

Past and Future Generations

Sun Myung Moon

August 1, 1976

Tarrytown, New York



Who is going to be responsible for this world? Indeed, men are responsible. When we say men, we mean men and women. The problem is what kind of men and women can be responsible for this world? A very handsome man or a beautiful woman? We cannot be that simple. The beauty of a person's face cannot be a qualification to be responsible for this world. Not only man is important but there are many other factors involved, such as money, and the system of organization. But everything hinges upon one key element: man himself.

What kind of man are we talking about here? A wise man or a foolish man? I'm sure every one of you agrees that it must be a man of wisdom. But what kind of wisdom? It could never be the man who leads a most prosperous and wonderful life only for himself. The wisdom of man has to be a factor to contribute to world history. Furthermore, that wisdom should transcend and penetrate all national and racial barriers and be a universal philosophy.

Actually, it all comes down to one man, one central person, who will lead the entire human race and the entire universe. Black people might want to have that man be a black man, yellow people might want him to come from the yellow race, and white people might look for him among whites. But the ultimate responsibility for the world ends up in one man. In that one man new history begins. There have been so many billions of men and women who have lived, but actually in the sight of God that one man is the key. So what kind of wisdom should that one key man possess? That is the problem. That man must understand the value of the universe. That one man must be in a position to bring the solution to the fundamental problem common to all mankind. That one man must exemplify the unchangeable and priceless value of all men. In other words, he must set the standard of value that will never tarnish - but remains for eternity.

True love, true life

Then let us consider what kind of value that can be. Can it be power? Will power remain for eternity? Can it be wealth? Or knowledge? No, it is love. That love does not originate from that one man alone, however. True love cannot be generated by one man alone. True love always comes in a circuit, and a circuit always has two poles, a subject and object. Then love is one qualification to be possessed by the key or universal man. What is next? Second, most importantly, he must possess true life. We have only one life to live, and the key question is whether we are really leading the most valuable, honorable and truthful life possible. Are you? Everyone is concerned about this, but everyone's standard of value for life is different. Among a thousand men you would find a thousand different standards of value. No real absolute standard has been established. To some people honor, dignity, prestige and a life of luxury have great value, while others value a simple and humble lifestyle.

Is there anyone who would volunteer to die for no reason at all? Even a murderer, for example, who has killed another person and certainly deserves that his own life be taken, is very terrified about and reluctant to face his own execution. Even though he killed another person, he doesn't want to die. Do you understand that psychology, that feeling?

Then when we talk about life, what kind of life are we talking about? Are we talking about the 80, 90, or 100 years we spend upon the earth before death: Or are we talking about life that endures for eternity with no change in the standard of value? What kind of eternity are we talking about, our earthly, miserable existence, or some elevated, heavenly existence in which we want to remain for eternity? We are concerned not only about eternity, but we are paying a great deal of attention to the quality of that eternity. Everyone wants to spend eternity in a high, honorable place.

The key fundamental factors of all mental life are love and life. Then where can we find true love and true life? What is the source? Those who think you are the source of that love and that life, raise your hands. No one? You are proud young men and women of America, first class citizens, yet still you don't have confidence that you are the source of life and love? Do you think we can find that true love and true life in the president's office at a distinguished university, or in the work place of a Nobel Prizewinner? Are they in a position to give out true love and true life? No, no one, including Reverend Moon, can say, "I am the source of true life and true love." We know that our earthly life span is less than 100 years, so any man who says that he is the source of life and love cannot be trusted, not even Reverend Moon. We could perhaps believe it at this particular time while he is alive and teaching, but in less than 100 years Reverend Moon will no longer remain on earth. So man's ambition and desire for true life and true love is a great and eternal one, but man's reality, his temporal life, is a miserable one leading to a destiny of decay.

Man needs an unchanging God

If God did not exist, man would have to create an original concept of God. It is absolutely necessary for men to have an almighty, unique, unchanging and absolute God, with unchanging thoughts throughout eternity. He could not be an ideal God if He changed His mind from morning to evening. Do you like men with changeable ideas and a changing attitude from morning to night? But aren't you like that? In the morning you're thinking one way, but by evening you are already discouraged and thinking something else. Even though some of us are weak in this way and change our minds from morning to evening, we still have at least one thing in common: we all value a man with an unchangeable and eternal type of personality. We can admire and respect him, isn't this true? All men want that. It's our common goal. Let's imagine that there was no God. Then we would have to create a concept or hypothesis of a God, a conceptual God, a fake God, attributing to him the characteristics of being eternal, unchangeable and absolute. Without such a subject, this world has no central point to rally around, and man's problems can never be solved.

So who are the men of wisdom? They are the men who think deeply, but not about how to make money, how to live more luxuriously, or how to succeed in business. I am not talking about that kind of thinking. Men of wisdom are those who think deeply about God and His characteristics, and His relationship with man. Without this kind of deep and serious thinking about this most fundamental problem of man, the world cannot survive. Do you understand? Man's reality is such that we need even an artificial God. Without some sort of God, fake or real, we cannot solve our human problems.

How exciting it is, therefore, that we do not need to create an artificial God. God exists. He is real. Once we recognize this, what a great gospel it is. A man, who is seeking to solve man's fundamental problems, must seek God, because without God men's problems cannot be solved. Once you find the eternal unchanging God above you, then that discovery is truly electrifying to you. Would you rather have an artificial God or a real God? (Real God!) Why is that? The artificial God cannot react, but the real God can react and you receive stimulation from Him. In other words, when you do something, He responds. Only the real God can do that. When you extend energy to the real God, a give and take relationship takes place, and a reciprocal relationship can be formed. In other words, it is not a one-way street, but a two-way street. That's why we need a real God. If you try to make a relationship with a dummy God, no matter how much energy you pour forth, there can be no reaction, no reciprocation. Therefore there's no energy generated. So if you try to relate with a dummy or conceptual subject, trying to be its object, no matter what you do, there's no energy, no circuit formed, no give and take of a reciprocal relationship. Therefore no energy is created. How long -- how many days or years -- could your happiness last with that dummy God?

You must know God exists

The greatest contribution one can make to mankind throughout history is to find God and to testify that He exists. This is the greatest possible contribution to history. Do you know that God exists? How certain are you? Even if your neck were chopped off, you would not relinquish or alter your belief? Do you think

God exists or do you know God exists? Who can guarantee to you that God exists? Can your father or your teacher guarantee to you that God exists? You yourself must know it to the depths of your being.

So what kind of man are you, to be able to guarantee that God exists? God would not want His existence guaranteed by a swindler, a liar or a lazy person. He would feel terrible to hear such a person testify to Him. The problem is whether or not we are the kind of persons God can willingly accept to testify to Him. He loves to hear the right kind of people say, "I know that God exists." Are you confident you are such persons? Do you really know that God exists? How much do you know? How about the equivalent of one thin hair? If somebody pulls one little thin hair from the back of my head, do I know it or not? So even though you don't know much about God, if you pull just one tiny hair from the back of God's head, if you know even that much about God, you really know a great deal. Even pulling just one thin hair from the back of God, you can attract God's attention, because He will turn around and look at you. Do you know even that much? It's very little, but at least it's one way to know God and attract His attention.

So you know God. Are you satisfied to know just one thin hair of God, or do you want to know His whole being from top to bottom including His heart? (Whole Being!) Aren't you greedy! So I trust you that you know God, and you will guarantee God's existence. Would you swap that knowledge for billions of dollars and deny God? (No!) How about if the entire population of America rose up against you and demanded that you deny God's existence, would you do it? (No!) What if the entire human race rose up against you and commanded you to ... many of us are actually willing and eager to live a life of religious discipline? Those who wish to live this kind of life, please raise your hands. In other words, it's no fun. In the religious life there are absolute limitations. It's not the kind of life where you can do anything you want. As a religious man, you must see only certain things with your two eyes, rather than exercising your entire vision. You have a fist and sometimes want to seek revenge, but instead the religious life brings the fist inside. You must be patient and you must withstand insults and injuries. That's the religious life. It's definitely not the life of freedom, of doing everything you want. Do you like that kind of life of limitations? (Yes!) Those persons who said yes are actually lying. You're crazy. Even I myself did not desire to live that kind of religious life with so much discipline and limitation.

I have now become the focus of so much controversy, and the government, the New York Times, the Washington Post and everyone every day is trying daily to tear me apart. Is there anyone here who would like to hear such criticisms every day? No one wants to live and work under such a barrage of criticism. Then why do we have to do it? Even under such unpleasant circumstances, why do we have to persevere? I must go on simply because I am doing not my own will but God's will. Whether I like it or not, God wants it that way, and therefore I will go. That's the religious way of life. No matter what kind of hardships or tribulations we must endure, we will follow heaven's unchangeable order. Therein lies our value.

Making the impossible possible

Then among all the saints who is the greatest or central one? It is the person who can pioneer and make the impossible possible to fulfill the will of God. If any such saint exists, he is indeed the central saint. God cannot trust man. Man has proven himself untrustworthy in the sight of God. However, if there is one man who can say, "God, even though You cannot do a certain thing, I want to do it Your way. I want to represent You and I want to make Your impossible job possible." If one person can make that kind of statement with conviction in the sight of God, God can smile at him. Are you the one? Or are you the one who gives up in defeat? You say you can make the impossible possible, but I cannot trust you. Even if someone poked out one of your eyes, would you still be determined to persevere? Every morning when you looked into the mirror and saw only one eye, would you still have no regrets? Or would you wish you had two eyes again? Would you think, "Instead of accepting God and going this path, I would rather have my two eyes?" For the sake of God would you be willing, if necessary, to sacrifice even your other eye? There are two types of persons: One says, "For the sake of God there is nothing I cannot sacrifice, even both my eyes." The other says, "Oh, God, why did you take my left eye? Can't You please put it back for me?" Which type are you, the first or the second? (First!) "Even if my life is taken and my head is chopped off, still I will never change." Are you that kind of person?

What kind of God is He? We must understand that God loves us not just for ourselves but for the entire world. He loves the entire world. Therefore you must offer yourself to God to be used as a living sacrifice for the salvation of the world. You must think that to serve as such a sacrifice is your greatest honor.

God has a great gift for us, the most unique and the most invincible gift. However, one must deserve that gift. Otherwise God's gift cannot be freely given. To deserve that gift, you must show your determination to persevere for God's cause, no matter what sacrifice it may demand. That's the only qualification to be accepted in the sight of God and to receive God's blessing. There is no other way. Do you understand?

Jesus Christ exemplified such sacrifice in his life. God had to sacrifice him to save the world, but did Jesus complain or accuse God for giving him such tribulation and suffering? Not at all. Jesus said, "Father, for the sake of Your will I would die 1,000 times. Forgive our enemies. I will die for them.

Father, don't worry about me; worry about them." From this we can see that Jesus Christ was really a genius in religion. He was really the greatest person under the sun, because he knew the secret of God. He held fast to that secret and never abandoned it. Similarly, don't you think that God and I, as the leader of the Unification Church, take comfort in seeing you work day and night, bubbling with enthusiasm, going on and on without even being asked, working harder and harder and achieving more and more? Would God curse such a person or find comfort in him?

God needs loyalty

We say that we want to become saints and live sacred lives, but that life is not an easy one. There is no freedom in that life. You must give up your own will and live for God's will. That's the only way to become a saint. Put yourself in God's place for a minute. What kind of person does God really need? The person who has a purpose and a goal and a plan of action, the person most loyal to the cause. Then what quality does God seek most? Is He looking for men with money? Men with knowledge, wisdom or power? Does God need the most handsome men and beautiful women? No. God needs the same thing as in all human relationships: He needs true love and loyalty. This, same principle applies to a nation or a company or any organization. God is love, true love, and once true love is established it will remain for eternity.

God cannot die. It is not possible. It is not within His capabilities. He is the source of true life and true love. What do you think is God's central theme of life? God has mind and body, though of course they are invisible to human eyes. Do you think He lives for His own bodily comfort? How do you know God has a mind and body? We know because we have both mind and body, and therefore our origin or cause must also have both mind and body. It's logical.

Every day we feel threatened or feel afraid. Why do we feel fear? We feel fear when our life or body is threatened. Do you think God wants to be in a position where He has to feel fear? No, God wants to remain in a peaceful place where there is no threat, no fear, for eternity. God is incapable of even thinking that His life will end someday. Therefore when God's standard is that way, then our standard, as His reflections and objects, must be that way too. So how can we live such a life of tranquility for eternity? There's only one way, and it's simple: by uniting completely with that source of tranquility, that source of life.

Let's disregard God for a moment and look at all human life. Where does life originate? Where did your life come from? You say your parents. Yes, your parents gave birth to you as a consequence of their love. A child born out of the true love of his parents is much wiser and happier. But today in America there are so many parents, but not very many children are born out of the true unity of love.

So then which comes first, life or love? (Love.) Then what about God, what can we say about God? God is the same. Even in God, love comes first. He wants to remain in the joy generated by love. In other words, even before life, love is the subject or goal. We cherish our life and life is precious to us because with life alone we can enjoy or stimulate or generate love. Because of love, life is precious. For example, which one sounds more sweet to you, that God is love, or God is life? Speaking about your husband, which is sweeter to say, "My husband is my love" or "My husband is my life?" No one dislikes love. So the decisive conclusion is that God is love, instead of God is life.

As I said earlier, God has mind and body. Mind or body, which one is subject? Certainly it is the mind. Therefore in our own lives the body is not the ultimate goal. Our minds must feel the joy of love, the joy of life.

What kind of person are you?

What about you? What kind of person are you? Are you a person who in the morning thinks one thing and is ecstatically joyful and bubbling with enthusiasm, but in the evening is all drained out? Or are you unchanging morning and evening, day and night, year to year? Are you the first kind of person or the second? Sometimes I wish every Unification Church member even including Bo Hi Pak would be kidnapped. I want you to be tested, to see how unchangeable you are. Imagine you have been kidnapped, blindfolded, gagged, and driven to some unknown place and imprisoned in a dark room. In your mind would you be saying to God, "Don't worry about me. I am not going to change." Or would you be saying, "Oh, boy, what can I do? Please, God, get me out of here!" I myself have been held in the worst possible prisons in Communist North Korea. Every time I was chained and pulled into the prison camp, do you think I said, "Oh, God, don't worry about me. I will never be defeated." Or do you think Reverend Moon said, "Boy, what should I do? Somebody should come and rescue me. God, where are You?" This was the same kind of test, and once I pledged my loyalty to God I never changed. That was 20 years ago. Now today I am in America, and no matter what America does to me, even if I am put into prison in solitary confinement or whatever they may do, nothing can change Reverend Moon even one iota.

What kind of teacher or leader would you like to have, one who is changeable like the summer weather,

or unchanging like a rock? Like a rock. How about you, are you rocks, too? I don't want to hear you say, "Well, I might change, but Reverend Moon does not change." I don't need the kind of person who says, "Well, I'm weak and I'm vulnerable, and sometimes I change, but I don't want you to change, Father." I want you to say, "Father, I'm a rock. I will never change, and I don't want you to change either." That's the kind of men and women I want. God did not want me to say, "God, please don't change, but if I change, please forgive me." God did not want to hear that kind of statement from Reverend Moon. Instead God wanted to hear him say, "I will never change, even if You change."

Are you going to be that kind of rock? You said yes, but how can I find out if that is true? We have to test you. Do you think the test will be pleasant and good and comfortable? A test is not pleasure or entertainment. No, the test comes as a limitation. You must not be arrogant. You must not see, hear or do certain things. Nobody welcomes such a test. It's human nature. However, what would you do if God calls out to Reverend Moon and the Unification Church saying, "You have assembled here to receive God's blessing. All right, how big of a blessing do you want? A tiny little blessing, or the blessing of heaven and earth including God's heart and His entire inheritance?" Of course you want the entire blessing including the heart of God. That means that you must be ready to withstand the universal test. You must be victorious in that test in order to be entitled to that blessing. This means we must be ready to undertake any test, no matter how difficult, even if the entire world were to come against us and at every door someone came out and tried to club us.

Be ready for tests

All we are really saying is that to be entitled for the universal blessing we must be ready for the universal test. You are saying that you are ready. Do you want the blessing equivalent to America's blessing, or even exceeding the blessing of America? When you say "exceeding" it means you are confident to withstand tribulation or persecution even greater in size than America. Would you like to have a blessing as big as the world? That means you are ready to withstand the tribulation of the same magnitude, not only from this world but including the spirit world, with even God trying to cast you down. Still you are steadfast like a rock-solid mountain and will not change. That is the type of person we must become.

Let's go back to our subject and draw the conclusion. Who is the ancestor of Christianity? Christianity's ancestor is indeed Jesus Christ and his own close disciples. Jesus, the son of God, was the greatest saint of all. Yet what about his disciples, were they all equally great people? No. Were they better than you or inferior to you? I want you to know that if you have made up your mind and determined that you will go on without change for the sake of God and humanity, then you are indeed superior to Peter or any other disciples of Jesus because they changed, but you will not change. In this matter you are superior to them. Have confidence. In Christianity have they left the right tradition to posterity and future generations? No, they left a tradition of betrayal.

Then who will be the Unification Church's ancestors? You say we are. Indeed, we are the pioneers and will be remembered as the church's ancestors. But what kind of people are we? Are you centered upon yourself, your society, your nation, or upon the world and the universe? (World and universe.) Jesus's disciples did not think of themselves as men who represented the world. They thought of themselves as individuals, or as Jews; they did not think beyond Judaism to the world. But Jesus was different. Jesus, even though he risked being denied or being killed because of it, though not in terms of the Jewish people, or Israel, but in terms of the world and universe. That was Jesus' philosophy. Then who is the real ancestor of Christianity? Not the disciples, who do not deserve that title, but Jesus Christ alone.

God likes a universal person

Do you suppose God thinks in terms of one individual or in terms of the world? Then what kind of person does God like most? God likes a universal person who shares God's own philosophy. God's philosophy goes beyond the nation and beyond even the world. When you love the world, that includes loving your own nation, your own tribe, your own society, your family and yourself. When you love the world, you love them all. God is seeking as a champion the person who has at heart the interests of the whole of humanity. Does God want you to become just a member of the Unification Church, or does God want you to be an individual who is a member of the church but is dedicating himself to the world and humanity?

If we really love the world, can there be segregation between white and yellow and black? There is no question but that this is impossible. Thus in the sight of God America must be ashamed. That there is a problem in this country between white and black shows that Christianity has been a failure in this country, where we find white-oriented churches and black-oriented churches. When the new universal age comes, a nation pursuing a racist course will be a failure. Do you understand?

Then where can we find a church which can bring the new universal awakening? Here in the Unification Church you can trust that we are pursuing a universal course. Since I have known God so deeply, I have become virtually color blind. History demands a man and a church which will set the universal tradition transcending race and color, transcending nationalism.

So it is our responsibility to become honorable ancestors, admirable forefathers in this universal movement. Even though you might die, you must leave behind the right tradition even at the moment of your death. It's your responsibility as the ancestors or forefathers of this movement. Millions of generations will come after you, with millions of children. I want you to be respected and honored by them as a great ancestor, a great forefather of this movement. Our goal is to forge ahead to win the salvation of the world. We are proclaiming the liberation of God. We will liberate God from His sorrow. That is our goal. No matter how many years it takes, humanity is destined to accomplish this goal. It is not just by our choice. It is our destiny. There is no other way. America must be truly liberated from the bondage of sin. Both the Free World and the Communist World must be liberated as well. Unless humanity is liberated from sin, God cannot be liberated. God and all of human history have been waiting for the birth of such children who can undertake this mission bravely and without fear. And we are the children who have been chosen to become those champions.

Become an honorable ancestor

You have two ways to go: you can become an honorable ancestor or forefather, or you can go the other way, like Jesus' disciples, and betray the movement and go away. There are only these two choices. We must know that. God was betrayed by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We are here to indemnify Adam and Eve's sin. Jesus and God were also betrayed by the disciples of Jesus, and we are here to pay the indemnity and restore that betrayal. That is our mission. In order to inherit the true love and true life from God, we must be willing and able to sacrifice even our fallen life in this degenerated world.

Adam and Eve, due to their failure of loyalty, have been criticized throughout history. Jesus Christ's disciples have been criticized for 2,000 years for their lack of loyalty. By the same token, our actions now will be remembered and either acclaimed as honorable or criticized as shameful for countless centuries to come. So even at the time of death we must be concerned about setting the right tradition. Can you do it? So even if you are in prison you must worry about only one thing: what kind of tradition am I leaving behind?

So let us pledge to God, pledge to humanity, pledge to the universe, that we shall become those honorable ancestors, those honored forefathers. We will build a tradition of honor, not shame. "That is our goal, and I can do it." This is the day to swear that pledge to God. Let us do so by raising both hands.

God bless you.

Let us pray.