

#### 4. Interfaith Champion - Resources for a 6 week, 40 day, Sermon Series on True Father, Sun Myung Moon

Eleonore de Watteville  
July 4, 2015

Good morning. Today we are continuing in a series of messages exploring some of the many dimensions of the life of our founder Rev. Moon – who we call Father. And then looking at lessons we can learn about living a more fulfilled life.

If you have missed any of the previous messages, they are available on our website SacFamilyFed.org

This series is during the 40 days around the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of TF's passing to the spirit world. According to the lunar calendar that will be next Tuesday August 12.

This week we are exploring Father Moon as an Interfaith Champion and the theme of creating one world wide family under God.

Interfaith work is not an extra activity added on to the Unification mission – it is at the core of our world view and theology. The original name of UC is HSAUWC.

To understand our view on interfaith activity you must first understand some core UC teachings:

God is Absolute Good Loving God

God's purpose for creation: JOY through loving relationships

Principle of Creation – Important, God only seeks good for us Relationship of parent and child

God lost children through the FALL

Come study with on Saturdays

Evil is human responsibility – God did not create Evil or Satan. Humans did.

GOD IS HEARTBROKEN

God is always working to save the children

Starting with the first family A&E, Cain and Abel

These points represent 3 parts of DP POC, Fall, POR

Important to understand the heart of GOD as a loving parent.

It is as if you as a loving parent had a child stolen from you at an early age. Imagine the desperation to get that child back. And that child is raised in a poisonous environment so they as the child suffers all the time. But because that is all the child knows it accepts that as natural. Those children and their descendents grow up under the influence of an evil world that lies to them about their true nature and because of that poison and ignorance cannot even feel the loving parent and actual keeps God away.

God, this loving parent has worked tirelessly to bring back the children – but the children have the power. The purpose of all major religions is to reconnect us to God. And God has worked through key people throughout history to try to reach the precious lost children.

TF speaks of 3 great headaches or heartaches of God 1)Communism 2) Family 3)Religion

How about God's 3rd headache -the division and disunity within Christianity and between the world religions? For God, religious people are the conscience of the world. Religious people have the tradition, values and practical power to overcome evil.

But instead they are divided. They antagonize and fight with each other. Being thus incapacitated, they have lost the power to overcome evil and educate the world about the true way of life.

To address this TF established many interfaith organizations and projects. I will touch on a few on them.

**Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) 1975**

**New Ecumenical Research Assoc. (New ERA) 1979**  
**Religious Youth Service Project (RYS) 1982**

**International Religious Foundation 1980**  
**Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace 1991**  
**Interreligious International Federation for World Peace 2003**  
**Universal Peace Federation 2005**  
**CWR, NCCSA, ICC, ACLC, ICRF, MEPI**

Council of World Religions, National Council on Church and Social Action,  
Interdenominational conf for clergy, Am Clergy leadership conf, International Coalition for  
Religious Freedom, Middle East Peace Initiative.

Assembly of World Religion  
1985 New Jersey: Recovering the Classical Heritage  
1990 San Francisco: Transmitting Our Religious Heritage To Our Youth And Society  
1992 Seoul, Korea: Religion and the Creation of World Peace



INTERFAITH BOOKS I

INTERNATIONAL HQ STATUES BUDDHA, CONFUCIUS, JESUS, KORAN

From the earliest days of the Unification movement I devoted the greatest portion of our resources to serving other religions. In the 1950s, when many Unification families did not have enough to eat, I devoted funds to the cause of interreligious harmony. I suffered to see their hardships and begged for their patience ...for the sake of mankind's future.

So Interfaith work is part of the core mission of the UM FFWPU.

Now for Unificationist a bit overwhelming but we are all called to be interfaith champions  
**Interfaith Champions One World Under God**  
---As peacemakers, find a common base - Look for the good and support it  
---As God's family, give then forget and be open to learn  
---As Abels, be loving Express humility, respect and love

Don't be arrogant, work together grow

Let us all...become aware of the mission that God has bequeathed to the religious leaders of this age - to correctly guide the spirit of humanity and secure the spiritual and intellectual order of the new world culture.

You must be able to embrace children of all five races, and embrace their grandchildren.  
So, you must be able to love people of the world with God's true love...

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## **Inter-Religious Cooperation: The Responsibility of Religious Leaders in Building a Culture of Peace**

**Reverend Sun Myung Moon**  
**Founder's Address: "Dialogue and Alliance"**  
**Assembly of World's Religions 1985**  
**November 15, 1985**

Honorable Chairman, scholars, leaders from religions around the world, ladies and gentlemen!

I welcome you from the bottom of my heart to the Assembly of the World's Religions. Our gathering here is not an ordinary event. It is itself a great accomplishment that we, from 85 countries and with such a diversity of religions, cultures, traditions, and nationalities, should come together to open our minds, to harmonize with each other, and to share our concerns about the future of humankind. I am sure that God also is delighted with this historical event.

We come from different religious backgrounds. Our answers to the fundamental problems of human existence are not identical. Our understandings of the causes of human suffering do not have the same frame of reference. Our ways of seeking world peace are diverse. But still we have a common ground: all of us try to solve problems in the context of our relations with the Ultimate. Throughout East and West, North and South, people living in the situation of sin, disbelief and confusion have yearned for the love, happiness and peace that is true and eternal. They have been making every effort to overcome the temptations of their evil desires and, by following their good desires, to find the happiness with which their original mind will rejoice. Although human experience throughout history cautions us that pursuit of such ideals is rarely successful, people's original minds are not likely to give up. All humankind irrespective of differences in peoples and traditions pursues this ultimate goal. If we humans are not able to fulfill such a purpose by our own effort, then we cannot but depend on the eternal, true, absolute Being beyond ourselves. We humans know that we are finite beings. Since we cannot determine our own destinies, we are bound to depend on the Absolute to whom we ascribe supreme power. We believe that since there is an Absolute being who wills true love, peace and happiness, all these things can surely be realized only with Him. We should know more about this Absolute, the source of the ideals which humanity is seeking. I have become familiar with the content of the spiritual world through my own spiritual experience and by deep communication with the Absolute. I have learned God's will, love and heart.

Religion is not merely truth or ethical teaching, but centers on people's original impulse to find that upon which they can absolutely depend and relate with. True religious intuition meets the Absolute and the Infinite. Through this intuition we can hear God's call for each of us. Such a state of original communion with the Absolute transcends any particular religious system or form. In such a state only do humans reach perfection and happiness. This God-human relation is one and universal. Because the Transcendental Power is one, and humanity's capacity to enter into the relationship which it offers is universal, the ultimate goal of human beings cannot be more than one. The goal of an individual is one. The goal of a family consisting of such ideal individuals is one. The goal of the ideal nation and world is one. All ways run toward God's ideal world of love, happiness and peace.

The ideal of love, happiness and peace is not possible for an individual in isolation. It can be found only in relationship with another. Even the Absolute Being cannot fulfill the ideal without relationship. If God is alone, who is there for God to love? In what is God to find His ideal? In this light, we can understand God's motive for creation. God created humanity in order that God might realize His ideal and fulfill His love. Only in human life in the world can God. In this sense, how precious is the original human being! Human beings are not on the same level as God. However, God and human beings are supposed to be in relationship and ultimately to become one.

In other words, God and human beings are in Parent-child relationship. Just as God is eternal and absolute, human beings also become beings of absolute and eternal value as the children of God. Furthermore, human beings are the objects for the realization of God's ideal. God's eternal and absolute will is consummated where He becomes completely one with humanity. Thus, the purpose of human life is also absolute and eternal. God is eternal, unchangeable and absolute. God's purpose of creation was also eternal, unchangeable and absolute, and was to found one ideal world, unified with one purpose. Today's world of sin, conflict and disbelief came into being because humanity fell from the original way. God has worked through the world's religions to restore fallen humanity to its original state. The salvation of fallen humanity will be completed by God's providence through the Messiah.

As God's purpose of creation is absolute, the purpose of God's restoration providence must also be fulfilled at any cost. Therefore, the messianic hope of an ideal world is not just a vague dream, but should become a substantial reality in our lives. Likewise, the purpose of all religions is to realize God's will in our daily life on earth. For the purpose of the whole providence, God has been broadening the foundation of goodness through many religions, each appropriate for its own age, people and environment. But the ultimate purpose of all these religions is only to realize God's will, that is, the ideal world of peace and happiness. Religions should be concerned with God's will for world salvation more than with the salvation of the individual or the welfare of their own denomination. I think that now is the time for all religious bodies together to search again for the true will of God.

As far as I know, God is not sectarian. He is not obsessed with minor details of doctrine. We should quickly liberate ourselves from theological conflict, which results from blind attachment to doctrines and rituals, and instead focus on living communication with God. I think we urgently need to purify the religious atmosphere into one in which believers can have living faith and every soul can communicate with God. In God's parental Heart and His great love, there is no discrimination based on color or nationality. There are no barriers between countries or cultural traditions, between East and West, North and South. Today God is trying to embrace the whole of humankind as His children. Through interreligious dialogue and harmony we should realize one ideal world of peace, which is God's purpose of creation and the common ideal of humankind.

Respected representatives of the world's religions! When we take an honest look at reality today, we

come to see that it is time not only for belief but for action. Why do we find such serious problems prevailing in our societies, problems including confusion in value systems, moral corruption, drug addiction, terrorism, racial discrimination, genocide, war, unjust distribution of wealth, disregard for human rights, and totalitarian Communism? These vices are the natural outcome of hedonism, atheistic materialism, and secular humanism that denies the relevance of God. All these are the effects of the declining faith and spiritual exhaustion of this generation.

Who can take responsibility for today's world? Can the military or the politicians? Can businessmen or people with new technology? Never. God is asking religious leaders, today's prophets and priests, to solve these problems.

All religious people should feel responsibility for the shaky spiritual foundation of this generation and should repent. Throughout the long history of religion, we have not made a convincing witness for our living God. We have not been sincere in the practice of love. Our past hypocrisy has allowed atheism to prevail. We should feel deeply guilty about all this.

Today God is calling us. All religious people, standing on the internal foundation of deep self-reflection, should challenge the prevalence of all evils and work creatively in order to realize God's will on earth. The living God wants to relate with us not merely in the context of scriptures and rituals, but rather dwelling in the hearts of people who keep God's will in their minds and live it in everyday life.

After long prayers and reflections on the future of the world and humankind, I have begun to feel that God's enthusiastic hope and the Holy Spirit's strong power are sweeping over the whole world. Today the world should be renewed. Religious leaders all over the world should join together and encourage a movement of purification in every religion. There should be repentance and the renewal of true commitment. The world should change. There should be a new reformation. The banners of "living faith" and "practical faith" should be waving everywhere around the world. Every religion should work beyond its own benefit to liberate the world from poverty and disease. By the practice of love and the burning conviction of faith, our witness will convince even atheists of the truth of the living God. Only through a religious and spiritual revolution bringing great harmony, love and compassion will we finally realize the ideal world of peace.

Respected representatives! In response to God's sublime call, the world's religious bodies should come out of the quagmire of hostility, misunderstanding and ignorance. With mutual respect and friendship they should build a large cooperative community of religions. Then together, we should show our religious will in action and practice everywhere on this planet.

Religion is not merely oriented to the world beyond. The earth is God's creation, and it is on this earth that God's will is to be realized. If the Kingdom of Heaven or *Sukkavati* is God's ideal place, we cannot go there merely by hoping. Rather we should live for, love and care for our brothers and sisters and the things of creation. It is in relationship with others that we can realize the ideal. Even though religion transcends ordinary social ethics and social policy, we should not ignore its functioning in society. Religious people should be concerned with actual problems and apply God's will to their practical solution. Moreover, religions should stimulate spiritual renewal and give an elevated value perspective to those in charge of politics, the economy, social programs and education. With their minds enlightened by the Spirit, these people can solve the problems in their fields. God is calling for religious people with living spirituality to uphold the truth of religion and to relate it to the situations in their societies. People who are grounded in truth and in living communication with God are bound to influence others and bring about a revival of spirituality everywhere.

True religions should not follow the trends of the secular world, but, centering on God's will, should enlighten the world and lead the people, even in the face of opposition and persecution. The movement for inter-religious harmony and unity and for living faith may go through a lonely path for some time, but it will soon receive tremendous support from many fresh-minded people who see things from an historical and global perspective.

I have been putting all of my energy into reforming the world and realizing God's ideal on earth in accordance with the direction of God's providence. I have been mobilizing the total energy of the Unification Church to work first of all for world peace through inter-religious harmony. I sincerely hope your religions also actively cooperate and join in this path, not because I want to reduce my effort or spare the financial resources of the Unification Church, but because I hope to see as early as possible a total mobilization of spiritual resources and creativity from all religious traditions in the direction of God's providence. This path will lead to the realization of the world of peace.

As you may know, the Assembly of the World's Religions is a project with historical significance. While even the secular world is seeking harmony through the United Nations and the like, should religious bodies fight each other? I have long been expecting certain leaders of the elder religions to initiate an assembly of the world's religions. After a long period of waiting, I have initiated this project, because I

believe it should be done at any cost. While this meeting itself is a meaningful accomplishment, the Assembly will, I hope, become more and more significant with meeting after meeting.

I have three hopes for these Assemblies. First, that the world's religious traditions respect each other and at least work to keep in check any inter-religious conflicts and wars. Second, that the Assembly serve the world by becoming a cooperative community of religions. It will hopefully agree upon and make resolutions calling religious people to practical action, encouraging all people to live by God-centered values, and fostering the development of human minds and spirits. Third, that the Assembly develop into an organization in which the major leadership of all religions participate.

The Assembly has to lift up the highest values and purposes of life and offer them to all religious people, all groups, and all nations. Only in communion with the Absolute and with love for one another can individuals, groups and nations prepare for and become a part of the Kingdom of God on earth.

I hope all of you, as representatives of your religions, find spiritual unity that can be the foundation for a bright future and for a new religious reformation that can lead the world. Through presentations and discussions, during plenary sessions or in committee, in artistic performance, meditation and prayer, please respect each other's faiths and contribute as much as possible to the harmony of the whole. Let us all march forward to fulfill the world-historical mission of religions, that is, the realization of God's will on earth.

I thank all members of the Planning Committee for their efforts in planning and preparation and all the staff serving the Assembly's practical needs for their hard work.

May God bless this historic conference and each of you representatives.

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### **Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace**

**Sun Myung Moon**

**August 15 -- 21, 1990**

**Proposal presented at The 2nd Assembly of the World's Religions**

**San Francisco, California**



*Father and Mother pose with Sheikh Dr. Ahmad Kuftaro and Rev. Kwak at the Assembly of the World's Religions Conference. Father is wearing a ceremonial robe, a special gift presented to him by the Grand Mufti of Syria.*

We are living at a most significant time in all of human history. This is a time of great difficulty for many,

but also a time of great opportunity. The opportunity is that humanity now stands on the threshold of a new age of peace and unity for all. Such an achievement of this age would be none other than the realization of our own human destiny. History is moving toward the ideal of one world under God, where the timeless goal of one harmonious family is realized. As time unfolds, this reality will be made ever more apparent and undeniable.

God's original ideal was for the creation of one human family. This human family would be united as one under the common parenthood of God. The pain and suffering that has characterized human history, evidenced in countless wars and conflicts, is a result of a departure from God's original ideal. Throughout history human beings have sought to overcome this difficult situation, but without ultimate success.

Recently, however, signals of hope have emerged on several fronts. For example, the events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union have brought a dramatic conclusion to the cold war era. In addition, we see the greater European community, including Eastern Europe, moving toward an unprecedented level of cooperation and unity. Still, while political and economic developments move toward oneness, the internal or spiritual situation of humanity worldwide remains in a state of confusion and conflict.

Lasting peace cannot be achieved by political or economic means alone. Political leaders or business leaders cannot resolve the ultimate problems that humanity confronts. The deeper solutions to humanity's problems must come from religious leaders for it is in the resources of the world's great religious traditions that the ultimate solutions to world problems may be found.

Of course, religions and religious leaders have often failed to respond to the challenges that we face in history. Too often religion has become caught in a destructive cycle of exclusivism and inter-religious strife.

Religious people throughout the world should reflect on this problem and repent for not having taken the lead in moving the world toward oneness. Moreover, religious people today need to understand one another and cooperate with one another. In order to do this we must cultivate both a parental heart and a serving attitude toward others. In this way, religious leaders must set the example of a lifestyle centered on God.

In order to create a forum for religious people of the world to work effectively toward inter-religious unity and, on that foundation, world peace, we propose the formation of the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace. This organization will work to secure cooperation and understanding among religions through educational programs, task forces, service projects and relief programs. The Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace will not duplicate the important work of other institutions dedicated to promoting peace. We will engage in fundamental service projects for the sake of world peace. We will also complement and support the efforts of existing institutions, and will seek to work cooperatively with such organizations.

The Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace will have an Executive Council of religious leaders representing all the world's traditions and it will meet regularly to help guide and implement the projects of the Federation. In addition the Federation will develop programs in Research and Education, Inter-Religious Service, Leadership and Conflict Resolution.

We hope that you will find this proposal agreeable and that you will lend your signature below, indicating your support to the ideas expressed above in this Founding Statement. As signatures are gathered we will present this proposal to other religious leaders throughout the world in order that we can mobilize a most inclusive and effective organization for world peace.

*The Initiating Committee for the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace*

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## **The Tradition of True Love and Bequeathing that Tradition**

**Sun Myung Moon**

**August 18, 1990**

**Founder's Address**

**Second Assembly of the World's Religions**

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

In this time of grave importance, a time of transition of human history, I am convinced that all of us religious leaders feel the dispensational call of duty, and as I stand here I am full of recollections and expectations. As we are all too aware, the founders of all the great religions had to suffer from lack of understanding on the world's part and to endure extreme persecution. In pioneering the way of truth, they

all had to overcome physical and spiritual persecution, even death. But despite their great accomplishments the paths actually taken by religions often departed from those that were originally intended. Religions often have shown division, contradiction, and disharmony within themselves, and even have fought one another. Still in today's world, wrongful religious zeal and narrow-mindedness induce antagonisms and hatred. Further, faith has often held only formality important and has disregarded practice; and this has given rise to social problems. Such are clearly not the true objectives of religion, and we must not bequeath any mistaken tradition to our descendants.

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



*Father delivers the Founder's Address at the Opening Plenary Session flanked on the dais by the staff of the Assembly and its distinguished participants*

### **First Know God's Ideal**

In order for us to understand the purpose of religion it is necessary first 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? Was it material goods, knowledge, or power? Those are available to God any time, and God can regulate them as He needs. Rather, true love can be formed only with a reciprocator; without a counterpart even God cannot realize love. God created the world to realize His ideal of true love. As we observe the mineral, plant, and animal worlds, we see that they are created with relationships of subject and object pairs that can respond to each other in harmony, centering on love. Such relationships are found on each level of the creation. Man is the center of the creation, and is created to be on the highest level, the closest to God. He is the partner of God's love. Thus, man is the object of God's true love, and without man, God's goal of true love cannot be accomplished. God had established as the highest and absolute value His true love, which is His ideal for the creation. Even the absolute God Himself likes to absolutely surrender to true love. In this perspective, we can readily see how high a value a man has, as God's own object 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. In this, He is realizing true love. God began His creation investing without limit.

All people are created so that they can harmonize, exist, and live eternally through God's principle of investing for the sake of others. Man came into being for the sake of woman; woman for man. Taking after 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 of God's vertical love. This is the very purpose of their existence.

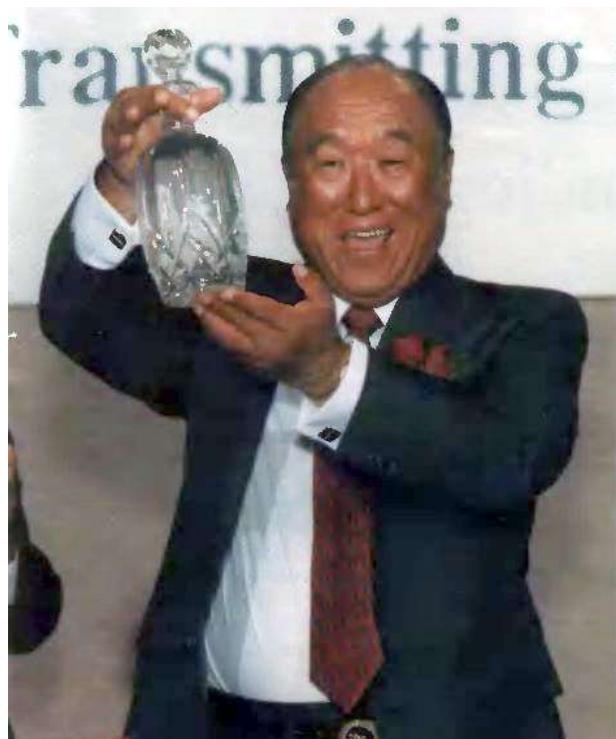
Men or women who are about to be married wish that their spouses be better than themselves. Parents, too, want their children to be better and greater. These attributes come directly from God. These wishes center on true love. It is the same with God. God, too, wants His object of love to be better. Therefore, He

invests 100 percent over and over again so that He can create better objects, and true love continues to exist in this manner.

God, who is the origin of true love, wished to give from the father's position this absolute and unchanging true love as an inheritance to man. Since in true love perfect harmony and unity are realized, God's true love can be perfectly bequeathed to man, who is His partner. Not only that: the right to live together with God and the right to share absolute value with God are also bestowed upon man, because of the attributes of true love. From this perspective, human beings can live with God as His children and have the same value as God Himself. Furthermore, even among themselves human beings, centering on true love, can share their inheritance, live together and become equal. Thus, in the ideal world all human beings, centering on God's true love, will possess true individual ideals and happiness and transmit both of these to their spouses and offspring. This was 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 spiritual world the original order of God's creation still exists; but the world of man on earth became ill, and brought damage to the natural world and the spiritual world.

We call this sick, broken human world, in religious terms, the fallen world. To bring this fallen world back to its original condition and order, God wages 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.



### **Call to True Parentism**

That which has played the main role in the dispensation for restoration according to Heavenly Will is religion. The purpose of religions lies in the restoration of this world as the original ideal family, and beyond that the establishment of the ideal world centering on God's true love and the thought of True Parents. When we understand the mission of the Messiah as a mission of True Parents to realize God's love in this world, 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 -- to expel Satan, who has been rebelling against God, and end his culture; and to transform Satan's lineage to God's in order 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 and receive the blessing of marriage and

give birth to sinless children. Thus they, like God, would become True Parents, and could enter into heaven. In this way, the world was to be the world of heaven on earth, where God's true love, God's true life, and God's true lineage were inherited. God's ideal family was to expand to realize a world where only God reigns.

However, Adam and Eve entered into illicit love before becoming mature: the archangel became Satan; Adam and Eve became evil ancestors; and the world of death began. The world has become a world with people in 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 while in their youth, the world now is to harvest: evidence that today is the end of days is quite unmistakable. The world needs to find the True Parent who can liberate it from Satan's love, life, and lineage. This person is the Messiah.

By Adam and Eve failing to fulfill their responsibility, God lost true children and mankind failed to possess True Parents. Tragedy has been the result. As a result of the fall, there has been lost the true being who can realize the true love of God and the ideal of True Parents. In order to correct the tragic failure of the fall and restore the original condition, God established religions. Thus the Messiah comes with the awesome task to stand as True Parent, uproot the false root that was planted by the human ancestors who became false parents, and realize the ideal world of creation. God's original ideal did not include establishing religion or creating a Messiah. God's unchanging purpose is to realize families, nations and a world of true love. How much a religion contributes to this determines the value of that religion. In this perspective, religions that are fulfilling their purpose are realizing true love and true families. Conversely,

religions that do not contribute to this end and exist just for their own sakes, even though claiming to do things in God's name, are failing their true mission.

In a family, the relationship among brothers and sisters exists only on the premise of common parents. Thus, before this world can enter into the realm of true love and true family, the True Parents' position has first to be established. To help fulfill this very purpose I have been called upon by God. For this objective I have dedicated all. The Unification movement I am deploying worldwide, the ecumenical movement, and all other projects that I have sponsored, covering all fields -- academic, educational, media, technical, business, financial etc. -- these were envisioned with this one purpose. I have suffered persecution and confronted death with only one purpose in mind, so that I can live with the heart of True Parents to love races of all colors in the world more than my own parents who gave birth to me, or my own brothers and sisters.

The path of true love travels the direct route. It requires no preconditions and nothing can block it. This is the straight path on which we travel rightly only with self-sacrifice. Unless all mankind lives the life of True Parents and the ideal of world peace are directly connected. All countries, races, cultures and religions should do more than 100 percent for the sake of each other, being generous and harmonizing, and by doing so achieve world peace.

### **Inter-Religious Federation**

Today, I propose to you the inauguration of the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace. In the current world situation, externally we are experiencing the termination of the Cold War, and peacemaking between East and West. Overcoming confrontations and divisions, we are heading toward the age of unification by harmony, as one world family of brothers and sisters. The last decade before the year 2000 is a precious period which God has allowed us for returning to the original world, a precious opportunity. I have already proposed the external establishment of the International Federation for World Peace, and thousands of leaders in the United States, Russia, and other countries of the world are responding enthusiastically. To truly achieve this goal we need an internal foundation, and that is an inter-religious foundation for world peace.

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

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

God requires good practice and example by men and women of religion. 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 and invest again for the sake of the world. Any religion with which God wants to work in this world now is a religion of True Parents.

Only religion with a parental heart, a religion which practices true love, can accomplish God's Will in this hopelessly complex world situation. Thus far in history, there have been many religions. There have been religions in the position of adopted son, in the position of stepson, in the position of son, and so on. The religions in all the different positions should transcend any limited view that their own religion is the best, that only through their religion will world peace be accomplished. Rather, the teachings of religions in all the positions are eventually to be fused and united in the religion in the position of True Parents. Then, the decline that religions are experiencing will be ended. All religions, centering on true love, which exists absolutely for the sake of others, will unite and march forward to realize world peace and realize heaven on earth. Knowing this, we should proceed to solve the world's urgent problems by the right practice of religion. The tasks of changing ritualized faith into living faith, reestablishing the true value-perspective from the many confused value-perspectives, restoring the original human nature from deviated and desolate human nature, elevating the moral standard and liquidating the decadent culture -- all are to be accomplished by men and women of religion joined together in an allied movement of the eternal God, practicing the true love of True Parentism.

The youth of the world today are intuitively realizing this great opportunity that lies in front of us. As true

religious leaders, we must act in the capacity of true teachers to these youth. Beginning with this true love, which is the standard of eternal, unchanging absolute value, we should establish not only the unification of mind and body, but we should connect and unify the two worlds represented by both spiritual and materialistic ideologies. This will create the foundation for world peace. On this foundation, we should unite the inner world of religions and then unite the outer world of nations and eventually achieve eternal world peace. In realizing this goal all men and women of religion must play a responsible role.

Many young people hunger for true love, which is to live 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 must make certain that religious traditions travel on the path of true love. By doing so, God and mankind 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, of true family, and true mankind has begun.

In conclusion, I wish that your discussion throughout this conference period will help realize true religion and the discovery of true love, and become a great contribution to the world. May God's blessing be always with you.

### **Introduction of Rev. Sun Myung Moon Richard Rubenstein**



Professor Rubenstein is a Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor of Religion at Florida State University

I have the very great honor of introducing the Founder of the Assembly of the World's Religions and one of the most extraordinary men of our era, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon. There is a very wise biblical counsel which tells us, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Although I cannot in this brief introduction do justice to even a portion of the fruits of his labors since he began his career of religious leadership, we can take note of a representative few.

Rev. Moon began his preaching in June 1946 in Pyongyang, now the capital of communist North Korea. At the time it was the most Christian part of Korea. Two years later, in February of 1948 he was arrested and sent to a prison camp in Hung Nam for two years and eight months. On October 14, 1950 he was liberated by UN forces. He thereupon made his way to Pusan 1000 km to the south, accompanied by two disciples, one of whom had a broken leg. Reverend Moon literally helped to carry his disciple the entire distance. When he arrived in Pusan, he built his first church. It was made out of mud and cardboard boxes discarded by the U.S. Army. I have been told that at the first service three people came to hear his message. While in Pusan, he would pray and meditate for hours on a rock high above the waters. His vision of universal brotherhood and worldwide unification under God had earlier roots in his spiritual life, but at Pusan it began to be embodied in his calling. Out of that beginning forty years ago has come the worldwide Unification movement.

From the very beginning of his ministry Rev. Moon has reached out beyond the circle of his disciples to the entire world. This very Assembly of the World's Religions is a prime example of that outreach. So too is the International Conference of the Unity of the Sciences, which brings together the world's leading scientists and scholars, a goodly number of whom have been Nobel Laureates, in search of absolute values. I have also seen that outreach in the work of the Professors' World Peace Academy which Rev. Moon founded in the early nineteen-seventies.

Having experienced at first hand the effects of media bias, Rev. Moon has founded the World Media Association, which brings together journalists throughout the world in very much the same way as we have been brought together. He has also established a worldwide chain of newspapers, magazines and journals. These include the Segye Ilbo of Korea with a circulation of over one million, the Sekai Nippo of Tokyo, The Washington Times, the Noticias del Mundo, the World and I and Insight magazines.

There are many other publications of high quality throughout the world.

Rev. Moon has disciples in almost every country on earth, and between December 1989 and July 1990, I was privileged to meet many of his disciples in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union. They are talented, selfless, highly educated men and women, many of whom had been persecuted by the

communist regimes which dominated their homelands. In the case of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria, these men and women are known and trusted by the new, post-communist leaders because many of them had been in communist prisons together.

As we gather together in the luxury of this meeting place, it is important that we be mindful of the sacrifices Rev. Moon and his disciples have made for their faith. Rev. Moon himself has been compelled to make such sacrifices not only by the communist government of North Korea but, I regret to say, by my own government. In spite of the fact that Rev. Moon and his church have spent hundreds of millions of dollars in the United States for the public good, Rev. Moon was accused of evading a small amount of taxes on the interest on a bank account which he had forthrightly put in his own name for the work of the Church. Normally, tax disputes over far larger sums are settled out of court, but it was not to be with Rev. Moon.

I shall never forget visiting Rev. Moon at Danbury prison. I saw myself as an honored and privileged guest in his house. I can testify that even in that setting, he was as ever the commanding presence. In spite of the fact that a terrible injustice had been done, Rev. Moon was neither dispirited nor resentful. On the contrary, he spoke of his love for America and of the many things he wanted to do for this country so that it could fulfill the providential role he believed God had assigned to it.

In conclusion, there is one aspect of Rev. Moon's global vision that I must not fail to mention. In April of this year the World Media conference met in Moscow in cooperation with the Novosti Press Agency. While in Moscow, Rev. Moon met with President Mikhail Gorbachev for more than one hour. In addition, Mrs. Gorbachev attended a ballet performance of the Korean Little Angels' Dance Troupe, founded by Rev. Moon, and sat throughout the performance with Rev. and Mrs. Moon. In committing his resources to special projects within the Soviet Union, he is acting in the cause of international amity and world peace.

Rev. Moon has founded the International Federation of World Peace to bring together leaders throughout the world for the purpose of turning the end of the Cold War into an era of genuine international peace. As all of us watch with apprehension at the events now unfolding in the Middle East, we know how important that task is. I think it is evident that we are in the presence of an extraordinary religious leader whose works are many and fruitful.

Let us rise to greet our host.

### **Words Of Gratitude - A Precious Treasure** **Ahmad Kuftaro**



At the Farewell Banquet, the Grand Mufti of Syria offered a speech symbolizing the response of the Assembly to the Founder's call for the establishment of the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace:

Praised be the name of God the Beneficent, the Merciful, the Creator of all creatures, the Lord of all prophets and all men of wisdom: Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, and Buddha, and all others whom we know and whom we do not know. They embody the quest for world peace and brotherhood.

I am deeply grateful to God that He has made it possible for us, as men of religion, to gather together to form and create a new religious federation for peace and I am grateful to Father Moon and his assistants in bringing this into reality.

All of us are aware of the catastrophes and calamities that took place in the 20th century,

and the major wars and regional conflicts that worked for the misery and suffering of humanity. Despite the efforts of leaders, politicians, and philosophers, and despite the creation of the League of Nations and the United Nations, we all know that man has not been able to achieve the peace that he has always longed for. Global peace cannot be achieved except by Allah, God, whose name in the Koran means peace. God is peace and peace is God, and no peace can be achieved except by God. All the programs laid by God through his prophets and apostles through the passage of history should be unified into one, and then peace can be achieved. If divine religions unify their forces and join hands together, then God will be

with them and peace will come. Prophet Mohammed says in his tradition, "The hand of God is with the unified community" and, "The wolf eats the sheep who goes away from its flock."

The Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace is an expression of the essential meaning of the messages of Heaven. The goal of religions should be to bring all into one family, into one body, so that if an ailment takes place in one limb, the whole body will have sleeplessness and fever for the sake of that ailed limb.

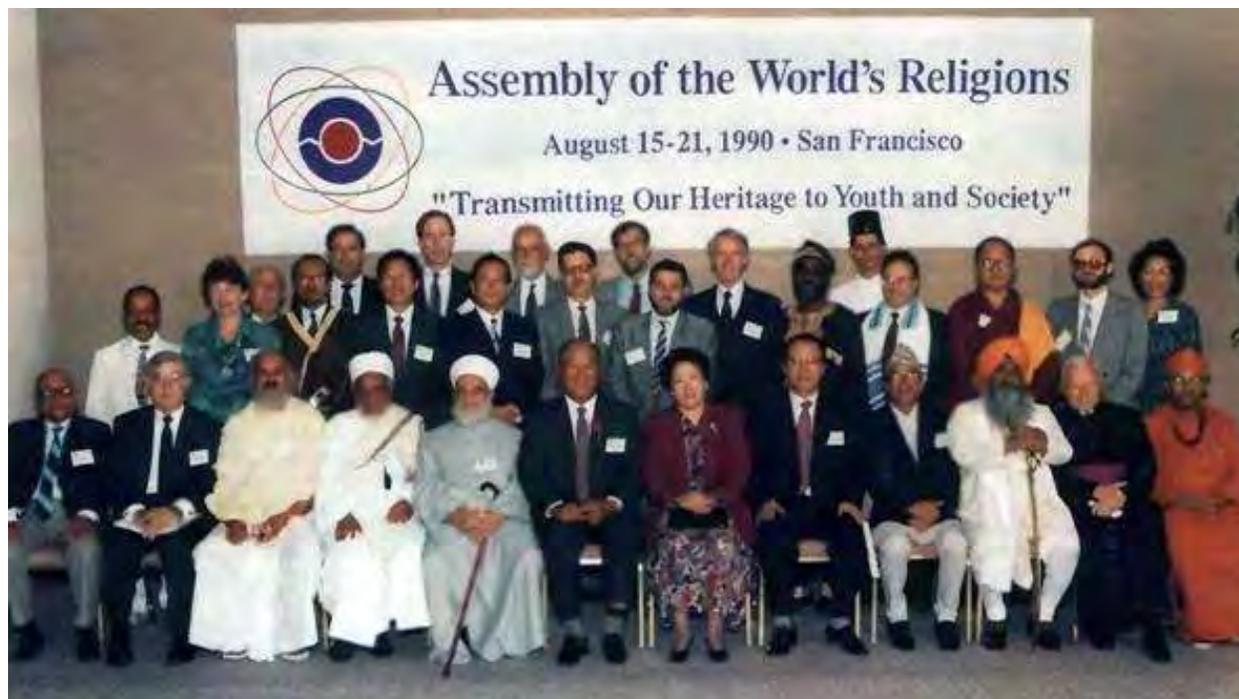
For forty years now I have been calling for the unification of religions and for their fraternity. I have been calling for that in my homeland as well as all over the world, in conferences, and wherever I went and lectured. I was always living for this dream. This hope of mine has always driven me to look where I could find its treasures and gems. And now I have found the treasure, represented by Father Moon.

He has laid the foundation stone and he is the engineer to bring about unification through this Inter-Religious Federation. I cannot express how much I rejoice in meeting with this great treasure. My heart, my self, is filled with a great feeling with which I cannot dispense. I believe that the 20th Century will not pass away before all religions unite, accomplishing world peace and fraternity. I feel that it will not pass before this comes into light under the patronage of my brother, Father Moon. The seeds for our unification are already there in our religions, but they have to grow and prosper so that all mankind can attain brotherhood and love.

I have a humble suggestion to present before you, and I hope that it will meet the approval of Father Moon and our esteemed audience. My proposal is that each religious leader write a compilation of sayings and truths from his own religion, explaining how it is oriented toward peace and love. Then these should be compiled into a book, and presented to the United Nations and to governments all over the world. It will be given to schools so that our coming generation will become acquainted with the beauty and spirit of all the religions. The aims of religions will be achieved when our young generation understands and imbibes the knowledge embodied in that book. And I propose that this book be presented to Father Moon in recognition of all his grand work, and in recognition of his suffering for the sake of all. We want the young people to know that religions are much dearer than all else that is dear in this world.

I repeat my full thanks to Father Moon for what he has presented, for all the efforts he has made, and the hardships he has borne for the sake of his global, spiritual mission to bring peace to all mankind. I pray to God Almighty that we see the fruits of these efforts of Father Moon in a way that the whole world will become one unified family. Peace be on you all and His mercy. God bless you.

#### **A Staff Reflection** **Francis Clark**



*The staff of the Assembly of the World's Religions pose with True Parents for a group picture*

Dr. Francis Clark has been involved with IRF since the first God Conference in 1981. Dr. Clark serves as a senior consultant to the Council for the World's Religions, and he is the senior advisor for the Religious Youth Service. Dr. Clark played a central role in the preparations for the 1990 Assembly of the World's Religions, serving as both a member of the Planning Committee and the Executive Committee. Dr. Clark, a Roman Catholic theologian, has taught theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and is now Director of Post Graduate Research in Religious Studies at the Open University, United Kingdom.

My dominant emotion as I look back over the Second Assembly of the World's Religions, held at San Francisco from 15 to 20 August 1990, is one of thankfulness: thankfulness first and foremost to God, the author of all good, and thankfulness to all those whom He empowered to make the Assembly such a magnificent achievement.

I pay tribute to the Founder of the Assembly, Reverend Moon, for his vision and generosity; to his dedicated disciples in the International Religious Foundation who labored selflessly to organize the Assembly and to bring it to its successful conclusion; to the members of the Planning Committee, drawn from different faiths, who monitored the preparations and ensured the integrity of the program; and to the many hundreds of men and women who journeyed from all parts of the earth to San Francisco to join in that great spiritual and social manifestation of our one, united human family.

It was there in the meeting of those "brothers and sisters from East and West, from North and South," in their warm friendship and animated discussion,

in their mutual sharing and discovery, in the widening of their thoughts and hearts and prayers, that the deepest success of the Assembly was achieved. For everyone who participated in AWR II and who truly joined in that celebration of inter-religious harmony, it was a pilgrimage that will never be forgotten.

The initiation of the Inter-Religious Foundation for World Peace, that will have important consequences in the future. It was fitting that this new foundation, destined to promote cooperation between religions and peoples in the cause of world peace and reconstruction, should be announced at the Assembly of the World's Religions, which is inspired by the same spiritual vision.

For many years I have been closely engaged in work for inter-religious dialogue and cooperation. I see AWR II as a significant contribution to the progress of the worldwide interfaith movement that has welled up in recent decades and is now advancing like an incoming tide. I am especially involved, as a consultant and organizer, with the activities of the International Religious Foundation, but I am also a member of several other inter-religious associations, such as the World Conference on Religion and Peace, the World Congress of Faiths, and the International Association for Religious Freedom. IRF and AWR do not seek to rival those other excellent organizations, but to make common cause with them. Our common aim, surely, is to break down the barriers of religious, racial, and social antagonisms and to collaborate for the spiritual and material welfare of the whole human family. That was the motivation of AWR II, and it is the permanent motivation of IRF.

The guarantee of the integrity of the San Francisco Assembly was the respect publicly shown for all the religious traditions represented there, without priority or preference being given to any one of them. No one was expected to abandon or to compromise his or her conscientiously held beliefs. Nor were we there to promote the merging of all religions into one form of belief and practice. As a Catholic theologian, I regard the principle of mutual respect and impartiality as essential for all interfaith collaboration. I know that my brothers and sisters of other faiths who were advisers to the project share the same concern. I am happy that principle is constantly observed not only in the program of AWR, but in all the activities of IRF.

The many elements that made up the program of the San Francisco Assembly were blended by a subtle alchemy to make a rich spiritual and human experience. The Opening Ceremony on the first evening, profoundly moving in its universality and spiritual purity, gave the keynote for all that followed. Deeply appreciated were the prayer and meditation sessions of the different traditions each morning, and the interfaith meditation each evening. The daily discussions of the dialogue groups, for which every participant had prepared a contribution in the form of a written paper (previously circulated to the group members) were the point at which each one was personally engaged in the Assembly. All could speak their minds, and could freely exchange ideas and aspirations across the frontiers of religion, race, and culture.

The highlight of the closing plenary session was the reading of the San Francisco Declaration, which all present ratified by rising to their feet to make together a corporate sign of assent. The Declaration will be a widely circulated memorial of AWR II. Not a few participants have testified that it conveyed the spirit of the Assembly as they had experienced it. I cite one such testimony, from a Canadian priest who is engaged in fostering exchanges between Western and Chinese culture: "I would like to express my admiration and full support for the San Francisco Declaration, which seems to me at this time to say so well what we were all about, without taking sides and without watering down any doctrine but rather professing common aspirations and designs."



*Father and Mother meet with Metropolitan Philaret, the Patriarchal Exarch of Byelorussia*

## **Goals Of Interfaith Work**

**M. Darrol Bryant**

**Chair, Department of Religious Studies  
Assoc. Professor of Religion and Culture  
Renison College, University of Waterloo,  
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada**

Dr. M. Darrol Bryant was one of the original professors who began the "theologians conferences" at the Unification Theological Seminary in 1977-78, which evolved into the New Ecumenical Research Association (New ERA). Dr. Bryant was among the founding board of consultants of New ERA who met Father at East Garden in October of 1980. Since then Dr. Bryant has been a Senior Consultant for both New ERA and the Council for the

World's Religions (CWR).

The Second Assembly of the World's Religions was a truly remarkable event. It was a stunning monument to the depth of longing for unity within the religious and spiritual communities of our time. It was the story of Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Muslims, African Traditional Religionists, Jews, Confucianists, Zoroastrians, and many others responding to the Spirit of Unity that is abroad in our times, stirring the depths of the human soul.

But let us be clear: unity is not uniformity, nor is it a new syncretism. It is rather a search for something deeper and more profound than that. It is a shared quest, across tradition, for the authentic sources of the spiritual life and ways that those resources can be brought to bear on our personal and corporate life. And thus at the Assembly people went to workshops on meditation and on solving social conflicts, they sought out prayer and meditation in their own tradition and opportunities for interfaith experience, they turned to people of other faiths to learn while sharing the gifts of their own traditions. Thus it was, at the same time, an exploration of what makes us what we are in our own way of faith and what we have in common with men and women of other faiths.

This to me is the first and most profound message of the Assembly; the spirit of unity is what we must nourish and serve in our time.

The second message is related to the first; it is its very corollary. The unity we seek passes through and is to be found in the very traditions of religious and spiritual life that make up the religious life of humankind. Some assume, mistakenly in my view, that the quest for unity is a way of saying no to the religious/spiritual heritage of humankind. This is contradicted by this Assembly. Here we saw that those traditions continue to be life-giving sources of the spiritual life for countless numbers of our fellow human beings around the planet. The interfaith task is to bring those traditions into new patterns of interaction and relation. It is, I believe, the patterns of interaction that we seek to nourish in the Assembly -- and other International Religious Foundation events -- that can help us to revitalize the true depths of the religious traditions and their connections to the heart of divine life.

This is the task of the interfaith movement. It is from these revitalized traditions of spiritual life and practice that will come the wisdom, insight, and cooperation that can transform our life together on this planet.

It has been my privilege to have been part of the Planning Committee for this Assembly. And I have been an active participant in the interfaith movement for more than a decade. It is from this vantage point that I reflect on the work of the IRF and this Assembly.

There are many international organizations that are seeking to promote interfaith encounter and dialogue. But the efforts of the International Religious Foundation are unique in several respects. First, the depth of the spirit of service that characterizes the IRF is remarkable. The IRF has an impressive tradition of service that is reflected both in the detailed attention it pays to all aspects of an event like the Assembly and its willingness to serve divine purposes rather than narrow institutional ones. Second, it is unique in the breadth of its openness to all the vital traditions of divine life we find within the human family. Here in this Assembly were found people from every tradition that the dedicated staff could locate. This is important because we want these events to be representative of the whole human race. Third, it is unique on its persistent focus in the Spiritual dimensions of the religious traditions rather than ideological or political aspects. Curiously enough, the interfaith or inter-religious movement is often sidetracked onto other agendas, but the IRF has held consistently -- in this Assembly as well as other events -- to the spiritual heart of the believing world. The issue here is staying centered on divine love and compassion, which is the foundation of our remaking -- over and over again. And finally, the IRF is unique in its

conviction that from the gathering of men and women of faith will come the wisdom and will that can contribute to the healing of our broken world. The Assembly -- and other activities of the IRF -- do not assume an apriori answer to the way ahead. Rather, we are committed to a process, one of give and take, where every participant is regarded as valuable. It is from this process that true wisdom can emerge. For at the heart of the healing of our lives and life together lies the spiritual remaking that comes when believers rediscover themselves in dialogue with other men and women of faith. It is in those moments that we recognize the other, not as our enemy to be overcome or as a stranger, but as our friend and fellow pilgrim.

We also come to recognize that we are sustained in our journey together by a divine source that is the foundation of our hope and our effort.

The Unification movement is to be commended for its generous efforts on behalf of the interfaith movement in our time. It has done more for the interfaith movement than any other organization or group. And as long as it continues to proceed on the basis of those principles indicated above, it will continue to do a work that is, I believe, pleasing to God.

### **The San Francisco Declaration**

We who have participated in the Second Assembly of the World's Religions, held in San Francisco from August 15-21 1990, join making the following three-fold affirmation of the centrality of religion in human life and society:

We reaffirm our commitment to religious freedom throughout the world. We declare our conviction that religious and spiritual values have primacy over merely material achievements, and indeed that it is only in faithfulness to those values that human kind will follow the road to true progress. We seek in all things to conform ourselves to the divine goodness that gives meaning to human life.

In this time of global expectation, we resolve to strive for a new international order based on peace, justice and fraternity. We proclaim the unity of the human family and reject all forms of exploitation of its members. We defend the right of all peoples to a fair share of the earth's resources, and we protest against all forms of political and social injustice. In furtherance of these ideals, we will pray and work for greater understanding and mutual love between the religions and believers of the world, joined together in spiritual power to promote the welfare of all humankind.

We recognize our duty to give to our children an education and a preparation for adult life inspired by the highest truths and values of our respective religious traditions. We pledge ourselves to love and service of children and young people, the rising generation upon whom the future of our communities and of all human society depends.

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### **Religion and the Creation of World Peace**

#### **Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios**

As chairman of this third Assembly of the World's Religions, may I greet you and welcome you to this holy gathering. May the peace and mercy of the Lord abide with us.

Respected Reverend Sun Myung Moon, Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon, distinguished fellow participants of this Assembly:

Permit me first to make my humble tribute of gratitude and admiration for the vision and work of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon.

I can do that best by testifying first to how I came to the first Assembly in McAfee, New Jersey, as an uninformed skeptic and have now become an ardent admirer of your vision and work. I came against the advice and counsel of my colleagues and friends in the World Council of Churches of which I was at that time a President. They unloaded all their unexamined prejudices onto me. I came largely to find out for myself the truth about your work.

Today I see you as an untiring and inspired worker for some of the principles that I myself hold very dear. I shall highlight only three.

I hold with you, first, that the presence and power of the Transcendent God as the center, foundation and moving force of all that is good, and thus of all that has free being or existence. At the root of all the problems that face humanity today, I see the ignoring of the Divine Principle at the heart of all reality. We have to wake humanity up from its sloth and slumber, to heed the call to be the bearers of the awareness of that Divine Principle, and to reorganize all life-personal, social and of the biosphere-on the basis of that Divine Principle.

Second, I agree with you that the Divine Principle which heals and unites, is manifold as love, truth and beauty. Love for all, across national, racial, linguistic, religious and other boundaries, love that flows from God through us to all, love that suffers and endures and sacrifices oneself for the sake of others - that love is God. That love seeks not one's own salvation, promotes not its own religious group, but labors for the healing of all, for the fulfillment of all, for the deliverance of all from ignorance and selfishness, from hatred and greed, from lust and restlessness.

Third I agree with you that these principles have to be put into practice not just enunciated and affirmed. Many of us religious leaders, I confess, have dismally failed at this point, by seeking power and glory, fame and adulation, for oneself or for one's religious group. You have shown us what it means to work day and night to fulfill the will of God and to make the Transcendent God rule in the lives of all. We have seen how starting with the crucial realm of the family you have sought to bring all culture into the obedience of God-Science and religion, the academy and the arts, politics and institutions. What we beheld yesterday at the Olympic Stadium here in Seoul, bears eloquent testimony to your extraordinary powers of vision and organization - an achievement without parallel in history, the community Wedding of 30000 couples from more than a hundred nationalities of the world. You have envisaged and created all these organizations and movements - the International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences, the Professors World Peace Academy, the IRF the IRFWP, the Women's Federation for world peace, the International Federation for World Peace, the Summit council, the world University Project with Bridge port University as its base, the encyclopedia Project, the World Scriptures Project, the Highway Project and many others that I cannot here enumerate.

We salute you, Reverend Sun Myung Moon, as an outstanding, devout, dedicated extraordinary servant of God. God bless you and your family and your work. May God richly reward you and grant you peace and joy all the days of your life. Two days ago, Reverend Moon, you spoke to all of us about your self - understanding - your declaration about who you and Mrs. Moon are: "the True Parents of all humanity, .... the savior, the Lord of the Second Advent, the Messiah", in your own words, "an astonishing and fearful announcement."

Those of us who do not belong to the Unification Church, from the various religions, professions and walks of life all around the world, would like to make a preliminary response in two parts, to you the Reverend Moon with the same simplicity and candor with which you have addressed us. We have great respect and admiration for your many monumental achievements for the work of human unity, peace and harmony, and we are privileged to be your fellow workers in this noble cause. We are grateful for what you have done and are doing.

First, we must place on record, with the utmost humility, that we are unable to accept your claim to be "the True Parent of all humanity, the Savior, the Lord of the Second Advent, the Messiah." By this we mean no disrespect. We want, however, to make it quite clear, that when we work with you for the unity of humanity we stand on our own convictions and traditions, while sharing with you your great vision of God at the center of all, and of an all-embracing love for all humanity.

That is the second part of our preliminary response. We pledge, rooted in our own religious traditions, to work with you for the fulfillment of the will of God, for making God known and acknowledged in all walks of life, so that humanity may find healing, liberation, harmony, justice, peace and a life-promoting environment.

Now a word about the central theme of this Assembly: Religion and the Creation of World Peace. You will discuss this large theme in the plenaries, the panels and the committees, as well as in your private conversations. I need only to highlight three aspects of the role of religion in creating world peace:

**a) Analysis:** Analysis can be of two kinds. *Fundamental analysis* means raising basic questions like: What is peace? Why is there no peace? What is needed for peace? Do not be satisfied with easy answers which everyone can provide. For example, you may ask "Why is there no peace?" Christians may answer: Sin. Hindus may answer: Avidya or non-knowledge. Buddhists may answer: Trshna or desire. Do not stop at these answers. Go deeper. For example, ask "Where is sin lodged?" You may answer: "In the individual soul." Someone may suggest: "What about sin in the institutions and structures of our society - in the political economy, in the discrimination based on sex, race or religion, and so on?" That is fundamental analysis.

*Functional analysis* is the other kind. Who are the enemies of peace? Who benefits from war? What is the relation between militarism and politics and of both with the industrial and economic system?" You can think up the questions - sometimes even more specifically: "Who wanted the Gulf War? Who benefitted from it?" and so on.

**b) Action:** You can discuss questions like "Who could act? What should they do? What can religions do?" Governments need to act. Only they can create the conflict-resolving and peace-keeping machinery. They

must work towards a democratic international structure of legislative, judiciary and executive. But governments are not gods. It is only when God is ignored that people begin to look to governments for salvation. People can act. They can act not just as individuals, but through committed groups, organizations, networks and so on.

**c) Activation of Spiritual Energy:** I believe that modern science, which knows about four kinds of energies: weak force, strong force, gravitational energy and electromagnetic energy, cannot tell us much about the more potent fifth form of energy - spiritual energy, the power of prayer that springs from a dedicated and disciplined life. They are on to bioenergy, which is actually one of the forms of spiritual energy.

The University of Chicago, through Enrico Fermi and his associates, discovered nuclear energy little more than 50 years ago. Will the University of Bridgeport be able to devise a project and a laboratory for generating spiritual energy through the spiritual traditions of all the religions of humanity? Can we develop a few experimental powerhouses - a Sufi powerhouse, a Yogic powerhouse, a Zen powerhouse and so on? That may be the beginning of a sea-change in our perception of the world. Is that not what universities are really for? I wonder and I leave it there.

I conclude. We religious leaders have been lazy and indifferent. God is pushing us to wake up and stretch our spirits and extend our horizons.

May the Grace of God come and heal. May the Transcendent Power abide in us and lead us to peace and unity. Amen.

(Speech at Third Assembly of the World's Religions, 1992)

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## **Religion and the Creation of World Peace**

***Reverend Sun Myung Moon***

***Assembly Of The World's Religions Founder's Address***

"This address was given at the start of the Assembly of the World's Religions, August 24-31, 1992, in Seoul, Korea."

It is an honor to welcome you to the third Assembly of the World's Religions, and to express my happiness in meeting all of you, in Seoul, Korea, the homeland of my wife, Hak Ja Han, and me. I hope that you will have a rewarding and fruitful time during your stay.

This is the third conference of the Assembly of the World's Religions. At the first conference, convened in 1985, I founded the Religious Youth Service and announced my plans for the first conference of the Council of the World's Religions. These projects, which I support every year, together with the volume, *World Scriptures*, which was published last year, have become the front line of the campaign for worldwide inter-religious harmony. In particular, youth leaders of various religious bodies have united in devoted service activities, providing a stepping-stone for harmony and understanding between religions. In doing this they have set up a valuable tradition for the future of humanity.

The second conference was convened in San Francisco in 1990; there I announced the founding of the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace (IRFWP). In August 1991, the historical founding conference of the IRFWP took place in Seoul. This year the IRFWP and the International Religious Foundation are jointly convening this conference.

As you know, this conference has been organized as part of the first World Culture and Sports Festival. Four years ago when the Seoul Olympics were held, I formally announced my plan for the World Culture and Sports Festival, which will open a new page of harmony, exchange and cooperation among the peoples of this world village. Although the Olympics play an extremely important role, they lack the vertical values and spiritual dimension which are bestowed by God.

Because religion lies at the heart of culture, the Assembly of the World's Religions and IRFWP stand at the heart of the World Culture and Sports Festival. Religious ideals together with the wisdom and values that accompany them should permeate the education, scholarship, art, physical education, media, politics and economics of the world, and become their standard. The World Culture and Sports Festival seeks to guide the spiritual culture of mankind and pursues genuine values for human happiness. It will also be an historical event, pointing towards a peaceful new world culture where God, man and all things merge together.

We are all aware of the fact that our world is immersed in deep suffering. Although the Cold War may have come to an end, conflicts are still occurring in all corners of the world, and evil, hatred and injustice

continue to afflict humanity. There are many people suffering in despair and spiritual poverty, even in materially abundant advanced nations. Although many people are seeking solace through drugs and indiscriminate sex, they are running headlong down the road to spiritual and physical ruin. Obviously, no one desires such a world of evil, conflict and despair.

I came seeking to open the way for the original nature of humanity to clear away this unhappiness, and to build a world overflowing with peace and joy. This is the very path which religions have sought to tread. Nonetheless, the ideal world for which humanity has been yearning has not yet been realized. At the core of religion lies the desire to reveal the source of the unhappiness and suffering of humanity. If we are ignorant of the source of suffering, we cannot even hope to get rid of it. The solution to this is only possible through the knowledge derived from divine revelation.

### ***Cause of the problem***

Today I intend to clarify the fundamental cause of this problem, and to indicate its solution. God created the ancestors of mankind, Adam and Eve, and bestowed upon them the three great blessings: to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth, and to have dominion over all things. The meaning of the first blessing, to be fruitful, is that all individuals should grow to become perfected people of character centering on God. The second blessing signifies that a perfected man and woman should become a true couple, give birth to children, and by treading the path of true parenthood become an ideal family. The third blessing is to become inheritors of a heavenly environment on earth, free of want and distress, in the environment which God has provided.

God, the embodiment of true love, hoped for all people, who are the object of His love and whom He created as His sons and daughters to become perfected incarnations of true love. Then He hoped that they could establish a heavenly environment after achieving the conjugal ideal based on true love. Tragically, Adam and Eve deviated through unprincipled love in a stage of immaturity, before they had perfected the true love that God had blessed them with, and were driven out of paradise. Consequently, the ancestors of mankind who had lost true love, which is the source of life and their original divine nature, ignored God's blessing and started married life centering on Satan's love. Thus, they handed down the love, life and blood lineage of Satan to their descendants.

God, determined to restore His ideal of creation not accomplished due to the Fall, and committed to save humankind from unhappiness, has guided man by establishing religions. Accordingly, in place of Adam and Eve who had become false parents, God had to send the Messiah--that is, True Parents--in order to give rebirth to all humanity. God's ultimate and unchanging dispensational purpose is to find and establish True Parents. True Parents comes as the personification of love and the seed of true life. A true family originates with the True Parents, and this family becomes the model for all families in their path of restoration.

God's true love is the love which invests itself, and invests itself again, and forgets that it has invested itself. When God created His object of love, He Himself, who exists for the sake of others, invested 100 percent of His being, and still desired to invest a further 100 percent, and even 1000 percent more. God wants to invest Himself still more because He wants His loving child, who is His object of love, to be better than Himself.

Thus, the path of true love is the path of giving and giving yet again. Likewise, the path of True Parents, who are the embodiment of true love, is not one which seeks recognition, but is the way of sacrifice for others. The path that should be exemplified by religions, which God established for His providence of salvation, is one of principle. Because human life is conceived centering on the ideal of love, the essence of human life is love. A being who is born on the basis of love should live a life of living for others in the same way God does. This is the principle of heaven. Consequently, one can say that people are beings who have come into existence for the purpose of true love.

True love starts from the point of living for others. Man as he was originally created contained God's true love in his mind and body and responded to it naturally. In other words, the mind centering on true love responds to God and the body automatically acts in unison with the mind. The true united desire of mind and body, when there is no conflict between them, is to inherit God's true love completely and to respond to it substantially. The idea of man, which is the unity of mind and body, is achieved when God's true love is possessed in totality.

The ideal of genuine freedom, peace and happiness is attainable only when the mind and body become one centering on true love. Furthermore, one can only achieve a free and peaceful family, nation and world on the foundation of the unity of mind and body. The cardinal point of peace should be found not at the global or national level, but in the relationship between mind and body within the individual.

### ***The Blessing***

Yesterday, 30,000 couples from all corners of the world received the holy blessing and secured the establishment of a new family tradition centering on God. The ceremony you attended was not simply an important wedding ceremony convened by one religious order. Society is being shaken to its foundations by the collapse of sexual morality, the deviant behavior of young people and the breakdown of families.

How should we tackle this situation? The seeds of moral corruption sown by Satan and the ancestors of humankind have borne their historical fruit. The phenomena of the Last Days of hell on earth, where the way of heaven and human morality have been ravaged and where men have become animals, are quite evident. This tragedy has been further exacerbated by a tendency to extreme egocentrism and a toleration of free sex which seems to have imbued immorality with a rosy hue.

Spiritually and morally, our world is facing a profound crisis. Not only are orderly families disintegrating, but also the minds and bodies of youth, who represent the next generation, are being damaged. This crisis facing humanity can only be solved through the Messiah, True Parents, who are the owners of God's true love and true life. Contrary to popular trends, God's ideal of marriage places emphasis on eternal "one-man--one-woman"-hood before God, the sanctity of love and sex, God's blessing, and marriage for one's descendants. This movement, which aims to realize an eternal ideal of couples and families centering on God's love in 160 nations, regardless of race and national boundary, represents the bright future and hope of humanity.

The basic unit of God's ideal of creation is the family. The family is the basis for the establishment of the society and nation. God's ideal of a one-world family, transcending race and based on true love, is directly connected to the realization of a peaceful world. The people of the world can have children of goodness and practice correct ethics when they build blessed families under God's ideal of true love and become exemplary husbands and wives. Then ideal families, which are the fruit of true love, can be perfected, and ideal societies and nations--as well as the ideal whole world--will come into being. The international joint wedding ceremony is providing a fundamental solution to the chronic ailments of modern society by restoring the original ideal for the family.

Now the time has come for religions to display their leadership in the world. Leadership cannot emerge from blind faith or an arrogant and self-righteous attitude stemming from narrow-mindedness. True leadership arises when one subordinates oneself to the will of heaven and acts altruistically. It is time for religious people to appreciate their responsibility towards the conditions of this age and its unprincipled facets, and to examine themselves deeply. Religious people should repent for failing to exemplify the practice of love, and because they were engrossed in their personal salvation or the interests of their own religious denominations, for not investing their whole efforts in the salvation of humankind. At this time the practice of love is required--not only faith.

### ***God is calling us***

God is calling us. He passionately desires to challenge injustice and evil in the world and express His true love. All religions should be of one mind in making known and practicing God's fervent hope for humanity. God, who transcends all ritual and doctrinal disputes, desires believers to raise up their spirit through profound spiritual dialogue and exchange with Him. Religions should establish the spiritual order to which man, who has a spiritual nature, should relate himself closely. They should systematize it and create a lifestyle which expresses it rationally. Religious leaders of all creeds should take the lead in self-purification and--furthermore--with mutual respect for each other, raise up influential inter-religious organizations.

Until I founded the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace last year, I endured enormous difficulties. For forty years, I trod the path of sacrifice, living for the sake of others, and envisioning the hitherto unrealized ideal of inter-religious harmony and the accomplishment of world peace centering on God's will. Despite the persecution of a number of intolerant religious groups in various countries and a lack of understanding shown by successive generations of political regimes, and at the cost of all kinds of personal sacrifices, I determinedly worked to establish an ecumenical movement, an ecumenical theological seminary, the New Ecumenical Religious Association, and the publication of the World Scriptures. I have also continually supported the Council of the World's Religions and the Assembly of the World's Religions for the promotion of inter-religious harmony.

One may ask why I have initiated all these projects. All I desire when I involve myself in these activities, including the holding of the Assembly of the World's Religions, and the activities of the Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace, is to fulfill the will of God, the parent of mankind. My only aspiration is, together with all of you enlightened religious leaders and religious scholars, to realize the hope of God and all people on the earth.

Rather than satisfying ourselves with inter-religious harmony, the next step from here is to involve ourselves more positively in social activities, by creating a broad-based unified organization aimed at world peace, together with opinion makers in the academic, political and media spheres. In cultivating

and guiding this organization to fulfill God's Will on earth, religions should exemplify the spirit of living for others.

Let us all open our spiritual ears once again and, inclining them toward heaven, follow God's advice with a humble heart. Then we should become aware of the mission that God has bequeathed to the religious leaders of this age and, by correctly guiding the spirit of humanity, secure the spiritual and mental order of the new world culture. I hope that this conference will provide a forum for discussion based on God's wisdom, transcending the dimension of human insight. I want to express my appreciation for the dedication of His Grace Dr. Gregorios, who has provided a model of organization and management as Chairman of the Conference. I would also like to thank all the Committee Chairmen and representatives for their hard work.

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## INTERRELIGIOUS WORK: THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO BRING ABOUT PEACE AND HUMAN BETTERMENT IN TODAY'S WORLD

[http://www.reverendsunmyungmoon.org/works\\_inter\\_religious.html](http://www.reverendsunmyungmoon.org/works_inter_religious.html)

### Fighting among Religions: God's Headache



**In His Words:** "How about God's headache--the division and disunity within Christianity and between the world religions? For God, religious people are the conscience of the world. Religious people have the tradition, values and practical power to overcome evil and educate the world about the true way of life. From the earliest days of the Unification movement I devoted the greatest portion of our resources to serving other religions. In the 1950s, when many Unification families did not have enough to eat, I devoted funds to the cause of interreligious harmony. I suffered for their hardships and begged for their patience for the sake of mankind's future." - Rev. Sun Myung Moon

A central tenet of Reverend Moon's work is that peace and human betterment will be most effectively achieved today through interreligious work--the close, cooperative work of religious leaders of different religions and denominations working together. Just as today's world is at war primarily because of religious strife, today's world can be largely cured of its ills, through the opposite--interreligious cooperation.

After 9/11, because of Unificationism's long history of interreligious work, organizations founded by Reverend Moon had the experience and connections to reach out to the Islamic world at a time of crisis. IIFWP organized an interreligious conference in October 2001 in New York, barely a month after 9/11, and then sponsored another groundbreaking conference for Muslim leaders in Indonesia in December 2001 entitled "Islam and the Future World of Peace."

From the early days of his ministry, Reverend Moon recognized the importance of and invested in interreligious dialogue and cooperation for a future world of peace. In fact, he spent more money on interreligious activities than on his own faith community. Reverend Moon knew that interreligious understanding and cooperation would be the most effective means to bring about a world of peace in the future.

### Interreligious Cooperation and Dialogue

**In His Words:** "Now is the time when all the world's religions should keenly feel central responsibility for the realization of world peace. The future happiness of mankind cannot be achieved through economic prosperity alone, but only by overcoming conflicts between ideologies, cultures and races through interreligious understanding and spiritual harmony."

### ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS

Inaugurated in 1985, the first Assembly of the World's Religions was held in McAfee, New Jersey, US. This gathering drew about 1000 religious leaders and scholars representing faith traditions from around the world. Subsequent assemblies took place in 1990 and 1992.

### NEW ECUMENICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1979 to promote dialogue and understanding between Unificationists and traditional Christian churches, the New Ecumenical Research Association sponsored numerous seminars and publications in the 1970s and 1980s.

## UNIFICATION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY INTERRELIGIOUS PROGRAMS



Founded in 1975, this seminary in New York state trains leaders of the Unification movement. It models interreligious understanding and dialogue through mandatory courses in the study of other religions and by sponsoring seminars and dialogues among leaders of Christianity and other religions.

[www.uts.edu](http://www.uts.edu)

## INTERRELIGIOUS AND INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR WORLD PEACE (IRFF)



Founded in 1999, the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace works with religious persons and organizations to promote peace especially in emergency situations and resolving international conflicts. Projects have included dialogues and seminars in hot spots such as Northern Ireland, Bosnia, South Africa and Nepal. [www.iifwp.org](http://www.iifwp.org)

## COUNCIL FOR THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS

The Council for the World's Religions was established in 1984 to work with religious leaders on issues relating to conflict and peace.

## MIDDLE EAST PEACE INITIATIVE (MEPI)



Founded in 2003, the Middle East Peace Initiative is based on Reverend Moon's vision that problems of the Middle East will ultimately be solved by religious leaders--the leaders of Christianity, Judaism and Islam working together, rather than political leadership alone. To bring reconciliation between the three Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, MEPI organizes pilgrimages, dialogues and peace rallies in the Holy Land. MEPI has brought 10,000 religious, civic and political leaders from six continents on peace pilgrimages to Israel, Palestine, Jordan and Lebanon. Participants meet with

both Arab and Jewish religious and government leaders to understand firsthand the Middle East crisis and to work to bring about reconciliation. Non-violent methods of resolving injustices are promoted.

Religious leaders, including veterans of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s non-violent civil rights movement, serve as mentors on the effectiveness of the non-violent approaches to resolving injustices.

[www.peacefederation.org](http://www.peacefederation.org)

## RELIGIOUS YOUTH SERVICE (RYS)

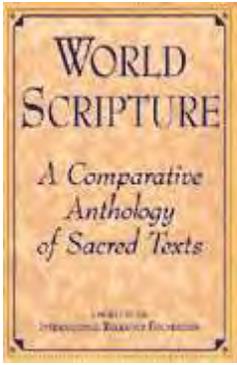


Youth from the world's different religions work and live together carrying out a social service project, putting into practice Reverend Moon's vision of solving social problems through interreligious cooperation. Since its founding in 1985, Religious Youth Service has carried out 151 projects in 51 nations. Up to 100 young people from different religions work together for one or more weeks on activities such as building schools, latrines and clinics; restoring religious shrines; painting murals, etc. In 2006 there were projects in Malaysia, Ghana, China, Guatemala, Estonia, Indonesia, Jamaica, Mongolia, Palau and Zambia. [www.religiousyouthservice.org](http://www.religiousyouthservice.org)



## WORLD SCRIPTURE - A COMPARATIVE ANTHOLOGY OF SACRED TEXTS

**In His Words:** "Through this text all people will recognize shared values and a universal foundation which are of greater significance than the differences which have historically divided religions." - Rev. Sun Myung Moon



To deepen mutual appreciation between the world's religions, the International Religious Foundation sponsored the research and writing of the book *World Scripture – A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts*. This remarkable book compares scriptural passages from the world's religions on several hundred themes. *World Scripture* demonstrates the amazing affinity of beliefs that religions share. It is widely available in book stores and has fast become a primer for comparative religion studies. The advisory board for the book was composed of 41 scholars from the various religions. Dr. Ninian Smart, professor of comparative religions at the University of California at Santa Barbara, wrote the *Preface*.

*World Scriptures* is widely used as a text for comparative religion classes. You can purchase *World Scriptures* on Amazon.com.

### **International Coalition for Religious Freedom (ICRF)**

A non-sectarian, educational organization dedicated realizing the vision of religious freedom found in Article 18 of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights which reads: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, alone or in community with others, and, in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance." [www.religiousfreedom.com](http://www.religiousfreedom.com)

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### **IRFWP history**

[http://www.irfw.org/history/history\\_1983.shtml](http://www.irfw.org/history/history_1983.shtml)

Regional Conference on Religion in the Media  
Atlanta, Georgia  
January 28th to 30th  
Sponsored by New ERA

Seminar on The Fall: Sin and Society  
Nassau, The Bahamas  
Febraury 23rd to 27th  
Sponsored by New ERA

Seminar on Religion in the Pacific Era  
Nassau, The Bahamas  
February 23rd to 27th  
Sponsored by New ERA

Seminar on The Unification of Restoration through Indemnity  
Nassau, The Bahamas  
February 23rd to 27th  
Sponsored by New ERA

Regional Conference on Marxism and Social Change in the 1980's  
Keystone, Colorado  
March 11th to 13th  
Sponsored by New ERA

Mormon-Unification Dialogue  
Barrytown, New York  
April 22nd to 24th  
Sponsored by New ERA

International Religious Foundation Incorporated  
April 25th

Regional Conference on Varieties and Unities of Religious Experience  
Berkeley, California  
May 13th to 15th  
Sponsored by New ERA

Regional Conference on Education for Moral Development  
New York, NY  
June 10th to 12th  
Sponsored by New ERA

Seminar on Unification Theology with Implications for Ecumenism and Social Action  
Nassau, The Bahamas  
June 27th to July 2nd  
Sponsored by ICC

Second Annual Youth Seminar on World Religions  
USA, Israel, Turkey, Italy, India, Nepal, China, South Korea  
July 2nd to August 22nd  
Sponsored by YSWR

Introductory Seminar on Unification Theology  
Medeira, Portugal  
July 30th to August 7th  
Sponsored by New ERA

Advanced Seminar on the Unification of World Religions  
Medeira, Portugal  
July 30th to August 7th  
Sponsored by New ERA

Toward the Twenty-First Century: Problems and Prospects for New Religions  
Berkeley, California  
October 5th to 9th  
Sponsored by New ERA

Unification Theology with Implications for Ecumenism and Social Action  
Freeport, The Bahamas  
October 17th to 22nd  
Sponsored by ICC

Unification Theology with Implications for Ecumenism and Social Action  
Freeport, The Bahamas  
October 24th to 29th  
Sponsored by ICC

General Theologians Conference on Unification Theology and Lifestyle  
Barrytown, New York  
October 28th to 30th  
Sponsored by New ERA

God: The Contemporary Discussion Conference III  
Dorado Beach, Puerto Rico  
December 30th to January 4th  
Sponsored by New ERA

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## **The Assembly of World's Religions**

**Laura Reinig**  
**November 15-21, 1985**  
**Americana Great Gorge Resort, MacAfee, New Jersey**



*The main Assembly banner*

It is the evening of November 15, 1985. Chief Richard Snake of the Delaware Indian Nation, a noble tribe that once lived on the land he now stands on, lights a ritual fire of evergreen sprigs in the center of a large circle, representing the cosmos. In prayer he invokes the presence of the Great Spirit. Into the center from four points, symbolizing the structural lines of our earth's sacred geography, come a Buddhist, a Hindu, a Jew, a Zoroastrian, a Muslim, a Christian, a Taoist, and a follower of African primal religion, to light a candle from the common flame, symbolizing the interconnectedness of all faiths. Each one recites a prayer from his or her own classical religious heritage in its original language and then calls upon all those gathered around the circle to recite the prayer again in English. Surrounding the circle in the semidarkness, over 600 spiritual leaders and seekers from 85 different nations of the world, symbolically representing all the peoples of the earth, past and present, stand together to take part in this sacred ritual. They are here on a pilgrimage to share the jewels of their own faiths with each other and to discover that their faiths

are all drawn from one common source, "that Ultimate Mystery, Memory, Mind, and Heart from which all energy comes!"

Thus began the first Assembly of the World's Religions, held November 15-21 at the Americana Great Gorge Resort in McAfee, New Jersey. Professors, clergy, artists, students, spiritual leaders, and professionals in many fields were invited from all parts of the world to take part in this historic event. Sponsored by the International Religious Foundation (IRF), this conference was the first in a series of three inter-religious and cross-cultural conferences commemorating the centennial of the World's Parliament of Religions, which was held in Chicago in 1893. Assembly Two is planned for 1989, and Assembly Three for 1993.

This incredible event was the manifestation of a vision for inter-religious unity that Father already had 40 years ago. At that time Father wanted the religious leaders of the world to join with him in his urgent quest for dialogue, harmony, and action to help solve the injustices of the world. Now, beginning with this series of three conferences, Father is hoping to recover the primacy of the spiritual dimension of life in the face of the growing secularity of modern society, so that religious people can actually work together and fully contribute to world peace.



To bring out the spiritual aspect, the Assembly sought to create, not merely a forum for theological discourse, but an atmosphere for direct religious experience -- through dialogue, lectures, meditation, prayer meetings, rituals, poetry readings, musical and dramatic performances, art exhibitions, and film and video presentations. In this way, participants could go beyond the dogma and doctrine that separate religions, and journey into the deep inner aspect, the spiritual center of life, or the heart. For it is only in the heart that true communication with God can occur; only through the heart can one receive real nourishment from and offer real compassion to one another.

The title of Assembly One was "Recovering the Classical Heritage' Participants had the chance to revive the beauty of their own diverse classical traditions and awaken to the richness of other faiths. It was truly a feast for the eye, ear, mind, and heart.



The spirit of celebration was bounteously manifested in the many-hued banners hung all over the hotel for the occasion, created by the famous banner-maker Norman Laliberte. Symbols of each religion were stylistically rendered in blazing color, adding greatly to the aesthetic environment.

The week began with an opportunity for everyone to greet Father and Mother, Rev. Chung Hwan Kwak, Dr. Bo Hi Pak, Program Chairman Richard Payne, Project Advisor M. Darrol Bryant, and Dr. Huston Smith, a long-time ICUS and IRF supporter. Father greeted each one of the participants heartily with both hands and a big, radiant smile. The seemingly endless line of people

offered a vivid display of turbans, cloaks, saris, robes, and habits -- the diverse garb of the world's pilgrims. A number of the guests had been former participants of the Youth Seminar on World Religions, and were very excited to shake hands with Father and Mother. A majority had never been to an event sponsored by Father before, but had been invited through many PWPA, IRF, and other church contacts throughout the world.

After dinner the participants gathered for the opening ceremony, the spiritual con- vocation described above, which included delicate yet penetrating Middle Eastern melodies performed by the Alhambra Trio. Even from the very beginning of the conference a sense of awe and a shared transcendent experience connected each person there to each other and to a higher Presence.



*Mrs. Sonal Mansingh, evokes the spirit of the Hindu gods in classical Indian dance.*

At noon the following day the participants gathered for the opening plenary session. Theologian Dr. Herbert Richardson introduced Father. He shared how Father had been asked by God to implement the unity of the spiritual and the physical aspects of man and bring about the building of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Then Father gave his Founder's Address in which he stressed the need "to purify the religious atmosphere into one in which believers can have living faith and every soul can communicate with God!"

"All religious people should feel responsibility for the shaky spiritual foundation of this generation and should repent," he said. "Religions should stimulate spiritual..."

During the entire week, meditations in the varied religious traditions were held every morning before breakfast in six different rooms. Participants could join in the services of their own or of other faiths. In this way they could experience a real taste of the heart of each religion. It was also a challenging opportunity for

the participants from different denominations or sects within the same religion to create a worship service that reflected not just one aspect but the essence of that faith.



*The voices of these four Tibetan Buddhists mingled sonorously, almost hypnotically, through the auditorium on the evening of traditional religious chanting.*

Plenary sessions were held every day for the entire group, centering on the Assembly's theme of recovering the classical heritage. Before each speaker began, one of the participants offered an invocation, a prayer, or a chant. The moderators and the speakers afforded absolute respect to people of all faiths by referring to God in such varied and beautiful ways as the Ground of Being, the Perennial One, the Divine Source, or the Transcendent Spiritual Order. Public prayers were spoken without the usual "Amen" common to Western ears; they were left open-ended and thus created among those gathered an expectant receptivity for whatever followed. Talks were given on the Islamic, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, Hindu, and African primal traditions by distinguished leaders of their faiths. Presentations were also given on "The Spiritual Heritage of Women" and on "Personhood, Peace, and Justice" Although each speaker touched on the very intimate and unique aspects of his or her particular religion, there was a quality of universality among all the offerings, as each speaker said in essence, "At the heart of each religion is the personal experience with God, and your God and my God are one."

Twice a day the participants met in small discussion groups of 15 or 20 people to discuss the plenary sessions and the papers that each participant had written prior to coming to the Assembly. Each group was centered around a theme, such as "Spiritual Disciplines and Practices." "The Encounter with Secularity," or "Stewardship of Creation and the Fate of the Earth." It was in the groups that people were able to

develop bonds of heart with each other as they shared their beliefs, their individual spiritual journeys, and their aspirations with others of different faiths. In one group a Hindu who had almost been killed four times by Muslims as he was trying to escape from Pakistan after World War II, and who had developed a tremendous hatred for Muslims, found himself sitting with a Muslim in his group, and he was surprised that he could open his heart up to him.

There developed over the course of the week a visible connection of love among people at the conference. Such an atmosphere was created that in the halls and in the elevators people would eagerly read each other's name tags and exclaim with childlike innocence, "Oh, you're from Indonesia? Well, I'm from Sri Lanka! Are you going to the fifth floor? Let's go up together!" And they would start talking excitedly about their new experiences without any of the usual reserve one normally would have with strangers. Some of the participants had met each other before in various inter-religious conferences in different parts of the world, but many new friendships were created.

One special aspect of this conference which lifted it above the realm of simply the verbal exchange of ideas was the emphasis on the transcendent, artistic experience. In the afternoons participants gave informal presentations of songs, poetry recitation, dance, music, chanting, and storytelling in their native traditions, which captured the intangible beauty of the heart expressing faith and love.

In the evenings, performances were held on a large stage. The most remarkable of these was the presentation of classical Indian dance. Two women, in turn, displayed incredible virtuosity in their rendering of traditional Hindu love stories into movement. One of the dancers, Sonal Mansingh, a highly educated scholar as well as a teacher at the Center for Indian Classical Dance in New Delhi, is famous throughout India. She was able to create by herself, through her supple body and especially through her astonishingly expressive hands, an entire rhapsody of emotion with such tremendous evocative power that one felt there had been dozens of separate personalities on the stage.

One day was spent on a field trip to New York City, where the group toured various sights in Manhattan and later gathered in Harlem, at the huge Metropolitan Baptist Church, where three speakers delivered talks and the preacher of the church even taught the entire congregation some real gospel singing.



The conference staff, mostly UTS students, had the blessing to meet every morning with Rev. Kwak, who offered valuable spiritual insights about Father's vision. He said that the most important job they could do was to unite internally with Father's heart and desire and try to develop deep, personal connections with the participants, which could be the most valuable gift the people could carry back home with them. We members should be like the roots of a tree, unseen and yet invaluable supporting the visible growth of Father's achievements. He emphasized how Father, determined to find a way to achieve harmony among religions, struggled alone through many years without real support from anyone and made many

serious conditions that are only now bearing fruit.

Rev. Kwak said that the spirit world is working very closely now with people on earth, and he told an amazing story about one of the special guests at the Assembly, a man from Senegal who is the spiritual leader of several million Muslims. About two years ago this man started seeing in his prayers a vision of Father surrounded by a bright light. God told him he was a man who was going to unite the religions, and that he was in America. Even though he didn't even know Father's name or who he was, he was determined to find him. By a miracle his visa was approved and he came to New York City, and he was finally able to find our church and come to the Assembly to meet Father. He spent many hours praying for Father during the Assembly, and he told Rev. Kwak that he is now resolved to completely follow Father's instructions for him.

As a practical outcome of the Assembly, a project emerged through the IRF staff -- a program called World Youth for God, where young people of all faiths will be able to join together each summer in various third world countries to serve people in need. Assembly participants were encouraged to enlist the involvement of the religious organizations with which they were affiliated in their own countries.

In addition, some of the delegates from India were inspired to get together to discuss among themselves how they could carry back the vision of the Assembly to their own country, and how they could organize themselves to help India contribute to peace in the world.

On the final day, a closing plenary session was held in which each of the project coordinators -- Richard Payne, M. Darrol Bryant, John Maniatis, and Tyler Hendricks -- and several of the participants could express their deep feelings about the success of the conference. Each in their own unique way commented on the incredible openness and frankness they experienced in the groups, the mutual respect they developed for other faiths, the gratitude they felt towards Father, and the joy and wonder of it all. One of the participants, Dr. Chatsumarn Kabilsingh, expressed very well the potential value of this meeting. She said that this conference is something we cannot just put on the altar. It is not a completed offering; it is just a step. "The Assembly is a well-written introduction." she said. "Now we have to write the book."

The conference culminated that evening in a sumptuous farewell banquet. During the meal Father sat quietly at the head table, looking out over the sea of guests with a profound and parental gaze. Dr. Huston Smith gave some heart-felt and insightful closing remarks, cautioning that it won't be easy for the participants to explain this experience back home among their families and associates. He urged that they should make an effort to "cultivate the habit of God." training themselves and drenching themselves in "the fullness of the Divine Presence"

After that Rev. Kwak introduced Father, and then Father rose and gave his Farewell Address. Father's talk sparkled with humor and ended with a warm and embracing feeling. He said that this parting need not be a sad moment if we take what we have learned here back to the community of faith from which we came. "The coming together of our various traditions and beliefs." he explained, "much like the meeting point of the branch rivers with the main stream, is full of cross currents and sometimes pretty rough water -- but that is not a bad thing, it is to be expected. In fact, the river's flow to the great ocean will be stimulated by these many currents. For me, that great ocean, the goal of our living river, is the Kingdom of God on Earth"

After dinner the musical presentations bestowed upon the whole conference a final blessing of joy and hope. The New York City Symphony performed several new arrangements of heart-rending Middle Eastern melodies in Western symphonic form, composed by conductor David Eaton and sung by Isabella Ganz. East and West were woven together in sound in an incredible encapsulation of the spirit of the whole week of events. Another extraordinarily moving piece, composed by Kevin Pickard expressly for the Assembly and sung by Jamie Louise Baer, was presented, called "Morning of an Age' It burst out into the banquet hall like a jubilation, announcing that the long- awaited dawn is not just coming but is already here. The ancient hope that has been buried within each person was touched -- and it brought many in the room to tears.

Departure time the next morning moved many of the participants to pledge to meet their new-found friends again, hopefully at the next Assembly in 1988, when the topic will be "Responding to Our Contemporary Challenge." or even at the third Assembly in 1993, which will have the title, "Strengthening Our Hope in the Future." A new dimension of faith had been touched in all of them; a realization that the essence, the inner core, of all religions and indeed of all people on this earth is really the same.

With the unity of heart developed from these conferences, the Assembly, in conjunction with other IRF activities, hopes to initiate many new collaborations among religions and to establish centers for inter-religious dialogue and training throughout the world.