

## Avoiding the Path of Self-Destruction

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Good morning, everyone! To all of you who were appointed today as members of the National Unification Preparation Committee, I offer my sincere congratulations.

We all have a wish in our hearts that the hostile armed confrontation between North and South Korea will end and peaceful unification will be achieved quickly, but we cannot know when and how the day of unification will come. When people say that we never know when and how Unification Day will arrive, the unification of Germany is always cited as an example.

November 9, 1989, the day the Berlin Wall fell in Germany, was a historic day. On October 3, 1990, one year after the Berlin Wall fell, East and West Germany were unified. If West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl had been present on November 9, 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell, he would have been the first to tear down the Berlin Wall, creating a historic scene, and that scene would have spread all over the world. He would have become a historic politician. However, Chancellor Helmut Kohl was not in Germany that day, but was meeting President Walesa in Poland.

It was actually not surprising that Chancellor Helmut Kohl was not present at that historic event. A month before the fall of the Berlin Wall, there had been a press conference at which reporters asked, "When do you think East and West Germany will be reunified?" Prime Minister Kohl had responded as follows. He said, "The unification of East and West Germany will take place after the unification of South and North Korea. The reason is that there are still 300,000 Soviet troops stationed in East Germany, but there are no Soviet troops stationed in North Korea, so the unification of North and South Korea will come before the unification of East and West Germany."

On the day the Berlin Wall came down, Willy Brandt, West German chancellor before Helmut Kohl, was visiting South Korea. He was meeting with Kim Dae-jung of the Peace and Democracy Party, and reporters asked him, When do you think East and West Germany will be reunified? Former Chancellor Brandt replied that the reunification of East and West Germany would be a long way off. That day, the Berlin Wall came down. Mr. Brandt had to rush back to West Germany.

The same could be said for the leaders of East Germany. On October 7, 1989, a month before the fall of the Berlin Wall, East Germany celebrated its 40th anniversary with a military parade, attended by the leaders of 27 communist countries and 300,000 Soviet troops stationed in the GDR. On that day, GDR Chief of Staff Honecker declared that "East German socialism has succeeded." Within a month of that declaration, the Berlin Wall came down, and a year later, Germany was reunified.]

Helmut Kohl, then West German chancellor, later wrote a memoir. It was titled "I Wanted the Reunification of our Fatherland." In that memoir, he wrote the following. "History opened the door of opportunity a little, and we stepped swiftly through it. God bless the German people!"

Mikhail Gorbachev, then General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, had an exclusive interview with Reuters on the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 2019. He recalled the fall of the Berlin Wall and said of that event: "History itself moved forward at an unbelievable speed. It was clear that everything was moving towards reunification at a speed that no one could have imagined. There were 380,000 Soviet soldiers stationed in East Germany at the time. They

were ordered to stay in their barracks. It was an incredibly complex process passed without bloodshed, and I think I deserve some credit for that."

The process that led to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of East and West Germany was one that no one could have predicted; leaders at the time could only look back and say that History had led them to that point.

I think it's the same with the reunification of North and South Korea. There are a lot of political leaders, but it's not going to come in a way that political leaders can predict; it's going to be History that opens the door to unification, and History is going to put us on the path to unification. By History, of course I mean God working. But even if History opens the door to reunification and leads us on that path, we will not be able to seize the opportunity for reunification if we do not prepare for it.

President Yoon Seok-yeol's closing remarks at the Unification Ministry's work report on January 27, 2023: "Unification is something we prepare for, not something that just happens." He emphasized the importance of preparing for unification: "Unification will come suddenly, but it can only be realized if we are prepared. No matter how well we prepare for unification, it will never be enough."

Then how shall we prepare for reunification?

This past August 18, the leaders of the U.S., South Korea, and Japan gathered at Camp David for an important meeting. The three leaders issued the Joint Statement of Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the United States. The summit was a substantive meeting aimed at substantially strengthening the effectiveness of the response to North Korea.

According to Sun Tzu's Art of War, there are some excellent strategies that win wars and some very bad ones. The best strategy is to strengthen and cooperate with your neighbors and break the alliances of your enemies. The leaders of South Korea, the USA, and Japan have strengthened their alliances and expanded cooperation to break the enemy's will for war - which is the best strategy according to Sun Tzu's Art of War.

The war between Ukraine and Russia is a good example. Many European countries, including the U.S., are currently helping Ukraine in its war. Ukraine has very good relations with its neighboring countries, while Russia, on the other hand, is becoming more and more isolated. Ukraine is in the best strategic situation, while Russia is in the worst strategic situation. Therefore, Russia is a powerful country that by common sense Ukraine could not hope to compete with, but even though Russia has been on the attack for over two years, it has not been able to engulf Ukraine, and in fact, it now looks like Russia is being backed into the corner.

What about the Korean War? North Korea was allied with the Soviet Union. What was our country of South Korea like back then?

On January 12, 1950, five months before the start of the Korean War, U.S. Secretary of State Acheson announced that the U.S. Far East Defense Line for Northeast Asia would run from the Philippines to Japan, and that Taiwan and the Korean Peninsula would be excluded from this defense line. In the end, during the Korean War, South Korea had weak alliances with neighboring countries, while North Korea had strong alliances with its neighbors to the north and west. From North Korea's perspective, it was the optimal state of affairs. What did North Korea always insist on even after the Korean War? Aren't they demanding that the U.S. withdraw its armed forces from the Korean Peninsula? They're always agitating to weaken South Korea's relationship with the U.S.

In Sun Tzu's Art of War, a war like the one Ukraine and Russia are currently fighting for over two years is called the lowest level of war. However, we must prepare for even the lowest level of war. In terms of military power, we must also prepare to discourage North Korea's will to go to war.

When discussing the issue of North-South unification, how many people living in South Korea now think it would be good for us to unite after the pattern of North Korea? I think no one here would like to be unified under North Korea's system.

The controversy comparing communist and democratic systems has already been concluded. Construction of the Berlin Wall began in 1961, but the issue of a divided Germany was already resolved by that time.

Walter Ulbricht of East Germany, who ordered the erection of the Berlin Wall, made a proud speech in public, but in private he complained, "In fact this is a matter of self-destruction," admitting to losing the competition between the two systems.

The reaction was similar in other Eastern European countries besides East Germany. Kadar Janos, the Secretary General of the Hungarian People's Republic, is said to have warned that "the erection of the wall will tarnish the reputation of the entire communist cause." Khrushchev also described the wall as an "abomination," but admitted that it was unavoidable to prevent the outflow of manpower from East Germany.

Let me quote the speech President Kennedy gave on his visit to West Berlin in 1963. His unforgettable line was "Ich bin ein Berliner!" (I am a citizen of Berlin.)

"Those who do not know what the biggest problem is between the first and second worlds, those who think that communism is the wave of the future, those who think that cooperation with communism is possible, and those who think that communism will at least bring about economic progress, please come to Berlin. There are many problems with freedom, and democracy is not perfect, but at least we do not need to build walls and imprison people." He sharply condemned the Berlin Wall.



President Kennedy said this after visiting Berlin and seeing the Berlin Wall. Even as he watched East Germany, a communist country, building the Berlin Wall to imprison people, he warned that we need to understand the nature of communism.

If a person commits a crime, they go to jail. Even in prison, you're still given three meals a day, clothed, and treated if you get sick. It's free too. When you hear that you can eat, dress, and sleep without having to pay, and go to the hospital for free, you might think that citizens of any country in the world would live in such luxury, but if you're actually locked up in prison, you would think differently. No matter how much you feed and clothe people, provide them a place to sleep, and take them to the hospital for free, any human being would prefer being free to do what you like. People will only say something's good if they like it. That's what freedom is all about. I feel truly happy when I can choose and have what I like at my own discretion, when I can freely go where I want to go, and when I can stay where I want to stay.

Communist leaders themselves knew full well what it meant to build a wall to confine their own people. No matter how much communism is promoted as an ideal system, it's up to the people living in that country to decide whether or not it is a good place to live. What's the use of shouting loudly that communism is an earthly paradise when the people living under it are desperate to escape to other countries? Not only East Germany, but all communist countries are trying to confine their people by force with walls. Because if they don't do that, their citizens will try to leave and go elsewhere.

Communist countries not only build walls to restrict their people's movement, they also try to monitor and control the thoughts of their own people. A representative example is state control of the media and teaching a distorted version of history. The worst problem is that freedom of religion is not allowed. They propagandize that God does not exist.

By building walls to confine its own people, communism admits to itself and the world that it lost the competition among systems of governance. Furthermore, by trying to restrict the free thoughts of the people under its system, it even blocks citizens from choosing their path to a fulfilled life. If you rightly understand communism and know what kind of life the people under communism currently live, there is no need to ponder whether North and South Korea should unify under the North Korean system. In this way, the systems of North Korea and South Korea have already demonstrated their reality, about which there can be no contest. Yet, strangely enough, some citizens and social leaders in South Korea are inclining toward supporting the North Korean system!

Take a look at this picture. At Gwanghwamun Plaza in the heart of Seoul, young people call North Korea's Kim Jong-un a great man and advocate preparing to welcome him warmly to Seoul. It is said that winning without a fight is the best, and in contrast losing without even putting up a fight is the worst. Looking at this photo makes us ponder the scenario of losing our country without even fighting. What does it mean if Kim Jong-un appears in Seoul and is hailed as a great man, with people welcoming him without even a battle? What is that but losing without fighting?

Losing without fighting means heading down the path of self-destruction. The path to self-destruction is, to put it another way, division. Division leads to self-destruction. Being divided, unable to unite, leading to self-destruction, is something we experience in human relationships around us. It is a well-known historical fact that a nation heads down the path of self-destruction if its citizens are unable to become one and divided amongst each other. The contest among systems between North and South Korea has ended, but the road to self-destruction still stands open.

The purpose of holding the appointment ceremony for the National (Citizens') Unification Preparation Committee is to prevent us from heading down that path of self-destruction. Political divisions must also be prevented. It is healthy to have diverse views, but we should not raise our voices to those views we disapprove of in such a way as to kill each other. Lies and fake news are different from the freedom for people to have various opinions. If counterfeit money is not filtered out, the society is sick. Just as lies are rampant, if fake news is not filtered out, it is not a healthy society respecting diverse opinions, but a sick society on the path to self-destruction. We're facing this now.

Not only political and ideological divisions lead us to self-destruction. There are things that lead to mental self-destruction. What about drugs? What about gambling? What about alcoholism? What about the society of young people that spurn the commitment of marriage?

What is the most important thing to stave off spiritual self-destruction until the end? It is said that among ten thousand virtues, the most important is filial piety. Filial piety begins with knowing how to be thankful for your parents' grace. It is said that people who do not know the grace of their parents are like animals. Having the way of filial devotion and gratitude for the grace of one's parents blocked is the most serious path to mental self-destruction. It is the same as following the path of beasts rather than the way of humanity. Will the spirit of filial piety become stronger in a society that spurns marriage? Will the teachings of filial piety become more precious if we become a society that frowns on having children? What if there are more and more same-sex marriages? How can the spirit of filial devotion shine in a society without children? If filial piety, the most precious of ten thousand deeds, loses its honor and radiance, will we head on the path to prosperity? Or will we head down the path of self-destruction?

True Parents' favorite saying is "When the family is happy everything goes well." So, True Parents hung this saying in front of their bedroom. When Reverend Moon uses the term "When the family is happy everything goes well," he refers to individual families, but more broadly, he is thinking of the family of humankind in which all people attend God as our Parent. Just as harmony between parents, children, spouses, and siblings is important for a family to prosper, it is natural that peace and harmony between nations, races, and religions are absolutely important for the world to achieve peace and prosperity.

The reason True Parents spearheaded the Victory Over Communism movement throughout their lives is because communist ideology denies God, the parent of mankind, and suppresses freedom of religion. If we deny our Heavenly Parent, how can we achieve harmony, peace, and progress? True Parents have always sternly declared the wrong of communism, that denies God and suppresses freedom of religion. They never hesitate to declare to any communist leader that communism, which denies God, cannot develop but will inevitably go the way of decline.

When Rev. Moon met Communist Party Secretary Gorbachev in the USSR in 1990, he strongly urged, "The success of the Soviet Union depends on whether it centers on God or not. Atheism only leads to self-destruction and disaster." Father emphatically said no to communism, and told them to take down Lenin's statues. It is well known that after the dissolution of the USSR, statues of Lenin were pulled down in many places.

The scenes of his visit to North Korea in 1991 and his meeting with Chairman Kim Il-sung were reported on the front page of North Korea's Rodong Shinmun (Worker's Party Daily), with them hugging and smiling, but what Rev. Moon said in front of North Korean leaders was not words to make them smile and nod.

This scene is of Father speaking in front of leaders including then North Korean Deputy Prime Minister Kim Dal-hyeon and Vice Chairman of the Korean Peaceful Unification Committee Kim Ki-bok at Mansudae Supreme People's Assembly the day before the meeting with Chairman Kim Il-sung. In front of those leaders, he said that economic development and unification of North and South Korea could not be achieved with Juche ideology based on materialism, but that they should accept Godism and that Chairman Kim Il-sung should also listen to me. When he said this before the North Korean leaders in the Mansudae government hall, in the room next to him, about 200 people, including ideological leaders and professors who study communist ideology in North Korea, were watching this scene on closed circuit TV. Not everyone was aware who that person was, but they were sure he would never see the light of day again. This is what I heard from Professor Kim Heung-kwang, who was one of those 200 gathered to watch the TV in the next room. Prof. Kim spoke at our event here three weeks ago. They all thought Reverend Moon would be executed, yet the meeting with Chairman Kim Il-sung took place the next day. Chairman Kim Il-sung is surely a great figure, as he met and held a meeting with Reverend Moon the day after hearing Father make such a bold public declaration.

In 1992, the year after meeting Chairman Kim Il-sung in North Korea, True Mother, Dr. Hak-ja Han gave a lecture at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. In China, the lecture manuscript was censored in advance and they warned against using the word God, but Dr. Hak-ja Han spoke every word verbatim as she had planned. She spoke the word God 12 times and shouted that we must create a world of peace centered on God.

In 1993, the year after her lecture at the Great Hall of the People in China, Dr. Hak-ja Han gave a talk at the Kremlin Palace in Russia. In that lecture, she also urged that the former Soviet Union must bear witness to God and take a path of development centered on God.

Even in the face of liberal democratic world leaders who recognize freedom of religion and do not deny God, she said that there is no hope for a nation if it becomes a society or nation that forsakes God, our Parent. What she said most strongly while serving as a missionary in the United States in 1971 was that if America continues like this, God will leave America, and that there is no hope for the U.S.A. once God leaves. True Parents warned that if a couple does not take responsibility for their love for each other, and if youth cannot escape from drugs and the culture of decadence, God will have no choice but to leave the family, and not only the family but also the nation will eventually lose hope and move from the path of prosperity to a path of decline.

This photo shows the World Peace Blessing Ceremony held at the UN Headquarters in Jan. 2001. Representative families from all over the world who volunteered to participate, joined in the World Peace Blessing Ceremony at the UN Headquarters wearing their national ceremonial costumes. The purpose of holding such a large Blessing ceremony at the UN Headquarters was to remind people of the importance of family and further inform the world that there is no hope for the world if harmony and peace in the family are destroyed. Rev. Moon said the message that reminds us of the importance of family is the most important message God wants to convey to all humankind on this earth. The reason is that God and people are like parent and children, and the relationship between parents and children is the core of the universe.

As I conclude today's talk, I wish to once more emphasize why we need to appoint 10 million citizens of the Republic of Korea as members of the National Unification Preparation Committee to prepare for peaceful unification of North and South Korea. The Republic of Korea has already surpassed the North politically, militarily, and economically. Even if North Korea makes any military provocations, we maintain international alliances and cooperative relationships that can ward off such provocations. However, what all citizens of South Korea must be wary of is that division as arising within our midst and our nation faces the danger of collapsing without a fight, if we head down a path of self-destruction. We must ensure that communist ideology does not raise its voice in Korean society. More importantly, Korean society must ensure that our children and young people do not enter the path of moral self-destruction. We must become a country where the spirit of filial devotion is alive and where the importance of family is always inculcated. That is the spirit of preparation for unification that the National Unification Preparation Committee must keep in mind.

It is great to think of the members of the National Unification Preparation Committee as reserve forces mobilized to realize peaceful unification of North and South Korea without firing a shot or any bloodshed. It is like a reserve force mobilized in advance to avoid being mobilized as a reserve force after a war breaks out. Reserve forces mobilized during war are reserve forces that are forcibly mobilized: You have to go even if you don't want to go. But the National Unification Preparation Committee consists of Korean citizens who are moved by their hearts and have united together to prepare for peaceful unification.

President Hak-ja Han emphasized that the hearts of the people of Republic of Korea must become one in order to welcome the rapidly approaching fortune of unification, and she prayed that along with the hearts of the people of the Republic of Korea becoming one, God, the angels of heaven, and the great loyal martyrs of history will all join together with us. And she exhorted us to pray.

I sincerely hope that through this joint worship today, the people of Republic of Korea will become one, and that heaven will help and be with us so that North and South Korea will lay down their nuclear weapons and open the way of peaceful unification. At the same time, we hope that humanity in this world will rise above individualism and materialism. I earnestly hope all the walls will be torn down, that we will be freed from the trap of decadent culture, that all humankind will become one family with God as our Parent, and that the door will open for us to realize the world of peace and happiness.

Thank you.