

Call to Action for UTS Graduates

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The following speech by Dr. Hugh Spurgin, President of the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS), to the graduates of the Seminary and of Barrytown College of UTS was given during the commencement ceremony in Barrytown, NY on May 23, 2015.

Graduates, I congratulate you on your achievements and your success! The degree to which a school fulfills its purpose is not measured solely by instilling intellectual understanding in its students. A seminary, in particular, is measured by how effective it has been in providing tools for success in ministry, professional life and interpersonal relationships. During your studies, you learned that the path to becoming a person of integrity is achieved by practicing what our Founders have called “true love”, which means forming a meaningful relationship with God and with others.

God sent Jesus and our True Parents to save the world, not to create either a new religion or a new denomination. On the foundation of their sacrifice, God’s desire is to bring love, hope, unity and harmony among all people, so that the world may become “One Family under God.” As graduates of UTS, we hope that you will become leaders who will help to create the Kingdom of God on earth. The purpose of attending an Interfaith Seminary is to learn to love one’s neighbor. This task, which goes beyond the boundaries of a particular religion, touches the core principle that our Founders taught us, which is that we are all part of “One Family under God.”

Graduates, I have some questions to ask each of you. The first four questions are rhetorical, which means that you do not need to answer publicly. However, for the fifth question I expect you to respond out loud with a clear answer either of “yes” or of “no”.

1. Do you understand the goal and vision of our Founders? The answer that our Founders gave to us is to realize God’s ideal of “One Family under God”, which we can call the Kingdom of Heaven on earth or Cheon Il Guk,

2. Do you know why our Founders created an Interfaith Seminary? The Rev. Sun Myung Moon indicated that a major reason why he came to America was to start a seminary, so that members of the Unification movement would be able to interact and to dialogue with ministers and elders from other denominations as peers.

3. Do you know your value and who you are? You are the Light of the World. Indeed, you are the physicians who will care for those who are sick – mentally, spiritually and physically. Through you, God wants to realize His desire for peace on this earth and goodwill toward humankind.

4. What should your attitude be toward others and toward the world? You should do the will of God and be public minded. You should be willing to sacrifice yourself to save others.

I would like to ask the fifth question and request that you respond in the affirmative to the following call to action for you and the UTS diaspora worldwide:

5. Are you ready to sacrifice yourself so that others can know the love and heart of our Heavenly Parent and be blessed by God? (To which the graduates responded in unison with a clear “YES”.)

Then God will work through you and through the alumni of your alma mater to heal and restore this world.

Finally, I ask, what is the role of America in God’s Providence?

For more than 200 years, America has been the hope of the world. No one can deny the influence of America everywhere in the world for the past century. However, the prestige of America is at a low point.

Why is America in decline today? The reason is that America is not serving other people around the world. We are not living up to the basic values and principles on which this nation was founded.



The Founders of UTS indicated that America will prosper if it serves the world. If our nation retreats and withdraws from the world, then its economy will waken and its moral fiber will deteriorate. If the American people love others worldwide, then America's fortune will change, and we will continue to be blessed and will prosper. Providentially, if America serves the world as a good, elder brother, then it will prosper. America's greatness and prosperity is linked directly to how it responds to the will of God to create the Kingdom of God and thus peace on earth.

Graduates! You are not graduating today from a denominational seminary that has a limited, doctrinal perspective. UTS is an interfaith seminary that started from its Judeo-Christian roots, but which has expanded to embrace all people and all faiths. You are being asked to educate leaders throughout the United States about these basic principles of the universe and of God's desire to establish "One Family under God" for people of all races, nationalities and faiths (or non-faiths).

As UTS alumni, you must rise up, take the lead and light the path for your fellow human beings. Through you, God wants to save the world and to build "One Family under God". You are God's ambassadors of peace and God's representatives on earth.

You must challenge the evil that exists in the world, and through your blood, sweat and tears be successful in everything that you do. The Almighty God has prepared many, good people in every church, community and career who are waiting for you to demonstrate the love of God and the truth of God's word as revealed through the scriptures.

I urge you to become ambassadors of peace who will help to achieve God's ideal of "One Family under God." When your life is finished, you should be able to testify to your accomplishments as a person of integrity whom God trusted with the responsibility to love and to help others.

May God be with you and your families, as you embark on your illustrious career and on this journey to bring true love and peace to a confused world.