole population of the world. God would delight in living in the home where that kind of love is lived. But He would want to expand that home to ever-broader levels until the whole of mankind could become one huge family under God as our Parent.²³

Chapter 23

Root Causes of Conflict

Where was the seed of hatred, conflict, and struggle sown, and how did it come to be rooted deeply within us? The seed was planted in the family of the first human ancestors, Adam and Eve. The conflicts and struggles that resulted have continued from generation to generation until the present time.¹

—Hak Ja Han Moon

We have seen that the family has impact far beyond its walls. Yet there are problems even in the best of families. Relationships are not all that people would wish them to be. No family is utterly free of friction, ambiguities, loneliness, and misunderstandings. Even in these close relationships—the ones people long to love perfectly in—people find themselves in disputes with others due to conflict within themselves. This threatens the very life of the family.

As the family is the cornerstone of peace, family relationships also impact people's relationships with their communities, nations, and ultimately, the world. Since humanity is ultimately one family under God, relationships in the world are merely family relationships written large.

It is important to look at the roots of conflict in the first family in order to understand how they have been passed down to impact the family today, and how they are projected onto the larger levels of the human family. Many of the same dynamics, tendencies, and patterns are alive today. To understand them is to begin to heal them.

Misdirected Love

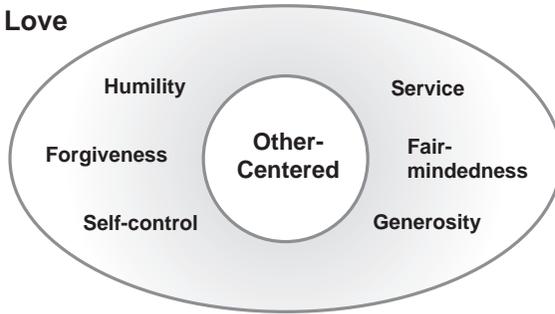
Reverend Moon teaches that the ultimate source of human conflict originated at the Fall of humankind. Due to the Fall, love became directed too strongly toward the self, focused inordinately upon bodily desires. This tendency, inherited through the blood lineage from Lucifer's staining of Eve, has been passed down from parents to children. Instead of being directed toward the benefit of others, and toward God, people became lovers of themselves. Cut off from the love of God, people are not naturally altruistic but needy and self-aggrandizing in false attempts to supplement the lack of love they feel.

Love went so awry in the first human ancestors, what we now call love may arguably not be love at all. Erich Fromm said in *The Art of Loving* that the kind of love most people know is more like "a symbiotic attachment, or an enlarged egotism."² In other words, it is self-centered.

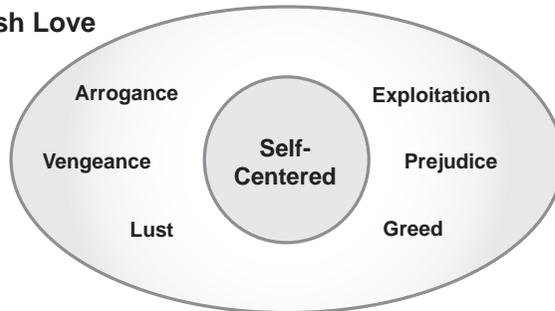
Reverend Moon said, "The human Fall was an accident of love."³ He makes the point that since love is the greatest power in the universe, the origin of evil "therefore could have only come about centered on love." Eve fell because of love, but it was a love that was centered upon the self and the self's desires, stimulated by Lucifer and his selfish desires for dominance. It was misdirected love, and it has permeated human history.⁴

If we probe beneath most conflictual situations, we will find aberrant love issues at the root. Indeed, M. Scott Peck said that almost all issues that arise in psychotherapy are related to inner confusion about love.⁵ From family level conflicts to international problems and war, the real issue is love. When love is awry, human relationships go askew.

True Love



Selfish Love



Fruits of True Love and Selfish Love

People's preoccupation with and love of self over others is demonstrated in innumerable ways every day. For instance, a woman phones a friend, ostensibly to see how the friend is doing, and spends the entire conversation talking about herself. Repeated over time, these actions cause the friendship to wither. Two cars are merging into a lane and one driver decides that his destination must be more important than that of the other driver, so he takes over the lane aggressively, risking an accident and elevating both parties' heart rates and tempers. A teenager doesn't greet her father when he arrives home from work, but instead bombards him with requests for her allowance and a drive to the mall. This frays their relationship and adds to family strife.

These kinds of events are all too common, yet they are far from harmless. They create friction and conflict with others. In all the

cases cited above, other people are seen as sounding boards, foils for one's own goals and concerns, obstacles to one's own desires, or else as means to one's own ends. Self-love is ascendant over love and consideration of others and their needs. This happens even among friends, even among family members. This pervasive self-centeredness is the tragedy of human existence, creating the vacuum of love and leading to many problems as people seek substitutes for the love that is lacking in their lives.

Extrapolated from the individual to the family level and to the community, national, and international levels, self-centeredness leads to lack, want, and acrimony. A nation that views other nations as means to an end, obstacles to its own desires, or foils for its own goals will soon enough reap the whirlwind of war.

Conflict in the Individual

A fundamental conflict exists even in the best-intentioned and most conscientious people, and this naturally affects all their relationships with others. Reverend Moon teaches that until the mind and body are united into oneness, with no contradiction, peace is impossible on any level—from the individual's own sense of inner peace to relationships in the family, to the society, nation, and world. He says, "Before we call for peace in the world, we should reflect on ourselves and consider whether our minds and bodies are united into one, whether we are the starting-points of peace, and whether God is at the center of our endeavors for peace."

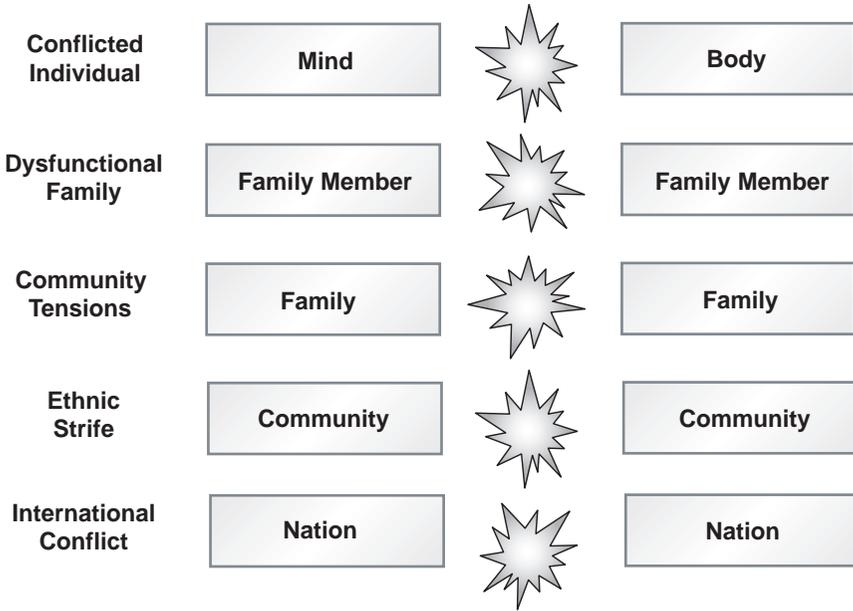
It is common experience that human existence is plagued by a deep-seated inner conflict (see Chapter 9). St. Paul expressed it poignantly when he said:

I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate to do For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind (Romans 7.15-23).

The Mahabharata of Hinduism contains a similarly rueful lament: "I know what is good but I am not inclined to do it; I know also what is bad, but I do not refrain from doing it."⁶ As it is written in Buddhist scriptures: "Although they wish, 'Would that we might live in friendship, without hatred, injury, enmity or malignity,' they still live in enmity, hating, injuring, hostile, maligning" (Digha Nikaya ii.276).⁷

Plato described the human personality as a charioteer with two willful horses pulling in opposite directions. Psychology depicts the war within as a battle between the socialized self and the infantile self. Some cultures have characterized it as a battle between the animal self and the human self. Religion and literature have depicted it as the epic battle between good and evil. Martin Luther King spoke of "a persistent schizophrenia which leaves us tragically divided against ourselves." He said, "A persistent civil war rages within all our lives."⁸

The contradiction between the mind's ideals and the body's actions is the "fatal flaw" in each individual. Counselor C. Terry Warner has called this contradiction self-betrayal—the tendency to act in accordance with our lower selves rather than our higher ideals.⁹ In psychological terms, it is called narcissism. In lay terms, it is called self-centeredness. In spiritual terms, it is called sin.



Conflict Expands from the Individual

Conflicts on the Family Level

Virtually all marital conflicts boil down to self-centeredness—love directed more keenly toward the self than toward the other or the larger good of the relationship. Marriage counselor Lawrence Crabbe cites the simple example of a couple getting into a fight over who will answer the phone. When the phone rings, each hopes the other will sacrifice his or her physical comfort or interests of the moment to go answer it.¹⁰ Arguments over which partner contributes more to the household in goods and services are common; each feels he or she is sacrificing more than the other.

Consider the story of Marty, a businessman in his early thirties:

The other night about 2.00 a.m., I awoke to hear the baby crying. At that moment I had a fleeting feeling, a feeling that if I got up quickly I might be able to see what was

wrong before Carolyn would be awakened. It was a feeling that this was something I really ought to do. But I didn't get up to check on the baby.¹¹

Soon Marty found himself justifying his own inaction by getting annoyed at his wife for not getting up, reviewing all his hard work of the day before and the day ahead, considering the possibility that she was only shamming sleep. He began to blame her for not having changed the baby right before bed and creating this situation in the first place. "He focused on himself," Warner says, and the result was acrimonious feelings in his marriage.¹²

In the parent-child relationship, conflicts can arise when the needs and requests of a child interfere with the parents' interests or desires of the moment. Parents whose minds are on their financial or career goals when they come home in the evening may be hard put to deal with the emotional needs of children. It may seem preferable to spend more time with the home fax machine, computer and phone and thus further one's dreams of material prowess or professional status. Yet this leaves the children starving for attention. Likewise, too much indulgence in alcohol or other questionable sources of comfort on the parts of parents can disrupt family life immeasurably. A more insidious form of parental centering on private needs rather than the needs of the rest of the family is the mother who reaps all the children's love and allegiance for herself and shuts the father out of the family circle, letting Dad appear to be the "bad guy" and the "outsider" when he attempts to impose discipline.

Children can be selfish too. Some older children consider themselves utterly independent of—and not responsible to—the network of relatives they came from. Some children take advantage of their parents' serving attitudes and refuse to take care of their own things or help around the house. Others see their parents as mere dispensaries of money and goods. Selfish children can try their parents' patience and cause conflicts, both with their parents and between the parents.

Finances and wills are a classic source of extended family conflict. Just when relatives should be drawing together to mourn the loss of a family member, they are often torn apart by vying claims upon the physical assets of the departed person's estate—assets each wants for their own aggrandizement. In this and in countless other ways, love of the self at the expense of others wreaks havoc with family peace and harmony.

Conflicts on the Community Level

Conflicts on levels larger than the family also may be seen to have roots in the inner contradiction that places self-absorption above the interests of others. A person with seniority might see, upon coming to the workplace, the tired and discouraged face of the elevator operator and feel he should pause to say a word of appreciation and encouragement. Instead, he hurries on to the important business in his office. Everyone can identify with such a scenario. Yet many such omissions add up to an unhappy workplace—maybe even the loss of valued workers or the loss of their commitment to do a good job in the work community.

This love of the self—love of “me” over “you”—expands into love of “me and mine” over “you and yours.” Neighbors in a community may argue over the actions of their respective children, each family convinced of their own children's faultlessness. Crime may not be an important issue in a community as long as it happens on the other side of the tracks. Political inertia—people not bothering to vote in local elections because of their absorption in their own personal affairs—can result in poor leadership for a town or community, leading to complaints and conflicts.

Thus, even relative goods like the family, church, and the community can become ills when their concern stops with themselves and they are not sufficiently other-regarding on a larger scale. Love of one's own group over other groups leads to divisions between churches, religions, and racial and ethnic groups.

Religious people especially need to be cautious about sub-

scribing to an exclusiveness based on a religious group's perception of its "rightness" about doctrine and practice. Theologian Reinhold Niebuhr pointed out that modern Christianity's meaning has been twisted into something far more narrow and limited than it was meant to be. He said that Christianity really means that "through the mediation and the pioneering faith of Jesus Christ, a man has become wholly human, has been called into membership in the society of universal being, and has accepted the fact that amid the totality of existence he is not exempt from the human lot."¹³ Instead, he said, Christianity has come to mean that one "has become a member of a special group, with a special God, a special destiny, and a special existence."¹⁴

This too is misdirected love toward oneself and one's own, rather than toward all of God's children. Exclusive and tinged with egoism, this misdirected love leads to many virulent conflicts among denominations, with the unfortunate result that the "unchurched" are repelled by the infighting among the people of God.

Conflict on the National Level

The American Civil War is a classic example of a national-level conflict caused by the self-interest of one region of the nation clashing with the larger interests of the nation as a whole. The economy and way of life of the South depended upon the free labor of black slaves. As a South Carolina resident explained to President Buchanan, "Slavery with us is no abstraction, but a great and vital fact. Without it our every comfort would be taken from us."¹⁵ Historian Lord Charnwood said, "The chivalrous South rose in blind passion for a cause at the bottom of which lay the narrowest of pecuniary interests."¹⁶

It was obvious to many Northerners, on the other hand, that slavery could not be reconciled with the nation's founding ideals. It was antithetical to the very beliefs that had given the nation life in the first place. It was an untenable situation. As Lincoln put it, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Northerners went to war

in order to preserve the nation their forefathers had built only a few scant generations before on the cherished ideal that “all men are created equal.”

Nations suffer from national level conflicts due to tribalism, ethnic, religious, and regional frictions. The world is fraught with nations suffering from these kinds of internal divisions: Rwanda, Northern Ireland, and Bosnia, to name just a few. These national level conflicts often keep countries in chaos, hampering their economic and civic life, and making life harder for all.

Conflict on the International Level

Patriotism is an admirable thing. Yet love of one's own country without any love and consideration for other countries can lead to unfair policies, unequal distribution of wealth and resources, and injustices to other countries. It can lead to war.

Adolf Hitler loved the Germanic peoples—the *volken*—whom he considered a superior people. He vowed never to marry because his only bride, he said, was the German people. He “tirelessly rushed from one meeting to another, working himself to the point of exhaustion in their behalf.” Because of his devotion, Hitler was able to call forth similar self-sacrifice from the Germans. “Nothing for us! Everything for Germany!” the people chanted at the Nuremberg rallies, as reported by eyewitness correspondents.¹⁷

Hitler's love was inordinately focused upon his own nation. He meshed the agony of the German people with his personal agony; he meshed their humiliation with his personal humiliation, and, due to his family background, the only solution he saw to their problems was violence against those who in some way, to his thinking, challenged their right to absolute rule.

Hitler's pan-Germanism appealed to people like Oscar Schindler, who was born and raised in Czechoslovakia, but who nevertheless spoke German, wrote in German, and thought of himself as a German. *Lebensraum*—expansion of living space for the *volken*—seemed like a good idea to him, too. When Germany

took over Czechoslovakia, Schindler joined the National Socialist Party as a like-minded person.

Yet history's judgment of the two Nazis was ultimately very different. Schindler is internationally recognized as a humanitarian, whereas Hitler is condemned in all quarters. What was the difference between them?

Both men loved the Germanic peoples and believed in their destiny. The difference was that Schindler's love for humanity outstripped his love for the Germanic peoples. His love went beyond his own kind to embrace others not of his kind. When the dark underside of Hitler's inordinate love for the Germanic peoples made itself horribly manifest in the cruel treatment of the Jews, Schindler not only broke with the philosophy, he became an activist against it. He sacrificed his own fortune and risked his own safety to protect Jewish lives.

Love that is limited to oneself and/or one's own becomes inordinate and aberrant—a form of idolatry. Niebuhr defined evil as “the assertion of some self-interest without regard to the whole, whether the whole be conceived as the immediate community or the total community of humanity, or the total order of the world.”¹⁸

The spread of love is limited by self-interest, and lacks are experienced on the family, societal, national and international levels. The lack of love is then reflected concretely in scarcity—of land, money, food, resources—and in intangibles like respect, equality and influence. Inevitably, some people wind up with more than others: the “haves” as opposed to the “have nots.” Misdirected love and the consequent lack of love it causes in the world are the sources of most human misery and strife. When the toxin of envy is added to the mix, situations can become volatile.

The Cain and Abel Dynamic

The roots of misdirected love can be found in the very first family of humankind. Due to the fall of Adam and Eve, love became focused on the self instead of focused upon God and others. Hence,

there was a lack of love even in this first family; it was dysfunctional in the extreme. The lack of love led to a situation in the first generation that solidified certain fallen natures in the human heart and impacted history with conflict. Reverend Moon's interpretation of the Cain and Abel story in the Bible penetrates deeply into issues of love and the lack of it that are the fulcrums of strife.

The story in brief: For reasons that were obscure to Cain, God refused Cain's offering, yet accepted the offering of his younger brother, Abel. Cain's countenance fell and he experienced anger because of the favor God had shown Abel. Cain was experiencing a feeling of being loved less even as he hungered after a position of favor. He felt unaccepted and rejected; powerless and envious. Rather than dealing with his feelings in a constructive way, Cain rose up to ruin the object of his envy. Luring his brother out to a field, Cain murdered Abel (Genesis 4.1-8).

Reverend Moon's insight into the Cain and Abel story is that it was, in fact, an opportunity to right the love relationships that went askew with the human Fall. God's acceptance of Abel and rejection of Cain was a "set-up." Cain was not inherently evil, nor was Abel inherently good. God put them in their respective positions of favor and disfavor for a purpose. God wanted Cain to "do well" and be "accepted" (Genesis 4.7) by purifying his heart of the envy and the impulse to destructiveness that humankind had inherited from Adam and Eve's transgression. God even warned Cain that he was in a testing situation. "Sin is couching at your door," He admonished him "You must master it" (Genesis 4.7).

Cain's Challenge

God wanted Cain to be able to love his brother as He, God, loved him. He wanted Cain to restore the inability of the archangel Lucifer to love the ones in the position of favor—the human beings—as God loved them. Cain was to unite with and imitate Abel, learning more about God from Abel's heart, just as Lucifer could have increased his knowledge of God through loving God's children appro-

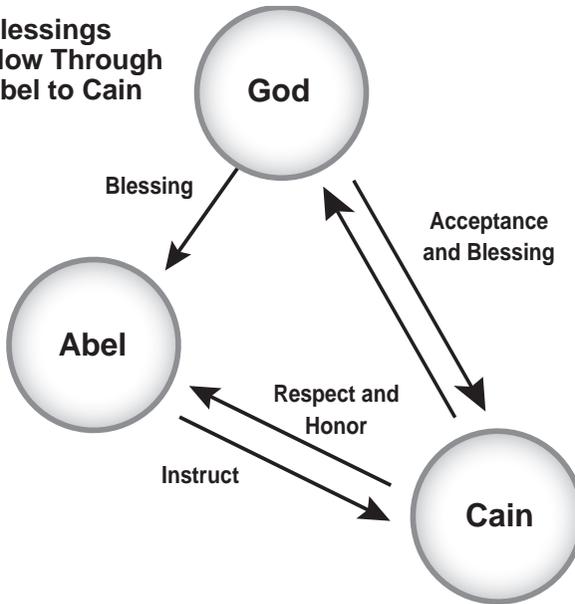
priately. Cain was in a position to reverse the archangel's jealousy and usurpation at the time of the Fall and thus purify humankind of selfish inclinations.

Confronted with the beloved children of God, Lucifer had felt a concomitant lack of love from God when he compared himself to Adam and Eve (see Chapter 20). Actually, Lucifer received the same amount of love he had always received as an archangel, a bearer of light, and as God's "right-hand man," so to speak. The difference between Lucifer and Adam was one of position. Adam was God's son, made in God's complete image, while Lucifer was in the servant and messenger position. Humankind is in a position to judge the angels (1 Corinthians 6.3), indicating that people occupy a position closer to God's heart than angels do. Adam was the pride of God's heart, the zenith of God's creation, and the heir to the throne.

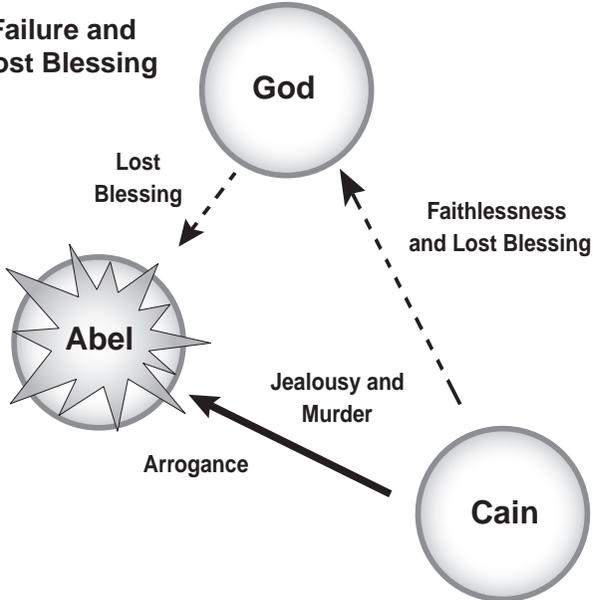
At some point, Lucifer would have recognized the royalty of Adam's character and his right to dominion and would have been grateful to have Adam as his loving master. In the early stages of Adam's life, however, all this was but potential, hard to discern in the undeveloped young male. The older, wiser, and more experienced Lucifer could not love and respect the young interloper Adam enough. Feeling that he, not Adam, deserved the uppermost place, Lucifer sought to take Adam's position through unfair means. He did so by tempting the vulnerable Eve and having her, in turn, tempt Adam.

Like Lucifer before him, Cain could not overcome his jealousy and rage at feeling loved less and being less favored in comparison to Abel, and he committed a heinous sin. He was duly condemned, and the unresolved feelings Lucifer experienced surrounding the Fall—feeling loved less, envy, a desire to take over another's position of love and favor even by foul means—were solidified in the human heart by the action of this early ancestor. They have been passed down ever since.

**Blessings
Flow Through
Abel to Cain**



**Failure and
Lost Blessing**



Paradigm of Harmony and Conflict

Abel's Mistake

Reverend Moon further posits that although Abel was pleasing to God and more lovable than Cain, he was also at fault. Abel took pride in God's favor towards him. His attitude, "I'm the favored one; I'm better" added to Cain's feelings of humiliation, rejection, and envy. Abel would have done better had he been compassionate and helpful to his brother. But Abel did not realize that it was his responsibility to love Cain and share his blessings with his struggling sibling. He did not think to teach his brother how to make an acceptable offering, or to assuage the pain and lack Cain felt by serving and helping him to become better, explaining his deeper understanding of God and bringing his brother closer to God's throne. He did not salve his brother's psychic wounds with love. Instead, by taking God's love and favor for granted, Abel only added to his brother's resentment. He also failed to be "his brother's keeper." Little did he know that it would be his downfall.

Psychologist Stephen Stosny says that when people feel attacked in their sense of core value, humiliated by others, they seek to re-empower themselves. However, they often do this ineffectively and possibly violently. When people feel belittled and rejected, as Cain did, they often choose Cain's way of dealing with it. They empower themselves with weapons, and they strike.

The youthful killers who opened gunfire on their fellow students at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado are a prime example of this point. A fellow student at Columbine said that killers Klebold and Harris were treated very badly by other students. They were the lowest of the low on the social totem pole. "Scum-bags" was everyone's favorite nickname for them. On the other hand, the athletes of the school were treated "like gods."¹⁹ After many incidents of humiliating treatment, including being repeatedly cut in front of in line, thrown against lockers by stronger boys, and treated as if they had no existence at all, Klebold and Harris resorted to Cain's solution. They empowered themselves with weapons, and they struck. Although their killings were ultimately quite random

and flavored with many prejudices on their parts, it was the athletes—the more favored ones—they were especially gunning for.²⁰

Cain and Abel on the World Level

From individuals to nations, the feelings of loss and inadequacy, inferiority, and being less blessed, especially in comparison to others, are rife. The resentment and rivalry this causes are very real and motivating factors, both interpersonally and on larger scales.

For instance, in his epic history of the First World War, historian Martin Gilbert notes that the Germans felt a great deal of envy toward Great Britain, which led to truculence on the part of Germany. In fact, there was a close blood relationship between the German Kaiser, William II, and the British royal family. Because of intermarriage among Europe's royal families, William II of Germany was the grandson of Queen Victoria of England. Gilbert says, "He resented the apparent ascendancy in the world of her son Edward VII and her grandson George V, the King-Emperors."²¹ William II's envy and resentment of his cousins helped precipitate a world-level conflict, with the two powers of Germany and Great Britain as leading antagonists.

The Cain and Abel paradigm also may be helpful in understanding the new geopolitical situation that has arisen. The Muslim world chafes with chagrin over the decline of Islamic power and the rise of the modern Western powers. John Esposito, director of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University, says, "Many Arabs and Muslims feel they had 10 centuries of great cultural achievement that ended with European colonialism. Now they feel impotent. The West, they feel, looks at them as backward and is only interested in their oil. Their sense of self-worth and identity is wounded."

Osama Bin Laden gave voice to feelings of "humiliation and degradation" experienced by Arab peoples in comparison to the West's wealth, might, and technological achievements. Bin Laden

claimed that the actions of terrorists had restored some of Islam's dignity: "They have raised the nation's head high and washed away a great part of the shame that has enveloped us." Feeling humiliated and rejected, unfavored by history and envious of the West, Osama Bin Laden seeks to re-empower his people through the method of Cain—slaughter of the unwarned and unarmed.

Other Arabs who would never apply Bin Laden's methods have nevertheless affirmed the sense of humiliation and deprivation. New York Times columnist Thomas L. Friedman did an extensive study of the Middle East after the events of September 11th. He coined the phrase "a poverty of dignity" that is endemic to the region. There is a pervasive sense of humiliation. A once-great empire is no more, and suffers, many Arabs feel, at the hands of the now-great empire of the United States. They feel, in Friedman's words, dwarfed by the power of the West.²²

Fraternal Rivalry

In the Middle East situation, there is the root complication of the rivalry between the descendants of the Biblical half-brothers, Isaac (the son of Abraham and his wife Sarah) and Ishmael (the son of Abraham and the servant girl Hagar). The descendants of Isaac and Ishmael respectively are the Jews and the Muslims. Once again, we see a dynamic of jealousy between two brothers extrapolated into national and international proportions.

As descendants of the eldest brother, the first-born of the lineage of Abraham, Muslims feel a strong claim to the land on which they have lived for centuries. At the same time, the Christian West, out of sympathy for the Jews' experiences in the Holocaust as well as their own sentiments toward the land as the birthplace of Jesus and the setting of the Old Testament, has supported the state of Israel. In this way, the major modern representative of the Christian West, the United States, has "favored" one brother over another, leading to increased jealousy and ire.

Further, Israel has prospered beyond anyone's imagination, due in part to support from American Jews but also due to the fierce determination of Holocaust survivors to build a prosperous and strong nation. The lifestyle and wealth of the Israelis and the Palestinians cannot even be compared. All these factors contribute to a sense of envy and humiliation when Muslims look at Israel, the younger brother.

Blinded by Arrogance and Rage

It is hard for the less favored ones to see what the more favored ones might be doing right in order to enjoy the blessings of God. Further, the envied ones often fall short of the glory of God, fomenting more anger and resentment. The favored side often takes its gifts and blessings for granted, forgetting God, the giver of those blessings. Abel tends to keep his blessings for himself and not share with his younger brother. The ones in favor also tend to look down upon others and act as if their status were due more to their own efforts and innate superiority than due to the grace and providence of God, whose purposes are behind the rise and fall of nations and individuals. They fail to see others as their brothers—equal in dignity and rights even as they are in need of help and service.

When Abel acts self-righteously, Cain experiences pain and fury. Palestinians bitterly resent Israeli military measures taken in “self-defense” for the innocents killed and property destroyed. Moreover, when Muslims look at America, which supports Israel, they are horrified by the moral degradation they see in such American exports as pornography and salacious movies. It is hard for them to believe that a nation with such loose sexual standards can possibly find favor in the eyes of God. It is all too easy, then, to ascribe others' prowess to corruption, manipulation, sinfulness and coercion, growing livid at the perceived injustices.

Nothing can justify Cain's getting his weapon and resorting to murder. People in the Cain position have the responsibility to seek God's viewpoint and understand why Abel enjoys God's favor—what

Abel does right in the eyes of God. Cain must learn to forgive and unite with his brother, refusing to resort to unjust actions himself. For his part, Abel needs to recognize that his blessing is not for himself alone, but to share with his brother. The purpose of his stronger position is to nurture and help his brother Cain, whom God loves too, to rise to his potential as an equal in love and blessing.

The nature humankind inherited from the Fall, solidified by Cain's murder of Abel, does not always manifest itself in murder or war, of course. On the everyday level, fallen nature manifests itself in general failure to love others from God's point of view—centering on oneself and one's own. This misdirected love ranges from the clerk who cares more about her coffee break than about the customer in front of her—a most common occurrence—to the person who cuts someone else off in traffic in order to get ahead himself—another common occurrence. There are myriads of demonstrations of loving oneself and one's own more than God and others in everyday human existence. In almost every moment of every day, people fail to love others from God's point of view. This underlying attitude of self-love at the expense of others is the root cause of conflicts large and small.

Chapter 24

Prevention and Resolution of Conflict

*Because self-centered love brought the Fall,
we must find a God-centered or unselfish love in order
to be cured or restored.*

—Sun Myung Moon

If the root of conflict is love directed to oneself and one's own rather than to God and others, the cure for conflict must be love that is not misdirected—love that is focused on God and others. Conflict is a breach of the essential love and respect that should flow between people as siblings under the parentage of God.

Based on their nature as children of God, all people instinctively expect to be treated with respect for their inherent dignity. Yet self-centeredness causes people to mistreat one another, and then there is a response. Most conflicts boil down to two fundamental issues: (1) How someone was treated, and (2) How that person responded. Hence, the resolution of conflict revolves around these same two issues.

Cain and Abel in Daily Life

The Cain and Abel dynamic as Reverend Moon teaches it shows not only the pattern of most common conflict situations; it also demonstrates how each side can treat the other differently in order to prevent and resolve conflict. In the biblical story, Cain was placed

in a difficult position of envy towards his younger brother, who received the birthright that the elder naturally expects. Left to stew in feelings of jealousy and injustice, Cain then chose to deal with those feelings by murdering Abel. Cain's response to his brother's favored status has been a tragic template for hostilities ever since, a fallen tradition that has been passed down to this day.

However, it was also possible for Abel to prevent the conflict had he helped his brother overcome the disfavored situation. Instead of self-righteously keeping his favored status to himself, Abel could have shown compassion to his brother and done more than his share to help his brother succeed in his offering.

An everyday example shows how this archetypal pattern translates into modern reality. Laura, a respected marketing director at a large firm, had a work-related spat with a co-worker. The co-worker's name was Susan. Laura was in the higher position in the firm; Susan was on a lower echelon. Laura's position called for her to rebuke Susan for a mistake she had made. The mistake was real; someone definitely needed to apprise Susan of it.

Yet, when Laura did so, she had a subtly insulting attitude—at least that's what Susan picked up. Her "constructive criticism" sounded snide and was edged with sarcasm. Aggrieved, Susan went on the offensive. She began to answer back, attacking Laura's personality, using hurtful adjectives.

"I felt like she was ripping me to shreds," said Laura. "I had to call our boss in, who affirmed that she was out of line. He asked her to apologize to me, which she did, rather grudgingly. I thought she owed me that at least."

Once she stopped smarting over the incident, however, Laura came to realize the role her own attitude had played in bringing about Susan's Cain-like reaction of "ripping her to shreds." Laura realized, "I had never really considered Susan to be important. She didn't have as much education as I do; the market she had handled at her last job was far less sophisticated than the markets I handled. Yet she was good at what she did, and she was growing a lot in the

position. She was an asset to the company. I wondered how much of my attitude of superiority had been communicated to her without words. I realized it was about time I started thinking of her as a fellow professional and treating her like that, instead of being patronizing all the time. No wonder she had blown up at me.”

This story illustrates both Cain’s and Abel’s tendencies, which have been inherited by people ever since the beginning and which catalyze conflict. In the next section, we will attend to Abel’s responsibility in the prevention and resolution of conflict; in the section after that, to Cain’s responsibility.

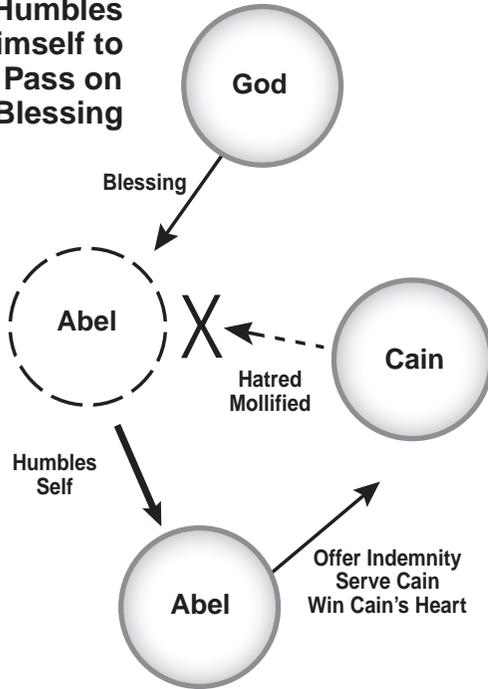
Abel’s Responsibility

Reverend Moon has said, “The Abel position was set up so that Cain might be saved through him. In order to save Cain, Abel should give him all the love that he received from God, and additionally his own love.”¹

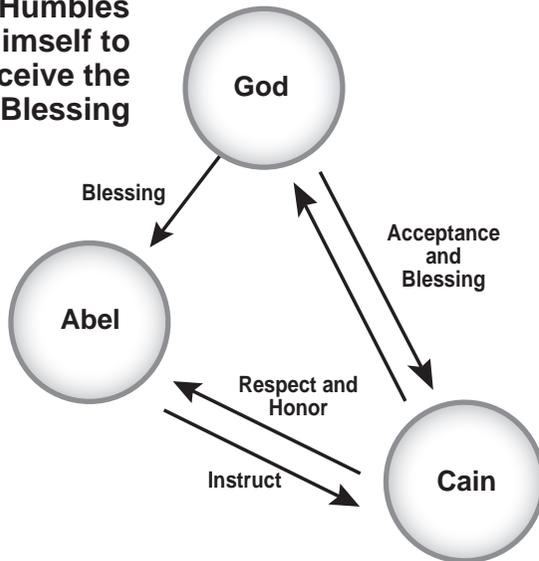
In the case above, Laura was the “Abel.” Laura had the most blessing and love—she was in the favored position. Yet Laura repeated Abel’s mistake. She was arrogant. She felt superior to Susan. She did not love her or aid her. She treated Susan as less important than herself. She saw Susan only in unequal relationship to herself and her own success, not as a talented person in her own right who needed support and encouragement from her seniors. She discounted Susan.

Naturally, people react to such attitudes with resentment. It is an offense to their innate sense of being worthy and equal as human beings. It is an affront to their irreducible need to be loved. Arrogance is communicated with a glance of the eye, a curl of the lip, a snide tone of voice, a put-down of a remark. It is often communicated subtly, even consciously denied, but its presence is bound to cause conflict, for it devalues the worth of the other person as a fellow and deserving child of God, a person whom God loves.

**Abel Humbles
Himself to
Pass on
Blessing**



**Cain Humbles
Himself to
Receive the
Blessing**



Paradigm of Conflict Resolution

To resolve conflict, arrogance is one of the first attitudes to be changed. Everyone is in a superior position to others at times. A teacher has knowledge superior to his students. A person giving directions at a gas station has superior know-how as compared to the person asking for help. The CEO of a corporation is in a superior position to all the other people in the company. An older sister who has mastered the skill of sewing is superior to the clumsy younger sister who is just learning to thread a needle. However, to glory in our temporary superiorities—and they are always temporary—is to stoke the resentment of Cain, who would be sensitive and prickly anyway due to his lower status.

The Abel individual—the one who is more highly favored—needs to reverse the tendency toward arrogance and presumption of special privileges. Instead, she needs to make it her mission to lovingly instruct, help, and raise up the ones in the lower position, seeing them as being equal in the eyes of God and worthy of esteem and respect. It is up to Abel to serve and love Cain, as a brother or sister whom their Heavenly Father loves.

Model for Conflict Resolution: Jacob and Esau

Reverend Moon cites the biblical example of Jacob and Esau as brothers who corrected the mistakes of Cain and Abel. By restoring the correct relationship between brothers, Jacob and Esau show how the Cain and Abel dynamic can be a model of conflict resolution.

Through various machinations, Jacob had managed to acquire many blessings that his older brother, Esau, felt should rightly be coming to him as the first born. Jacob knew he was acting within God's will as Heaven's designated elder son—the destined ancestor of the people of Israel—and he acted shrewdly to get what was needed from Esau.

Jacob became the heir when he cajoled Esau's birthright from him—recognizing that Esau had no regard for its value. Jacob then sealed his position by pretending to be the elder son and receiving

the blessing of their dying father. In this Jacob enjoyed the favor and support of their mother, who assisted him in acquiring his father's blessing.

The stage thus was set for envy and humiliation on Esau's part. Indeed, when he found out Jacob had usurped his blessing from their father, Esau was so enraged that he was ready to kill his younger sibling—which would have repeated Cain's murder of Abel. Jacob had to run away to a relative's home in order to escape murder at his older brother's hands.

Living with his relatives put Jacob through difficult trials, which challenged him to grow his character. As Jacob had tricked Esau, so Jacob himself was deceived several times over. His Uncle Laban compelled him to work for him twenty-one years rather than the agreed-upon seven; Laban also substituted his older daughter, Leah, in Jacob's marriage bed and withheld the more desirable Rachel, even though he had agreed to give her to Jacob.

Yet Jacob did not respond to this trickery with murderous wrath. He paid the price of swallowing his pride and ire and did what Laban demanded, without complaint and for a long time. On this foundation of inner fortitude, Jacob became ready to face the man he had tricked with the merit of having withstood much more trickery without resorting to violence. Perhaps being tricked so much led Jacob to empathize with Esau's ire at him too.

Jacob returned to his home area, knowing that Esau's threat to kill him was still in force. In fact, as he approached the area, word came that Esau was coming with armed men. Jacob sent generous gifts ahead of himself to be given to his brother. When the two were finally face to face, Jacob bowed to the ground seven times in front of his brother. Esau's heart was softened enough to forgive and embrace Jacob. To crown the moment, Jacob asserted Esau's holiness. He said, "to see your face is like seeing the face of God" (Genesis 33.10).

Arrogance overcome

Jacob had reversed the arrogance of the original Abel. He served Laban humbly and uncomplainingly and, when he confronted his brother, he served him too, with lavish gifts and the humility of the seven bows. Through love and service, Jacob won over Esau's aggrieved and humiliated heart, stung by being less favored and less blessed. Jacob then affirmed Esau's position as being beloved of God. The two embraced as brothers and the murder never took place.

When service comes from the person in Abel's position, as Jacob did when he eased the heart of his brother, it assuages pain in the heart of the less favored, pouring grace into the rents that would give rise to conflict. Abel's job is to help and give to Cain, the one who is less favored. Cain needs service, not superiority. Cain's aggrieved feelings, festering resentment, feelings of having less to the other's more, can be relieved by Abel's loving attitude and service. Abel's service affirms the value of the other as a child of God. It takes the position of other-centeredness, anchoring itself in true love and bonding the two as brothers on the journey of life together.

Cain's Responsibility

"Cain actually wanted to receive love from God, and he rebelled because he did not receive love," states Reverend Moon. "What was Cain supposed to do? To receive God's love, Cain had to love Abel just as God loved Abel."²

The person in Cain's position has a responsibility too. Cain has a tendency to nurse grudges and harbor resentment. He does not see why Abel is favored; he does not love him. The original Cain saw Abel from his own point of view—one of grievance, blame and smoldering resentment. Unable to overcome his outraged and envious feelings, Cain cultivated a feeling of vengeance toward his brother. He probably kept a "list" in his mind of all of Abel's mistakes and flaws. He was ready, more than ready, to commit murder when the

final stimulus came. His heart was full of hatred.

To return to Susan in the example above, it was almost inevitable that Susan would lash out at Laura. Like Cain, she had allowed herself to harbor resentment. She must have nurtured a critical and blaming attitude toward Laura, keeping a mental inventory of all of her apparent wrongs; otherwise, she would have had no ammunition for her torrent of personal accusations. She had nursed a grudge against Laura for a long time, probably jealously thinking Laura didn't deserve the higher position and that she herself deserved it more. Through her accumulated resentment, she was, in effect, "gunning" for Laura all along.

Receptivity to reconciliation

The example of Esau shows the possibility for the person in Cain's position to overcome this archetypal pattern of resentment and retaliation. Esau was victorious in that he accepted Jacob. He allowed his heart to be won over by his brother instead of stubbornly holding on to his resentment. He was open to reconciliation when the gestures came and courageous enough to reverse his course. He gave up his claims to retaliation and consented to love and be loved. He put aside his touchy pride and forgave.

Forgiving even an old wound takes a certain amount of preparedness within. Esau had clearly done some internal work on his attitude toward Jacob in order to have the ability to open his heart so completely toward him in the end.

What are some ways to overcome the powerful and unpleasant feelings of envy, humiliation, and outrage before they bring about destruction? All people have felt them in some measure and at some time. Everyone knows the acrid snares of Cain-like jealousy, anger, accusation, smarting under the perceived slights of others. How do people deal with these feelings before they break out into damaging conflicts?

Defeating the Wolf Within

First of all, people do well to monitor their hearts for resentment. It is easier to get rid of resentment in the earlier stages than in the later ones. A Cherokee story from a wise old grandfather makes the point:

An old Grandfather, whose grandson came to him with anger at a schoolmate who had done him an injustice, said, "Let me tell you a story, Grandson. I, too, at times, have felt a great hate for those that have taken so much, with no sorrow for what they do. But hate wears you down, and does not hurt your enemy. It is like taking poison and wishing your enemy would die. I have struggled with these feelings many times."

He continued, "It is as if there are two wolves inside me. One is good and does no harm. He lives in harmony with all around him and does not take offense when no offense was intended. He will only fight when it is right to do so, and in the right way."

"But the other wolf is full of anger. The littlest thing will set him into a fit of temper. He fights everyone, all the time, for no reason. He cannot think because his anger and hate are so great. It is hard to live with these two wolves inside me, for both of them try to dominate my spirit."

The boy looked intently into his Grandfather's eyes and asked, "Which one wins, Grandfather?"

The grandfather solemnly replied, "The one I feed."

People do well to recognize the presence of these two "wolves within." Our fallen, sinful nature, or bad wolf, is ready to take offense even when no offense is intended. "He fights everyone, all the time, for no reason. He cannot think because his anger and hate are so great." Recognizing the "split personality" within is the first step

toward preventing Cain from rising up. Cain attacked Abel because he already denied the part of himself that is in the image of God and wants to live in love and peace with all.

If Cain feeds her inner wolf of resentment through keeping a list of grievances, mulling over injustices, standing apart and nursing grudges, judging and accusing, it is almost inevitable that her angry wolf will grow stronger and rise up to fight. Resentment, accusation and blame are incendiary materials. Sooner or later, letting them grow will result in a conflagration of conflict.

Far better for Cain to recognize humbly that Abel is in the position he is in because he has earned some favor. Abel has something special about him that attracts good fortune and blessings. Cain may grow close to Abel; he may study his ways, and inherit some of his merit through serving him and imitating him, seeking to understand and assimilate the heart of one who is closer to God. Cain too must take God's perspective on the other and be willing to learn to love. What is more, when Cain serves, Cain's dignity comes from an inner source unrelated to external position. Cain's service reaffirms his or her value and power as one who can command God's blessings and love too.

Yet in a conflict situation, Cain may be so drowning in grievances that he can hardly be expected to make the first move towards reconciliation. Abel, who is in the more blessed position, is generally the one to take initiative. Abel is likely to have the resources and the sense of self-worth required in reaching out to his brother. In response to his brother's love, Cain then can find the strength to defeat his inner demons.

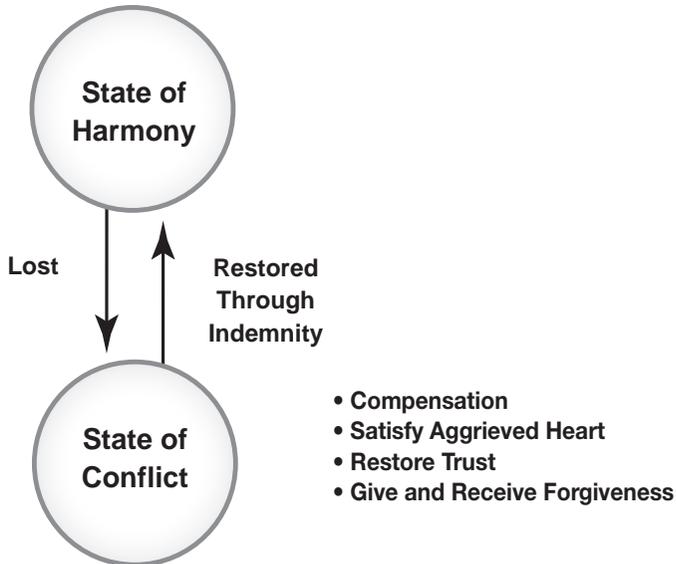
In any conflict, who is "Abel"? The one who takes the first step to relieve the grievances of the other party.

The meaning of the Cain-Abel dynamic of conflict resolution is that the person in the position of Abel needs to step up to the challenge of loving, serving and helping the person in the position of Cain. The role of Abel ultimately belongs to the one who loves and serves the most.

Restoration through Indemnity

Imagine the aftermath of a serious conflict and both parties are hurt. The wounds and stripes have been given. The Cain person is crushed, alienated, and feeling “everyone’s hand against him” because of his over-reaction to the Abel person’s provocation (Genesis 16.12). Abel figuratively lies bleeding on the ground, a victim in part of his own arrogance. Both blame the other. Both are in agony and will be in agony until their relationship is healed. How can such a situation be resolved?

Since conflict involves the abrogation of a relationship, it cannot be resolved without healing the violations. This usually means paying some price. Reverend Moon calls this “restoration through indemnity.” Indemnity fills the painful breaches with something good and healing and builds up areas of the relationship that had broken down. Indemnity cancels the spiritual debt and restores what was lost, rebuilding love and regard.



Indemnity Reverses the Breach by Which Harmony Was Lost

It often happens that Abel takes on more than his or her share in paying the price for restoring the relationship because Abel is the closest to God and loves and cares the most. As was said above, Abel takes the responsibility for mending the relationship. Hence, we have Jacob serving twenty-one years in Haran, giving his brother gifts, and bowing to the ground before him. We have the victorious nations in World War II helping and serving the very ones who had attacked them and cost them so much in blood and treasure. We have Jesus Christ as the “suffering servant” who pays the price for others to have a restored relationship with the Father. He takes their burdens on himself and suffers for their sake, canceling their debts with the Father by paying with his own blood. Abel’s willingness to love and serve, even above and beyond the call of duty, provides God with the leverage to heal.

An Eye for an Eye?

Indemnity is different from simple compensation. Rather, it describes the effort by the side that takes responsibility for the conflict to satisfy the aggrieved heart of the other side. Regardless of who was at fault, the Cain side holds on to its emotional need for some satisfaction for perceived and actual wrongs. Regardless of who was at fault, Abel takes it upon him- or herself to pay that price. Thus, instead of assessing guilt and determining “fair” compensation, the way of restoration through indemnity operates by the logic of the heart. Indemnity is whatever is required to bring the relationship back to one of love.

In some instances, lesser indemnity may be required to heal the breach. Jesus’ parable of the prodigal son is a story of lesser indemnity (Luke 15). The wastrel son who has squandered his fortune shows a changed heart and a chastened attitude after putting his father through years of worry and agony. The return of his penitent son, who is willing to be taken back by his father even as a servant, is enough for the father to forgive him in full. The father dresses the son in a fine robe, places a golden ring upon his finger, and orders

the fatted calf killed for a feast. The young man is restored to full relationship with his father based on the indemnity condition of a changed heart and father's great love. From this parable, we learn that in relationship to the Father, humankind is in a position to pay lesser indemnity for their sins, even though guilty, because of the Father's deep love and munificence.

Equal indemnity

In some cases equal indemnity is required to restore a relationship. A public apology may be necessary in cases where public humiliation was inflicted, in order to restore the reputation of the one impugned. Damaged property may have to be restored at full value. To murder may mean one will pay with one's own life.

Cases of equal indemnity often come up when the relationship of heart is not a deep one—between acquaintances, neighbors, co-workers, classmates, citizens, etcetera. Since indemnity exists to restore relationships, shallow relationships or relationships between strangers might require at least equal indemnity since there is no large store of grace and love to call upon, as there might be in a personal friendship or between relatives.

The concept of “restorative justice” reaches for equal indemnity with the goal to restore the broken relationship between the criminal, the victims, and the community. Rather than visiting retribution on the perpetrator in the form of impersonal imprisonment, the criminal literally pays his or her “debt to society” directly to the victims and all those affected by the crime. This may involve face-to-face meetings with the victims and their families wherein they freely express their pain and loss to the person who caused it. It may involve financial restitution. It may involve special services rendered or public demonstration of a change in consciousness through community activism. In all cases, restorative justice asks for payment in kind to the victims of a crime with the goal of restoring relationships.

Greater indemnity

In some cases, the payment required may be greater than the original injury. This occurs when there is bad faith. In cases of financial debt where the borrower falls behind on his payments, penalties may be imposed to make up for the creditor's frustration at the delay in payment.

Failing to live up to an initial trust may incur greater indemnity. For example, one husband had been fiscally irresponsible in the early years of a couple's marriage. Through counseling and support, he learned to handle finances in a responsible way. However, the mistrust was not quite alleviated. Five years later, when he bought one item his wife considered frivolous, much of her old pain came back, and they had a quarrel. Observing friends couldn't understand how the wife could give the husband such a hard time over a twenty-dollar item. Yet, in fact, by endangering their security early in their relationship, the husband had set up a situation where he had to "pay" for his early acts of irresponsibility by being fiscally conservative for a long time to reassure his wife that the pain he had visited upon her in the early days of their marriage would not be repeated.

Loving Again

Author C. Terry Warner offers many insights about the internal work involved in taking responsibility to heal a conflict. When a person is in a relationship of blame and accusation toward another person, that is what Warner calls a "collusive" relationship—a trap impossible to get out of.² Sorting out who was right and who was wrong is impossibly difficult because of the subtleties underlying the conflict. Therefore, what must finally happen is that one or the other or both must take responsibility for their own part in the conflict, regardless of what the other person has done.

While a person is not responsible for the uncaring words and actions others may heap upon him or her, the person is responsible for his or her own. No matter what the other person has done, to

behave in an unworthy fashion is to betray one's own best inner self—it is an act of self-betrayal, betrayal of God and betrayal of the other that ultimately calls to be rectified.

Warner uses the extreme example of a woman who was sexually violated by her father. Although she had suffered one of the worst violations a person can, she could not heal until she owned up and took responsibility for the acrid bitterness and accusation she had held toward him for decades. This blaming and accusing attitude injured her own spirit, betrayed her own best self. Stewing in the juices of her blame, she could not repair her life. It was not until she took the radical step of confessing to him how much resentment she had harbored toward him all these years and repenting of it that the impasse was broken and she began to piece her life together again. What was more, through this, she liberated her father to begin the long, slow, agonizing road toward redemption from his heinous sin.³

Taking Responsibility for One's Part in the Conflict

Taking responsibility for one's own actions and attitudes does not excuse what the other person did. It does not absolve them of responsibility. Yet no matter what others have done, it is up to each person to live in accordance with their best self, the part of them that is closest to God. Even faced with an enemy, a person must live up to their nature as a child of God. No matter what others have done, it is up to each person to do right—to act well and charitably toward others. Then we become like Christ. We become like Buddha, who said, "Hatreds never cease through hatred in this world; through love alone they cease. This is an eternal law" (Dhammapada 5).⁴ We lose our victim status and become proactive kingdom-builders.

The process is to let go of blame and accusation toward the other person and to recognize that such attitudes are wrong in and of themselves. Once a person suspends blame and accusation, he or she may see the other's actions in a more charitable light. It might be revealed that the person acted out of fear, or insecurity, or to cover up his or her own shame. Such insights allow the person to

feel compassion for the other and to begin to forgive. It helps the person to be able look more honestly at his or her own contributions to the difficulty. He or she becomes willing to ask the momentous question: "Might I have been wrong?" The person is ready to take responsibility for his or her own contribution to the difficulty, including the attitudinal contributions. He or she is ready to try to love again.

This process is eloquently and poignantly expressed in a poem, "Crown of Glory" written by Reverend Moon when he was 16 years old. Though he found the world corrupt, he determined to continue on the right path.

This is the heart of Abel, who refuses to give in to his own Cain-like feelings of suspicion, blame, and hatred even when wrong has been done to him. The result of giving in to judgment and hatred pains his spirit. He realizes that, even if others have hurt him, he is wrong in front of God if he judges and blames them. He has asked the momentous question, "Might I be wrong?" He answers it courageously, "Yes, I am wrong," and concludes that, no matter how others act toward him, he is responsible to act lovingly toward them. Then he will be a true child of God and receive the crown of glory.

In later life, Reverend Moon continued to put his thoughts into practice. He traveled to North Korea, the place of his birth, and embraced Kim Il Sung, the man who had administered the communist dictatorship that had imprisoned, tortured, and sentenced Moon to a death camp years before. The two discussed the reunification of the Korean peninsula, and Reverend Moon extended the hand of fellowship so much as to invite Kim Il Sung fishing, with the hope of winning him over with love.

This is the classic teaching of loving the enemy, praying for and doing good to those who spitefully use a person. The one who assumes the responsibility to love and serve wields the redemptive power of God, whose purposes are always to heal and to restore. Loving an enemy is the greatest expression of love that goes beyond oneself and one's own.

Crown of Glory

When I doubt people, I feel pain.
When I judge people, it is unbearable.
When I hate people, there is no value to my existence.

Yet if I believe, I am deceived.
If I love, I am betrayed.
Suffering and grieving tonight, my head in my hands
Am I wrong?

Yes, I am wrong.
Even though we are deceived, still believe.
Though we are betrayed, still forgive.
Love completely even those who hate you.

Wipe your tears away and welcome with a smile
Those who know nothing but deceit
And those who betray without regret.

Oh Master! The pain of loving!
Look at my hands.
Place your hand on my chest.
My heart is bursting, such agony!

But when I loved those who acted against me
I brought victory.
If you have done the same thing,
I will give you the crown of glory.

As mentioned above, Abel's purpose in loving and serving his enemy is not just to vindicate himself in God's eyes. He recognizes that his welfare requires the redemption of Cain, so that they may be brothers again. Dr. Martin Luther King expressed the process eloquently when he said to white supremacists in the South that blacks would not retaliate in kind for the bad treatment they were given, but would continue to act with love. Then, he promised, "One day we shall win freedom, but not only for ourselves. We shall so appeal to your heart and conscience that we shall win you in the process, and our victory will be a double victory."⁵

Peacemaking on the Worldwide Level

If all human beings are indeed brethren, then the Cain and Abel conflict, and its dynamic of conflict resolution as played out in the story of Jacob and Esau, has implications for conflicts on larger levels. Larger conflicts often bear a strong resemblance to the Cain and Abel struggle. Hence this model's restorative dynamic of conflict resolution through service and love becomes intriguing and compelling as a possible solution to world problems.

An interesting example is the World Wars and their aftermaths. As noted above, World War I was literally between cousins. Though it was called "The War to End All Wars," it most certainly was not—its unresolved issues directly led to World War II.

After Germany, the aggressor in World War I, was at last defeated, the nation was then deeply repressed by the victors, England, France, and the United States. Heavy war reparations were demanded. To the wounds of the humiliation of defeat were added the salt of punishment. The Treaty of Versailles punished Germany both territorially and financially. Germany protested even as it had to endorse the Treaty, which ended the war. Economist J. M. Keynes protested that the Treaty of Versailles was financially unreasonable and unfair to Germany, yet it remained in force.⁶

To a proud people, the yoke of this humiliation was unbearable. Their aspirations for an honored place in the world had not

died with their defeat in the war. In fact it was fueled into virulence by their further humiliation under the terms of peace. Adolf Hitler personified and gave voice to their sense of disempowerment, humiliation, nationalism, and agony over the round physical drubbing they had received. He rose to power with startling swiftness. His solution to the problem was Cain's: war, murder, and violence. Hitler rearmed Germany and began to invade other countries.

All too soon the world was embroiled in war again, spurred on by the aggression of Hitler and his ally, Japan. Only after tremendous effort and the losses of millions of lives was Germany conquered again. Japan's defeat followed shortly thereafter.

Policy of Service

This time, however, the victors learned from the experience after World War I. The solution of love and service was applied. Farseeing George Marshall understood that a prostrate Europe, especially Germany, would be a breeding ground for future conflicts. Upon his proposal, billions of U.S. dollars went into the rebuilding of Europe. The victors gave to the vanquished, reversing the process of demanding heavy financial reparations from the defeated. The rapid rise of European democracies and economies after World War II was unprecedented in human history. Free Germany became a prosperous democracy, a trading partner, and an ally of its former enemy.

Another far-sighted man, General MacArthur, administered occupied Japan. MacArthur quickly established a constitution that assured citizens of basic rights. He broke apart the old oligarchy that had had a stranglehold on the country's economy and, through land reform, gave the land to the people who worked it. Many of these policies became popular. MacArthur refused to have the Emperor of Japan tried as a war criminal. Instead, he had the Emperor become more of a public figure than ever before. As such, the Emperor brought comfort to his people and a sense of continuity in the midst of sweeping changes.

The enemy was “loved” with substantial service in the conscious hope that the enemy could be won over. Humiliated and vanquished Cain, who had risen violently to throw off his sense of rivalry and ill fortune, was served as a brother and given the hand-up he needed to resume his place among the family of nations. The victorious nations fulfilled the role of Abel: They transcended their love for themselves and their own and reached out to love the enemy with substantial service. As a result, countries who were implacable enemies became partners and friends who now have been at peace for more than half a century.

The Role of Force in Resolving Conflict

At times it may be the better part of love to restrain one's enemy from committing further atrocities and injustices, since he cannot restrain himself. Certainly many criminals need to be captured and restrained through the use of force. To restrain him by force may be actually helpful to the enemy because it cuts down his accumulation of demerit and debt toward those he has harmed and intends to harm. It protects his future victims. It may be seen to be an act of love to protect the weak from a stronger, more aggressive foe through the use of force.

Religious people have historically recognized that some wars are necessary, even noble. Just War theory, formulated by Thomas Aquinas in *Summa Theologica*, lays out criteria for when and how it is appropriate to go to war. The sum and substance of Just War theory is that a legitimate authority with some prospects for success may wage war on a military enemy (not civilians) in basic self-defense after being aggressed upon or to prevent credible threats of future aggression. The use of force also must be appropriate, not excessive.

Inner Work of Restoration

However, it should be noted that physical force alone does not resolve conflict. As the aftermath of World War I shows, without the necessary internal work of restoration, the use of force will be in vain, and at a later time the festering resentments will reemerge in a new conflict. The ultimate goal is the restoration of the abrogated relationship into one of friendship, peace, and brotherhood. Force is only used to create a situation where the means of restoring the relationship—love and service—can be applied. Once restraint has pacified the enemy and created a safe and secure zone for negotiations, the parties may be able to begin the internal process of seeking mutual understanding. Together, they may seek to end the grievances and issues that led to the conflict in the first place and

pay the indemnity to heal the hearts. This alone will actually resolve the conflict.

Since humankind is all one family, all conflicts are ultimately between brothers. The one in the Abel position has not loved Cain enough, and Cain has not been able to overcome feelings of being loved the less, giving in to resentment and hatred. Understanding the deep love issues embedded in the first family and passed down for generations throws light upon resolving conflicts today. Successful models of serving and loving the “enemy”—who is ultimately one’s brother—provide a paradigm for the resolution of conflict.

Chapter 25

Waging Peace

*The foundation of peace exists only where people seek
the path of loving others.*

—Sun Myung Moon

Peace is a universal hope. A perennial rallying cry of political campaigns, a theme of the central holiday season in most parts of the world, a daily greeting between neighbors—“peace,” “shalom,” “salaam.” All people pray for peace. A traditional Sudanese prayer pleads, “Our Father, it is thy universe, it is thy will: Let us be at peace.”¹ A Hindu supplication goes, “May all the gods grant me peace! . . . May everything for us be peaceful!” (Atharva Veda 19.9.14).² Indeed, peace is considered an attribute of the Divine. “God is peace, His name is peace, and all is bound together in peace,” declares a Midrash (Leviticus Rabbah 10b).³ The Bible calls peace a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5.22).

Peace is often used to refer to the absence of armed combat, but the ideal of peace goes beyond merely the cessation of conflict, since a well-run prison might technically fit that description. True peace rather involves the presence of harmony and bonds of heart. It is inextricably linked to true love.

Peaceful harmony in Reverend Moon’s teaching encompasses many levels. Inner peace occurs when mind and body are of one accord. Peace in the home is based on loving oneness between husband and wife. A peaceful community is one where neighbors respect one another and cooperate to bring about mutual prosper-

ity. Such productive harmony is the fruit of true love.

Peace also involves a sense of trust and shared heart as fellow human beings. Mere tolerance of those who are different from us is not enough, though it is a valuable first step. Where there is abiding peace there is the breaking down of “the dividing wall of hostility” (Ephesians 2.14) and the mentality that judges others’ worth and perceives them as alien. Again, this is the result of true love. The eyes of such love are basically color-blind as well as “creed-” and “class-blind.” Differences are seen as secondary and celebrated as sources of variety and strength.

Further, for true and lasting peace in this strife-torn world, there needs to be reconciliation of heart among those who have hurt each other. There is a need for both sides to consider how their attitude or actions contributed to the conflict. Often the side that is more morally and spiritually mature initiates, regardless of who appears to be at fault. Going beyond what is required, the “Abel” side provides love and service to the more aggrieved party. This provides the space for the “Cain” side to fulfill its responsibility, which is to overcome its resentment and pain to accept Abel as a brother whom he can love.

Peace Depends on Other-Centered Love

Thus the way of peace demands justice, equality, brotherhood, and a sense of unity, shared purpose and destiny. In other words, it depends upon an other-centered love. “Where do we establish the origin of peace?” asks Reverend Moon. “Every knotty problem in the universe will be solved once we find that we were born not for ourselves but for the sake of others.”⁴ Yet as discussed, most of the time people are dominated by the insistent concern for their own needs and desires and those groups with which they identify themselves. This leaves a vacuum of true love in the world, so that even in the absence of open hostilities, there is frustration, pain and longing. This vacuum fosters conflict on all levels—within and among families, communities and nations.

International institutions dedicated to the cause of peace have failed to bring about the desired results because political or economic approaches do not address or resolve this intractable problem of self-centeredness. Nations, like individuals, cannot be talked or coerced out of self-centeredness into true love through merely external means. A different approach is needed.

“Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.”⁵ The lyrics of this simple song capture an essential insight about peace-making—the foundation for global peace is within the individual. Reverend Moon teaches that a peaceful society or world of love would extrapolate from the person who is unconflicted. It would resemble a mature person whose mind and body are in oneness—a unified vehicle of truth, beauty and goodness. The altruistic urges of the mind take ascendancy over self-concern, and are manifested through the body in practice.

What are the “mind” and “body” of a peaceful society? The “mind” is comprised of the moral and spiritual beliefs and attitudes that guide people to live for the sake of others. The “body” of such a society is this unselfishness manifested in people’s actions in every aspect of the culture—from family life to politics and economics. Thus, world peace comes about as religious and moral truth is exalted and comes to speak with one voice, and as this truth is embodied in service practiced on all levels. Reverend Moon has said, “The world must be renewed through the global unity of religious leaders . . . and a movement of service.”⁶ Let us explore this in more detail.

The Mind of a Peaceful World

Since the mind’s direction precedes the action of the body, the first priority is to harness the power of society’s “mind”—its spiritual and moral values. Religions, rooted in the transcendent God and universal truths, can educate people to appreciate the blessings of placing the benefit of others ahead of narrow self-interest. Indeed, it is this foundation of moral and spiritual truth that clarifies what

is “true” in true love and distinguishes it from more self-serving or misdirected affections. For this reason, the most effective way to promote peace necessarily enlists the authority of religion and the force of the conscience.

It is the great faith traditions that have nourished the hope for peace throughout the ages. Every tradition paints its own vision of a peaceful world. Recall the Bible’s stirring image engraved on the wall opposite the United Nations building:

They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation and they shall learn war no more (Isaiah 2.4).

All the world religions exalt peacemaking as holy work. The Biblical blessing upon this is familiar, but the same is true in other scriptures. “The whole of the Torah is for the purpose of promoting peace,” proclaims the Talmud (Gittin 59b).⁷ The Qur’an directs the faithful to “make peace” among those who are fighting (49.9).⁸ A Buddhist text praises the harmonizer:

He brings together those who are divided, he encourages those who are friendly; he is a peacemaker, a lover of peace, impassioned for peace, a speaker of words that make for peace (Digha Nikaya xiii.75, Tevigga Sutta).⁹

Faith is linked to peace in another essential way—it has the power of personal transformation. As alluded to above, persons must rise about self-centeredness to become instruments of peace. The spiritual disciplines possess the capacity to do this. By connecting people to God’s love and light, people’s hearts are changed, such that they are moved to sacrifice themselves and forgive and embrace strangers.

Religion as a divisive force

Some however have doubts about religion's efficacy as a harmonizing influence. They observe that claimants to moral and spiritual truth have too often fomented division rather than promoted amity. Religious ideals have been misused in service to self-centered salvation that would sacrifice others for its own sake. In addition, claims of superior truth have promoted an attitude of negative competition among believers.

Yet, "the sole, awesome purpose of religion is to bring about peace on earth," Reverend Moon reminds us. "Religious bodies must be concerned about the salvation of the world, the Will of God, before thinking about salvation for one religious denomination or one individual."⁹ He has encouraged religions to come together, dialogue with one another, and learn to embrace one another in order to find the common ground to speak to the world with one voice.¹⁰ Such a unified force would be powerful indeed.

Common insights

Fortunately, there is a realistic basis for the great faith traditions to work in partnership. They share many insights in common. Because they have arrived at their truthful precepts through a focus upon the one Creator, God has revealed many of the same profound understandings to all earnest seekers, no matter what paths they have used to approach Him. It is in this commonality of insight that hope for peace lies.

The Parliament of the World's Religions issued a declaration in 1993 that expressed hope for religious unity around certain basic values common to all the faiths of the world. The declaration was endorsed by Bahais, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jains, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Native Americans and primal religions the world over, neo-pagans, Taoists, Theosophists, Zoroastrians, and various interreligious organizations. The declaration said, in part:

We confirm that there is already a consensus among the religions which can be the basis for a global ethic—a minimal fundamental consensus concerning binding values, irrevocable standards, and fundamental moral attitudes¹⁰ We affirm that this truth is already known, but yet to be lived in heart and action¹¹

The drafters cited the ubiquitous Golden Rule as an example of one guiding norm for human life. Another near-universal precept is the idea of loving the enemy—to repay evil with good—as an essential “weapon” in the waging of peace (see Chapter 24).

“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,” said Jesus of Nazareth. Mohammed taught, “Repel the evil deed with one that is better, then lo, he between whom and you there was enmity shall become as though he were a bosom friend” (Qur’an 41.34).¹⁴ Buddha advised, “Conquer anger by love. Conquer evil by good. Conquer the stingy by giving. Conquer the liar by truth” (Dhammapada 223).¹⁵ Lao Tzu declared, “I treat those who are good with goodness, and I also treat those who are not good with goodness. Thus goodness is attained” (Tao Te Ching 49).¹⁶

This sentiment reverberates through all the faith traditions because all of them have been touched by the deep heart of the Creator. As Reverend Moon has said,

The reason why God does not punish, even though He may see an enemy and have the urge to kill him and get revenge, is that He is thinking of the enemy’s parents, wife and children who all love him. Knowing all too well their unparalleled love towards that person, God cannot strike him with His iron rod. When you really understand such a heart of God, could you take revenge on your enemy? When you know all these things, you would even go and help him.¹⁷

In this way, the religious traditions have potent capacity to extinguish hate and promote reconciliation.

Paradoxically, the more sincerely people devote themselves to their own faiths, the more they will discover that which is held in common with believers of other faiths. As Gandhi, the great apostle of non-violence, said, "If a man reaches the heart of his own religion, he has reached the heart of the others too."¹⁸ The great souls of each tradition in many ways transcended their own faiths and spoke to the world. Their actual words and deeds tend to challenge and reform their own believers' parochial and limited viewpoints with an all-encompassing vision of inclusion and love. Like streams fed by a common spring, the many faith traditions have the potential to join together into a mighty river that can, to paraphrase the prophet Isaiah, raise up every valley, make low every mountain and hill, make the rough ground level and the rugged places a plain (40.4).

Harnessing Spiritual Power

"This age more than any other demands that boundaries of faith be extended toward cooperative projects and interreligious harmony," declared Reverend Chun Hwan Kwak on behalf of Reverend Moon in an address to the United Nations. "People of faith are meant to feel responsible for and demonstrate a common moral sentiment toward poor and suffering nations." In light of this, Reverend Moon has proposed a religious "senate" either within the United Nations or as a complementary guiding body of moral deliberation on world issues. He further posits that every nation and every community should have similar bodies of spiritual leaders to serve as their guides and collective "consciences."

Exploiting the power of religious leadership has a practical dimension as well. Since the end of the Cold War, ethnic strife has been the dominant threat throughout the globe. Most tensions are not between nation-states but between groups divided along religious, racial, linguistic or similar lines. National governments are

therefore poorly equipped to mediate disputes that transcend state borders and state power. However, many ethnic struggles have a religious component. Thus they can respond to the enlightened voices of charity and peacemaking from within the faith traditions involved. Even if the conflict has no overtly religious element, all ethnic groups have a spiritual tradition to utilize as a resource to overcome hate and promote reconciliation. In this way, religious leaders have a unique and vital capacity for preventing and resolving conflicts.

What about the Non-Religious?

Many people see themselves as secular in outlook. Yet the conscience guides each person in the same way. Thus, as the religions of the world speak in accord with the human conscience, even non-believers can be drawn together with believers to speak with one “moral voice” as ethicist Amitai Etzioni terms it.¹⁹

Whether they are of a religious persuasion or not, there is much that people can agree upon as being good, true, beautiful and worthy to guide human life. Some values may be deemed universal, transcending time and space. For instance, even enemies are capable of recognizing and respecting one another’s courage. Honesty and fair dealings are the underpinnings of successful economies, and the hope beneath every transaction in the world, whether it takes place on Wall Street or on a hillside in Africa. Humility is another universally valued trait. It is communicated without words, by deeds and posture, and is appreciated wherever a person goes. Hospitality to guests and strangers is valued by peoples as diverse as the Bedouins and the British. Certain universal values form a common denominator that links humanity.

Christian philosopher C.S. Lewis was quite convinced of this:

I know that some people say . . . different civilizations and different ages have had quite different moralities. But this is not true . . . If anyone will take the trouble to compare

the moral teaching of, say, the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Hindus, Chinese, Greeks and Romans, what will really strike him will be how very like they are to each other and our own

Think what a totally different morality would mean. Think of a country where people were admired for running away in battle, or where a man felt proud of double-crossing all the people who had been kindest to him. You might just as well try to imagine a country where 2 plus 2 equals 5.²⁰

All human beings share common biological and psychological characteristics and functions. It therefore stands to reason that people share a common moral sense.²¹

One study of children of different cultures brought the researchers to this conclusion: "There are some things that young children regard as wrong whether they are middle-class residents of Hyde Park, Illinois, or Hindus living in the Indian village of Bhubaneswar. These include breaking a promise, stealing flowers, kicking a harmless animal, and destroying another's property."²²

In a better world, moral truth would be mediated by religious bodies and the ethical systems of conscientious people everywhere. Yet at the same time, true love—living for the sake of others—is greater than all partial apprehensions and "isms." True love is the common human currency, sensed and responded to everywhere in the world. It is not necessary to agree on every point of belief when all hands are desperately needed on deck to do the work of love—assist the poor, raise up the abandoned and lost, minister to the helpless and weak, heal those who are hurting and support those whose strength is flagging. The imperative of love urges all people to work together to help.

The Body of a Peaceful World

The “body” of a peaceful society that complements the “mind” of religious and moral values is well-expressed by the motto that Reverend Moon often used to characterize the life of a person of true love: “to go forth with the heart of the Father, in the shoes of the servant.” This is yet another way to speak of the unified mind and body of the peacemaker. The “heart of the Father” refers to the focus of the mind on spiritual and moral truth. The “shoes of a servant” characterizes his actions. Religion and conscience connect us to truth and goodness that is naturally embodied in a life of active service.

Guided by such universal values, individuals, the families they comprise and the society they create would naturally practice the altruistic ethic of living for the sake of others. They would see all people as members of the same human family entitled to equal regard and good treatment. They would want to share with their less fortunate siblings. Their answer to Cain’s self-serving question, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” would be a self-giving, world-resounding, “Yes!”

Distribution of Blessings

Service is the natural way we pass on the good we have received—and how God distributes His blessings. The Bible states, “Every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required” (Luke 12.48). Those who have can share their abundance with those who have not, as was elaborated in the discussion of Cain and Abel, above. This understanding of justice is transparent even to children, who are quick to shout “that’s not fair!” if their sibling has an advantage that he is not sharing. Thus, withheld blessings are related to the issue of inequality—at least perceived inequality—that spawns many conflicts. Inequality of wealth, freedom and opportunity is what fueled the socialist experiments of the 20th century. Today new approaches are being sought. For this reason Reverend Moon

has encouraged efforts to enhance food production in undeveloped nations and to share educational opportunities and the technology to generate wealth. Reverend Moon has said,

We can never have world peace until those nations which have been blessed with material and technological advantages willingly share them with the other nations of the world. The blessings of science and technology are meant for all humankind, and they should be shared. Every nation should have an equal chance to utilize technology for the people's well being Otherwise, the advanced nations will be resented and hated by those who are deprived.²³

God cannot bear to witness some of His children enjoying affluence and comfort while many others languish in poverty and misery.

Christian scripture refers to the example of Jesus, who shared his spiritual abundance with those who had little—"though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich." It then goes on to this exhortation to a group of materially blessed believers:

That as a matter of equality your abundance at the present time should supply their want, so that their abundance may supply your want, that there may be equality. As it is written, "He who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little had no lack (2 Corinthians 8. 9, 13-15).

This theme of equalization of resources is likewise echoed in the Qur'an. After an exhortation to be kind to kin and neighbors, strangers and servants alike, it says, "God loves not the proud and boastful such as are selfish" and who would "conceal the bounty that God has given them" (4.36-37).²⁴

When the blessed person gives to one in need and the latter receives and even returns blessing to the former, then of course, the differentiation between them has less and less meaning. They

experience the equality of blessing. A great deal of conflict is thus preempted or resolved. The example of the Allies' treatment of the Axis powers has already been noted. By sharing economic, political and other assets, the vanquished and destitute countries were indeed able to join the community of nations as peers in a short time. Thus peacemaking involves the consideration of equalizing assets, opportunities and other blessings.

The Power of Service

Benevolent giving directly confronts misdirected love—love that is directed too strongly toward oneself or one's own rather than outward toward others and their interests. In breaking through the walls of self-preoccupation that encase people's (and nations') hearts, service opens up areas where unselfish love, and hence true happiness, can abide. Service can melt away the resentment, pride, humiliation and desire for vengeance on the parts of those who have less, even as it generates understanding, compassion and humility in the minds and hearts of those who have more. In these ways, service is an indispensable weapon for waging peace.

Peacemaking Impact

Among neighbors, service helps to restore peace when it has been violated. Voluntary giving, either directly to the victim or to benefit the community, is often recommended in restorative justice programs: "A victim may request that the offender undertake community service (a public service of the victim's choice) [or] perform personal service for the victim."²⁵

When we think of warring siblings, the one who rises above taking sides is the parent. The parent is able to mediate and restore bonds of trust and affection. So the one who is able to rise above the "us" versus "them" mentality and offers a hand of assistance is adopting the parent's position and viewpoint (see Chapter 22). Reverend Moon calls this "parentism," the outlook that seeks to embrace and care for both sides of a conflict. In many ethnic conflicts, a third

party can intervene with humble service and demonstrate the Divine Parent's heart, reminding opponents of their common humanity and helping to mend severe breaches of trust among groups.

An example of this occurred at the time of the Hindu and Muslim partitioning of India and Pakistan in 1947. Tensions ran high within India between the remaining Muslim communities and local Hindus. In one village, false rumors had caused the Muslim section of the community to attack the Hindu section, driving the people out and looting and destroying their homes. A service team of Quakers went to work. Through impartially distributing supplies and medical services to all who needed them, they won the trust of both sides in the conflict. Over time, they were able to leverage that trust into persuading the groups to reconcile. The groups worked together to rebuild and repair the damage to the homes. Before the service team went home, the Muslims, the Hindus, and the Christian servers had a worship meeting together to thank God for the reconciliation.²⁶

More recently, a Christian service group in Uganda has been mediating a conflict between two tribes. The Karamojong had raided and destroyed the villages of the Iteso, a tribe they considered rivals. Many people were displaced and killed in the violence. The group helped young Karamojong consider giving up their arms. At the same time, they helped the Iteso rebuild, and provided medical services to encourage the people to return to their villages. They gave seeds to both tribes, encouraging farming and settlement. Because of their impartial assistance, they earned the trust of both sides. When the army threatened a "reprisal" against innocent Karamojong, which would have destabilized the situation, members of the group interceded with the army and prevented the attack.²⁷

Equality and service

Real equality is not measured with weights and rules, as young children do who keep score of how many candies each sibling

receives. Equality is a question of being equally valued and receiving what one truly needs. Parents understand this well. The strong child may need only an occasional reassuring word and assistance in certain moments. The weak child however may need far more attention and care to feel as content as his more resilient sibling. People have different needs, even at different times. The happy child is not the one who receives exactly what her siblings receive, but rather feels cared for as much as the others and receives what she needs when she needs it, or at least her parents' sincere desire to give it even if it cannot be procured.

This last point perhaps illuminates the issue of equality and how it is best attained—even among groups and nations. It is the heart behind the service that can be more important than the service itself. To be sure, favored peoples ought to voluntarily share what they have with those who lack. But more than this, the recipients look for a heart of compassion and respect. For the less-favored, empathy with their suffering and recognition of being of like value is precious. This is the way to true equality, to be respected as fellow human beings with all the dignity of possessing a heart, conscience and spiritual nature.

Reverend Moon has elaborated on the proper heart of the blessed group or nation towards the less fortunate ones:

When making offerings to those unfortunates who have shed many tears, you should also shed many tears for them; not standing in the position of authority and power Otherwise, rebellion and discontent would increase. Who should shed tears, first? It is the donor, not the recipient. That is a parental position. That is why the donor should offer aid with tears.

Given the fallen nature of selfishness, the automatic generosity of the blessed can hardly be counted on. This is why religion exhorts believers to feel connected to the poor and suffering and to understand how the Creator is depending upon them to distribute His grace to others. It is also why until the “haves” heed the dictates of their faith or their conscience and adequately care for the

“have-nots” in their midst, governments continue to have a role to play in caring for the downtrodden, however imperfectly that role is performed. Yet benevolence by foreign aid, domestic welfare and other political approaches will always be a clumsy and ultimately ineffectual substitute for the essential work of heart-to-heart giving by people on the ground, sensing the needs of those requiring help and meeting them in situation-specific, person-specific ways, as a family does. Only this kind of service can ease resentments, foster healing, and bring reconciliation of heart among members of the great human family.

Equality of contribution and participation

Equality of value is inextricably linked to the opportunity to contribute and participate with others as equals. This helps explain an inherent problem in the concept of service. A simple gesture of charity can reinforce a sense of inferiority on the part of the recipient. This is the negative impact for many in receiving government assistance—it denies the dignity of being an equal citizen. The disturbing sense of indebtedness, of being unable to give in return, highlights another aspect of equality. Equality includes the opportunity to not only receive but to give, to participate in the social fabric through reciprocation. In other words, people have a real need to be needed, to be useful. This is instinctively understood in many families. When for example the husband’s elderly mother becomes frailer and needs to live with his family, the wife may include her mother-in-law in preparing meals, asking her to do appropriately paced tasks to give the older woman a sense of contribution and thus, participation and equality.

This consideration also sheds light upon why humanitarian efforts with the most long-lasting influence—and most effective peacemaking impact—may be those that have as their goal to empower their recipients and assist them in helping themselves. This is characterized in the well-known expression, “Give a man a fish and he is fed for a day; teach a man to fish and he is fed for a life-

time.” Illustrations of this kind of service abound. Heifer International provides poverty-stricken families with precious livestock and training in animal husbandry that can make them self-reliant. The gift comes with the stipulation that recipients are to spread the opportunity by passing on one of their animals’ female offspring to a neighbor and also their practical knowledge. Thus the recipient of blessing becomes an instrument of blessing to another.²⁸

Other organizations, such as the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, specialize in providing small business loans to would-be entrepreneurs in developing nations, especially impoverished mothers. To help applicants qualify for the loans—generally as little as fifty to one hundred dollars, but representing a fortune to the recipients—mentors help them draw up business plans to ensure the viability of their enterprises and their capacity to repay the loans. Successes in these small businesses lead to manifold benefits for their owners as well as their villages and the entrepreneurs preserve the dignity of having accomplished it themselves.²⁹

Service Close to Home

Though national and international service efforts to promote peace and harmony can be dramatic and deserving of special recognition, the most essential work is always in the interpersonal arena, one on one, person-to-person, heart-to-heart. Of this, the most potent and lasting peacemaking is in the intimate realm of close friendships and family relationships.

To make friends with one who used to be regarded as an enemy is to destroy the enemy and decimate the borders that divide us. We have already discussed how the recipients of service may be drawn towards friendship by the benevolent mediator. But a similar effect can work in the other direction too. Those serving may experience deep bonds of connection and affection being forged even as they tend to the needs of another. This is most meaningful when the servers are those who were prejudiced against one another. “I cringed when I heard the spoiled rich kids from the university were

going to be there too," a young woman remembers of the time she and her other teenage co-workers at the home supply store had volunteered to repair the town animal shelter one Saturday. "My friends and I always made fun of them and they didn't hide their disdain of us locals either. At the shelter at first our two groups tried to keep to ourselves, but eventually we had to mix. I got stuck working on the ceiling with a law student, but I was impressed with how hard he worked—he barely stopped for lunch—and his gentle way with even the nastiest dogs. And I think he was surprised with how broad-minded I was. We still keep in touch."

Parenthood is an instrument of bridge-building when couples adopt orphaned children from ethnic groups not their own. This is particularly poignant when the parents raise the children to appreciate their ethnic culture. A striking example of this is in a story attributed to Gandhi. During religious strife in India following the partition, a Hindu man came to Gandhi overcome with guilt for murdering a Muslim boy in retaliation for the Muslims killing his son. He asked how he might atone for his sin. Gandhi gave him a challenging indemnity condition. He told him to adopt an orphaned Muslim child as his own, but that was not all. He was not to raise him as a Hindu—but as the hated enemy, a Muslim.

The most intimate realm of service to one's "enemy" is in marriage. If conjugal love creates the most complete kind of oneness, then taking someone as a spouse from an ethnic group that has current or historical enmity with one's own is the consummate kind of waging peace. Of course the sexes themselves fall into the category of warring factions. But more importantly, the countless gestures of giving between husbands and wives take on added significance when their own extended families or ancestors would have had nothing to do with each other or worse, have bad blood between them. Reverend Moon recommends serving one's spouse as a representative of the spouse's ethnic group and all of man- or womankind. "It makes a difference in my attitude," reports the Russian husband of a Lithuanian wife. "If we have a big disagree-

ment, it motivates me to find a way to work out our differences when I think that our love is knitting together two peoples with a lot distance between them.”

Think globally

This is to say that on the everyday level, living for the sake of an ever-expanding network of others may mean to “act locally but think globally.” One is to serve one’s neighbors as if they symbolized the entire global family. Even small gestures become deeply meaningful when they are done with such a heart. Every act of benevolence, every gesture of mindful service contributes ultimately to a culture of peace, especially when done with a universal consciousness. This is implied in the Jewish saying, “He who saves one life saves the world entire.”

Giving helps to save oneself as well. Those who do volunteer work testify to the deep satisfaction they feel. Just as the caring for loved ones in the family is often a calming joy, so too many volunteers testify to how service to strangers is a healing balm for their personal worries and a grounding balance to the rest of their lives. Adults notice that even troubled children change for the better when they take on helping roles in the community.³⁰ Service brings inner peace.

True Service

We have seen how service has the power to both prevent and heal conflict. It is a proactive way of loving others before they can become enemies, and it helps heal the rifts, divisions, and inequities that exist between enemies. Service is of such clear importance and effectiveness that many might think service alone is the answer to the world’s problems. However, there is a caveat. Just as love in itself—without ethical boundaries—is not necessarily good, so altruistic service by itself—without truth to guide it—is of questionable value. History is replete with examples of individuals giving them-

selves sacrificially to misguided and unworthy ends. Fascism is a recent example. The Nazi Youth of Germany zealously served their national ideal. Yet they demonstrated that when service stops short with oneself or one's own, it ceases to be wholesome.

Hence, just as the body must be led by the mind, benevolent giving must be guided by truth that is grounded in a God-affirming vision of giving that can transcend all man-made boundaries. Again, this is why the great religious traditions are indispensable to world peace, why the "body" of service needs to be guided by the "mind" of moral and spiritual truth.

The way of peace, illuminated by unselfish love, melts boundaries and engenders harmony. "What educational material will God use in teaching people the realization of peace on earth?" Reverend Moon asks. "He will use love."³¹ If love is to teach us how to build a peaceful world, then in turn we are wise to continue to engage in the education that advances our understanding and practice of true love.

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