

Bequeathing the Tradition of True Love

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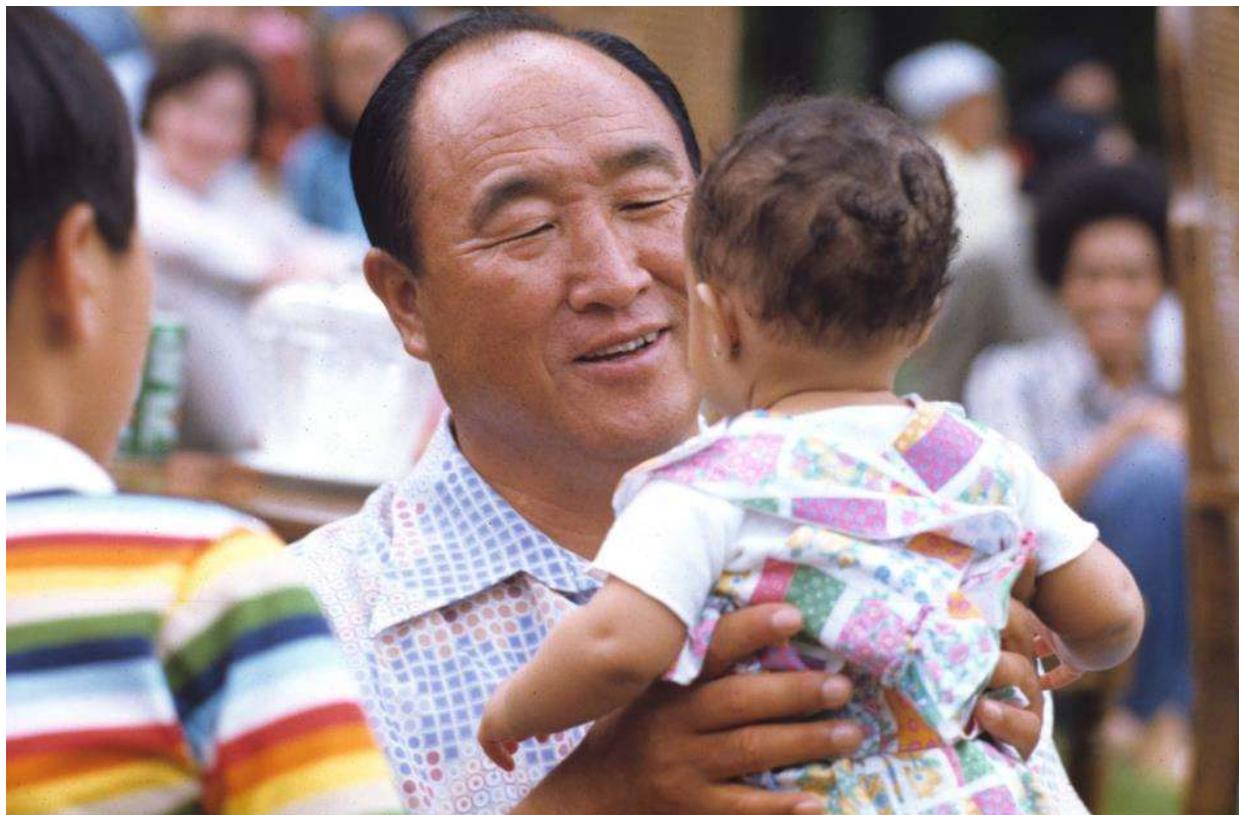


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I would like to extend a heartfelt welcome to all of you at this Second Assembly of the World's Religions, where we will discuss the transmission of our religious heritage to our youth and society.

In this time of grave significance, a time of transition in human history, I am convinced that all of us, as religious leaders, feel the dispensational call of duty, and as I stand here I am brimming over with recollections and expectations. As we are only too aware, the founders of all the great religions suffered due to lack of understanding by the people of the world. They endured extreme persecution. In pioneering the way of truth, they had to overcome physical and spiritual opposition, and even encounter death.

Yet, despite their great accomplishments, the paths actually taken by religions constantly diverged from what the founders originally intended. Religions have often fallen prey to divisions, contradictions and disharmony within themselves, and have even fought one another. In today's world, wrongful religious zeal and narrow-mindedness continue to induce antagonism and hatred. Furthermore, faith often has been espoused as a formality yet disregarded in practice. This has given rise to social problems. These are clearly not the true objectives of religion, and we must not bequeath such a mistaken tradition to our descendants.

Then what is the true purpose of religion? What is the correct tradition to bequeath?

In order to understand the purpose of religion, we first need to understand God's ideal for the creation. For God, who is absolute and eternal, why was creation necessary? What was it that God needed absolutely? Did He need material goods, knowledge or power? Those have been available to God at all times, and He can regulate them as He wants. By contrast, true love can be expressed only with a reciprocating partner. Without a counterpart, even God cannot express love. God created the world to realize His ideal of true love.

As we observe the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms, we see that they are created with relationships between pairs of subject and object partners that can respond to each other in harmony, based on love. Such relationships are found on each level of the creation. Human beings are at the center of the creation and were created to be at the highest level, the closest to God. Human beings are the partners of God's love. Thus, we are the object partners of God's true love, and without us God's goal of true love cannot be accomplished. God established His true love as the highest and absolute value, and that love is His ideal for the creation. Even the absolute God Himself likes to absolutely surrender to true love. From this perspective, we can readily see how high is the value of each person, as God's own object partner of true

love.

God originated His ideal of creation with love for the sake of others. He gives and gives, without even remembering that He gave. Through this process, He actualizes true love. God began His creation by investing without limit.

All people are created so that they can live in harmony eternally through God's principle of investing for the sake of others. Man came into being for the sake of woman, and woman for the sake of man. Based on God's ideal for the creation, which is the giving of true love, both man and woman are born to give love and become husband and wife. By doing so, they become the object partners of God's vertical love. This is the very purpose of their existence.

Men and women who are about to be married would like their spouses to be better than themselves. Parents, too, want their children to be better and greater. These attributes come directly from God. These desires are based on true love. It is the same with God. He, too, wants His object partners of love to be better. Therefore, He invests Himself 100 percent over and over again so that He can create better object partners, and He continues to manifest true love in this manner.

God, the origin of true love, has been longing to bequeath from the Fathers position this absolute and unchanging true love for humanity to inherit. Perfect harmony and unity are realized through true love. Therefore, God can perfectly bequeath His true love to human beings, who are His object partners. Not only that, because of the attributes of true love, God can bestow upon us the right to live together with Him and the right to share absolute value with Him. From this perspective, we can live with God as His children and have the same value as God Himself. Furthermore, based on true love, we can share the inheritance with each other, living together and becoming equal. Thus, in the ideal world, all individuals, having God's true love at their center, will possess true ideals and happiness and will transmit them to their spouse and offspring. This would be the world of God's original ideal.

Today's world, however, is far from the world God intended. Contrary to the original world, it has degraded itself to become a world of hell, full of sin, struggle and pain. In the world of nature and the spirit world, the original order of God's creation still exists. However, the human world on earth became ill, and this inflicted damage on the natural world and the spirit world.

In religious terms, this sick, broken human world is called the fallen world. To bring this fallen world back to its original condition and order, God carries out a dispensation for salvation. Thus, as I have been teaching, God's work of salvation is the work of restoration, or synonymously, the work of re-creation.

According to Heaven's Will, religion has played the main role in the dispensation for restoration. The purpose of religion is to restore this world, first forming the original ideal family, and then establishing the ideal world based on God's true love and the thought of True Parents. The mission of the Messiah is the mission of True Parents, to realize God's love in this world, and we are all called by God to pursue and accomplish this mission. The mission of the Messiah is thus the cosmic mission that all religions are now undertaking; namely, to expel Satan, who has been rebelling against God, and end Satan's culture, and to transform Satan's lineage to God's lineage, to bring about the God-centered, ideal world.

As described in the Bible, Adam and Eve, the first son and daughter of God, were to grow in God's true love, receive the blessing of marriage and give birth to sinless children. Thus they, in the image and likeness of God, would have become True Parents and would have entered heaven. In this way, the world was to have become the kingdom of heaven on earth, where we would inherit God's true love, true life and true lineage. God's ideal family was to expand to realize a world where God alone would reign.

Adam and Eve, however, engaged in illicit love before reaching maturity. As a result, the archangel became Satan, Adam and Eve became evil ancestors, and the world of death began. The world has become one in which people have Satan's lineage.

Satan became a god of lewdness, and God hates lewdness the most. Because of lewdness, America and Europe today face the fate that befell Sodom, Gomorrah and Rome. What Adam and Eve sowed in their youth, the world is now harvesting. This situation provides unmistakable evidence that we are living in the Last Days. The world needs to find the person who can liberate it from Satan's love, life and lineage. This person is the Messiah.

By the failure of Adam and Eve to fulfill their responsibility, God lost His true children, and all people were left without True Parents. The results have been tragic. As a result of the Fall, the true human beings who could fulfill the true love of God and the ideal of True Parents were lost. In order to rectify the tragic failures of the Fall and restore people to the original condition, God established religions. Thus, the Messiah comes with the awesome task to stand as the True Parent, to uproot the false root planted by the human ancestors who became false parents, and to realize the ideal world of creation.

God's original ideal did not include establishing a religion or sending a Messiah. God's unchanging purpose has been to realize families, nations and a world of true love. The value of a religion is determined by how much it contributes toward this purpose. From this perspective, religions that are fulfilling their purpose are realizing true love and true families. Conversely, religions that do not contribute toward this end and exist just for their own sake, although claiming to do things in God's name, are failing their true mission.

In a family, the relationships between brothers and sisters exist only on the foundation of having common parents. Thus, before this world can enter the realm of true love and true family, we have to establish the position of True Parents first. I have been called upon by God to help fulfill this very purpose. I have dedicated everything to meet this objective. The Unification movement I have been deploying worldwide, the ecumenical movement, and all other projects I have been sponsoring, covering all fields—academic, educational, media, technical, business, financial and so on—all of these were envisioned with this one purpose. I have suffered persecution and confronted death with only one purpose in mind, namely, that I can live with the heart of True Parents to love people of all races and colors in the world more than loving my own parents who gave birth to me, or my own brothers and sisters.

True love travels along a direct route. It requires no preconditions and nothing can block it. This is the straight path on which we travel correctly only through self-sacrifice. The life of True Parents and the ideal of world peace are directly connected to this path, which all humankind needs to follow. All countries, races, cultures and religions ought to give more than 100 percent for the sake of one another, engaging in generous and harmonious relationships, and in so doing achieve world peace.

Today, I am proposing the inauguration of the Interreligious Federation for World Peace. In the current world situation, we are observing the end of the Cold War and hear of peacemaking between East and West. Overcoming confrontations and divisions, we are heading toward an age of harmonious unity as one world family of brothers and sisters. The last decade before the year 2000 is a precious period when God has allowed us to return to the original world. It is a precious opportunity.

I have already proposed the establishment of an external foundation, namely, the International Federation for World Peace. Thousands of leaders in the United States, Russia and other countries of the world are responding to it enthusiastically. To truly achieve this goal, we also need an internal foundation, and that will be the Interreligious Federation for World Peace.

Many have devoted themselves to seeking true unity and establishing one world. However, true world peace still evades us. Everyone wants peace. First we have to know what is necessary to bring it about. The key lies not in one's spouse, sons and daughters, neighbors, nation or world. It lies right in oneself. It depends on whether one can become a harmonious being, with mind and body in harmony and unity and one's original mind at the center. When a person comes to have the heart of God and True Parents, he or she can begin to live fully for the sake of others and consistently lead a life where true love is at the center, a life in which the person can achieve true peace.

These are the concerns of religion. The role of religions in realizing ultimate world peace is therefore indispensable. Accordingly, all men and women of religion now have to tear down the walls of sectarianism to make themselves available to act with unified religious power, in accordance with God's desires for the greater goal of world peace. Now is the time to reflect on the fact that religious people have not contributed enough to attain world peace. Now is the time for each religion to develop true love, the origin and basic element of world peace, and to practice it faithfully in an all-encompassing movement, the Interreligious Federation for World Peace.

God requires men and women of religion to engage in good practices and set a good example. God does not exist for the sake of religion. Religion was established to achieve the Will of God to restore the world back to its original condition, where people invest again and again for the sake of the world. Any religion with which God wants to work in this world now has to be a religion of true parents. Only a religion with a parental heart, one that practices true love, can accomplish God's Will in this hopelessly complex world situation.

Thus far in history, there have been many religions. Religions have assumed the position of adopted son, stepson, son and so forth. The religions in these positions need to transcend the limited view that their own religion is the best, that only through their religion can world peace be accomplished. Rather, let us eventually unite the teachings of religions in all positions into a religion in the position of true parents. If we do so, the decline that religions are experiencing will end. All religions that exist absolutely for the sake of others, with true love at their center, will unite and march forward to achieve world peace and the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Knowing this, we can proceed to solve the world's urgent problems by the proper practice of religion. We are now faced with the tasks of changing ritualistic faith into living faith, reestablishing a true value perspective out of the many confused value perspectives, restoring the original human nature from

deviated and desolate human nature, elevating the moral standard and resurrecting the decadent culture. All these tasks are to be accomplished by men and women of religion joined together in a movement allied with the eternal God, practicing the true love of True Parentism.

The youth of today's world are intuitively recognizing this great opportunity that lies before us. As true religious leaders, we have to act in the capacity of true teachers of these youth. Beginning with true love, which is the standard of eternal, unchanging and absolute value, we have to achieve unity of mind and body. We also have to connect and harmonize the two worlds that are represented by spiritual and materialistic ideologies. That will create the foundation for world peace. On this foundation, we need to unite the inner world of religions, then unite the political world of nations, and eventually achieve eternal world peace. In realizing this goal, all men and women of religion have to play a responsible role.

Many young people hunger for true love, which is manifested by living for the sake of others. We religious leaders must exemplify God's true love and the absolute value of the way of true parents. We have to make certain that religious traditions travel on the path of true love. By doing so, God and humankind united together will march forward to a new world of hope and achieve God's ideal of creation. Therefore, let us clearly show the world and our youth that a new age of peace, true family and true humankind has begun.

In conclusion, it is my wish that your discussions during this conference will help in the realization of the true purpose of religion and the discovery of true love, and will become an invaluable contribution to the world. May God's blessings be with you always.