

With Heartfelt Love and Thanks

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Photo date and location unknown

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: I am very happy to welcome you to the opening ceremony of the 2002 World Culture and Sports Festival in my homeland, Korea.

I have witnessed many miraculous changes taking place in Korea throughout my life. I hope those who are visiting Korea for the first time will be able to experience Korean culture and see with your own eyes how it has developed in leaps and bounds.

We began the new millennium with the expectation that, if we utilized all our modern technology, surely we could bring about a world of peace and prosperity and end the violence and pain of the past.

However, in reality, a series of events that occurred last year demonstrated otherwise. Even though we are enjoying incredible comforts and benefits from a remarkable material civilization, we are still unable to resolve the serious conflicts that persist due to moral confusion, as different cultures are based on different value systems.

Today's world is troubled by moral and ethical relativism. My husband, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, has dedicated his entire life to teaching the world about absolute faith, absolute love and absolute obedience to God, as well as absolute sexual morality based on the true love that all humanity and all of creation have hoped for.

I believe many of you already know Rev. Moon through the projects and activities he has been promoting throughout the world. However, today, I would like to introduce another side of him that only I know. I have been married to him for forty-two years, and I believe that only God knows my husband better than I do.

A life dedicated to the realization of world peace

What do the absolute values that Rev. Moon teaches have to do with his life? I see him living for the sake of others from early morning until late at night every day, working to break down all barriers in every sphere of human activity, for the ultimate purpose of breaking down the barriers between God and human beings.

When I met my husband for the first time, the world was divided into two camps, with opposing military

powers facing off along one national border. The Cold War between East and West had led to the tragedy of the Korean War, which divided Korea into North and South. In just a few years the war destroyed almost everything in this country. My husband built his first church from discarded boxes and mud bricks. Even in that situation he believed, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that God would fulfill the promise of new hope He had bestowed upon this land.

Rev. Moon never prayed to God to help him, even under the most difficult circumstances. For example, he escaped death several times while enduring severe torture in prisons under the rule of the North Korean communists. In addition, he endured imprisonment as a result of false accusations from leaders of other Christian denominations in South Korea.

Rather than defend himself, he would endure persecution in silence while consoling God and promising to himself thousands of times that he would, without fail, achieve world peace, which is the Will of God. No matter what difficult circumstances he encountered—when he was on the verge of starvation, or when Christians and the media conspired with the government against him—his love for God and sympathy for humanity only increased.

Like God's prophets throughout history, he did not submit in the face of opposition. Instead he proclaimed the message of truth ever more intensely.

Rev. Moon has set us an example of absolute faith in Heaven. At the age of sixteen, he received a revelation from Heaven and came to understand that he had been chosen to fulfill the mission of leading humanity into a world of purity, freedom and happiness, a world that God has longed to see since the beginning. To fulfill his mission, my husband had to expand the scope of his life from the level of the individual to that of the family, tribe, people, nation and world, on the foundation of absolute faith in accomplishing God's Will.

The path of sacrifice and absolute obedience

Ever since he received his calling from Heaven, Rev. Moon has taken a path of total sacrifice, accompanied by indescribable suffering and pain. Most painful for him is that those he has endeavored to save have ridiculed and falsely accused him.

Nevertheless, Rev. Moon has not once compromised or hesitated in the course of accomplishing the mission that Heaven bestowed on him. He has taught us the way of absolute faith in God by setting the example himself.

Most important of all, what my husband has taught about absolute love is second to none. Many religious leaders and scholars have dedicated themselves to building their religious denominations or spreading their doctrines. Some have worked on a bigger scale, through charity or humanitarian projects. Yet from the beginning, my husband was different.

Even when the Unification movement was small and beset by financial difficulties, he always taught that we needed to devote more than two-thirds of our resources to the service of others before taking care of ourselves. He has devoted hundreds of millions of dollars to supporting interfaith work, seeking to bring all religions closer together, because he knows that this is God's desire. He has spent far more on interfaith efforts than he ever allowed the Unification movement to spend on itself.

Students at the Unification Theological Seminary, which he founded in 1975, are required to spend far more time studying other religious traditions than their own, and to engage in dialogue with scholars and clergy of other religious denominations.

When the United States government unjustly prosecuted him and was in the process of sending him to prison, my husband founded *The Washington Times* to help America put an end to the Cold War and fulfill its providential role for world peace. As you know, he financially supported many world media organizations and even now he is increasing their budgets rather than investing in the publications of the Unification movement.

I am certain that his way of living for the sake of others before looking after himself, as well as his indomitable spirit, come from God's unconditional love. I believe that this is the true meaning of love, which is the solution to breaking down the walls existing in today's world.

Setting the example of absolute love

Rev. Moon teaches us by setting the example himself. Absolute love between a couple does not allow for infidelity or divorce. This kind of love is the only true way to prevent the sexually transmitted diseases that are so widespread in today's world.

There have been people who misunderstood his unwavering and sacrificial dedication to practicing and teaching his ideals through the way he lived his life. Sometimes, because of his absolute standard, he was falsely accused by people who were jealous of him or misunderstood him, or who would have rather taken an easier path. However, as time passed, more and more people came to understand that there is no negotiation or compromise in matters of right and wrong, or good and evil, and that there is no yielding when it comes to devoting our lives and love to God.

The time that he might have spent with me he almost always shared with others. We weren't even able to enjoy a honeymoon as most people do. Nevertheless, I can say honestly that I have received greater love from my husband than any wife has ever known.

His love for our family and his devotion to education have yielded remarkable results. He has taught us to become as absolute in our dedication to God, and as universal in our love for humanity, as he has been in his daily life. Although we never took an ordinary family vacation, our thirteen children and more than twenty grandchildren live with gratitude for God's grace and blessing.

Rev. Moon: True Husband and True Parent

When we moved to New York, we lived with hundreds of Unification Church members. My husband was eager to learn how to use the riding lawnmower, and he would mow the lawn with the heart of wanting to present a beautiful lawn to God and to the people. He learned how to lay a carpet, and as he nailed it down, he poured that same heart into each nail.

Our life has not been like the lives of others. I see the result of his lifelong sacrifice: the millions of families that have begun to follow this same tradition, and their children and grandchildren. I know that God is truly proud of His dedicated son, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon.

I cannot suppress my joy over this opportunity to introduce my husband to you this morning. I am happy to publicly express my overwhelming love and gratitude to him for the first time. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming the founder of this World Culture and Sports Festival, a true son of God, a true husband, a true father and a true teacher, my husband, Rev. Sun Myung Moon.