

II Shim Study Topic #1

1. Our family pledges to seek our original homeland and establish the original ideal of creation, the Kingdom of God on Earth and in Heaven, by centering on true love.

Before we begin anything in life, we should clarify our purpose. Once our aim is true, then everything we do contributes to our ultimate success. The Family Pledge thus begins with a statement of purpose and commitment: to live in the service of God's Kingdom. The Family Pledge should be seen in the tradition of great public prayers that define the essence of faith. Indeed, its opening words bear a striking resemblance to the words of the Lord's Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Jesus himself came preaching the Kingdom of God. (Mark 1:15) He taught his followers, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33) and promised God's abundant happiness and prosperity in return. With this opening clause of the Family Pledge, we commit ourselves and our families to becoming partners with True Parents in establishing God's Kingdom.

What constitutes a family? The Korean word *kajông*, "family" means far more than just a father, mother and children. (This is described in detail in the third point of the Pledge.) *Kajông* embraces seven elements associated in the meaning of family, the first of which is, of course, the people. Ideally, three generations should live together in harmony. The house, which is home to the family, is also part of the family. It should be clean and have True Parents picture displayed to ensure a good spiritual atmosphere. The house needs an area to welcome guests, however small, it allows the home to fulfill its public purpose. The third element of the family is the property of the family. Today most Americans don't cultivate crops, but devote efforts to business activities and reap money as the fruit of labor. Dedicating our family means also offering "first fruits" through tithing. When we dedicate the first ten-percent of our earnings, God accepts it as if we had dedicated the whole. The fourth element of the family is pets, animals and garden. Pets and living things we care for teach responsibility and parental love. By sharing these together with friends we can enhance bonds of friendship and love with our neighbors. Turning from earth to heaven, the fifth element in the family is God. The true family is the crowning glory of billions of years of His work of creation and dispensation of restoration. God is a veritable family member, and those families that center on God will have the quality of permanence and ability to weather storms of difficulties that families face. We need to acknowledge God through prayer and devotion to His work in our community. Angels and ancestors are the other participants in our family. The family extends vertically through the generations; seven generations exert direct spiritual influence. Angels are destined to be our object partners in fulfilling the will of God. They need our direction; therefore

we should verbally call and command them. Angels and good spirits provide a great source of power and wisdom. They are constantly filling our life with inspiration and guiding our steps to accomplish great things. We should acknowledge their help with gratitude.

The family is thus a community encompassing heaven, people and the earth. These three dimensions are intertwined in our lives. Our family is to be a small Eden or "original homeland" in which the Three Great Blessings are realized: perfection of individual character as each family member grows through the Four Great Realms of Heart and becomes on with God, multiplication through three generations of grandparents, parents and children, and dominion over the creation including both the physical and spirit worlds. Though this goal may seem awesome and way beyond our present capacity, we pledge it before God, assuring Him of our unchanging commitment to His divine will for the family.

The heart of pledging before God has always been a part of the True Parents' tradition—it is the pinnacle of prayer. Though we may have many personal burdens to share with God in prayer, and petitions we need fulfilled, in the end, the words God wants to hear most are words of pledge uttered with a sincere heart and with hands ready to carry it out. When True Father was imprisoned in North Korea he pledged to maintain his faith and determination through any suffering:

I never prayed from weakness. I never complained. 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 knows me so well. He already knows my suffering. How could I tell Him about it and cause His heart to grieve still more? I could only tell Him that I would never be defeated by my suffering. [A Prophet Speaks Today, 1975]

Our family is to fulfill the pledge by *centering on true love*. This means our family pledges to live by true love as the way to accomplish the contents of the Pledge. The words "centering on" imply a three-dimensional relationship of individuals as they relate with each other horizontally and with a higher center vertically. God is the vertical center. Only God, the Source of love, can endow a family with true love. True love is living for the sake of others. In true love we invest ourselves totally for the welfare and happiness of our beloved. True love is patient and bears all things in hope. True love is unchanging, regardless of circumstances. True love is public; it does not stop with those who love us but embraces even the "enemy". True love is courageous. It calls us to do whatever is necessary to save the lost people of the world.

The first clause of the Family Pledge is a declaration and determination to live centering on true love and establish the Kingdom of God, our original homeland.

Reading Assignment: Exposition of the Divine Principle, Purpose of Creation 3.2, "Good Object Partners for the Joy of God"; on Tithing, *Genesis 14: 18-20; 35:7; Luke 21: 1-4*; on True Love, *I Corinthians 13; Matthew 5: 43-48*

II Shim Study Topic #2

1. Our family pledges to represent and become central to Heaven and Earth by attending God and True Parents; we will perfect the dutiful way of filial piety in our family, patriotism in our nation, saints in the world, and divine sons and daughters in Heaven and Earth, by centering on true love.

The second clause of the Family Pledge describes the vertical axis of love. Usually, people think of love as personal relationships, considering only the horizontal aspect of love. But, true love must be founded upon the vertical axis of our relationship with God and our individual responsibility to perfect our character. Once our love connects with God's vertical love, we have the foundation to properly relate with others in true love.

How can we establish the vertical axis of our love? The words *by attending God and True Parents* describe the way we connect to God, through our dedication to Him and His will. The words *to represent and become central to Heaven and Earth* show us the way to ground the vertical axis, through taking responsibility for ourselves and our circumstances. This means that our family pledges to stand firm and fulfill our public responsibility in God's providence, regardless of what anyone else does or does not do. A central family takes responsibility to act upon the will of God as their conscience dictates.

This second clause sketches the vertical axis of love in another way, by defining an ascending ladder of public love. The base of the ladder is the *dutiful way of filial piety* where sons and daughters serve their parents faithfully and without complaint, honoring the family above themselves. The patriot extends such love to the nation, exhibiting the civic virtue of living for the sake of others. Higher still is the saint, who embraces even the enemy through his devotion to God. The highest rung of the ladder of public love is where *divine sons and daughters in Heaven and Earth* serve the entire physical and spiritual realms by attending the heart of God through establishing His kingdom. By establishing the vertical axis of love, our love and life come to resemble God's love and life.

Attendance (*moshio*) is the basic attitude of faith. The word *moshio* comes from the ethic of chivalry in the royal court of loyalty and service to the king. One who attends the king and dedicates himself to the welfare of the king obeys and serves without complaint. The king's concerns are his concerns, the king's welfare his welfare, the king's suffering his suffering. The king can rely upon him to carry out any responsibility and loves such an attendant as his son or daughter. He becomes the king's second self.

The family which represents (*taep'yo*) the cosmos and the family which is central (*jungshim*) to the cosmos illustrate two different ways the attitude of taking responsibility for one's circumstances. The Divine Principle teaches that I as an individual should take responsibility not only for myself but for every problem in my family, community, nation, and world.

I must take up the cross of history and accept responsibility to complete its calling. To this end, I must fulfill ...all the unaccomplished missions of past prophets and saints who were called in their time to carry the cross of restoration. [Restoration, section 3]

This is the meaning of the term "central figure" in the Divine Principle; someone who takes responsibility for God's will and the advancement of the Providence. Standing as an object partner before God, we represent others in accomplishing His will. In such a way, a few hundred church members may be referred to as "America", although this nation is actually comprised of more than 200 million people. Seen from the horizontal viewpoint, we are central to the welfare of all those in our domain—we are the connection to God's blessing. The spiritual welfare of others depends upon us. Understanding this, we should also regard those in central roles of responsibility above us as a precious lifeline of connectedness and source of blessing from God.

The vertical ladder of love mentioned earlier begins with *perfecting the dutiful way of filial piety*. The ethical principle of dedication in obedience and love to one's parents is the same principle as that of the patriot as applied to the nation and in all four levels of public love. In the parent-child relationship we learn the essence of every level of love. This is why it is written in the Ten Commandments, "Honor your father and your mother that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth." (Exodus 20:12) This is the only commandment accompanied by a promise. As we regard our parents, we will likewise regard our spouse, our employers, and teachers in life. Our parents embody the family, live to support the family, and are ever concerned for its welfare. Therefore, when you serve your parents, you are serving the whole purpose.

The society and the nation are the greater wholes immediately above the family. Families have a civic duty to contribute to the welfare of the community. The prosperity of the community depends directly upon family involvement. The Bible indicates that the rise and fall of a nation depends on righteousness of those set apart as His people (2 Chronicles 7: 14). True Father's emphasis in most of His speeches is the way of "living for the sake of others". True love is so much more than a private horizontal relationship centered on individual desire. This is a key realization in understanding the Principle.

Reading Assignment: Exposition of the Divine Principle, Restoration, section 3, *The History of the Providence of Restoration and I*, page 187; *The Ten Commandments*, Exodus 20:1-17; 2 Chronicles 7:14

II Shim Study Topic #3

1. Our family pledges to perfect the Four Great Realms of Heart, the Three Great Kingships, and the Realm of the Royal Family, by centering on true love.

The third clause of the Family Pledge describes the family as the school of love. Through the relationships in our family we learn how to love. From birth, we learn the basics of love with our mother and father, brothers and sisters. Then we leave our parents' home, marry and cultivate love through the relationships with our spouse and children in our new family. All other relationships in our lives are patterned after these primary relationships.

Four types of love arise in the family: children's love, fraternal love, conjugal love and parent's love. Each type of love has its own distinctive qualities and purposes. Each realm is like a class teaching a specific course of lessons. Each stimulates a particular quality of human love appropriate to that class. A corresponding quality of divine love becomes available to us as we progress through our class lessons. As we pass through each realm of heart, our hearts grow in their ability to receive and give love horizontally and we receive a more profound quality of divine love vertically. As family members love each other within one realm of heart, they help each other grow to the point when they can graduate to the next realm.

The Four Realms of Heart, corresponding to the four types of love, follow each other in chronological succession like grades in a school. We ascend from one realm to the next when our love reaches the standard required for entry into the higher realm. Thus it is not appropriate to enter into the realm of conjugal love before its time, before love for brothers and sisters has matured. However, each realm also includes the realm below it; no matter how accomplished we become, we always remain the children of our parents and children's love remains.

Children's love begins from the unconditional love of parents. Children respond to the warmth and nurturing atmosphere of parents' love; both embracing love and love that disciplines are included in that love. Children's love develops from open receptivity to wanting to please the parents. This is the beginning of filial piety. Children naturally offer love and respect expressed as obedience, gratitude and trust. Do's and Don'ts become internalized through imitation. This fosters the development of the conscience, an "inner parent". Throughout our lives we develop children's love through attendance not only to our earthly parents, but our heavenly Parent as well.

Brother and sister love is also learned from the parents; we love our brothers and sisters because our parents first loved them. When brothers and sisters are

viewed through the parents perspective, we must love them. Loving brothers and sisters is loving the parent and that love deepens and broadens as we relate with people of every sort of personality. Children learn empathy, caring, sharing, tolerance and cooperation. Ideally they learn not to be insecure or grasping in love, but to give out of an abundance of love. These qualities of love, cultivated through many mutual relationships, make the foundation for a harmonious and successful marriage.

In the heart realm of brother and sister love, children are not meant to manifest sexual love. Society does a grave disservice to them by exposing them to sexually explicit music, television, and placing them under intense social pressure to become sexually active as young adults. Young adults should be like closed buds, preserving the fragrance of sexual love deep within the core of their being. Meanwhile, education at home and at school deepen their soul and broaden their minds in preparation to meet ideal love one day. Sexual purity, abstinence before marriage and fidelity in marriage, is not only God's commandment to each of us to protect lineage, it is also the greatest gift of love to our spouse and the basis necessary for true conjugal love.

Conjugal love is meant to follow upon the perfection of the children's and brother-and-sister realms of heart. Through the fulfillment of these stages we come to respect our parents, feel responsible to help our parents, and want them to be proud of us. Ultimately, we long to reach God, our divine Parent. Therefore, a relationship as a couple should never form without God's approval, through the church, and their parents approval. Genuine conjugal love includes the desire for the relationship with the beloved to bring joy to their parents and be solemnized in a holy ceremony to receive God's Blessing.

Sexual fulfillment is an essential dimension of happiness, its proper expression occurs **only** in the conjugal love between husband and wife. God created human beings in two kinds and ordained that they become one as husband and wife. Jesus said: "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matthew 19: 4-6) True marriage is a unity of soul and body, but first the husband and wife should understand the principles of God for marriage and prepare for the challenges it will surely bring.

In married love all levels of love develop, and through the birth of children husband and wife share in God's creativity and parental responsibility. Just as God pours His love into the married couple, so they now pour their love and effort into raising the child. The experience makes possible a deep communion between the parents and the Heavenly Parent. In raising children parents learn

to be sacrificial, generous, patient, and forgiving. Parents give and forget what they have given. Parents want children to be smart, attractive, strong, clever, brave and prosperous, but most of all children should be connected to God in heart and manifesting true love. These are key to happiness. The happiness of the married couple grows through the common victories they create together with God's help to fulfill their responsibilities.

In addition to fulfilling the Four Great Realms Of Heart, the Family Pledge calls us to fulfill the *Three Great Kingships*. No worldly honor can compare with the glory of a person who has graduated from the Four Great Realms of Heart and reached the highest level of spiritual maturity. Such a person has divine character, is one with God and reigns with Him as a true parent, true teacher and true owner. Worldly concepts of kingship are conventionally defined by power, such as military power or sovereignty. God's ideal of kingship is the perfection of true love encompassing nobility, the authority of truth, respect and good government through public-mindedness.

When the tradition of victory in achieving the Four Great Realms of Heart has been passed down through three generations, that family is said to have achieved the stature of being a Royal Family of True Love. *Three Great Kingships* refer to three consecutive generations of heavenly tradition. Three generations are necessary to establish a solid tradition that can overcome the wrong habits which we have inherited from the fall. Grandparents are kings and queens of the past, representing the past, spirit world and God. Having pioneered the way of love, they own a treasure-store of wisdom and experience. Parents are the kings and queens representing the present, carrying the burdens and blessings of spiritual and practical leadership in the family and community. Children represent the future. As princes and princesses they are being trained to assume kingship by perfecting the Four Great Realms Of Heart.

The Realm of the Royal Family in the Pledge is the *hwang jok kwan*. *Hwang* is Korean for 'emperor' or 'king of kings'. All blessed families, engrafted into the True Parents are members of the imperial clan. We enter the Realm of the Royal Family by deeply engrafting our families to the True Family. As more families receive the Blessing and live heavenly tradition, the Realm of the Royal Family will grow and grow until it encompasses the entire earth. Just entering the Realm of the Royal Family is not perfecting it; but as we take a growing responsibility for all of humanity and history we will realize a pattern of kingship of tribal messiahs connecting to the True Parents as king of kings and head of the one family of humanity.

Reading Assignment: Exposition of the Divine Principle, Creation, section 2.3.4 page 30-31 top (Conjugal love fulfilling the purpose of Creation); *Fall*, section 3.2 and 3.3 (The Why? Aspect of Sexual Purity); Matthew 6:23-24 and Matthew 6:12 (God Requires the Fulfillment of Brother-Sister Love)

II Shim Study Topic #4

1. Our family pledges to build the universal family encompassing Heaven and Earth, which is God's ideal of creation, and perfect the world of freedom, peace, unity and happiness, by centering on true love.

Families living in true love centered on God will naturally participate in forming the global family of humankind.

Reading Assignment: Exposition of the Divine Principle, Creation, section 2.3.4 page 30-31 top (Conjugal love fulfilling the purpose of Creation); *Fall*, section 3.2 and 3.3 (The Why? Aspect of Sexual Purity); Matthew 6:23-24 and Matthew 6:12 (God Requires the Fulfillment of Brother-Sister Love)

1. Compare the family to an actual school. For example: the family is focussed on nurturing the development of the Four Realms of Heart, the school on education of the mind and character. In what ways are they similar, in what ways are they different? (List at least five other comparisons.)
2. Why would it be important to you that your future spouse practices purity before marriage and fidelity in marriage? (List at least five reasons.)
3. Suppose someone were actually, morally, and legally guilty of wronging you. It would seem to any passer-by that you had a legitimate reason to hate the person and/or take revenge. Would God endorse a plan to do that? Why or why not?