

Leaping Forward and Gaining Momentum

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Photo date and location unknown

Honorable chairmen, eminent professors and scientists, ladies and gentlemen:

As we begin this fourteenth International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS) meeting here in Houston, I would like to express my appreciation to each of you for your commitment to and support for this conference and its theme, "Absolute Values and the New Cultural Revolution." Since I was unable to be with you at last year's ICUS in Washington, I am particularly moved to stand before you this morning.

The need for a great awakening and breakthrough for humankind

As you know, I was recently released from prison, on August 20, 1985, having spent thirteen months in confinement in the United States. I thank you again for being concerned with my situation caused by unfair treatment, for visiting me in prison, for writing letters to comfort me, and for your tremendous efforts in advocating justice and fairness on my behalf.

Those who were so eager to fabricate a crime and have me imprisoned invested a great deal of money, time and effort in the attempt to block the work God has called me to perform. However, despite opposition, the Unification movement prospers worldwide. Contrary to the expectation that my imprisonment would break up the work of our church, people from all walks of life, including Christian clergy, have expressed their understanding and supported us in an unprecedented way. Through such an experience I have learned once again, as I always maintained, that victory comes through persecution countered with God-centered righteousness.

My experience in prison has sharpened my awareness of the critically dangerous state of the world. It let me feel the urgent necessity of a worldwide great awakening and of a new breakthrough. As a result, I have come out of prison with a renewed sense of urgency and determination to commit myself and the Unification movement to give everything for the cause of world peace and global prosperity.

In today's world, millions of people live in miserable circumstances in spite of tremendous scientific progress, efficient technologies and economic abundance in many places. Many nations live in constant strain and even in a state of war. In most of the world such problems as poverty, illiteracy, disease, violence and crime, drug addiction and mental disorders, social discrimination and inequity, broken families and teenage immorality threaten the future of our planet. Why do anxiety and agony increase constantly, even though many leaders -- especially conscientious, distinguished scholars -- have been devoting themselves toward realizing a pleasant and peaceful world? The reason is an ethical, moral and

spiritual crisis that brings with it mental exhaustion. Traditional value systems are now inadequate for societies that are changing with unprecedented speed. Time-honored ethics and morals are no longer persuasive. Criteria for goodness have been disappearing. At a time when these problems are causing self-contradictions, conflicts and disunity both in individual lives and on the societal level, it is difficult to speak of moral standards or of eternal life.

Leaping forward through persecution

If in such a reality there is no room for God, then we cannot expect to fulfill our ideals or to substantiate happiness. We could conclude that to continue in such a fashion would bring about our eventual demise. Nevertheless, if the absolute God exists, we can be confident that He will conduct a providence for changing this destructive reality. He will advance toward a universal standard of ethics that establishes a reality of mutual joy and prosperity. God is our Parent with only true love for all humankind. The purpose of any calamitous events in God's providence in the past was never to destroy humankind. Such effects were part of a process for dramatic leaps ahead; the unfortunate effects were to be followed by new and hopeful things to come.

Throughout history there have been numerous moments of leaping forward; there have been numerous people contacting the transcendent God at moments of severe oppression by the contemporary society and then leaping toward a better future. Ordinary moments are not likely to be a springboard for such transformations. Pioneers, through positively digesting paradoxical moments, have been able to surge forward and create new ways of living.

Loving your enemy, as Jesus practiced on the cross, may not be easy to understand. But Jesus showed us God's providence by dramatically changing that moment of being completely denied by the world into a leap of complete positivity. As a result, a new page of resurrection providence was opened.

I think the Unification Church has set a new record in the history of persecution. However, such persecution has never been detrimental for the Unification Church. When the Unification Church is not overwhelmed by suffering but overcomes it and lives God's Will through advancing with this momentum, the suffering itself becomes a preparation for eternal life centered on the Absolute. By practicing such faith, we recognize that the reality of today's world is not a cause for despair, but can provide momentum that permits God to advance us toward a new world.

The initial motive for humans to develop science was the desire to realize world peace and prosperity. However, the methods employed in the specialized fields of science have not brought results that meet that original expectation. Though our expectation of science was focused on the well being of humankind, science has mostly been concerned with developing the material environment, which is the object partner of human beings, who are its subject partners. The scientific pursuit of higher living standards and the application of theories of politico-economic equality have not produced true happiness for humankind. Therefore, scientists should become newly aware of their mission.

Contemporary men and women ought to look inside the depth of their being and establish a universal ethic built on the natural order of existence. This new ethic requires us to love nature, to reconsider the dignity of human beings, to seek love among all humankind, and to search for God as the origin of love. Scholars need to take on the mission of accomplishing a cultural-spiritual revolution, which ought to realize ideals such as human perfection and world peace, along with the external, technological revolution.

Creating a new culture centered on God's truth and love

Long before the first ICUS, I became convinced that scientists should play a decisive role in building a good and hopeful future society. My support and enthusiasm for ICUS for the past fourteen years has come from my respect and my expectation for scholars' potential to solve the world's problems. I hope that such a potential can be developed and mobilized through ICUS and that responsible scholars will actively contribute to the realization of the new cultural revolution.

This is the fourteenth ICUS. The number fourteen is twice the number seven. According to Unification theology, the importance of the number seven, like the number three, is that it signifies perfection. Up until now, ICUS has been committing itself to relating scientific studies to the discovery and realization of absolute values. In addition, it has been concerned with the integration of knowledge, that is, with an interdisciplinary and integrated approach to the understanding of reality. Yet an integrated approach is not possible without establishing absolute values, and the criteria for absolute values come from God, the origin of absolute love. Many people have now come to recognize the necessity of absolute values. I am grateful that the chairmen and the members of the planning committee have resolved misunderstandings and become pioneers on this new path.

From now on, where is ICUS supposed to head? Should we be satisfied with annual conferences carried

out just as before? My answer is based on my recent emphasis on the new cultural revolution. I think that the potential and foundation for realizing the original ideals and happiness of humankind are greatly endangered, because evil is now challenging humankind most seriously and essentially.

We, as the ICUS family, should stand up and take on the great mission of creating a new culture in this world. We need to invest everything for its establishment. The exploration of absolute values for its own sake is meaningless. Truth has eternal direction, and the ideal world founded on absolute values must be concretely realized. This realization requires that we act determinedly and rise above the difficulties we encounter in the present reality.

Today, the world should change. Now is the time for scholars to responsibly come to the forefront, advancing a new cultural revolution based on God's truth and love. We orient this new cultural revolution with God's ideal for humanity and all creation. In order for this ideal to be accomplished, each of us needs to fulfill our responsibility in realizing true love, not only knowledge, as an absolute value.

Humankind should now leap forward. The creation of a culture of new dimension, enabling us to overcome the limits of our present reality, is necessary. We should wake up from the illusion wrought by arrogant beliefs that the power of human reason alone can bring about the perfection of individuals and the world, and the laxity it engenders. Our effort will remain in vain if we fail to relate to God's expectations for the original human character and to God's providence behind the turmoil of human history. Humbly recognizing our limitations as human beings, we are called to fulfill the ideal of unity with God through leaping forward, in sync with the historical momentum introduced by God's providence. God's ideal for the creation was meant wholly for human beings. We naturally conclude, therefore, that the ideal has to be fulfilled through our human response to God's comprehensive concern.

Let us become pioneers who practice absolute values

Respected scholars! I have been committing my whole life to fulfilling God's Will by fulfilling human responsibility. As a pioneer, I never tried to avoid even the most rugged path. For instance, I determined to offer an alternative to the existing biases of the news media. I have closely watched the process of how the news media offer information, the good points and bad. I know through my experience, as many of you know, that the misuse of the news media's power can undermine and destroy the foundation of goodness. Therefore, for years we have been sponsoring at great cost *The Washington Times*. Recently, I inspired the publication of the weekly news magazine, *Insight*. Further, in this coming month, we are going to release a monthly magazine called *The World and I*. These projects will offer alternative media for education and mass communication that will contribute to the promotion of truth and the common good.

I ask you to become pioneers in a new cultural revolution through participating in the continuous pursuit of truth, and by contributing articles about your findings to *The World and I*. Furthermore, I envision the publication of dictionaries for the different specialized fields of science, with the help of our worldwide Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA) and Paragon House Publishers. All this is in preparation for the publishing of an encyclopedia of human events, which will, under the guidance of absolute values, contribute constructive educational material based on keen insights into original human character.

Respected scholars! We would not fulfill our leadership and social responsibility by remaining indifferent to the existing world of contradictions and presenting no alternatives. We have to show a new standard, not missing this precious historical and global momentum. It has come not by chance; God has granted it to us. We should set an example by leaping ahead and firmly awakening all people to fight against injustice. Leaping ahead involves risks and adventure. A full-fledged adventure on a false foundation would result in greater difficulties. However, where there is truth, practice is always bound to follow in its wake. We need to become champions in the practice of absolute values and actively lead the world.

I hope this conference will not only become a forum for free and open discussions, in which useful conclusions are reached, but also a historic event through which we determine to energize this suffering world, that it may give birth to the world of a new culture.

I deeply thank the members of the planning committee for their very hard work for this conference. May God bless all of you and your families!