

## “Leave It to Beaver” and a Family Perspective

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Many of us fondly recall watching a TV show called *Leave It to Beaver*, that ran from 1957-63, and laughing at the antics of little “Beaver,” enjoying the give and take (and teasing) between him and elder brother Wally, while admiring the wisdom of his parents, June and Ward Cleaver. Little did we know that this show, in one sense, held the key to creating the ideal world. Not that it was perfect or that it can “easily” be applied to the perhaps more complicated world in which we now find ourselves firmly embedded. But the main elements that comprise an ideal family were there, and as Reverend Moon often said, consonant with the great sages of the past, the true society is like an ideal family writ large.



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This concept reminds me of a matryoshka doll I purchased when I was in Russia helping with the Divine Principle workshops being held in the Crimea in the early 90s. It consisted of a finely crafted set of wooden dolls of decreasing size placed one inside the other. The art dates back to the 1890s, but one of the most popular versions in the early 1990s was a wooden doll of Mikhail Gorbachev, which, when opened, led to a virtual cornucopia of “great” Soviet leaders in reverse chronological order, one inside the other, culminating in Vladimir Lenin in the center. The intimation was that all the Communist leaders were cut from the same cloth, following the pattern set by Lenin.

Likewise, I believe the *Cheon Il Guk* society could be represented by a matryoshka doll with the ideal nuclear family, like a divine imprint, in the center, forming the model for the neighborhood/community “family,” and ultimately for the state, national, global and cosmic “families.” This would illustrate our principled viewpoint that every level of the ideal society is cut from the same cloth, following the pattern of the ideal family. The national “family” could be further broken down into sectors such as the political “family,” business/economics “family,” education “family,” etc.

I can’t help but marvel at this “family” plan for the ideal society as I read Father’s words from his 1994 speech tour:

*“The family is the base where each form of true love can be brought to perfection... [W]e can see the creation of a model, centering upon true love, for the perfection of children, brothers and sisters, husband and wife, and parents. It was God’s ideal of creation that this model be expanded not just to the level of country and world but to the entire cosmos. Thus it is possible for a country to become a family-patterned unit that is larger than the family; the world can*

*become a family-patterned unit that is larger than a country; and the cosmos can become a family-patterned unit larger than the world.”*

What does it mean for a “country to become a family-patterned unit?” How would this concept apply to politics, for example? We see today, especially on the national scene, a big divide between left and right, conservative and liberal, which literally and figuratively shut the government down. Some of us may have even vigorously supported one side or the other in this debate.

My purpose is not to argue the merits or demerits of either position, but rather to raise the issue whether this is ultimately the position we want to take as Unificationists. Is one side completely right and the other completely wrong on every issue? If we follow one side alone, will we be able to establish the ideal society?

What would family-patterned politics potentially be like? Just as in the ideal family, each member of the political “family,” whether it be a leader or citizen, would embody God’s image through striking the proper balance between internal and external values, with internal values of integrity and goodness leading the way. In addition, the political “family” would reflect the unity within the Godhead (and ideal family) between masculine and feminine elements. Dr. Tyler Hendricks wrote in a 1994 article that the political left reflects more “motherly” concerns of embracing and working for fairness, while the right emphasizes more “fatherly” concerns such as competition and opportunity.

*Leave it to Beaver* often illustrated the balance necessary between the father’s and mother’s perspective. For example, in one of the earlier episodes, Ward wanted to get closer to his boys and build a basketball area in front of their house for them to play with their friends. However, he didn’t really listen to his boys in terms of how they wanted it to be built and injected himself too much into the boys’ play time. It took the more feminine perspective of the mom, as well as the sage advice of another parent in the neighborhood, for Ward to overcome his tone deafness and listen to what his boys were really saying.

Here’s an example of employing a “family” perspective in the political sphere. We know there is a great debate between those wanting more versus less government. And it seems like this argument could go on *ad infinitum*, like a cosmic Ping-Pong game. What suggestions could we make as Unificationists which could potentially break this logjam? What might a “family,” Headwing-type perspective be on this? According to Divine Principle/Unification Thought, leaders should exhibit a parental-type heart. If that’s the case, then naturally a parent would want to provide some kind of safety net (i.e., more “motherly” care) when his/her children find themselves in a situation in which they are not able to do for themselves. We may all have experienced this in our own families to one degree or another.



*A matryoshka doll set from the early 1990s.*

On the other hand, a responsible parent would be concerned about his/her children becoming overly dependent in the long term and take steps to ensure that his/her children ultimately become independent without a safety net (i.e., more “fatherly” care). If we promoted such a “family” type perspective, I think this would appeal to just about everyone, both liberal and conservative. For example, I recently saw an Oprah (not exactly a conservative) interview in which she said one of the main messages her show has emphasized over the years is that people should not view themselves as “victims” but rather do whatever

is in their power to make their lives work. This type of “family” perspective could be instrumental in bridging the gap between left and right and forming the basis for a Headwing-type worldview.

What I’m suggesting is we need to find and promote our unique perspective (i.e., “family” perspective) as Unificationists. I believe this is what Dr. Sang Hun Lee referred to when he said in a 1994 Unification Thought workshop:

*“Until now the ideal society has been described only in vague terms. Now we must describe in concrete detail how True Love will be expressed in the family and, with the family as the model, in the educational system, the organs of government and the institutions of society. Such clarity is an essential step in the public acceptance of Father’s vision for the future.”*

Notice that Dr. Lee said that applying a family model to different fields was not only important, but essential if we are to see the widespread acceptance of Father’s ideas (i.e., Vision 2020). John Redmond wrote in an introduction to this blog that Applied Unificationism is “wide open for discovery, development and implementation,” and that the “movement will shift to focus on these areas over the next 40 years as the second generation intellectuals come of age and begin to exert their diverse passions.” I propose that, as Dr. Lee suggested, we explore the application of this “family” perspective to all fields (i.e., politics, economics, medicine, arts, education, architecture, etc.) in a future conference (at UTS/Barrytown College?), and we might even invite the actor who played Beaver, Jerry Mathers, to come to speak!

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*Above: A 1960 publicity photo of the Cleaver family from the television program Leave it to Beaver. From left: Hugh Beaumont (Ward), Tony Dow (Wally), Barbara Billingsley (June), and Jerry Mathers (Theodore, nickname “Beaver”).*