

The Wife of Jesus Seen from the Perspective of Divine Principle

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Jesus and Mary Magdalene by Stephene Adams, 1906. A stained glass window from Kilmore Church, Scotland, depicts Jesus with a possible pregnant Mary Magdalene.

In the same week that Dr. Hak Ja Han, revered by Unificationists the world over as our True Mother, took the lead as the True Parents on earth, Harvard professor Karen King announced the discovery of *The Gospel of Jesus' Wife*, a fragment of an ancient Christian-Gnostic papyrus in which Jesus mentions his wife and defends her before the other disciples as most worthy. Surely, the timing is no accident, but an indication of God's work to elevate and establish True Mother in the minds of Christians and Unificationists as the genuine Lady of the Second Advent. For this, we should give thanks to God.

The traditional Christian belief that Jesus was unmarried promoted a messianic expectation up through the 20th century that the Lord would return as a man. This has impacted our church, because even though we believe in the True Parents, we have mostly regarded that role as encapsulated in the person and work of True Father (Rev. Sun Myung Moon), who came as the Lord of the Second Advent. This Christian concept, moving in the hearts of the lineages of thousands of Unificationists, dovetailed with traditional Korean patriarchy to deemphasize True Mother's role. It created an environment in which True Mother never received the respect, veneration and praise that was afforded True Father. But if Jesus was in fact married, and if his wife was also Jesus' most devoted disciple, as *The Gospel of Jesus' Wife* indicates, then Christians both on earth and in the spirit world need to reassess their views of True Mother. For truly she has been True Father's most devoted disciple and is worthy in every way.

Still, how are we to understand the claim that Jesus was married — most likely to Mary Magdalene? How did the controversy arise among the earliest Christians, with some believing that Jesus was married and others believing he was not? This can be clarified by the Divine Principle, the revelatory theology of the Unification Church.

According to True Father's first Principle text, *Wolli Wonbon* (written in the early 1950s), Jesus was indeed married to Mary Magdalene. It was a conditional marriage, however, because Mary Magdalene also had been sleeping with another man in the Archangel position (Judas Iscariot), who was supposed to give her to Jesus. Mention that Jesus would have to restore Eve in this way is hinted at in *Exposition of the Divine Principle* in the discussion of Abraham and Sarah in Egypt:

Abraham walked this providential course to make a symbolic indemnity condition to restore Adam's family... he was deprived of Sarah, who was playing the role of his sister, by the Pharaoh, who represented Satan. He then had to take her back from Pharaoh as his wife... This course which Abraham walked was the model course for Jesus to walk in his day. (p. 209).

God set up this situation to restore the Fall of Man. God had created Adam and Eve to become husband

and wife, but Lucifer slept with Eve and stole her from Adam. To restore the Fall, this action had to be reversed: an Archangel-type husband would have to give up his wife, representing Eve, to a man in the position of Adam — and do it voluntarily. Thus Pharaoh (the Archangel) was induced to give up Sarah (Eve) to Abraham (Adam).



*The Last Supper by Giampietrino, ca. 1520. Many debate whether Mary Magdalene is the effeminate figure (left) sitting next to Jesus (right) in this painting inspired by Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*.*

In this regard, *Wolli Wonbon* describes a triangular relationship between Jesus, Mary Magdalene and Judas, who were in the positions of Adam, Eve and Archangel:

Jesus tried to set up Judas' wife as the woman in the position of Eve who would fulfill the original purpose of the Will. Mary Magdalene was this woman. Although she was Judas Iscariot's lover, she absolutely obeyed Jesus' will. Thus, as Satan had taken Eve from Adam, Jesus would try to take Judas' wife for himself and thereby fulfill the Will according to the Principle.

Thus, Jesus gave Mary Magdalene to Judas Iscariot, and from that position he began the providence of taking her back to be his wife, in the position of Eve. Once such a fundamental work had begun, Satan mobilized all of his powers through the Pharisees, scribes, etc. and created tremendous opposition to Jesus. Nevertheless, if only Judas had kept absolute faith, obedience and attendance to Jesus, the fundamental foundation for the fulfillment of the Will could have been achieved. However, even he begrudged Jesus' intentions and began acting against Jesus. He sold his master for 30 pieces of silver, a crime unprecedented in human history.

Judas Iscariot's basic problem was that he did not understand God's intention behind Jesus' actions in taking Mary Magdalene, to make a beginning for the fulfillment of God's Will. Hence he acted destructively, conspiring with Jesus' enemies against Jesus. In so doing, he took a direction that was pleasing to Satan. This put Jesus in a situation where he could not avoid the way of the cross, even as he appealed to the disobedient people (pp. 243-244).

For Mary successfully to restore Eve's position and stand as Jesus' wife, she had to convince Judas to offer her voluntarily to Jesus. But she could not prevail upon him to do so; to the contrary he let his jealousy get the better of him. This was Judas' real motive for betraying Jesus, not the paltry sum of 30 pieces of silver. Father has often said that the reason Jesus was crucified was because he could not receive his bride, hinting at this providential failure.

Judas was probably not the only disciple to look askance at Jesus' relationship to Mary Magdalene; likely there were others who took this position. In *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, the disciples Andrew and Peter accused Mary Magdalene of lying about the special teachings Jesus had given her:

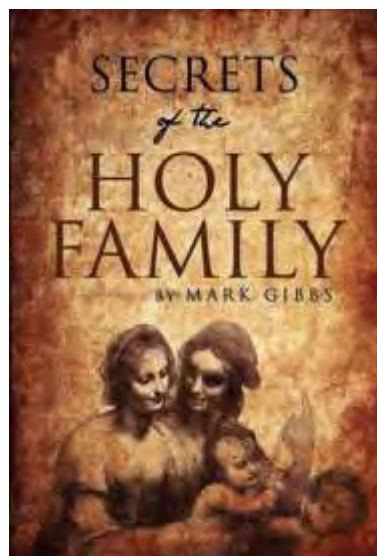
Andrew answered and said to the brethren, "Say what you wish to say about what she has said. I at least do not believe that the Savior said this. For certainly these teachings are strange ideas."

Peter questioned... "Did He really speak privately with a woman and not openly to us? Are we to turn about and all listen to her? Did He prefer her to us?"

Then Mary wept and said to Peter, "My brother Peter, what do you think? Do you think that I have thought this up myself in my heart, or that I am lying about the Savior?"

Levi answered and said to Peter, "Peter you have always been hot tempered. Now I see you contending against the woman like the adversaries. But if the Savior made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her? Surely the Savior knows her very well. That is why He loved her more than us."

In the same vein, True Father in his speeches often praised Mary Magdalene as superior to all the (male) disciples in terms of her faith, love, and devotion to Jesus. That is the reason why, at his resurrection, Mary Magdalene was the first person to see Jesus after he came out of the tomb (John 20:11-18). It was she who announced the resurrection to the other disciples. However, the real poignancy of that scene was that when she went to embrace Jesus, he stopped her. Father said that Jesus could not hold her, because the failure of that conditional providence meant that she could no longer be in the position of Jesus' bride.



The Secrets of the Holy Family by Mark Gibbs. In his book, Gibbs suggests that some painters of the early Renaissance believed that Jesus and Mary were married.

From this, we can understand that there was a period during Jesus' ministry when he and Mary Magdalene were living as husband and wife. Some of the disciples remembered this and founded churches which asserted that Jesus was married. At the same time, from a Principle viewpoint, the marriage could not stand, because Judas failed to restore the Archangel's role and cease the accusation. As a result, Jesus died unmarried, and their conditional relationship never bore fruit to create a true family. It may be argued that, to prevent any confusion on this fundamental point, God led Christianity to an understanding that Jesus never had a wife.

When True Mother and True Father were Blessed, the situations of Jesus' day had to be indemnified. Certainly there are huge differences between Mary Magdalene and True Mother — not least that True Mother was a pure and virginal young woman when she and Father were wed. Nevertheless, like Jesus' would-be wife, True Mother faced and overcame incredible opposition from other church members, thereby indemnifying the disciples' rejection of Mary Magdalene. She received all the accusation aimed at the original Eve and then at Mary, digested it, and restored the wife's position.

Now, on the foundation of her victory, the story of Jesus' wife can be revealed to humankind. Don Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* enjoyed extraordinary popularity because the time has come to rehabilitate Mary Magdalene from obscurity. She was the predecessor of True Mother, and True Mother stands on the foundation of her devotion to Jesus.

Let us take the release of *The Gospel of Jesus' Wife* as an occasion to appreciate True Mother, who took on the burden of this providence and overcame everything. And let us do what Jesus' disciples could not, and recognize True Mother's unparalleled devotion and loving oneness with True Father as making her far greater than any disciple possibly could be.