



## **New Jersey Family Federation for World Peace and Unification**

1231 Van Houten Ave, Clifton, NJ 07013

# **IL SHIM STUDY GUIDE**

Welcome to the IL Shim Preparation Program! As a teenager, you are growing closer to becoming an adult with each passing year. You are entering a time in your life when you are freer to make your own decisions and determine your own destiny. So, what future will you choose? What role will God and True Parents have in your life? How will you balance your personal goals and ambitions with church and parental expectations? How you answer these questions depends upon your level of faith and your personal understanding of your unique position as second generation.

As a child, you were born into the faith tradition of your parents, and you have grown up in your parent's church. As a teenager, however, you have reached a point where you need to define your own faith. You need to sort out what *you* believe and *why* you believe it. This means that you need to take ownership of your faith tradition. Taking ownership means building your own personal relationship with God and True Parents. The IL Shim program is designed to help you begin this process.

As a teenager, you are capable of assuming more responsibility for your life of faith, and you are able to take a greater role in the daily activities of your church. The question is, however, do you want to? Are you trying to rise to a new level of faith, or are you content to stay where you are? Only you control this decision. The IL Shim program is designed to help you recognize your unique potential and support your efforts to grow in both the knowledge and practice of your faith. Through your participation in the IL Shim program, you will be challenged to rise to a new level of faith by putting your faith into practice on a daily basis. By doing this, you will naturally begin to assume a greater ownership and understanding of your position as second-generation.

IL Shim is a Korean term that means "one heart" or "of one heart and mind." This term dates back to when True Father was released from Danbury prison. On that day, Father conducted a ceremony called "IL SEUNG IL" or "Day of One Victory." It was during that ceremony that True Parents declared the beginning of the period of responsibility for the second generation.

Four years later in 1989, True Parents also conducted an "IL Shim" ceremony to proclaim the total unity between Heavenly Father and True Parents and the inheritance of this unity by the children. It was during this ceremony that True Father said that as children who inherit the love and lineage of True Parents through the Blessing, we should all work to completely unite with God and remove ourselves from the influence of Satan. True Parents conducted the first IL Shim Ceremony to recognize and support the responsibility of the True Children to inherit True

Parents' tradition and foundation. In keeping with the spirit of this original ceremony, we have adopted the IL Shim ceremony for the purpose of supporting and educating second generation as to their unique position and responsibility.

The IL Shim preparation program is an opportunity for you to begin the process of growing into a mature life of faith. It provides you with the opportunity to study about the unique value of your lineage and birthright from God and True Parents. It also guides you to a deeper appreciation of your own parents and family by providing an opportunity for you to study together and learn about your parents' life of faith.

Each major faith has a significant ceremony that recognizes and promotes the inheritance of their faith tradition by their children. The IL Shim Ceremony is quite similar to these ceremonies. Through our ceremony we are recognizing that you are maturing and that God seeks to relate to you in a more adult manner. This means that you are entering a stage of life in which you need to take more responsibility for your spiritual growth.

The IL Shim is also a special ritual, which signifies that you have begun to accomplish important conditions of faith and are making a commitment to ideals that are valued by God. The ceremony emphasizes your unique position as a member of the second generation and encourages you to make a commitment to protect that special inheritance. Finally, the IL Shim Ceremony allows you to make a new beginning and a new commitment to God, True Parents, and your own parents and family.

In preparation for this important ceremony, we have designed a special educational program for you. As you go through this preparation period, you will be challenged to look seriously at the Divine Principle and True Parents' words as the foundation for your spiritual life. You will be challenged to examine your own habits and attitudes in contrast to God's Word and Ideal. You will be challenged to make a commitment to practice those traditions that we value within our church and especially to make a personal commitment to an abstinent lifestyle as a precondition to receiving the matching and blessing from True Parents or True Parents' representative.

Throughout this period, there will be certain requirements that you will be asked to fulfill as your portion of responsibility and sign of commitment to God. You will do some of these activities on your own, while others require the involvement of your family and community. You will be encouraged to pray, study, and seek out your own personal relationship with God and True Parents.

Please read through this packet carefully in order to more fully understand what you will be doing over the next several weeks. As you read each section, be sure to identify each responsibility you are to fulfill. Check it with your parents to be sure. Finally, I sincerely hope you will enjoy this study. Coming into a personal relationship with God is the most important and most fulfilling thing you can ever do. Remember that God is seeking you. God is seeking to establish a relationship with you and bestow upon you His love and grace. Coming to know God in such a personal and direct manner is the true objective of this study and the essence of the IL Shim Ceremony. I sincerely pray that as you proceed through this study, that you will discover this God, this Father who loves you.

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## **IL SHIM PLEDGE**

**AS A BLESSED CHILD OF THE SECOND GENERATION,  
I FREELY AND SINCERELY DEDICATE MYSELF TO:**

1. *Love and honor God and True Parents by practicing a life of attendance with absolute love, absolute faith, and absolute obedience.*
2. *Love and honor my parents by maintaining the tradition of our lineage that began with the Matching and Blessing of True Parents and has been passed on to me.*
3. *Love and honor my church and community by giving of myself in service to others and by participating in church activities.*
4. *Love and honor my future spouse, my future children and myself by maintaining sexual purity prior to receiving the Matching and Blessing.*

# IL SHIM CEREMONY REQUIREMENTS

The IL Shim Program is intended primarily for second-generation, seventh graders. However, any teenager is welcome to participate if he or she was not able to complete the program in previous years. Any teen that wishes to participate in the IL Shim Ceremony need only to submit an application and fulfill the requirements listed below. **At Family Camp, we encourage each family to set their own conditions, along with their son or daughter., using these as a guideline.**

The IL Shim requirements are as follows:

1. **One Meal Fast:** Both parents and teen(s) are expected to offer a one-meal fast before coming to the ceremony. This fast may be completed anytime prior to the date of the ceremony. After fulfilling this requirement, the teen needs to bring a signed note from their parents indicating when the fast was done. During this time, we suggest that parents and teens take the time to talk about the fasting experience and discuss why we fast and make conditions in our life of faith.
2. **Two-Day Retreat:** All teens planning to participate are required to participate in a 2-day retreat. The Winter Retreat at the end of the year fulfills this requirement. If you were not able to attend a retreat, please contact your youth pastor or church leader to make alternative arrangements.
3. **Three Service Conditions:** All participants are to fulfill **three, three-hour** special service conditions. The three conditions are:
  - a) Service to the church – our local Clifton church or outreach centers (3 hours)
  - b) Service to our community – the community where you live or your school (3 hours)
  - c) Service to your family – your family or place of residence (3 hours)

The service conditions must be completed prior to the IL Shim Ceremony. When the service is finished, complete the Service Project Form included with this packet and return it to your youth pastor or church leader. The service act must be a significant offering requiring at least **three hours** of concerted effort. These service conditions must be completed in order to participate in the IL Shim Ceremony. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO GET THIS DONE!**

4. **IL Shim Home Study and Special Preparation Classes:** All participants are required to complete the IL Shim Home Study program (see IL Shim Study Topics) and to attend five (5) special IL Shim preparation classes which will be held on Friday or Saturday evenings (see IL Shim Schedule). These classes are in addition to the weekly youth ministry classes. Parents are strongly encouraged to supervise and support their child's effort to complete these study conditions.

5. **Special Prayer Week:** All participants and their families are asked to offer a 7 minute prayer condition together for one week prior to the date of the ceremony. The focus of this prayer condition should be on the four points of the IL Shim Pledge and other providential concerns (i.e. the current providence, True Parents' Family, etc.).
6. **Purity:** Teens who plan to participate in the IL Shim Ceremony must not be involved in an exclusive dating relationship. Dating is not an acceptable behavior for second generation and a violation of True Parents' teachings. If a person has been involved in dating or intimate sexual contact of any kind, a full confession and repentance condition must be completed before being allowed to participate in the IL Shim Ceremony. To conduct this condition, you must consult your church leader and your parents. A signed report must be submitted to your church leader attesting to your commitment to discontinue this behavior.
7. **Donation:** At Family Camp, there is no fee required. We would encourage any family participating in the IL Shim ceremony to make a donation to their local family church.

Each of the above conditions is directly related to one of the IL Shim Ceremony Pledges. By fulfilling these conditions, you will be moving forward in your personal relationship with God as well as deepening your relationship with your parents, family, and community. Completing these good conditions will help you to develop good habits of faith that will strengthen you against evil and enable you to stand proud and unblemished before God, True Parents and your future spouse. It is our sincere hope that these requirements will become *habits of faith* that you maintain even after you complete the IL Shim Ceremony.

Good faith habits that you develop now will serve you throughout your life. If you invest yourself 100% in each of these requirements, you will definitely feel that you have gained something when you are done, and the IL Shim Ceremony will take on a much deeper significance for you. We encourage you to dive in and give of yourself completely to each activity and lesson.

# IL SHIM STUDY TOPICS

Each of the following topics are to be completed as a home study prior to attending the IL Shim preparation classes. The presentation will be based upon the assigned readings and participants will be required to discuss their answers to the study questions in small groups prior to the presentation. Parents should set aside time each week to study the material with their children. A small notebook/journal called “God Thoughts” will be provided for each participant. All notes, reflections, and questions related to each IL Shim topic should be recorded in this notebook.

## **Topic #1: “Choosing To Become a True Son or Daughter of God”**

We are all called sons and daughters of God and we hear that phrase a great deal throughout our life – both at home and at church. You in particular have a special designation as “second generation.” But what does this really mean? What does it mean to be born second generation? Can you describe clearly what it means for you to be called a second-generation son or daughter of God? More importantly, even though you may know in your mind what it means to be second generation, can your friends tell that you have a special relationship with God through your daily actions and words? When our actions conform to the moral parameters of our conscience, we can feel at peace and fully satisfied; we have integrity of heart, mind, and body. But often in our daily lives, our actions and words do not fully reflect this ideal. We are not naturally people of integrity.

Unity of mind and body is a fundamental challenge for our life of faith. When Saint Paul says that we are a “temple of God” (1 Cor. 3:16), he indicates that we are intended to have a special relationship with God. Divine Principle says that we are God’s own children and that we are intended to perfect our character and become completely one with God in heart. This kind of intimate relationship requires integrity of heart, mind, and body. Our life needs to come into conformity with God’s Word. God lives within the heart of a person who makes him or herself an object to God, desiring God’s love and seeking out God’s Will in all things.

The essence of True Parents teachings can be summarized in one simple statement – that God loves you and seeks a personal relationship with you as His son or daughter. Knowing God in this manner, however, cannot occur by simply applying a program or following a particular method. Being a son or daughter of God means establishing a *relationship* with another *Person* – *God* as our parent. God is not a concept but a real living Being. God seeks a real, love relationship with you as His son or daughter. Through this love relationship, God wants to reveal His Will to you and invite you to join Him in His life and activity.

The loving heart of God is nonetheless restricted by our fallen state. The fall of man has placed us in a hopeless position of separation from God. God is *not* free to relate to fallen mankind without the intervention of His son, the Messiah, as our mediator and savior. Through the sacrificial offering of His son on our behalf, and through our faithful attendance to His Son, God is able to bring us back to Him.

Through the Blessing of True Parents we can enter a realm of God's love, life, and lineage that heretofore has never been accomplished. By accepting and attending True Parents in our hearts as Messiah and Savior, God can accept us back as His children. God's spirit can come to live in us and we can begin our love relationship with God as His lineal children. The Messiah has paid the price on our behalf to enable this reunion to take place. Like the Prodigal son who repented and was forgiven by his father (Luke 15:11-32), on the small condition of our repentance and acceptance of God's representative, we can regain our position as His sons and daughters, and through the Blessing of True Parents, we can be reconnected to the true love, life, and lineage of God, our Father.

Being born as second generation means that you have already received the merit of forgiveness for the original sin by virtue of the blessing of your parents. You have already been born in the realm of God's love, life, and lineage and God has a right to relate to you as His child. At times, God may even choose to relate directly to you as a result of this Completed Testament merit. Many of you may have had experiences with God already. On the other hand, many of you may only know God as a concept and not as a living reality and daily presence in your life.

Fulfilling your inherited potential depends more upon you than upon God. Have *you* received True Parents in *your* heart as the Messiah and Son of God? Have *you* personally repented for the fall of man and asked God to come into *your* life? Have *you* asked God to guide *you* on the path of *your* personal growth toward perfection? Have *you* committed your life to God and True Parents? Are *you* seeking to connect with God and True Parents by joining them in their work?

This study is intended to encourage you to respond to God's invitation to enter into a personal relationship with Him as his child. If you have not yet asked God to come into your life and guide you as His son or daughter, you may want to do so now and/or discuss your situation with an older brother or sister. In order to get the most out of these sessions you will need to first work out these fundamental faith issues. Do not let a fractured faith linger. Nothing will change unless you take the action to change it. As Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Matt. 7:7)

The first statement of the IL Shim Pledge asks that we promise to love and honor God and True Parents by practicing a life of attendance. In short, this means that we make a sincere effort to become a true son or daughter of God. It means recognizing clearly "to whom" we belong. Fully recognizing this important identity is also why you are called "second generation." However, until you begin your own quest to discover the reality of God and the messianic identity of the True Parents, you will not be able to fully inherit the potential of your position as second generation.

God wants you to experience life in its originally intended fullness. Don't shortchange yourself. Don't shortchange your lineage. We sincerely hope that you will take advantage of this study to truly make a new beginning in your life and discover, maybe for the first time, what it means to be *second* generation. God Bless You!

The following reading assignments and questions focus on the issue of God purpose in creating you as His child, and your true identity before God as second generation. Please do the readings and record the answers to the questions in your God Thoughts journal.



**Reading Assignment:** Read chapter one, sections 1-3, Outline of the Principle: Level 4  
Read the following Bible passages: 1 John 4:7-16 and Luke 15: 1-32  
Read from The Way For A True Child, pages 85-90.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

Please read the above listed passages, and then write down your responses to the following questions in your IL Shim notebook (God Thoughts Journal). This assignment must be completed prior to the second preparation class.

1. What is the Four Position Foundation?
2. How would you describe the nature of God?
3. Why did God create mankind?
4. What is the meaning of the first blessing, “To be Fruitful?”
5. What is the meaning of the second blessing, “To Multiply?”
6. What is the meaning of the third blessing, “To Have Dominion?”
7. How does True Father describe the position of Blessed Families and Blessed Children in the Hoon Dok Hae reading from *The Way For A True Child*?
8. From Luke 15:1-32, write your response to the following questions:
  - Was it fair for the father to receive his son back and shower upon him such lavish attention and love?
  - How do you compare to the Prodigal’s son? What stage of the story compares to your life?
9. From 1 John 4:7-16, reflect on the following questions:
  - How has God demonstrated that He *is* love (see verses 9-10)?
  - How can a person know God and experience His love (see verses 15-17)?
  - How does this verse relate to True Parents and your personal life of faith?

To conclude this study, please write at least one action step in your God Thoughts Journal, identify a prayer point to focus on this week, and complete your reflection.

## **Topic #2: Understanding God's Expectations and our True Potential**

When we talk about being God's sons and daughters, there must also be some expectation or vision that God has for our lives. What are these expectations? How does God define the purpose of your life? How can you possibly live by that standard in today's world? There are times when you are asked to act so differently that your friends may not understand. Those are times when you stand out from your peers. Do you have the self-control, discipline and the strength of character to act in a principled manner?

In understanding God's expectations for your life, it is essential to clearly recognize not only your purpose in life, but also God's original concept of a human being – a son or daughter of God. Our commitment to God is intimately tied to our identity as second-generation children of God. Do you know your value as second generation? Do you understand how God sees you? If we can truly fathom our value and true identity before God we can begin to find the strength and willpower to resist bad influences and make wise decisions.

Last session we spoke about how to begin our relationship with God. We said that at some point in our lives we each need to make a decision to accept True Parents in our hearts as our personal Messiah and Savior, and then ask God to come into our lives and guide us according to His will. Once again, if this is something you have not done, or if something is blocking your faith, preventing you from seeing True Parents in this manner and from believing that True Parents love you, you need to work this out before proceeding with this study. Without resolving this issue, much of what we do during this study will seem foreign and irrelevant to you. For this reason, tonight's study will deal with God's expectations and the issue of our personal state of faith.

Just being born as Second Generation and living your lives the way you want is not enough to know God. God desires more of you than a casual mention before meals and bedtime. God desires a personal love relationship with each one of you and He is waiting for *you* to begin the process. Have *you* begun to seek a relationship with God or are you still a spectator on the sidelines? Are *you* dependent on exciting programs or some high powered event to keep you involved in the church or are you self-motivated and participating in your faith? At some point we all need to decide where "I" really stand in relation to God and True Parents, and at that point, our spiritual journey can begin.

As a teenager, it is time for you to begin to think about your daily life, your attitude, your words, and your actions. Are you making choices and decisions that will help you grow spiritually in a healthy way? Or are you making some decisions and developing habits that will hurt your spirit in some way? You are at that time in your life where you can take more direct responsibility for your decisions. You are being asked to make choices every day. You may not think that your choices are all that important to God and God's Providence, but they are. You *are* God's Providence. What happens to you effects the outcome of God's Will. So, the simple choices you make deserve consideration in the light of God's Will and God's personal relationship with you as His child.

The following reading assignments and questions focus on this issue of God's expectations and your unique potential as God's son or daughter. Please do the readings and record the answers to the questions in your God Thoughts journal.

Reading Assignment: Read chapter one, sections IV & V, Outline of the Principle: Level 4  
Read from The Way For A True Child, pages 3-11. Bible: Luke 11:1-13

## STUDY QUESTIONS

Please write down your response to these questions in your God Thoughts journal and come to the second IL Shim preparation class prepared to discuss them.

1. What does it mean to be in the Indirect Dominion of God?
2. What is the difference between the Indirect Dominion and Direct Dominion of God?
3. What is the human portion of responsibility?
4. Why did God give human beings a portion of responsibility?
5. Why has God's providence of restoration taken so long to be accomplished?
6. What is position of human beings in God's cosmos?
7. Explain the relationship between the spirit and physical selves.
8. What determines the place one goes to in the spirit world after death?
9. What does True Father identify as the most important aspect of our spiritual growth? Explain.
10. How can we be certain that we are living properly and growing spiritually?
11. What can we learn from the Bible verse cited above?

To conclude this study, please write at least one action step in your God Thoughts Journal, identify a prayer point to focus on this week, and complete your reflection.

### **Topic #3:           The Importance of Purity**

It is one thing to understand God’s original desire and vision for our lives, but we also need to understand that this ideal was never realized due to the fall. It is because of the fall that we are separated from God and that we struggle with evil influences, fallen nature, and all types of temptations that try to pull us away from God’s love.

As second-generation, you represent a new effort by God to see His ideal established on the earth. The term “second generation” is not simply a convenient way to describe your identity; it literally stands for a new generation – the first generation born without original sin since the fall. If you are to appreciate this distinction as second generation, it is necessary for you to understand the full meaning of the fall and the real results of that devastating event. Although the fall took place thousands of years ago, its impact on our culture is still present today. The fall and its effects continue to bring great pain and sadness to God.

As second-generation, you are challenged to not only resist temptation but to correct the fallen culture. As second-generation, you are expected to rise above that which is considered “normal” in this world and establish a totally new way of living. True Parents have proclaimed the beginning of Chun IL Guk, but it is up to you to make it a reality in this world.

These challenges raise many important issues for you. For instance, how can you maintain your friendships and still keep your integrity as a second-generation child of God? How can you consistently resist temptation while growing up in a society that does not share the same values or beliefs? What does it mean to live in God’s Chun IL Guk culture? These and other questions are important for you to consider as we proceed through this study.

Please complete the following readings and record your answers to the questions in your God Thoughts journal.

Reading Assignment: Read all of chapter two, “The Fall,” Outline of the Principle: Level 4  
Read from The Way For Students, pages 84-95. Bible: Genesis 1:1-3:24

## STUDY QUESTIONS

Please write down your response to these questions in your God Thoughts journal and come to the next IL Shim preparation class prepared to discuss them.

1. What was the commandment that God gave to Adam and Eve?
2. Why did God give Adam and Eve the commandment?
3. Why did Satan tempt Eve?
4. Why did Eve give in to Satan’s temptation?
5. What did God do to Adam and Eve as a result of their fall?
6. How do you think God felt as a result of Adam and Eve’s fall? Why?
7. How does the Fall of Adam and Eve relate to me today?
8. What can I do to change the results of the fall today?
9. Why is dating and establishing exclusive relationships not good for me?
10. Why should I protect my identity and purity?
11. Why is wrong to date?
12. What are the benefits of living an abstinent lifestyle?
13. How does my commitment to abstinence and purity prepare me for my future spouse?
14. What are some things I need to do to strengthen my commitment to abstinence?

To conclude this study, please write at least one action step in your God Thoughts Journal, identify a prayer point to focus on this week, and complete your reflection.

## **Topic #4: The Need for a Messiah**

We may not be aware of how deeply the Fall of Man injured our spiritual sensibilities. Imagine that one day you woke up and found yourself in a prison. Your parents are gone, your brothers and sisters are gone, and you have lost everything. At first, you are shocked by your situation, but as the days go by, you learn to adjust to your circumstances. Eventually you forget that you had a family. You forget what the real world is like. You begin to think that your life is normal.

This is similar to what happened to mankind as a result of the Fall. The Fall caused us to forget what life is all about. We lost life's true purpose and meaning. We became accustomed to a life that is not the life God intended. We have forgotten our true identity as God's children and we have lost the understanding of our true purpose and potential.

How can this problem be solved? How can we return to our originally intended life and identity? This is a problem that God cannot solve by Himself, because God did not cause the problem – we did. But we cannot save ourselves. If we could save ourselves, we would already be living in God's Kingdom and God's sorrow would have long ago been erased. We cannot save ourselves. God's efforts to save us require our participation and cooperation. A drowning man needs someone who is not drowning to save him. Our fallen state cannot be changed without the intervention of a special person on behalf of God.

Our fallen state prevents God's direct intervention. God cannot directly intervene to bring us out of a situation that we created. Knowing this, God has been working throughout history for one purpose, to raise up a savior as His representative. This savior is called the Messiah. The word "Messiah" in Hebrew means the "anointed one," signifying a king. The Hebrew people believed that God would eventually send them a King who would be their savior, and who would guide them according to God's will and purpose.

Two thousand years ago God send a savior in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus came to be called the "Christ," a word that also means "anointed one" in the Greek language. Yet, in spite of Jesus' coming, our world continues to live in sin and suffering. The Kingdom of Peace long envisioned by the Hebrew people did not arrive at the time of Jesus. Instead, Christians anticipate the *second coming* of the Messiah as a time for the completion of God's Will.

Why wasn't God's Will for the complete salvation of His children accomplished at the time of Jesus? Why do we now wait for a second coming – a concept foreign to the Hebrew people? These are questions that we need to consider as we approach this study. We need to re-examine the traditional understanding of the Messiah in God's plan of salvation.

Since the Messiah is a person anointed by God to carry out His Will, it is therefore of utmost importance that we understand the Will of God and His purpose of creation if we are to accurately understand the purpose for the Messiah and the Messianic mission. In this section, we will study the purpose, identity, and mission of the Messiah for the purpose of gaining a better understanding our role in God's providence of salvation.

Please complete the following readings and record your answers to the questions in your God Thoughts journal.

Reading Assignment: Read all of chapter three, “The Purpose of the Messiah” and chapter four “The Consummation of Human History.” Outline of the Principle: Level 4  
The Completed Testament Age and The Ideal Kingdom, pages 29-33  
Bible: Luke, chapters 1 & 2

## STUDY QUESTIONS

Please write down your response to these questions in your God Thoughts journal and come to the next IL Shim preparation class prepared to discuss them.

1. What is salvation? Explain.
2. What would a person who has fulfilled the First Blessing be like? Explain.
3. What must the Messiah accomplish? Explain.
4. Why did Jesus pray not to be crucified in the Garden of Gethsemane?
5. What would have happened if the people of Israel had accepted Jesus as the Messiah?
6. Why did John the Baptist not follow Jesus and become one of Jesus’ disciples?
7. How is our position before True Parents like the position of John the Baptist before Jesus?
8. What can we do to not make the same mistake as the people at Jesus time?
9. What is the meaning of the Last Days? Explain.
10. Are we currently living in the Last Days? Explain.
11. What is the mission of religion according to True Parents? Explain.
12. According to True Parents’ explanation, why do we need a Messiah? Explain

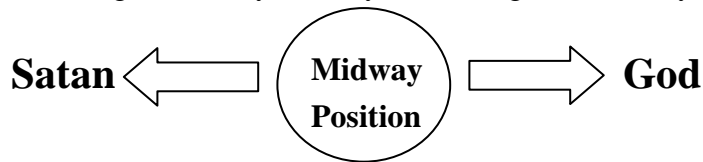
To conclude this study, please write at least one action step in your God Thoughts Journal, identify a prayer point to focus on this week, and complete your reflection.

## Study #5: Chun IL Guk and the Age of Ownership

As followers of True Parents, we have been taught the meaning of restoration. In particular, True Parents have stressed the need for us to practice the three absolutes: absolute love, absolute faith, and absolute obedience. But what does this mean for your life. What does it mean to practice these absolutes? What does a truly faithful life look like?

Sometimes we may think that it is enough to just stay out of trouble. If I just stay pure and receive the Blessing, then I will have done all I need to do to be a faithful person and a true son or daughter of God. But this is incorrect. It is not that easy to stay pure. The fallen environment exerts a great influence on us, and whether we know it or not, we are always being influenced by our environment to think and act in a certain way. Unless we take deliberate control of the forces that seek to influence us, we cannot control the direction and course of our development. Divine Principle calls this dilemma, the “midway position.”

Simply stated, being in the midway position means that we are not yet perfected in our love relationship with God. Divine Principle calls this phase of faith development the period of Indirect Dominion. What it really means, however, is that unless we are making deliberate effort to move closer to God, we may actually be moving further away. We cannot just stay neutral. As the saying goes, “If you are not for me, you are against me.” In regards to spiritual growth, this means that if we are not growing, we may be shrinking. If we are not moving closer to God day by day, without our knowing it, we may actually be moving farther away.



This dilemma is due to the continuing influence of Satan and the satanic environment of this world. We are not living in God’s environment. We are living in a world that is 180 degrees opposite God’s intention. Whether we know it or not, much of what we are has been determined by influences in our environment that have nothing to do with God. If we genuinely want to know God and be his son or daughter, we cannot remain idle or lukewarm in matters of faith. We need to act. We need to grow.

To strengthen your resistance to evil, you need to build your relationship with God. This requires specific action and deliberate planning. It does not just happen. God has always asked those He trusts to demonstrate their faith through making certain conditions. The Principle calls this process restoration through indemnity. Even though True Father has announced the end of the providence of restoration and the end of indemnity, this does not mean that we do not have to make spiritual conditions. It is still necessary for us to make conditions of faith and conditions of substance for our personal growth to perfection.

Making conditions and taking responsibility for your own life of faith is a fundamental step toward maturity. Spiritual growth means that you are becoming a mature, contributing member of your faith community. Taking *ownership* of your faith and your church is what settlement is all about.



The third statement of the IL Shim Pledge asks that you commit to participating in the life and activities of your church, not out of parental mandate, but because you seek to grow in your faith. This means that you start committing yourself to your own spiritual growth; that you start working on your spiritual habits; that you discipline yourself with specific spiritual conditions. This IL Shim program is designed specifically for this purpose – to provide you with the opportunity to begin the development of good spiritual habits that stay with you throughout your life.

The following reading and study questions will help you become familiar with the Principle of Restoration and our portion of responsibility in restoration.

Reading Assignment: Read chapter eight, “Overview of the Principles of Restoration,”  
Outline of the Principle: Level 4.  
Read from The Way of Unification in God’s Providence, pages 8-15.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

Please write down your response to these questions in your God Thoughts journal and come to the next IL Shim preparation class prepared to discuss them.

1. What does the term “providence of restoration” mean?
2. What is the meaning of the foundation of faith and foundation of substance?
3. What is a spiritual condition (faith habit)?
4. Why do people make spiritual conditions?
5. How important is it to establish good faith habits? Explain.
6. What are some spiritual conditions and/or faith habits that you have made?
7. What are some of the obstacles to fulfilling a spiritual condition?
8. Make a list of faith habits/spiritual conditions that you have heard about or which you think would be helpful.
9. Next, select one new faith habit that you are willing to commit to accomplishing.
10. What youth ministry programs are you willing to attend on a regular basis?

To conclude this study, please write at least one action step in your God Thoughts Journal, identify a prayer point to focus on this week, and complete your reflection.