

## The River Does Not Reject the Waters That Flow into It

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*Photo date and location unknown*

Selfishness is rampant in the world. Ironically, however, the individual is destroyed by this, and not just the individual, but those around him and the nation as a whole. The greatest obstacle to the world of peace is avarice in people's hearts. It starts in individuals and expands to the nation, and hearts stained with avarice cause division and conflict at every level. Countless people throughout history have shed their blood and died in conflicts caused by avarice.

To eliminate such conflicts, we need a great revolution to change the enormous impact of values and thinking that are widespread in the world today. The complex problems our societies face, today, can be resolved quickly if there is a revolution in people's thinking. If, each individual and nation begins to look out for the other first, working together with the other, the problems of modern society will be resolved.

Throughout my life, I have dedicated myself to efforts for peace. Any time the word peace comes up, I become emotional. I choke up, it becomes difficult for me to swallow my food, and tears begin to well up in my eyes. It moves me deeply just to imagine the day when the world becomes one and begins to enjoy peace. That is the nature of peace. It links people who think differently, are of different races, and speak

different languages. Our hearts yearn for this world and harbor a hope that it will be realized.

However, peace comes through concrete action, not just having a vague dream. Building a movement for peace has not always been easy. There have been many difficulties, and it has required large sums of money. I have not done this for my own honor, or to make money. All I did was invest my full effort, so that we can have a world where a strong and true peace takes root. For as long as I have been doing this work, I have never been lonely. This is because, ultimately, peace is the desire of every person in the world. It is strange, though. Even though everyone wants peace, it still has not come.

It is easy to talk about peace. But to bring peace is not easy. This is because people push aside the most elemental truth needed to bring about a world of peace. They pretend not to know this truth is there. Before we talk about peace among individuals or among nations, we must talk about peace between ourselves and God.

Each religion today thinks of itself as the highest, rejecting and looking down on other religions. It is not right to build fences against other religions and denominations.

A religion is like a wide river flowing toward an ideal, peaceful world. The river flows for long distances before it comes to the wide expanse of peace. On its way, many streams flow into it. The streams cease to be streams from the point they meet the river. From that point, they, too, become a part of the river. In this way, they become one.

The river does not reject any of the streams that flow into it. It accepts them all. It embraces all the streams and forms a single flow as it continues toward the ocean. People in the world today do not understand this simple truth. The streams that seek out the river and flow into it are the numerous religions and denominations of today. Each stream traces its origin to a different spring, but they are all going to the same destination. They are seeking the ideal world overflowing with peace.

Peace will never come to this earth unless we first tear down the walls between religions. For thousands of years, religions have grown in alliance with particular ethnic groups, and so they are surrounded by high cultural walls. Tearing these down is an extremely difficult task. For thousands of years, each religion has surrounded itself with such high walls, insisting that it is the only correct religion. In some cases, religions have expanded their influence and entered into conflicts and fights with other religions, using God's name in places that had nothing to do with His will.

The will of God lies in peace. A world fragmented by differences in nationality, race, and religion, where people attack and fight one another and shed one another's blood, is not what God wants. When we shed blood and fight each other in His name, we only cause Him pain. A world torn to shreds has been created out of the desires of people to promote their own wealth and glory. It does not represent the will of God. God clearly told me so. I am only His errand boy, receiving His words and carrying them out on earth.

The path to bring about a world of peace, in which religions and races become united, has been exhausting. Many times, I was rejected by people, or my own abilities fell short, but I could not put aside this mission. When members and colleagues who worked with me would cry out in anguish because of the difficulty of the task, I would even feel envious of them.

"If you decide this path isn't for you, you have the option to stop and turn back," I told them. "Or if you try and try and still can't accomplish it, you have the option to die trying. But you should pity me," I said. "I am a person with no such options."