

ONE FAMILY UNDER GOD

A DETERMINED MAN

His country lies in ruins,
Ripped apart by outside powers
Fighting the Cold War.

Bombs and missiles have destroyed everything.
Virtually the entire population
Are now refugees.

The small following he had built with love
Is devastated.
Members are scattered or dead.

His beloved wife has left him
After five long years of separation
He has been imprisoned
Hundreds of miles away
In a concentration camp
Where men died a slow death.

He has nothing to eat
And only one set of clothes.
With nowhere to live, he builds a small shack
Out of old military ration boxes
On a lonely hill in Busan.

Yet, he speaks of a future
When the world will come to Korea
To learn to live in peace and harmony.

Will anyone listen?
Will anyone respond?

EARLY DAYS

Sun Myung Moon was born on January 6, 1920 in Sangsa-ri, North Pyeongan Province in what is today North Korea. The Moons were a family of farmers in an unbroken line who had tilled the land for centuries. As a boy he was a keen observer of nature in the countryside of North Korea, and throughout his life he has referred in his sermons to the early lessons he learned from nature.

He began his formal schooling at the local *Sodang*, a traditional primary school. There he studied the philosophy of Confucianism and also learned to read and write the Chinese characters that were used for all scholarly works in that time.

Throughout the early part of the twentieth century, the Christian faith was making rapid advances throughout Korea, with several well publicized national revival movements. Around 1930, after being helped by the Presbyterian church during a difficult period of family illness and crisis, his parents converted to Christianity. Rev. Moon soon became a popular Sunday school teacher to the children of his village.

At that time, Japan ruled Korea. As one part of Japanese imperial policy, the Japanese colonialists tried to force the practice of the Shinto religion onto Koreans. Becoming a Christian under these circumstances involved significant commitment and risk. By the time World War II came to a close, the Korean people had been subjected to forty years of occupation and control as part of Japan's Greater Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere. Growing up oppressed in his own land, Rev. Moon learned early about human suffering and the pain of injustice, whether among his own people or at the hands of the Japanese rulers.

From his early teens, he sought to understand why people suffer and how suffering can be ended. At church, he learned that religion addressed the fundamental human condition and promised an ideal world to those who believe and obey God. However, he also saw that established religions, although centuries old and based on holy scriptures, had been unable to solve many of life's questions or provide solutions to injustice and tragedy. Increasingly troubled by the immense gap between religious ideals and the actual state of the world, he began his own search for solutions through a life of prayer and study.

1935: AN ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS

Rev. Moon reports that the turning point of his life came on a cold Easter Sunday morning in 1935. As was his custom, he had gone up into the hills before dawn to pray and seek God's word. But this morning was to be different. Jesus appeared to him in spirit, and told him that God was going to anoint him to an extraordinary task. Jesus told him that human suffering continued because God's work of salvation was still incomplete. Jesus then asked him take on the task of establishing God's kingdom on earth and bringing peace to humankind, the same task Jesus himself had begun 2,000 years ago.

Rev. Moon says he was stunned by this encounter, and especially by the enormous request that had been made of him. How could he, still a boy, possibly take on the work of Jesus? Three times he told Jesus that he could not accept the mission. He felt unworthy and unqualified, and, he later acknowledged, reluctant to contemplate the hardship such a task would necessarily entail. However, Jesus kept asking him, and after prayer and reflection, he finally came to a point of acceptance and submission to Heaven's call. He pledged to make the overwhelming mission his own.

CROWN OF GLORY

When I doubt people, I feel pain.
When I judge people, I cannot bear it.
When I hate people, I feel no value to my existence.
Yet if I believe, I am deceived.

Tonight, I am trembling with anguish and sorrow,
My head deeply buried in my hands.
Am I wrong? Yes, I am wrong.
Even if I am deceived, I should believe.
Even if I am betrayed, I should still forgive.

Love unconditionally even those who hate you.
Wipe your tears away, and with a smile,
Receive those who know nothing but deceit,
And even those who betray without remorse.

Oh, Lord, what a pain it is to love!
Lay Your hands on my chest that is burning.
My heart is about to burst with agony.
Yet when I loved those who acted against me,
I brought victory.

If any of you could only do the same,
I would offer you a Crown of Glory.

Sun Myung Moon, 1935

1935-1941: LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

In the years following the Easter morning encounter, Rev. Moon increased his study of the Bible and other religious teachings in order to better understand the cause of the fundamental problems of our world and to search for the answers that could end human suffering. During this time, he built a deep relationship with God. He led a life of rigorous discipline, denying his personal desires. Through this, he came to understand God's suffering and His longing to be reunited with His children, lost since the human Fall. He learned of the difficult course that humankind would have to take in order to return to God and establish peace on earth.

However, he did not confine himself to only spiritual pursuits. Like many young men in his province, he yearned for the day when the Japanese colonial influence would come to an end. There were few opportunities to voice such sentiments, of course, but in the spring of 1938, when he graduated from Jeongju High School, he found his chance.

It was customary at such events for graduating students to read a short speech of thanks to their teachers. The eighteen-year-old Sun Myung Moon was the last on the rostrum. "There is something I would like to say," he began. With that, he launched into an unexpected and unprecedented critique of the entire education system. Then, he went on to the teachers, one by one, analyzing their characters, and pointing out the consequences if they were allowed to continue their way of teaching. And then, he finally suggested solutions. After finishing with them, he took on the country's leaders and called on them to lead the nation properly. It was an early sign of his willingness to speak without fear of the consequences. It lasted for a whole hour and the students loved it. The police noted his name.

Shortly after graduation, Rev. Moon moved to the capital, Seoul, to continue his formal studies at the Kyeongsong Institute of Commerce and Industry. He was a student there from 1938 to 1941. He intensified his quest for the truth, spending long nights in passionate prayer, rigorous fasting and scriptural study. At the same time, he found in the creation and in the natural world great insights into the nature of God.

During that time, he continued his spiritual quest and attended church services, including those of one of the first Pentecostal churches in Korea. Later, he attended the Heuksong-dong congregation of the "Jesus Church," a new church founded and organized by a charismatic local evangelist, Yong-do Lee.

As he listened to these powerful preachers, Rev. Moon knew that something fundamental was missing. He knew that God wanted him to witness to them about his profound and new understanding of the Heavenly Creator and His creation. However, these established ministers would not receive his efforts to share with them.

1941-1943: STUDENT YEARS IN JAPAN

Following his graduation from the Kyeongsong Institute, Rev. Moon pursued further studies in Japan. In late 1941, he entered a technical college affiliated with Waseda University in Tokyo, majoring in electrical engineering.

With the shadow of all-out war looming, the relationship between the Japanese government of occupation in Korea and the Korean Christian churches became even more strained. The Japanese government was particularly wary of the independent Christian churches of the kind that Rev. Moon attended, because many of the most fervent activists in the Korean independence movement were devoutly religious.

While in Japan, Rev. Moon met other Korean students who supported the underground independence movement and the exiled Korean

government in Shanghai. They met secretly, but were soon exposed. For this activity, Rev. Moon and other students were arrested by Japanese police and tortured before being released. This was the first of what would become six periods of imprisonment.

Rev. Moon's friends in Tokyo included both Christians and communists. He could see that although they were both trying to make the world a better place, they had deep disagreements about methodology, which made long-term cooperation impossible. More convinced than ever that the answers would have to come from God, he expanded his study of the Bible.

In Tokyo, he disciplined himself in his studies and also trained himself to be able to endure many kinds of physical challenges, trying to work faster or harder than others, to survive on less food, to do the most difficult jobs. At times many of his fellow countrymen expressed open hatred for the Japanese because their occupation of Korea was so oppressive. Rev. Moon felt that the enemy he had to fight against was not simply Japan, but all the injustice and evils of the world. Eventually the war began to affect daily life in Japan, and Rev. Moon's class graduated six months early in September 1943.

1943-1946: RETURN TO SEOUL

Soon after returning to Korea, Rev. Moon married Miss Sun-kil Choi, a devout Christian from a prominent Presbyterian family. He and his new bride moved to Heukseok-dong, Seoul, where Rev. Moon had lived earlier as a student. By day, Rev. Moon worked as an electrical engineer, still spending long hours late into the night in study of the Bible, attending church, and serving people.

As the war began to go badly for Japan, the Japanese authorities in Korea began to root out independence activists in Seoul. Rev. Moon, who already had a record of underground independence activities in Ja-

pan, was arrested on suspicion of being a communist. He was known to have had communist friends in Tokyo, and he was severely tortured and interrogated. He repeatedly stated that he was a Christian, and not a communist, but refused to divulge any names. After holding him in jail for several weeks, the police released him.

When Japan surrendered to the Allies on August 15, 1945 (celebrated today as Liberation Day in Korea), Korea was free of Japanese rule for the first time in nearly 40 years. Koreans were elated. Rev. Moon marks this day as the beginning of his public ministry.

One incident soon after the end of the war reveals a remarkable trait of his character. He heard that some of his friends were planning to get even with a Japanese policeman, who was truly in danger of his life. Despite the fact that he had suffered more than most at the hands of the Japanese, Rev. Moon pleaded with them to turn aside from thoughts of violence. "Japan is finished," he said, "It has failed. The country has already lost its power and God will punish them if it is needed. You don't need to take revenge." They dropped their plans.

Rev. Moon later discretely advised many of the Japanese who remained in Heuksok-dong to leave, before they were hurt. Under cover of darkness, he helped a few of them pack their belongings and leave.

In the ten years since his 1935 encounter with Jesus, Rev. Moon had not spoken with anyone about the mission to which he had been called. But now, freed from the strict scrutiny of the Japanese occupation authorities, he was free to teach the spiritual insights known today as the *Divine Principle*.

The *Divine Principle* reveals God as the loving parent who created human beings to be the object partners of His love. God is almighty and all knowing but He is not the distant creator of traditional theology.

According to the *Divine Principle*, even God cannot be happy and feel complete without the reciprocal love of His children. God needs human beings in order to experience joy.

Tragically, due to humankind's separation from God at the human Fall, we did not fully become His object partners of love. The ideal world God had planned could not be realized. As the loving parent, God continues to suffer greatly due to His separation from His children. God continues to work ceaselessly behind the events of human history to bring His children back to Him and to realize the ideal world He originally planned. In the Principle and in all his subsequent teachings, Rev. Moon offers an intimate glimpse of the frustration God has always felt:

God is like a loving father who worked and sweated his entire life to accumulate assets for his children, only to have a thief steal everything in one night.

From beginning to the end, the *Divine Principle* speaks of God's effort to restore the family. God's originally planned ideal was to be first embodied in the family of Adam and Eve. Humanity's Fall, however, led to a corrupted family of confusion, mistrust and violence. From God's point of view, the whole purpose of human history is to restore humanity, untangle the knots of sin, and establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. All history must be examined through the lens of the family.

The *Divine Principle* offers a new understanding of the Judeo-Christian scriptures revealing the providence of family restoration, beginning from Genesis and ending with the prophecies of the Book of Revelation. In fact, according the *Divine Principle*, all of God's providential work in history is to establish one God-centered family, the 'true family' that will be the foothold for God to turn the world around.

The conditions were certainly right for Rev. Moon's message. Even today, Korea is recognized by many as having the most fervent Christian faith. Later, in 1973, Rev. Billy Graham was so impressed by the spiritual

vitality of the churches during his visit to Korea that he predicted that Korea would soon send missionaries to revive the West.

In this atmosphere of fervent faith, Rev. Moon's original plan was not to start a separate denomination but to work together with Christians of all churches and denominations to build God's kingdom on the earth. He would visit church after church to share his new revelations to the ministers and lay leaders. His teachings were rejected.

At the same time, many pastors worried about his impact on their congregational numbers. The word went out that he was espousing "false teachings" and congregants were warned against listening to him. As his repeated efforts to reach out to the established Christian churches were rebuffed, Rev. Moon came to realize that he was headed down a lonely and difficult path.

1946-1950: MINISTRY AND PRISON IN NORTH KOREA

Before World War II, the epicenter of Korean Christianity was Pyongyang, now the capital of North Korea. The churches there were so fervent that the city was sometimes called the "Jerusalem of the East." In 1946, Rev. Moon obeyed the call of God and left Seoul immediately for Pyongyang.

Among the spirit-filled churches of Pyongyang, there were many that already held strong messianic expectations. Some of these churches had even received revelations that the Messiah would be born in Korea. Individuals were spiritually guided in various ways to prepare to receive him. In this turbulent environment, Rev. Moon began at once teaching, holding prayer services, gathering people and giving lectures. Often the sessions went late into the night.

He began to teach more and more openly, despite the communist-dominated government and its antipathy toward religion. A poor preacher with new interpretations of the Bible, and a newcomer to the city as well,

Rev. Moon was alone, vulnerable and exposed. He became one of the first religious figures to be targeted by the communists.

Eventually, he was arrested by North Korean authorities on charges of “disrupting the social order.” He was held in jail for several weeks and tortured. Though suspected of being a spy for the American military government in South Korea, he was finally declared “innocent” by a Soviet official and released.

Because of the extent of his injuries, the police believed him to be close to death and tossed his body out into the prison yard. Some of his followers found him and carried him away to tend to his broken body. He survived and regained his strength. Undaunted, he began preaching in public once again.

The Christian churches became increasingly concerned because people from their congregations were attracted to Rev. Moon’s message and teachings. They complained to the authorities, and in 1948 he was arrested once more and after a show trial was sentenced to five years imprisonment in a North Korean labor camp modeled after the Soviet *gulag*.

A prison sentence of anything more than a year at the notorious prison at Heungnam was essentially a death sentence. Prisoners were worked until they dropped dead of disease, malnutrition and exhaustion. The labor was overwhelming and debilitating, and involved long days of bagging and loading chemical fertilizer onto boxcars. The rations were meager and sanitation non-existent. Diarrhea, dysentery and other ailments were commonplace.

Rev. Moon credits his survival in Heungnam to God’s protection over his life, and to the energy he derived from his own strong belief that the welfare of others was more important than his own. On a practical note, he developed the habit of saving half his daily water ration for washing the toxic chemicals off his skin each night.

Although he did not speak at all of the *Divine Principle*, or of his mission, many of his fellow prisoners later said they looked to him for spiritual strength. Some of them actually became his disciples in jail, moved by his way of living more than anything he said. He would share his rations with other prisoners and work harder to make up for those who could not work. Others had spiritual experiences in which their ancestors appeared and guided them to him.

During his third year in the labor camp, the Korean War began when North Korean troops under Kim Il-sung invaded the South on June 25, 1950. A few months later, on October 14, 1950, UN ground troops pushed northwards and they advanced on the camp, the prison guards all fled, releasing the prisoners who remained alive.

Later he explained that the day of his release was in fact the day he and other prisoners were scheduled to be executed by the communists. Throughout his life, he has expressed his gratitude and respect for the United States, the United Nations, the sixteen-nation UN peace force and Koreans who not only fought for Korean liberation, but also literally saved his life.

After his release, rather than travel to the relative safety of the South along with the stream of refugees, Rev. Moon spent 40 days searching for his members and followers in the North. Most had already fled, however, and he could only find a few members. All of his efforts in the North had been swept away.

On December 4, 1950, he set off on foot with just two disciples, Won-pil Kim and Jung-hwa Park. Park had a broken leg and had been abandoned by his own family because they feared he would slow them down. But Rev. Moon insisted on bringing him, and for the long trek either pushed him on a bicycle or carried him on his back. Finally the small group arrived in Busan, at the very southern part of the peninsula, on January 28, 1951.

FREE FROM PRISON AND CERTAIN DEATH

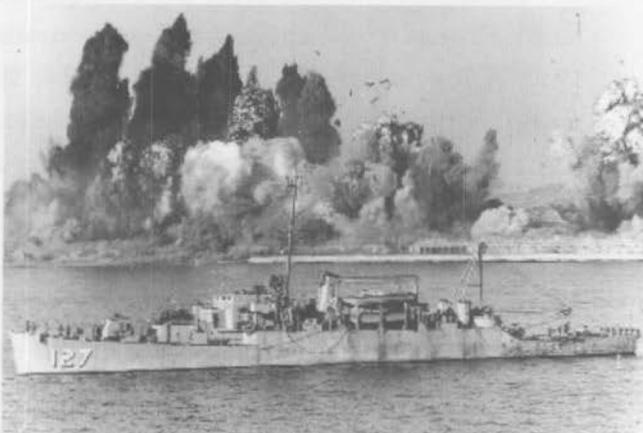
Hungnam, Korea. 0500 hours. October 14, 1950

In the small hours before dawn, the industrial city of Hungnam on the east coast of North Korea was eerily quiet. The aerial bombardments which had been systematically destroying bridges, factories and other key military targets for weeks was suddenly over. US and ROK troops, spirits buoyed by the triumph of the September 15 Inchon campaign, were advancing up the Eastern coast toward the Yalu River and the Chinese border.

But in the Hungnam Special Labor prison camp, the 152 surviving prisoners didn't think they would get to see the sun rise even one last time. Over the previous nights, North Korean guards had been systematically executing the men, with the idea of leaving no one alive. The only reason the executions had not already been completed the night before was that as ROK and US/UN forces entered the city, the guards had begun to desert, afraid for their families' safety. Later that very day, the prisoners were suddenly set free to return home.

The dramatic story of the prisoners freed from Hungnam and forced labor camps like it, and their reprieve from certain death, might have remained largely unknown. But among the men liberated that cold October morning was a young Korean who was later destined to become known around the world: the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Unification Church, *The Washington Times* and many other humanitarian and philanthropic enterprises. And he was determined that the story should be told.

Moon had been sent to Hungnam on May 20, 1948, after having been arrested for preaching the gospel in Pyongyang and thus 'creating public disorder.' Many of the inmates were imprisoned on similarly politicized charges as the North Korean communists extended their grip on



The USS Begor standing by during the final demolition of Hungnam industrial facilities in December 1950, after the successful evacuation of US/UN forces following the Chinese communist counteroffensive

society. The camp's goals were simple: work the prisoners to death in Hungnam's huge industrial complexes, the largest in all of East Asia and crucial to Kim Il Sung's war effort.

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Each ten-man team had to load 700 40-kilo sacks a day of ammonium sulphate fertilizer, later raised to 1300 sacks. Failure to meet the quota meant half-rations the following day.

During the three years Moon was imprisoned, more than half of the original 1500 inmates had succumbed to disease, brutal treatment and starvation. Moon knew that he been sent to die and that his only chance of survival was to fight a spiritual battle by loving everyone—his fellow inmates, the communist guards, and even God.

“I realized very clearly how God loved me and that He knew how much I was suffering,” he later recalled, “Therefore, I could not ask Him to remove or relieve my suffering. I did not ask for help but told God to worry about others, about the nation and the world.”

With this resolve, he threw himself into the work, determined to make it fulfilling. Other prisoners noted that he hardly ever seemed to sleep but was often seen in prayer during the early morning hours. Finally even the guards came to respect him. He won an award as an outstanding prisoner.

Throughout his life, the Reverend Moon has often spoken of his gratitude to the US and United Nations servicemen who saved him on that October morning and rescued his country from slavery and despair under the communist system; and for the United States’ ongoing efforts to defend freedom throughout the world. But he always saw it as more than just a human effort.

“Victory came because God had chosen and raised the United States of America, in accordance

with His providential program, and had raised the American people,” he said in a recent speech in Hawaii. Even today, “the future of humankind lies in the preservation of peace in the Pacific Rim region, centering on the United States.”

In 2003, Dr. Moon founded the United Nations Peace Forces of the Korean War Memorial Federation (UPKMF) to mark the 50th anniversary of ceasefire.

The foundation has two goals. First, to enable veterans from the United States and the other fifteen nations supporting the UN effort to



After being freed from Hungnam, Sun Myung Moon went as a refugee to Busan. He is pictured here with some of his early followers outside his first church, a cardboard shack made from discarded US Army ration boxes

visit Korea, retrace their footsteps, meet with each other, and even visit the final resting places of former colleagues.

More recently, the UPKMF has enabled ROK veterans to make return visits to the veterans’ associations in each of these sixteen nations and pay respect to the spirit of sacrifice and honor that was the mark of those who helped Korea in its hour of greatest need.