

We Saw New Hope in Atlanta - Reverend Moon's 1973 "Day of Hope" tour

Jeremy Gaylord
November 9, 1973



Peachtree rally announces the Atlanta Day of Hope campaign

The city of Atlanta, Georgia, experienced a culmination point in its history November 6-9, when Reverend Moon's 1973 "Day of Hope" lecture series arrived in this, the ninth city of the 21-city tour. Since New Orleans we have been giving free invitation tickets to the lectures, and raising funds by flower selling. This was carried out with great success in Atlanta.

Imported flowers were brought from the airport, wrapped through the night, and sold by half of the team in the city and suburbs. The other half visited universities, houses door-to-door, and on the streets, speaking to people and inviting them to attend Reverend Moon's dynamic talks. This was quite a new experience, and without the feeling of being obliged to sell tickets the teams were able to meet and talk with people and gain their friendship and trust. This was also because Atlanta is such an open and friendly city, and much more God loving than any other city we had experienced. The Christian foundation in Atlanta is very strong. Much suffering and indemnity was experienced when the city was burnt to the ground during the Civil War. The people were open to new ideas, and students on campus were quick to respond to a smile and willing to take time to talk.

On Friday, November 2, we held a Rally for God at Central City Park, on Peachtree Street. We stopped lunchtime shoppers with our songs and with messages from many of our European and American members on the themes of the family and communication, morality, the role of America, Communism and Christianity. Television coverage gave several minutes on the news that night to our rally.

The city was well postered with details about the lectures, and everyone at least saw Reverend Moon's face and could decide whether to hear more about the New Hope in America. If Atlantans did not see a poster then they must have heard one of the four vans which drove around the city every day, playing a taped message and our "New Day of Hope" theme song. Members gave out leaflets and tabloids which

tell about the Unification movement and about the background and life of Rev. Moon and his work in this nation. People became very interested and curious about Reverend Sun Myung Moon.



We were very warmly received by the churches in Atlanta. The East Lake United Methodist Church gave us full use of their hall and kitchen for all our meals there. A team was formed to visit many of the 500 churches in the city and speak with the ministers. This met with great success, and many of them accepted tickets for their families and congregations to attend the lectures. We also visited several different denominational churches for Sunday service, and met with many warm-hearted and sincere people during the coffee hours afterwards.

The moment of Reverend Moon's first speech arrived. The Phoenix Ballroom of the beautiful Regency Hyatt House Hotel was chosen for the event, despite the fact that it was not very large. The newspapers reported that a thousand guests attended the first night, which was a full house. It was obvious that Reverend Moon was not unhappy with the attendance when he entered and sat down with Mr. Pale and Mr. Salonen. The

chorus sang some new selections, and then Mr. Salonen introduced the lectures and was able to reveal much more deeply than before the significance of Rev. Moon's work in this country and the world. When our founder spoke, the audience responded very readily and audibly to what he was saying, and he was able to raise many laughs as well as to express very strongly the significance of this time, and the responsibility that needs to be accepted.

In each city the truth is introduced more and more clearly to the people, and here in Atlanta it left very little doubt as to what Rev. Moon's mission must be. On Wednesday many indicated that they had been at the previous night's speech. There was standing room only in the back of the hall. The history of America's part in God's providence in the restoration of man had a great meaning to these people whose ancestors had seen such suffering.

Thursday night's lecture was so full that Unification Church members crowded the aisles and sat around the feet of Reverend Moon at the base of the stage to hear him speak. Reverend Moon explained God's revelation of the real meaning of "The Last Days" and "Final Judgment." It became clear that God can really work when there is a full hall, and when people respond wholeheartedly. Then we show Him that everyone involved truly desires the truth and the fulfillment of His divine plan.

The following day we received a wonderful surprise. Reverend Moon arranged a luncheon banquet for the 500 family members in Atlanta, as a gift to us for our work. We were able to meet and sing in our national groups, and then Reverend Moon spoke to us and gave us an idea of what we could expect in the near future. He assured us not to consider our result as a victory, until we were able to do the same in 12 more cities; until then, we should not begin to think that we had achieved any success. He spoke with great joy, and as long as possible before he had to leave for the airport, and the science conference in Tokyo.

We were filled with the determination and desire to redouble our efforts, and to follow the pattern of our Father's monumental task, as we set out to win our various cities to God all over this mighty nation of America.