

The True Meaning of Marriage

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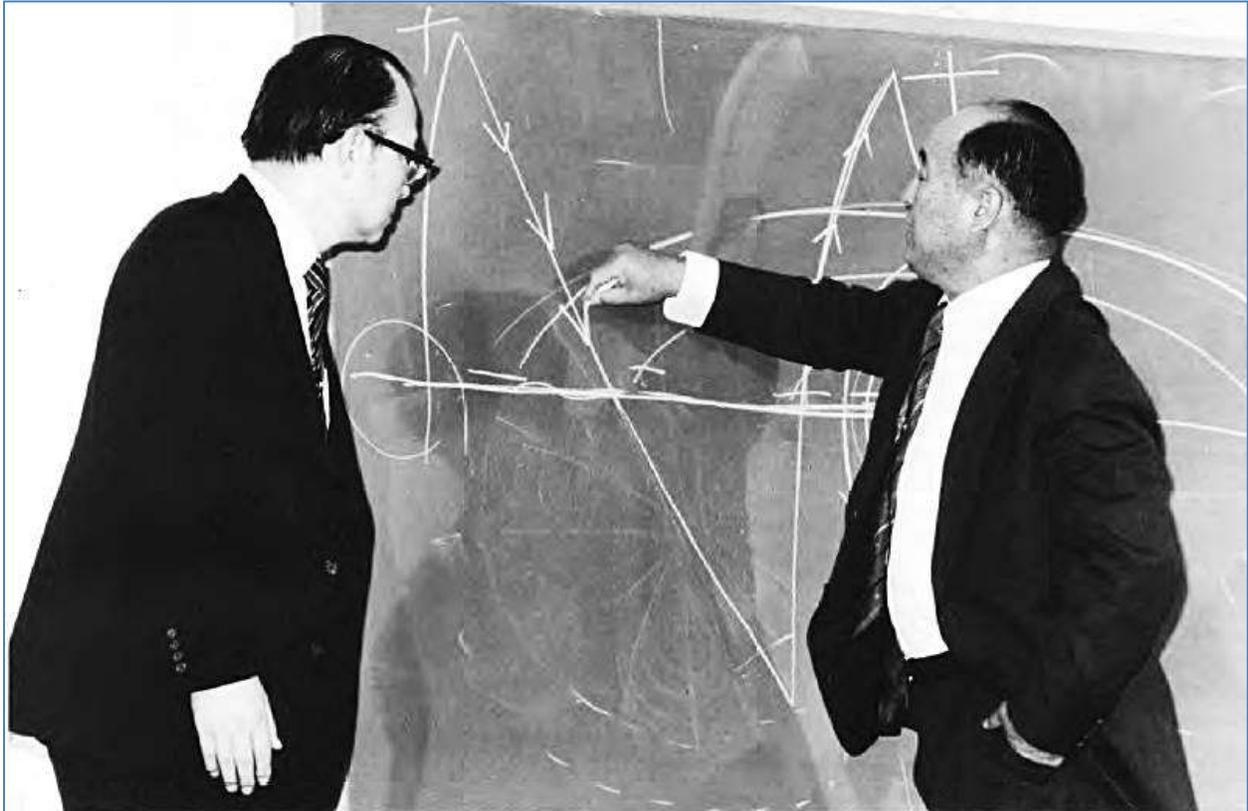


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International and intercultural marriages are the quickest way to bring about an ideal world of peace. Things that would take seemingly forever can be accomplished like miracles through these types of marriages in just two or three generations. People should marry across national and cultural boundaries with people from countries they consider to be their enemies so that the world of peace can come that much more quickly. A person may hate people from a certain country or culture and think he never wants to set eyes on them. But if someone from that country becomes his spouse, then the person is halfway to becoming a person of the new country. All the hatred melts away. If this is repeated for two or three generations, the roots of hatred can be eliminated.

White and black people will marry each other; Japanese will marry Koreans and people from Africa. Many millions are entering into such international and intercultural marriages. A completely new lineage is being created as a result. A new kind of human being that transcends white, black, and yellow is being born. I am not just referring to marriages across international boundaries. The same is true for marrying people from other religions or denominations. In fact, marriages between people of different religions are even more difficult than international marriages. Even if two religious groups have been fighting each other for centuries, it is possible to bring harmony between them by having their followers marry each other. In such a marriage, one spouse will not close himself off from the other just because she was raised in a different tradition.

It is most important to teach young people about the sanctity and value of marriage. Korea today has one of the lowest birthrates in the world. Not to have children is dangerous. There is no future for a country that has no descendants. I teach young people that they should remain sexually pure during their youth, receive the marriage Blessing, and then have at least three children. Children are blessings given to us by God. When we bear children and raise them, we are raising citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. That is why it is a great sin to live immorally and to abort babies conceived in this lifestyle.

We marry not for ourselves but for the sake of our partners. When looking for a spouse, it is wrong to look only for a beautiful person or for a person living well. Human beings must live for the sake of each other. We should apply this principle to marriage, too. No matter how uneducated or homely your prospective spouse may be, you should marry with a heart that you will love him or her even more than if the spouse were educated and beautiful. God's love is the most precious of all blessings. In marriage, we receive that blessing of love and put it into practice in our own lives. We must understand this precious meaning of marriage, conduct our lives in marriage in the context of true love, and bring about true families.

World peace is not such a huge undertaking. It takes peaceful families to create peaceful societies and eliminate conflict among countries. This will lead to world peace. This shows the importance of families that are intact and the immense responsibility such families must bear. The thinking that says "It's enough that I live well and that my family lives well" is completely alien to me.

Marriage is not something that involves just the bride and groom. Marriage creates a relationship between two families, and it brings reconciliation between clans and countries. Each accepts the other's different culture and overcomes the resentment and hatred built up through history. When a Korean and Japanese marry, it contributes to reconciliation between the two countries; when a white person and a black person marry, it contributes to reconciliation between the two races. The children of such marriages represent harmony because they inherit the lineage of two races. They represent a new beginning for humanity that transcends the races. When this continues for a few generations, division and hostility among nations, races, and religions will disappear, and humankind will become one family living in a world of peace.

In recent years, more and more Koreans are marrying foreigners, and we see more families with people from different nationalities and religions. Koreans have even coined a phrase for it that means multicultural families. It is not easy for a man and woman who have been raised in different cultures to create a family and live with love for each other. Particularly in Korea, which traditionally has had a homogeneous culture, the partners in such marriages need to make extra effort to understand and care for each other. The reason our members who enter into international and intercultural marriages succeed is because they live together centering on God.