

The Sun Myung Moon Christian Crusade returns to New York

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The Sun Myung Moon Christian Crusade, which swept across the country from Oakland, California, to Rochester, New York in two whirlwind months last year, has returned to bring its message of hope, love, and inspiration to the people of New York. And New York needs it.

The air is noxious, the streets are littered, and the sidewalks are clogged with hurrying people. But on corners throughout mid-town Manhattan the 100-plus members of the Crusade hand out brightly colored flyers inviting New Yorkers to the "New Hope Festival" An unforgettable evening." After its first week, the Crusade moves on to Forest Hills (Queens), the Bronx, Hempstead, back to Manhattan, then Brooklyn and Albany.



Crusade members are from Europe, Latin America, Japan, and all over the United States, because the dilemma of New York is the dilemma of the nation and of the world today -- faced with proliferating problems for which no solution seems to exist. There is a solution, but it doesn't lie in pouring out millions of dollars more on aid to cities, aid to foreign nations.

"All our problems can be resolved as a human family if we are willing to sacrifice," featured speaker Neil A. Salonen, president of the Unification Church of America, told the first-night audience at the New York Hilton, August 13.

"Don't let your worries get you down," the members of Sunburst sang out to the full-capacity audience at the opening of the show. And the rest of the evening gave plenty of evidence that there is hope for solving not only our individual worries, but those of the nation and the world. Sunburst, a 12-member musical group of vocalists and instrumentalists formed originally in 1973, provided a lot of other "messages" in its numbers preceding and following President Salonen's talk.

Messages like: "You've Got a Friend," "There's a New World Coming," "It's All Right," and "Pass It On." And the audience responded to the music of hope, searching, and happiness by clapping along with the performers and with enthusiastic applause. The youthful group had been performing at colleges and universities around the nation before they joined the cast of the New Hope Festival.

Patsy Johnson, one of the lead vocalists, also shared with the audience some of the experiences of her life that had led her to join the Sun Myung Moon Christian Crusade. Born in Texas, she spent her early years as an Army brat, moving around extensively. "In college, I went through many conflicts. I got involved in the black movement, women's liberation, and the counter-culture in turn. I was torn apart. I asked myself, What is my life worth? Why do we have to live like this? Then I met someone from the Unification

Church who told me about a way to create one world, one family. I had never seen people so willing to sacrifice. I had never heard anything like the Divine Principle before. I really felt it was a group that God could work through."



Mr. Salonen, who has traveled around the world with Rev. Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Crusade, also told the audience why he was there: "We've been reading and studying the Bible, but still there are over 400 Christian denominations. Often we spend as much time and effort fighting each other as reaching out to those people who have not yet heard the message of Christ. I'm not a minister, but my life has been changed through the revelation given by Jesus Christ to Sun Myung Moon."

Noting that a few years ago it was popular to quote classical authors to prove that mankind has always faced the same problems, he pointed out that by almost every index, our society is facing a crisis. New York City postponed facing its problems for years. "No one had solutions, so we tried not to face them. We couldn't avoid them though." The solution, he went on to say, is that we must love God and love His purpose more than ourselves.



"How do you turn the other cheek?" he asked. "How in reality can we live to be able to restore God's ideal without being destroyed in the process?"

The key to restoring this world is to establish faith in God, he said. The great religious leaders have been great for one reason only, their faith. God's way of life is evident in His works and in the way He has been working throughout history, setting the example in parental giving, the unconditional willingness to give to others.

"The secret is to live for a higher purpose." If individuals live for their families, and those families do as much as possible for one another, and those communities they serve the nation, the nation will serve the world.

That is how God's ideal will be established on earth: by establishing our faith in Him and giving our life for others.

What is the role of America? "America is a miracle -- assembled by God to be used as an example, a symbol of God's way of life." The fundamental motivation of the United States should be to do something to bring the blessings of this society -- prosperity and freedom -- to other peoples of the world. God is looking for individuals, families and nations willing to sacrifice for something bigger than themselves. As a nation blessed by God, we have to humbly realize our blessings were given for the use of all mankind.

"God is crying out to us to realize the secret to establishing His ideal. This country needs a new movement that will demonstrate God's way of life. The purpose of the Sun Myung Moon Christian Crusade is to demonstrate that principle in action."

To do this, the members of the Crusade split up into three teams under the direction of Terry Walton, Sam Pell, and Mike Smith -- have been inviting guests to hear lectures on the Divine Principle at local centers in the New York area and to attend weekend workshops in the mountains.

"So many people today especially the young are seeking God and asking many questions where a generation or so ago the answers were taken for granted. We are reaching out to those people, inviting them to share in a life experience with God and a spiritual revolution in the hearts of men," President Salonen explained.

In his series of three talks in each city, Mr. Salonen will speak on Who is God -- emphasizing that God needs man as much as man needs God; New Hope for Christianity -- the mission of Jesus Christ and the significance of the Second Coming of the Lord; and New Hope for America -- how to establish God's ideal. The evening's program also includes a short film showing highlights of Reverend Moon's 1974 Day of Hope tour in the United States, including his highly successful Madison Square Garden appearance. The Bible urges us to work together "until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4: 13) The New Hope Festival inspires us toward this life of perfection and joy, and urges us to awaken others to this true vision of the heavenly kingdom.