

Reflections on True Mother's City of Refuge Speech

Tyler Hendricks
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In her April 6, 2019 speech at the City of Refuge Church in Gardena, CA, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon made significant statements on environmentalism, the ethics of nations, the use of force, and her course as the True Mother. Her speech has raised some discussion among Unificationists. Here is my understanding of her statements.



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Environmentalism

I categorize environmentalism under what Divine Principle (Ch. 1) calls the third blessing, through which "the entire universe becomes yet another good object partner giving joy to God." No one can deny that we are not caring for the earth as much as we should. We certainly are not achieving the oneness with nature that Principle considers our original birthright. And indeed cultural Marxists exploit the problem, subverting young people's love of nature for political purposes. Which means those young people, including some of our second generation, stop listening to someone who is complacent about the environment.

So, first of all, Mother has to assure those young people that she agrees with their concerns; she's with them that climate change and ocean pollution are issues. Then idealists on the left say, great, this woman gets it. But then look at True Mother's solution. It has nothing to do with carbon credits and bans on plastic straws.

Here's what she said: "We should attend God, the Lord of creation, live in accordance with the eternal principles of creation and find the right solution."

And then she went on to reject the view that science has all the answers. In fact, she stated that blind faith in science is actually part of the problem. She stated we are not here to live convenient lives, and that God and the marriage Blessing are part of the solution:

"What I am saying is that we should live in line with the principles originally established by God. ...Blessed couples who received the Blessing today, you would not want your beloved children to live in an even worse environment than today's. Isn't that so?"

True Mother steered the conversation toward the heading solution: attendance of God and the marriage Blessing.

My nation first

As to the problem of putting one's own nation first, she said "the leader of this nation and leaders of other countries in the world are engaged in politics and actions that are centered on their own interests. Going this way means there is no hope for the future." Mother is calling people on the right to do some soul-searching. Plus, again, she's telling the left that she understands their heart.

But she does not advocate the left's neo-Marxist response of resist, hit hard and socialize. Her solution, again, is God and the Blessing:

"All of you here that have received the Blessing today, please fulfill your responsibilities as tribal messiahs, and all ministers of religion participating today please go to your places of worship and accomplish your responsibilities. We have to start a movement that will bring this country to attend our Heavenly Parent, our Creator God, even one day sooner. This is the only way for America to fulfill its heavenly mission as a nation blessed by God. In this way, God's dream and humanity's yearning to see the heavenly kingdom of one family of humankind under God can be realized."

This is straight from the *Peace Messages*.

Guns and knives

As far as the guns and knives statement, she used the same tactic. Get the ear of the left, and give them, and everyone, Father's message. Here's what she said:

"On the path to a peaceful world, do we need guns and swords? On the path to a peaceful world, we do not need guns and other weapons. You all know very well, that as a result of these, innocent lives are taken every day. We can no longer just watch these things happen. What should we do? Let us practice true love. This can only be achieved through the Blessing."

I researched Father's position on guns, and found that her words align perfectly with what Father said. For example:

"The word 'Unification' (*Tongil*) means to lead into oneness. The group which teaches leading into oneness is the Unification Church. But it does not lead and teach from a position armed with guns and knives. ...for thousands of years the Christians have fought and have divided into three or four hundred denominations. With what can they be united? With guns and swords? Have you learned anything? With what are you going to unite them? By guns, by violence, by dictatorial skills? ...So what the unification of world Christianity means is being unified by the Holy Spirit. This is the Holy Spirit Association. Do you understand? It is not bringing unification by the fist; it is not bringing unification by guns or swords. Through what will we unify? It is the Holy Spirit."

Conclusion thus far

In conclusion, what some may take to have been "throw-away" lines, even red herrings, at the end of the speech were strategic statements from True Mother articulating the headwing position. Now, she may have turned off people on the right by hitting their hot-buttons. "What, she's against polluting the oceans?!" But for the sincere listener, she balanced that adequately with her expression of love for God and Jesus, marriage and family, reverence for the Christian roots of this nation, and hope for America and its Christian leaders.

Next: Not talking directly about Father

Both True Mother's and True Father's words are not their words; they are God's words. She spoke the name of God or Heavenly Parent 24 times in the five-page speech, but not Father's name. Why?

I refer to Father's words on May 5, 2007:

"God should take the lead in the providential world and in making providential history. I will move to the rear now. If there is anything to praise, it is not me. The name, 'Rev. Moon,' should be erased. The name 'Rev. Moon' is associated with the opposition I faced, isn't it? Next are the True Parents! To understand the title 'True Parents,' the unnecessary terms 'Savior,' 'Messiah,' and 'Lord at his second coming' were attached to it during the course of restoration. Those superfluous titles should all be removed."

And on another occasion:

"My teaching is, 'Love your 360 homes more than you love me.' You don't need to worry about me anymore. Say, 'Father, you don't need to come here for many years because I found someone whom I love more than you. I don't need you anymore.' That is fine. I will not complain, even if I am a stepping stone for all mankind. Instead, I will feel more hopeful."

Dr. Moon's husband celebrated and validated her emergence as a woman with a voice:

"What is so wonderful about Mother is that she trusts everything I say. She has absolutely obeyed what I have said, and therein lies her greatness. She has been put into situations in which a lot of women would have opposed me. But she overcame all this and became the kind of a daughter whom Father can trust. Even if a father is flawed, his daughter should think that she will take responsibility for her father's flaws. When a woman has that kind of attitude, she can extract the root of Eve's sin from herself."

Consistent with this, Mother's words about the Holy Wedding did not mention her husband. She said at the City of Refuge Church, "In 1960, by my own volition, I ascended to the position of True Parent."*

First, is it permissible not to mention her spouse? Of course. The speech was not about the Wedding; it was about Mother's course. Father spoke of the Holy Wedding countless times in the context of his course, without mentioning his spouse. And her emphasis that it was *her* decision is vital.

Father and Mother each individually represents True Parents

Father once said, "Even when I am alone, I represent True Parents. And the same goes for Mother. When she is alone, she represents True Parents."

This relates to the determination of our movement's leadership, but it is deeper than that. It is rooted in the core of God's purpose of creation. As Father said in 1977:

"The invisible God, almighty God, can manifest through True Mother's and my image. We are His visible image here on earth. ...Almighty God ...is appearing to you directly in the forms of Mother and me, borrowing our images to work with you. God is doing that only because Mother and I have laid a complete foundation for salvation."

True Father testified that he is the visible form of Heavenly Father and True Mother is the visible form of Heavenly Mother. God is "borrowing" True Mother's image to speak to us. She not only has the right, but the responsibility to let the world know.



Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon speaks at the City of Refuge Church in Gardena, CA, on April 6, 2019

Herstory

Second, why is Mother telling people about her own course?

Maybe because there were thousands of women there who could relate to it, learn from it, and follow it. And because the main driver of religious life, Christian or otherwise, is women.

From the outset of his ministry, Rev. Moon called this the age of women and age of the wife. Christian theologians in dialogue with UTS seminarians in the late 1970s remarked that by their reading of *Exposition of the Divine Principle*, the Lord of the Second Advent should be a woman. God and Father want to hear the woman's viewpoint, the woman's story. It is the complement to the man's story.

In my doctoral studies in American church history, I encountered women historians, two of whom, Mary P. Ryan and Ann Douglas, impressed me tremendously. Ryan's book is *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865*; Douglas's is *The Feminization of American Culture*. Both deal with the era of my focus, the early 19th century United States. There are many more excellent studies by women scholars and they reveal history from the point of view of women. The traditional male viewpoint is called the "great man theory." History is shaped by male central figures. Fine, true, very meaningful, but only half the story. The world is ready to hear "herstory."

I'm not talking about the Cain-side feminism that Mother since her first WFWP speech consistently critiques and rejects.

Father is the one who brought out the heroic *women* of the Bible, whom even female scholars call "the bad girls of the Bible." Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba... yes, Mary. Father revealed that these women are heroines. As Judah declared of Tamar, "she is more righteous than me." For Tamar, pregnancy, childbirth and more -- the likelihood of being stoned to death. For Judah, an encounter with a prostitute. And he gets the spotlight as the progenitor of the Jews -- "the tribe of Judah," and Tamar is a "bad girl of the Bible." Only *Father* vindicates the women who gave their lives so that Jesus could be born. Father discovered the Divine Principle "herstory" of restoration.

Here's a bit of True Mother's herstory. Her mom pulled her into what was regarded by media and government as a sex cult. Father had just been released from Seodaemun Prison. It was December 1955 when Dae Mo Nim joined the UC. The church was poor; its leader was rejected by all other churches. In April 1960, Father was in the police station until 11 p.m. the night before the Holy Wedding.

"Han Hak Ja, where is your fiancé? It's ten at night, and tomorrow is your wedding!"

"He's getting interrogated at the police station. I'm sure it will be fine. Please get some rest. We start tomorrow at 3 a.m."

Mother was preparing to be a nurse, in a Catholic school. Solid as a rock, the Catholics. Respected, wealthy, stable, wise, Western. Good future. Help people, take care of the sick. Good girl. No one questions. No trouble.

She knows that if she, a nobody in this church, stands up as Rev. Moon's bride, she will be the object not just of the opprobrium of society but of the women of the church itself. I'm being blunt here, but this is based on Rev. Moon's words, not Mrs. Moon's.

So the point Mother made in that City of Refuge speech was: This was *my* decision; I was not *forced* to do it; it was between me and my God, and I took responsibility for it and am still doing so. This was a symmetrical relationship, my husband and God, me and God, me and him. I had just turned 17. I own it, am proud of it, and am going to fulfill all of the promises I made that day.

Predestination

In that speech, a couple of paragraphs after her "it was my decision" statement, Mother said:

"If key figures had understood the providence, Christianity would have become the foundation."

She's saying *it did not have to be her!* We are not Calvinists. The human life that perfectly fulfills God's Will is predestined. The person who lives that life is the predestined person.

The providence of God is full of woulda's, coulda's and shoulda's. If people had received Father in the 1940s, the True Mother's position would have been filled by another woman. She knows that, and said it in so many words. If the providence 2,000 years ago had succeeded, obviously the True Father's position would have been filled by Jesus.

But Judaism failed Jesus, and Christianity failed Father. Father did everything humanly and divinely possible, and had to make condition after condition, and wait and wait until he was 40. That's a long time to wait for one's true wife to appear. Of this course, he said,

"The suffering and tears of mothers have filled the valley of Christian history. This had to continue until ... the true bridegroom is born on this earth and becomes mature enough to be

married in the Holy Wedding."

Finally, a 17-year old female follower, who didn't even convert on her own, came because her mother joined -- a Jacob child; this nursing student appeared, and said, "Yes."

So, theologically, Mother was saying, "Look, people, it's not about me; it's about God's providence. Here's God's providence as Principle teaches it. I fulfilled the True Mother's portion of responsibility. Now, how about you?"

Apparently, that resonated with Bishop Noel Jones and those gathered at the City of Refuge Church. It resonates with me.

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**=Author's notes from simultaneous interpretation. The official translation is "In 1960, the time had come when I could decide by myself, and in that year I ascended to the position of a True Parent." He prefers the "of my own volition" phrasing.*