

Dr. Michael Balcomb's Opening Speech at the European Media Workshop

Neumühle, Bad Camberg, Germany, January 5, 2018



How is it possible to reach all the 7,5 billion people on the earth, when we are so few? How are we going to do that practically?

I want to give you an example. There are two well-known American companies, Walmart and Amazon. Walmart was founded four generations ago, and its founders are all billionaires. Walmart is the world's largest retailers with thousands of stores. But it took a long time to get to that level.

But in ten years, Amazon, which hardly owns any stores – it has a few distribution centres – has now more than doubled the market value of Walmart. This is True Mother speaking! She was telling us her reflection on these two companies. She said our movement doesn't have the time to be a Walmart. That would be like trying to be the Episcopal Church, the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church. We just had the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther in Germany two months ago.

We don't have 500 years! We may not even have five years, according to True Mother's time table. That kind of strategy which involves a slow and patient long term building of bricks and mortars and congregation – although it is important – cannot be our only strategy. We need something like Amazon, something that can quickly vault us into the place

where the whole world knows about the True Parents and their message!

But to do that, honestly speaking, it can't be about self-promotion – again, this is True Mother speaking. She said mostly people are not interested in what doesn't bring them benefit. True Parents came to the world to bring the ultimate benefit to humankind. That is to return to the embrace of God, and to be Blessed, to take our rightful position as being the sons and daughters of God and True Parents. However, in order for that to happen, people need to know about it! And, they need to make a conscious decision to want it!

If you think about the Fall of Man and what really happened, Adam and Eve made the wrong decision to exclude God. On that single condition, Satan took human history into darkness for thousands and thousands of years.

Today, God needs people to turn their faces – families, peoples, nations – and ask God, "Please, be involved again in our lives!"

There is a lot of discussion about what is national restoration. In some areas, people feel you have to become the largest church in the country, or even have a majority. I don't believe that! I think national restoration happens according to the Scripture, when a people turn their face to God, and asks His

forgiveness, asks His presence in their lives. God only needs a small condition to be able to work and restore the world.

I am a big believer in the power of True Parents! I don't think it has to take a long time. Mother is convinced it can take a short time! So, she wants us to have the Amazon model. She is an avid watcher of the news. Does anyone know her favourite news station? Remember she is Korean, speaking Korean. Mother is a daily consumer of news. She's also very interested in certain themes and topics, which are reflected in the projects she sponsors. What are some of those projects or areas of interest? Education. Environmental protection. Family. Youth. Refugees. Health. These are things that she's interested in.

Note that none of those are religion! Something to think about, right? None of Mother's primary interests are purely about religion. It's all about things that make for the complete human life.

A long story short: My hope for this workshop is that we gain a sense of confidence that we are on God's winning team! We do have a message that the world needs to hear. But we won't be able to get it there just by telling people we have a message you need to hear! There is a real need to rethink the way we express our teaching, our presence, our value, so that people want to hear it and are interested to hear it.

I think Europe should take the lead in this. I think we have the skill! I think we have the talent! We have an opportunity here that I think is even better than the United States. If you look at the way that the US Media has gone in the last year and a half, it's almost entirely political. Still we haven't reached that stage here in Europe. Why not relaunch here some of the vision that Father had for the media? I was really inspired by hoondokhwe this morning. Father knows that journalists are not all the most ethical people. In fact, privately he once told me that if you meet a journalist, grab him by the balls and don't let go, until he's finished writing the piece you want him to write! You can't trust them at all! That was Father's thinking.

But in public, he would tell them, "Journalists, you are heroes! You are moral heroes! You have a role to play to teach the world." And of course he would say the same thing to professors, to lawyers – I'm not sure about lawyers, but... Almost everyone Father met, he would tell them, "You are special to God, and you are special to the Providence!"

When Mother spoke in the US Senate about a year ago, she told the assembled politicians, senators and congressmen, "You are chosen by God! Don't take lightly the fact that you've been elected to public office. It means you are special people to God!"

Of course, a lot of them may not feel that way, but True Parents' thinking is that everybody – everybody

– is special to God and has a role to play in restoration.

I think this group in particular, we should leave here tomorrow thinking we are special to God. We have a role to play. And this year is going to make a difference. In fact, I have a goal that by the end of this month, every nation will have an official media representative. Every nation! Let's not wait for this, let's not delay on this.

Of course, the national leaders are the team captains. The national leader has to be the one who decides and chooses things. But just as you can't have a soccer team without a goal keeper, we can't continue if we don't attend to this area.

And finally, I want to say that I believe the time is right. In fact, even though in the past there have been a lot of challenges, difficulties, persecution, bad coverage, God has prepared a way to reach the 2020 goal! He's prepared a way for nations to be changed, for people to really understand who True Parents are, and why they are important. If that were not so, I don't think Mother would be pushing us the way she is. She believes it! She believes that despite all the evidence of our past ups and downs and struggles, now it's possible! I believe that a hundred percent! We have to believe now that it is possible to do things we couldn't do in the past! And you are the ones that are going to make it happen!

Three years ago, we decided in America that we would make a holy ground pilgrimage, to visit the Holy Grounds that Father planted 50 years ago. And I must confess that although I felt this was very important, as Church president, I couldn't imagine that anyone else would be interested. Who could be interested in planting Holy Grounds fifty years ago? Nevertheless, I wrote an article about it, and someone said, "That was a very interesting article! You should send it to the media!" And you know what? It was published in the Washington Post the next day! Before we even started the pilgrimage, many newspapers around the country had picked up the story. It turned out they were interested! What happens in 50 years in a new religious movement? What happens to that vision that Rev. Moon had?

So, I want to challenge you: This year each one of you should have a piece published in a top newspaper in your country! An opinion piece, or whatever it may be. Think about how God can allow me to represent True Parents on the national level! It shouldn't even take a year. Maybe you can think how to do that before Mother comes to Vienna!

But I know it's possible. I'm not interested in self-promotion, I'm not interested in simply promoting our movement, for the sake of promoting it. Life is too short. Our business is national restoration, European

and Middle East restoration, restoration of God's earth.

I think this workshop is going to be an important part of that. I hope you don't feel excluded. I hope that in the breaks you really share. I'm sitting here if you want to come and talk. I change my shirt every week

whether it needs it or not, so you may come close and feel free to speak any time.

I thank Peter for putting it all together. We have a lot of work to do! I've already sent Mother a video about this workshop, so she knows it's under way, and I think it's going to be great!

Thank you very much!.

