

The World Peace Blessing of Marriage

Guidance for Purification, Renewal and the Holy Honeymoon

The Family Federation for World Peace and Unification

Invitation

Strong, joyful marriages, healthy enduring families, children who are a life source for the community, diverse societies of peace, freedom and dignity for all - all people share these aspirations. They unite us in a vision for the future.

To achieve these ideals, the Reverend and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon established the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. This is a God-centered, international movement founded in 1994 of married couples and their families. One of our most important activities is a marriage rededication ceremony, called the World Peace Blessing. We would like to explain the opportunity this Blessing represents for you.

Let us look around. In many ways our country is a blessed nation. Compared with most of the world, we have great peace and prosperity. In so much as we are a nation of healthy and happy families and communities, enjoying the fruits of faith and hard work, how did we become so blessed? The Family Federation understands that blessings come to a nation on the basis of the moral values of the people. A nation can be great because that nation is good.

Thus, we are concerned with the signs that our nation is losing God's blessing. One need but glance at the rising rates of teen pregnancies and AIDS, juvenile crime and the soaring market for pornography and illegal drugs. Our nation is facing an awesome moral and social challenge.

What can save our nation and keep the Creator's blessing?

The Family Federation believes that it begins with a shoring up of the family. The blessing of marriage and the blessing of the nation are linked. The real enemy of marriage is not in the larger world; it is close to home. In our own lives, we recognize that within us is a tendency toward adultery. This would not exist were the living God and His perfect love present in our marriages. How do we recover God's blessing of love?

Let us consider God's purpose for creating us.

God's original ideal was for a world of truth, beauty and goodness created through true love. To accomplish this, God created us male and female, to become one flesh with His eternal blessing, bringing joy to Earth and Heaven.

Men and women are meant to become true parents, giving birth to sinless children through godly true love. In our hearts, we nurture this desire and hope. But we are not fully one with God, so we are incomplete parents giving birth to imperfect children. To differing degrees we all suffered as children who did not receive the love of perfect true parents, and we pass our difficulties on to our own children. Deep

within, we long to separate from our lineage of immaturity and selfishness, and begin fresh.

Through Reverend and Mrs. Moon, God is now bestowing the chance to separate from this unhealthy inheritance and begin completely fresh in our marriage. This means that we can eradicate the lineage of the strife-filled world and create a healthy society, nation and world. We find that health, personally and socially, begins through the perfection of marriage. This is why the commitment to love each other truly within marriage, family and community is the universal value uplifted by all religions and ethical systems.

It is time to recover the original blessing of love. We of the Family Federation believe that this is ours to have today. From that inner renewal of ourselves and our marriages, we can set a foundation for God's blessings to multiply upon our nation and to the entire world. We call upon our fellow citizens to revive our commitment to family life, beginning with a rededication of the bond of marriage by each and every couple. Today, we can take the all-important first step to receive this World Peace Blessing.

What follows is a simple and basic explanation about how to receive the World Peace Blessing of Marriage. Please read the entire text and make sure you understand it in preparation for your participation.

Affirmations of True Love

Our undertaking begins with a commitment to marriage and its ethical and moral requirements. We invite married couples to support these affirmations of true love and practice them appropriately.

1. Affirming the eternal true love of husband and wife, we rededicate our marriage to God.
2. We will be faithful in marriage forever.
3. We will teach our children sexual purity.
4. We will support all people to uplift sexual purity and marital fidelity, beyond race, nation and religion.

For unmarried youths and singles, we offer the following affirmations and encourage you to think deeply upon them:

1. Affirming the necessity of sexual purity for my spiritual growth, I will refrain from all sexual relationships before marriage.
2. Following my conscience, when it is time for marriage, I will respect my parents' and/or spiritual elders' guidance in choosing my marriage partner.
3. I will serve as a good example in this for my brothers and sisters, colleagues and friends.
4. I will encourage others in these ideals, beyond race, nation and religion.

For unmarried youths and singles, partaking of the holy wine (see below) represents one's commitment to these affirmations.

Holy Wine (Nectar) Ceremony

We then partake of a spiritual grace for the Blessing through the Holy Wine (Nectar) Ceremony. The Holy Wine (Nectar) represents God's love, the original love of the creator, which is the root of the lineage of goodness. God's love infuses new life into us as a couple. We are reborn as true parents, inheriting the love, life and lineage of God. This is the redemption of our bodies, as husband and wife together.

After receiving the Holy Wine or Nectar, pray in gratitude for separation from any wrong-doings of the past, from the evils of this world and its broken history, and for the chance to begin anew.

Holy Blessing

A sprinkling with Holy Water represents your renewal as a husband and wife standing together as a Blessed couple. Again pray, for the new life of yourself, your couple and the world. Joyfully honour the true love you are given to enjoy and take responsibility for as an eternal husband and wife.

The Ceremony to Remove Resentment: Repentance and Forgiveness

In the Blessing, married couples can cleanse the sin committed between men and women. In man-woman relations, to some degree, we all have erred, as have our ancestors.

To end the resentment, guilt and shame within us, we repent and forgive each other. We symbolize this by gently and with love striking our partner's backside or shoulders three times. Carry this out with a light spirit, grateful for God's mercy and the understanding of your spouse.

First, the husband chastens his wife, three times. Next, the wife chastens her husband, three times. As we do this, we determine never to hit each other again.

Commitment for Renewal: Making It Real

By your participation in the Blessing for world peace, you are part of an historical event together with millions of couples all over the world under the love of God. It is the first step toward a destiny in marriage greater than we ever dreamed. What are the next steps? How do we really grow spiritually over the long term? How do we strengthen the spirit, resist temptations, and become true spouses and true parents?

We encourage couples to invest the forty days following the Blessing for the sake of spiritual renewal. The number forty represents purification and offering in many of the great religious traditions. Couples who have received the Blessing are asked to make a financial offering and to offer a period of sexual abstinence for forty days.

Let us consider the purpose of this. We live in an era of excessive permissiveness which many justify by saying that human beings cannot control the sex drive. The Family Federation rejects this demeaning view of the human being. Human beings differ from all other creatures because we are endowed by our Creator with the

capacity to postpone sensual fulfillment for the sake of a higher ideal. This capacity for self-restraint allowed the great men and women of history and the world's great civilizations to emerge and prosper.

Civilizations collapse when self-indulgence rather than self restraint becomes the norm. The Family Federation laments that some in our nation are falling into a life style of self indulgence. We believe that one way we can respond to this is through showing exemplary commitment as husband to wife, wife to husband, and parents to children.

Putting our beliefs into practice, we married couples, who have joined the Family Federation, show a concrete example of self restraint to our children and society by voluntarily refraining from all sexual relations for forty days. We realize that this sacrifice is small when we consider the exemplary followers of the great religions, who lived their lives in celibacy out of their commitment to God. It is also small when we think of the many young people who willingly gave their lives for their country without ever having the opportunity to marry or have a family, so that we might enjoy the blessings of freedom. We make this symbolic offering out of respect for that tradition and a sense of commitment to posterity.

The forty days is also a step in the process of transformation and renewal. It can be a time to re-evaluate, reflect upon and rebuild from the ground up. Even the strongest of marriages can get better, for we are people of love, and love is infinite. But the fact is that most marriages have suffered the stresses and strains of life in the world. This time to focus on renewal can help every marriage. Couples can treat it as reliving their time of engagement, sharing that excitement and anticipation. Marital problems often work out during this time, which is an opportunity for spiritual and marital growth. We encourage investment in this time and offer the following plan for your consideration.

The 40 Days of Purification and Renewal

Forty days is six weeks, with the final week being five days long. We offer the following series of themes for your prayer, meditation, conversation and activity week by week. The questions are intended to be a guide for personal reflection. It helps to write down these reflections in the form of a letter to your spouse. It is also valuable to maintain a personal journal. We urge you to develop this outline with the resources of your faith community and personal exploration.

Week 1: To Remember

Recall and reflect upon your marriage from the first time you met until the time of the Blessing Ceremony. Remember the good and beautiful, and the bad and unhealthy. Explore the meaning of your common path as a couple, and be willing to learn from your marital experiences.

1. What situations in our marriage do I remember that built a strong loving relationship between us?
2. What situations in our marriage caused us pain and alienation?
3. How did we meet and develop our love?

4. What would I do differently if I had the chance?

On a larger scale, recall and reflect upon the history of your country, people and religious faith.

Week 2: To Repent

Repent for what was bad and unhealthy. Allow yourself to feel remorse for having caused grief and pain because of your failings and insensitivity toward your spouse. Take personal responsibility; do not blame. Know that through the love of God and your spouse, forgiveness is yours. Build the power to forgive your spouse and to accept forgiveness from God and your spouse.

1. How do I discover an objective view of myself in my marriage?
2. Am I able to make fundamental changes? Can I accept my spouse as he/she is, and look for the problem in myself?
3. Realizing my weaknesses, can I yet find the power to love? What is the source?

On the larger scale, repent for what was bad and unhealthy in your country, people and religious faith.

Week 3: To Recover

Recover what was good and beautiful. Strive to bring to light an understanding of our original potential as human beings before God. Develop a sense of gratitude for your spouse.

1. What are areas of improvement in our marriage?
2. What are some issues or behaviors where I could make some positive changes?
3. In what respects could my partner change for the better?
4. What did I see first which I loved?

On the larger scale, recover what was good and beautiful in your country, people and religious faith, and develop a sense of gratitude.

Week 4: To Respect

On the foundation of gratitude, develop a greater appreciation for your spouse. Based upon this, come to respect your spouse as you would respect the most noble and cherished person.

1. How can I develop a sense of awe and respect for my spouse? What does it mean to honor my partner?
2. How do I increase my appreciation for my spouse?
3. How can I show gratitude for my spouse?
4. How can I develop an awareness of the God-given qualities in my partner?
5. How do I detect situations of disrespect towards my spouse and how can I avoid those situations?

On the larger scale, develop a greater appreciation for your country, people and religious faith.

Week 5: To Restore

Through appreciation and respect, restore the original excitement, idealism and hope of your marriage. Acknowledge the need for healing your relationship as a couple and for turning healing efforts into positive patterns of behavior. Capture your original love.

1. How can I revive our love for each other?
2. How can I re-romanticize my marriage?
3. What new behavior will bring healing to past wounds?
4. What conditions need to be accomplished to indemnify past failings in our marriage relationship?

On the larger scale, restore the original excitement, idealism and hope of your country, people and religious faith.

Week 6: To Re-determine (five days)

Determine to work from that point of original love forward, avoiding the mistakes which you committed before, and building upon the successes and strengths of your marriage. Develop a sense of higher purpose for marriage and strive to be motivated constantly by the assurance of God's blessing upon your marriage.

1. How can my love for God be applied in my love for my spouse?
2. How can I develop my faith that God desires to be present in our marriage relationship?
3. How can we agree upon daily conditions that will allow us to make marriage building a joyful daily activity?
4. How do we define a clear vision for our marriage? What is in my opinion a deeply satisfying marital relationship that would display our God-given original nature?

On the larger scale, determine to build upon the successes and strengths of your country, people and religious faith.

7: Re-creation - three day's spiritual and physical consecration and celebration of true love between husband and wife.

Through this 7th stage, which is represented through three days, bring this process to a climax in which you re-create, and are re-created, by your spouse. The period of celibacy is complete and we renew the act of love as a re-creation of joy and holiness and of your very being as husband and wife.

On the larger scale, pray deeply for your country, people and religious faith, seeking God's guidance for the world.

What follows is an explanation of this three day's spiritual and physical consecration and celebration of true love between husband and wife.

The Holy Honeymoon

Having completed the forty day period, we are ready for the final step of the Blessing of marriage, a three day ceremony so joyful that it has been called 'The Holy Honeymoon'.

For three consecutive evenings, blessed husbands and wives should meet in the privacy of their own bedrooms or a favorite place to offer a special prayer of thanks.

The two handkerchiefs given you are a souvenir gift of this Holy Blessing.

They are color-coded with a pink spot for the wives' and a blue spot for the husbands'. They represent the purity of God's True Love. During the holy honeymoon, husband and wife each use his or her handkerchief each evening when bathing as a purification to prepare for a prayer of thanks.

You should view this cleansing with the handkerchief as cleansing of the mind and body of past misconduct. Thank God for His gift of sexuality which enables you to become one body with your beloved. More than any other part of your body, your sexual organ exists to bring joy to your beloved, and in that sense they belong to your spouse more than to yourself. Prepare to offer yourself completely and selflessly. As you are about to pray, greet each other humbly and respectfully in remembrance of the great commandments given by all religious and ethical teachers, to love the Lord your God with all your heart . . . and love your neighbor as yourself.

Begin with a prayer representing the holy words of your faith. Then offer personal prayers of thanks and determination to create an eternal family centered on God's ideal for husbands and wives all over the world.

After the prayer is a time to enter into the most intimate and precious relationship of sexual love that only a husband and wife brought together by God may experience. The union of man and woman was meant to be sacred and joyful, but the sinful world has taken its toll on our marriages. Through this sacred union, you can renew the feeling of purity in love by coming together centered on the True Love of God.

The husband should help his wife experience a new sense of self-esteem as God's daughter and a heavenly wife. He humbly encourages her to take a motherly leadership role in the prayers and in their sexual relationship during the first two nights. A husband's identity as a man is strengthened and renewed by a true wife. The key for healthy families is for women to have a position of esteem and respect in the household. For this reason, on the first two evenings of the ceremony, the husband should be beneath the wife during the act of love. Through this gesture, the husband indicates his recognition that his own spiritual growth and the family's prosperity come through his relationship with his wife. She is not only in the role of wife towards her husband but also in the role of mother. Most men hold their mothers in awe and they should do precisely the same with their wife.

The third evening symbolizes the man reaching true maturity to assume his proper position as the loving head of the family. The husband and wife consummate their marriage with the woman beneath the man. To renew his dignity as a son of God and a true husband, the wife supports him and respectfully follows his leadership in both the prayer and the act of love, from that moment and for always. Through the ceremony, both husband and wife share a new commitment to one another, centering on God.

After their holy union on each of the three evenings, the couple offer prayers of thanksgiving that this most intimate of relationships is now centered completely on God, bringing joy to God, Heaven and Earth.

We thank God for having taught all of us to become true parents in our families centered on Heaven. At the conclusion of the third evening, dry your sexual parts with your Holy Handkerchief. Do not wash it, but store it safely representing your eternal love life together.

Please pray and reflect upon the meaning of this beautiful ceremony of love, and follow your heart and wisdom in creating through it the most holy, refreshing and powerful new birth in your blessed marital life. The whole three evenings should bring glory and thanksgiving to God in the highest. Amen!

Conclusion

During and following the forty days, we encourage you to do something for the sake of the public. For example, it is a wonderful time to speak to your children and friends about your renewed commitment as a couple and about your experiences of renewal. Your married friends may also want to participate in the Blessing. If the opportunity presents itself, consider sharing with adolescents about premarital purity and marital fidelity. Too often young people hear about abstinence but from people who have never intentionally practiced even one week of celibacy. Let them know that love is worth waiting for!

Congratulations and welcome!

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or comments you might have...

Please send us a message at the email address, below...