

Unificationist Simon Cooper Discusses Fatherhood on British Television

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Simon Cooper holds a picture of his four sons and to his left, his wife Chieko holds his daughter.

Simon Cooper, head of London's Unificationist congregation, was featured on 4thought, a daily religious, moral and ethical opinion show on Britain's Channel 4, on July 19, 2012.

According to 4thought.tv, the show is on every day of the year, after the news: "Every week we explore a theme, such as whether it's wrong to want to be rich, if faith schools should be banned, or whether God chooses sides in war."

The 4thought.tv site continues: "We showcase seven different views or perspectives, in order to stimulate a discussion. We hear from the devoutly religious, like Ann Peoples and leaders like Rabbi Johnathan Romain, to atheists like Stephen K. Amos, converts like Mohammed Payne, as well as the holders of more challenging views like Stephen Green, and representatives of non-traditional lifestyles like Clair Lewis, plus politicians and other celebrities.

"Most of the great religions believe that they are led by an all-powerful and unambiguously male figure, and most traditional faiths teach that it is the father who must take the lead in the spiritual and moral guidance of the family. But an increasing number of children are now being raised with no father figure in the family home and scientific advances seem destined to make fathers superfluous even to the creation of children. This week 4thought.tv asks, 'What does fatherhood really mean?'"

Cooper, a first-generation Unificationist who was matched and Blessed in marriage to his wife Chieko by Rev. Sun Myung Moon in 1995, was one of the seven subject experts featured on the show. Rev. Cooper spoke about his perspective on fatherhood and his own father-son relationship.

"Through my life, I want to understand God's love in a deeper and deeper way," Cooper said on camera. "One of the ways I can really experience that is through becoming a father. My name is Simon Cooper; I'm here with my wife Chieko and my little girl, Amy. We also have four boys who are in school. I am a pastor in the Unification Movement in London and our family is part of the Unification Movement. We believe that the father plays a really important role in the family.

"When Chieko and I got married in Seoul, Korea, there were 10,000 couples in a very big Olympic stadium; there was a very big atmosphere. But at the same time, for her and myself, it was a very intimate experience. It didn't go down too well with my family or even some of my friends, but it was especially difficult with my father. He's an atheist, so my faith and religion didn't make too much sense for him. He was quite concerned about it. My father decided to take me out of the will, and that hurt a lot. Of course, he did it because he felt hurt.

"After I became a father and I started to think, 'Where do I learn to be a father from?' I realized how important that relationship with my dad was. Somehow, we've rediscovered our father-son relationship. I realized how crucial it is, as a father, for me to have a good relationship with my father, and how much it informs my parenting and so much of what I do with my little boys and little girl."

To watch the video, visit www.4thought.tv/themes/what-does-fatherhood-really-mean/simon-cooper?autoplay=true