

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS
OF THE
UNIFICATION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
GIVEN BY
REVEREND SUN MYUNG MOON

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Respected professors, parents of our students; ladies and gentlemen:

Today we are congratulating the 54 honorable graduates who are participating in the 11th graduation ceremony at the Unification Theological Seminary, and hereby we are celebrating their future.

You graduates are now departing with hope, after having studied here two or three years, to go out and practice your ministry in order to fulfill the will of God. Before offering my encouragement to you, I must first thank God for the protection that allowed you to celebrate this day, and also praise the outstanding education given you by all your professors.

Despite the short history of our school, the Unification Theological Seminary has become famous throughout the world for its uniqueness. It has been giving its students an interdenominational and interreligious education, and it serves as a model for breaking scholarly barriers, by inviting scholars from various religious denominations to teach and share with the students of our own denomination. This is truly an historical achievement. In the near future, a department devoted to researching all the great religions of the world will be installed.

God established many religions in order to guide us to the full realization of God's ideal for the creation. In these Last Days, the Unification Church has been erected as a religious movement for fulfilling the entire will of God through bringing harmony among religions and among denominations within religions. It was not established by the will of humans.

God is not a being who dwells in doctrines, nor is God restricted by rituals and forms; God is the creator of the universe as a living spirit.

Religions are intended to be the exemplars to all mankind of correct teaching.

God's heart aches the most when he sees religions struggle because of conflicts among their own denominations, or when they fight against other religions.

Centered on the Unification Theological Seminary, I initiated New ERA and the God Conferences, two truly ecumenical movements. Through these, I demonstrated both the possibility of and the necessity for the harmony and unification of Christian denominations and, further, of other great religions. I believe that this unification and harmony will be the precious result of patience, sacrifice, and true love. To advance the will of God on earth and bring peace to the world through sincere dialogue and the creation of harmony among religious bodies, I also founded the Council for the World's Religions and the Assembly of the World's Religions. These organizations have performed miracles in the stagnant religious world. Further, I founded the Youth Seminar on World Religions and the Religious Youth Service, bringing young people together in helping to prevent racial and religious wars and to establish a peaceful ideal world under God. Through all these organizations, I am presenting to the world's religions a new alternative. All of these programs and projects are part of the Unification Movement that I initiated. It is my wish that you graduates, and everyone here today, may inherit this foundation with the heart of an owner, expand it, and bring forth new fruit.

Beloved graduates! You are departing today as important members of our church, bearing grave responsibility toward fulfilling God's will for salvation. At this time, what would be the deepest wish in your hearts? It would be to establish true lordship as ideal individuals, creating ideal families, societies, nations, and ultimately an ideal world, which the human ancestors were unable to initiate due to the fall.

Because of the fall of man, all human beings came to live in the bondage of Satan, the master of false love, without being able to become the worthy objects of the love of God, who is the lord of life. Hence, this world ceased to be the original world. This has been expressed as "paradise lost." The fall has affected not only individuals, but also all families, societies, and nations, and thus the world and the entire cosmos.

Humans who have lost paradise should proceed to the ideal through the process of restoration, or re-creation. However, humans cannot proceed directly to the path of re-creation; they must first go through the path of indemnity, reversing the way of the fall. Adam and Eve and the archangel fell due to false love, abandoning their public-centered way. Therefore, one should walk the way of recovery through the heart, by loving God more than Satan, loving goodness and rejecting evil, and loving that which is public more than that which is private.

This is not some vague theory but a practical principle. For individuals, this means loving God the most by following one's original mind -- the mind that is oriented towards public righteousness -- and rejecting Satan, who is rooted in the fleshly desires of our daily life. At each social level -- family, society, nation, world, and cosmos -- one should eliminate the bases of evil, such as greed, indulgence, distrust, and false love, through the practice of sacrifice, service, trust, and true love centered on God.

From ancient days, outstanding religious leaders have strongly emphasized the disciplined life of faith. This is because the conditions that religious persons establish here on earth affect their eternal life. You should understand that your living environment is a battleground between good and evil that both God and Satan are watching carefully. I ask you to understand this serious point: Depending on whether your one word or one act is truly

with concern for the public benefit or only for yourself at the public's expense, the act can belong either to God or to Satan, to life or to death.

Man has inherited the fallen nature to be a slave of habit, and even religious people are inclined to live an easy life. But a habitual life of faith is hazardous. Such a life of faith presents a condition for Satan, who works without ceasing, to try to infiltrate. As people walk the way of restoration, Satan, who doesn't want to lose anyone, looks for every opportunity to re-invade. Even if Satan must depart from a person because of the indemnity conditions that he or she has set, he may re-enter on the family level or the national level.

Are you not feeling a sense of liberation with graduation? In certain ways, strict regulation is helpful for a life of faith. But a secular life relying on habit, which can easily involve your own past life, is not the way of true life. Only by living a life of true love and continual self-sacrifice can a person overcome Satan. Moreover, great satisfaction can be gained by exercising public righteousness, even when it is difficult. I wish all of you may lead such a life.

The Messiah comes to teach mankind to overcome Satan, to destroy Satan's base in this world, and to build God's Kingdom on earth. The Messiah shows the example for this through his own life. Thus, the Messiah comes with the love of true parents, which is the highest love.

Unification Church members should be able to embrace the world with love. Only when you are totally united, centered on the love of parents who have become one with God, can you totally win the world back to God. Through this love, and by overcoming Satan's cunning tricks in your daily life, you can live in the eternal realm of liberation. When you are an individual of such love, you can finally build a true family and further, an

ideal society, nation, and world, which will be the Kingdom of Heaven.

Beloved graduates! In order to find the best location for our seminary I looked at many different places. This place was not chosen easily. I put great emphasis on finding a place in a beautiful natural environment, where the spirit of the mountains and the river could help educate you in wholesomeness of character. After this school opened, I came here many times and prayed, and I personally educated students from many different perspectives. My heart and my dreams dwell in the Hudson riverbanks, the surrounding mountain-tops, the trees, the grass, and even in every small rock. On this campus, there is nothing in which my heart is not given. You have been living here day by day, drinking in the life spirit provided by God, under the protection of the world of good spirits. I hope that you will not leave this campus with only a bag of knowledge accumulated by your years of research, but also with God's hope for each one of you, and my expectations for you as you go out to the field to practice the ministry of love.

I expect all of you, who are graduating at a time whose importance can hardly be matched in the entire providence of God, to become witnesses of the living God and of true love. For this, I pray each of you will become a lighthouse and an example for all humankind, and that you can educate all people through an exemplary life.

I pray that God's blessings will be with you, and that you will all be the disciples of love and heart.

Thank you.