

Old Habits - A personal reflection on becoming an individual of Cheon Il Guk

Christian Nseka

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I am very grateful to God, our Heavenly Parents, and the True Parents for establishing the Foundation Day. Shortly after the establishment of the Foundation Day, our True Mother asked us to offer a twenty-one-day Jeong Seong condition. This condition was about us, as individuals as well as families, being grateful everyday. For twenty-one days, we had to find something to be grateful about and report it to our Heavenly Parents, True Parents, and our loved ones. How many of us truly understood the purpose of this condition?

Of course, there are different levels of understanding as we are all, more likely, at different spiritual levels. I am not implying that one person's understanding is better than the other's, but that each other's understanding should help us transform ourselves, change our lives, and change the way we deal with life's challenges.

During the condition, my understanding was that True Mother wanted us to think about our Heavenly Parents everyday. She wanted us to keep our Heavenly Parents present in our mind every second of every minute of every hour we spent. This means that she wanted us to think about God, our Heavenly Parents, more and more. She gave us the opportunity to put the Heavenly Parents as the Center of our lives regardless of what happened through the course of the day. So at the end of the day, regardless of what happened, regardless of our disappointments, we could find one thing for which to be grateful. And that is what we shared in the presence of our loved ones. Now, what happened when the condition ended?

It has become as if a tradition that we quickly fall back on to our old habits after we have finished a Jeong Seong condition. This time is definitely no different. How many of us have continued to express our gratitude after the Jeong Seong condition ended? I, myself, am no exception. Just a few days after finishing the twenty-on-day gratitude Jeong Seong condition, I found myself overcome by ungratefulness. I reverted to focusing on what I wanted to happen that did not happen, what I wanted to have but did not have, what I wanted to do but did not do, what I wanted my wife to do but did not do, what I wanted my kids to do but did not, etc. All this was happening a few days after having finished the gratitude condition. Then it hit me: "Should I not continue to be grateful for what I have instead of focusing more on what I do not have?" Then I quickly realized another level of understanding the meaning of the gratitude condition. I came to understand that True Mother gave us that condition in this first year of Cheon Il Guk because she wants us to develop our messiahship. Can you imagine the life that Jesus lived?

Jesus was surrounded by individuals who did not understand his heart. Besides that, those who were prepared to receive him were the ones who adamantly rejected him. Can you imagine how painful that was to Jesus? Jesus could have started to think, "Why did God give me such individuals as disciples? They don't even know the scriptures. How can I establish God's Kingdom with such ignorant followers?" Jesus did certainly **not** think this way. He instead was grateful to God and heaven for allowing him to find some people willing to follow and work with him. Furthermore, he was grateful to his disciples for following him. Even though those prepared by God and heaven did not accept Jesus, he was without a doubt grateful that God and heaven prepared some people to welcome him. And regardless of what happened in his life, Jesus maintained a grateful heart toward God, heaven, and his contemporaries. Imagine what would have happened if Jesus spent his life being ungrateful to God, heaven, his disciples, John the

Baptist, and the rest of his contemporaries?

Now, fast forward two thousand years. Think about True Father's life. Was True Father's life easy? What do you think would have happened if True Father blamed Jesus for conferring the messianic mission to him? Through it all, True Father had to be grateful even when his life was in danger. He had to be grateful even when he was falsely imprisoned. This is the heart of the Messiah. This is what makes the Messiah. True Mother has not been any different.

True Mother's life course has been filled with a lot of chagrins. Yet, she has remained unwaveringly grateful to our Heavenly Parents, True Father, and all of her children—biological as well as members. Furthermore, through her love and faith, she has demonstrated her gratefulness for her responsibilities and mission as the True Mother.

True Mother would not have occupied the position she is occupying right now without being constantly grateful. As the True Mother of Heaven, Earth, and Humankind, she wants us to inherit and nurture the qualities that will help us fulfill our messiahship. Among them is gratitude.

Gratitude, being grateful, is one of the greatest weapons against Satan. I believe that we can do wonders if we develop a consistency in being grateful. We should determine to make this first year of Cheon Il Guk a year during which we solidify our attitude of gratefulness towards heaven. We should be grateful to our Heavenly Parents (God), the True Parents, Jesus, spouse, children, etc. We should strive to create harmony, regardless.

Good luck as you endeavor to become an individual of Cheon Il Guk.