

## One Tradition

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*Photo date and location unknown*

"Tradition" is a word that has fallen into disrepute in these fast-paced times. Many people associate the word with old men imposing anachronistic ideas and rituals upon their unwilling descendants. But from the standpoint of the History of Restoration, tradition is a key factor in fulfilling God's purpose of creation. Just as surely as parents pass on their good and bad traits to their offspring, so tradition passes on patterns which can either be a rich soil in which future generations can grow and thrive, or else a stumbling block, a barrier and a barren waste upon which future generations can only suffer and struggle.

Our Unification Family has experienced the importance of tradition. We have seen how a strong tradition and pattern can become a wellspring of strength and direction for new members coming in; but if a vague, weak or undefined pattern is established, or if habits and attitudes develop which are not completely God-centered, then this becomes a trial and a stumbling block for rising generations of Family members.

How can we establish the true, Heavenly tradition? If we carry man's traditions back to the source, we come to realize that if man hadn't fallen, there would only be one tradition over all the earth, along with one language and culture; the tradition of loving service and offering beauty and joy to God. Because of the Fall, however, we see two main traditions developed: the tradition of the Fall, and the tradition of Restoration from the Fall. The former is based on pride, egotism, rebelliousness, the tendency to spread sin to others; in other words, the tradition of sacrificing other people to fulfill one's own selfish desires. The latter is the exact reverse of the fallen tradition, and is actually God's formula and strategy for eliminating the Fallen tradition forever.

The Heavenly tradition is characterized by selflessness, faith and obedience in God's Word, and service and loving witness to others; in short, the tradition of sacrificing oneself for others' sake. This is the tradition set by Noah, Abraham, Moses, and the Old Testament prophets; reached its highest expression in Jesus, and is still carried on by devoted Christians today.

We of the Unification Church, as inheritors of the mission of Jesus and all the saints, have the responsibility, not only of carrying on this tradition, but of guiding it toward its ultimate purpose; the attainment of Christ's everlasting reign on this earth. This means we must go beyond the tradition of the church, and toward the tradition of God's True Family; beyond the tradition of the Cross, and towards the tradition of total victory over evil. That is, to fulfill God's purpose and the mission given to us, we must set a higher and truer tradition than any now existing. As Jesus said, "You must be more righteous than the Scribes and Pharisees."

Does that seem like a tall order? Not if we follow the tradition set by our Leader; to "go forth with the Heart of the Father, in the shoes of a servant, shedding our tears for Man, our sweat for the Earth, and our blood for Heaven."