

Send Me -- Farewell to FFWPU USA Sermon at Belvedere

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Dr. Balcomb farewell service at Belvedere

First of all, thank you, to all of you, to all of our family. He's a real New Yorker, born in the Bronx. And still at college up in Rochester. So even while my wife and I are in Europe, please have a mind for him as the last Balcomb in New York. The others have fled to California or Texas.

Well, it's been a busy three weeks. Last week, I was in Berlin, as you may have seen in the weekly update. The weekend before that, I was in Austria, in Vienna, and the weekend before that, I think I was still president [of FFWPU USA]. So, life goes quick.

We have already been here a long time, so I will try to give a five-minute sermon. On the topic, "Send me!" I've spoken here many times, on the topic, "Heed the call." One of the most interesting things to me is how God calls people and how they respond. Because that really sets the standard for a person's whole life. Father said, "The way you meet me [True Parents], will determine your eternal destiny."

If you meet me well, then your future will be blessed beyond all imagination. But if we meet in the wrong way, then difficulties may lie ahead. The fact is, God, I think, prefers to call young people. For example, he called Samuel as a young boy of 10 or 11. I've spoken on the topic of how God called him even though Samuel didn't know God at the time, and commissioned him to a great work. God called Jesus at the age of 12, when he was to be found in the synagogue preaching and speaking with the teachers. Of course, God called both True Father and True Mother as teenagers. In the service that was cut so short in New Jersey, I was trying to talk about Jeremiah, who was called as a young person.

So, God calls like to young people. Why? Because young people are flexible, they're open, and can make very sudden decisions (audience laughs). That can be a strength and a weakness. The other night, I was in England and my son called from California. My son called and told me, "Dad, I got a new job. I'm going to be the manager of a luxury apartment complex." That's kind of ambitious when you've never managed to fix or clean your own room! And don't own any tools and haven't been trained. Well, that job didn't last very long, but he's in a new one. But, on the other hand, I felt good. I felt good that he wouldn't let concepts get in the way of what he can do. So God definitely likes to call young people.

There are a few young people here. I want you to be attentive to the possibility that God will call you with a personal message because he wants to. He needs you. But God also calls older and more experienced people as well. And honestly speaking, quite often, we have objections. For example, Moses, when called by God, said "You know what? I'm not a good public speaker. I stutter. I stumble." And God, of course, said, "Don't worry about that. I'll send your brother to fight with you -- no, I mean, to speak on your behalf." (Audience laughs). Jonah said, "No, I can't go. I'm a member of the chosen people of Israel. I'm not going to go and speak to the garbage pagans in Nineveh! They won't listen, anyway." He, of course, turned the other direction, and got swallowed by a whale. And even St. Paul. Think about St. Paul. He

said, "God, I'm already doing your will, even though I'm persecuting and killing Christians, I am doing it for the right purpose."

So, the fact is, that as adults, we tend to assess the task that is being asked of us, to measure ourselves against the task that is being called for, and to conclude that we are not qualified. Anyone have that experience? The rest of you must be lying, because the truth is, we are not qualified. But I have good news for you. God is not necessarily looking for qualified or capable people. God is looking for people who are willing to take a challenge, and that includes everybody in this room today.



Either way, that is the reason I like the response from Isaiah. Do you remember the reading we had from Isaiah, Chapter 6? And this was the exact word that came to my mind just before True Mother called me to take this new mission in the Middle East, Europe, and Eurasia. So, for those of you who need a refresher: Isaiah was born probably around 600 and 660 B.C. It was a time when Israel was already divided, and the glory days of David and Solomon were over. There was a lot of trouble. Isaiah could see that the trouble came because people did not listen to God. He didn't exclude himself. He had a vision, in which he saw the court of God, and he was terrified. He said, "I'm not qualified." Actually, he said, "I'm a sinful man with filthy lips. And I come from a people with filthy lips." What does that mean? It means, we are not used to speaking about God. We don't put God first in our lives. We think of ourselves.

But God did not take that as a disqualification, and sent an angel with a burning coal. I have thought about this, it is a spiritual experience of course. But if you can for moment, imagine what it might be like to feel a burning coal placed at your mouth, and was told, "You're cleansed, you're purged, you're forgiven." And then comes the question we studied in the scripture. When God asked, "Who shall we call? Who should we send?" And Isaiah, not thinking of the obstacles or his own lack of ability, said, "Send me!" That word remains three thousand years later because God was pleased to hear it. God was pleased to hear someone say, "Okay, send me. I am not perfect. I might not be qualified. I have a lot of issues. But if you can work with me, send me." It turns out this is the exact experience that both Father and Mother had with God.

I have been really inspired to read and reread the autobiography and the scriptures—particularly of Father in the early years. I must admit, for a long time I thought it was pretty straight forward. Father met Jesus, Jesus called Father, Father said Yes, and so off to the races. But it was not like that at all. In fact, Father said that for some years he got nothing at all. He was waiting for that memo: "What's the job? What do you have to do?" There was no job description. There was no guidance, so he sought to find it himself. He got three bibles. An English one, a Japanese one, and a Korean one, he opened them all, he studies, he took notes, covered the pages with notes until the day came when he turned them over and realized the answer is not there. "I am not going to find it there," he said to himself.

We know now that the Divine Principle took about ten years to draft. Sometimes I thought, well how did that happen? It's 500 pages. 10 years is 5650 days. So that means about a paragraph a day, a page a week. What kind of prophet is that? But it was actually worse than that. Father said that years would pass by with no guidance, no word. Sometimes, he thought he'd found something, but then he realized he was wrong. This happened again, and again, and again. Until finally, after many years, he said the

breakthrough came. Interestingly, he said, "It hadn't come because my prayer was not enough, my dedication was not enough."

That, to me, is astounding, because no one has ever been more dedicated, more prayerful than True Father. But he said, "My prayer and seriousness was not enough. But when it was God turned on like a movie projector and I saw from the beginning of history, all the incidents and realized at last God's plan for salvation." So it was a very challenging task. I've come to know Mother quite well in the last four, five years. And I realized it is quite challenging to be called to lead, especially when you don't expect it. Leadership calls for sacrifice, but it also calls for confidence. You can't be a leader if you don't have the confidence to go forward, even admitting you might be wrong. God will let you know. If you do nothing, if you don't stand up, if you don't say, "Send me!" then nothing can transpire.



In the second reading, we heard Father say, "Forget about what you've done in the past." Honestly speaking, I think our movement, not just in America, but in Europe, Eurasia, the Middle East, we're desperately in need of revival. And usually, there are two mindsets that get in the way of revival. One, "I've already done my part. I've put in my 30 years, or 40, or 20. It's time for a new generation; I've done enough." But that's not what God thinks. That's why God says, "Forget what you've done in the past." What counts is, what are you going to do from now on?

The second mindset is: "I've screwed up real bad. My life is a mess. There are many problems, maybe my marriage is a problem, my family is a problem, my nation is a problem. How could God use me? I'm out." Again, that's not how God sees it. God's perspective, also from Isaiah 43: Forget about the past. Think on the new thing that I'm going to do."

I've mentioned in Berlin that when we were there, speaking and proclaiming the end of Communism, marching against the Berlin Wall. If we're really honest, I don't think many of us believed it was happening anytime soon. It just didn't look possible. There was an armed enemy with nuclear weapons, a tall wall, and even in the west, the only people who came out to the rally were people who wanted to support Communism. That's how the reality was, but we did it anyway because we had faith. And we were astonished to find just two years later, the wall was gone.

I had my first trip back to Berlin in 30 years to see from the other side what it might have been like to live under Communism and to realize then that God sees things differently. God sees what can be when we fulfill our responsibility. To me, that is the great lesson of the Divine Principle: when we fulfill our responsibility, God's 95% can take charge. When we don't, we're left with 5% or almost nothing.

So, hard though it is to see the extent of True Parents' vision, that 2020 and beyond is a time of healing and kingdom-building, I want to see with eyes of faith. I want to believe God has already prepared the people who will build his kingdom. They may not be members of this church, but they're members of God's family. And they are ready and waiting for God's call. They are also saying, "Send me," just waiting to hear, perhaps from us, the invitation to build that kingdom. So, this might be my last time on True Parents' stage here at Belvedere, but know this for sure: God's kingdom is coming. God will bring about His world of peace. In the program, you'll see Mother's words, "It's not far away." Act on that conviction. Think that today: "Send me. In some small way, send me." If I leave you with anything is to hear that voice, and to answer it from God himself, because we can change America and change Europe. The time is now.