

Those Who Prevail

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To the 1975 Missionaries

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History is proof that evil men as well as good men are remembered by posterity long after their life on earth. That which was done for others and left for the benefit of the future is remembered by later generations. For example, in his own day nobody thought that what Jesus did was going to be remembered by later generations, so people had no qualms about persecuting him. But in fact he is loved by people all around the world two thousand years after he lived.

In Christianity and in other religions, the most beloved members acted only to benefit all humanity, centering on God's will. That's why their deeds are remembered. They had the power to overcome all difficulties and hardships. The power which made this possible was their faith in God. In history, the more persecuted the religious people were, the more dynamic and spirited they became in their deeds. When pressure was put on those people they showed great vitality.

The same thing applies to our everyday life. The stronger, more courageous people will survive persecution and difficulty. They will rise again and again despite much oppression. In its first few centuries Christianity was so vigorous that its people strove onward in spite of severe oppression and mass persecution; they worked underground in order to survive, and they prevailed.

With that in mind, whenever I am contemplating our future plans, I ask myself, "Will our people remain?" There's no question that if we are greeted with a warm welcome some place, we are going to stay there. But in the face of animosity and hostility the key question becomes, "How will we survive?"

Surviving Oppression

I have been thinking of tactics for confronting difficulties. When oppression comes, you must grow sideways, horizontally. You become tougher under oppression; smaller but harder. Or else, you can burrow into the ground and thrust your roots deep into the soil. After the preparation period underground, you can sprout again with more power and energy than before. When you are oppressed, whether you grow sideways or go into the ground and become small and hard, you must have surplus power which will enable you to surge up again with renewed strength. I myself am a good example. Through almost thirty years of oppression I have learned how to grow in a robust way.

As greater oppression was heaped on me, it looked like I was becoming smaller, but in fact I hardened myself and made myself stronger. When I dug into the ground, I prepared to spring up later on, when the oppression was gone.

Let's think of the example of how seeds grow. If seeds from a pine tree growing in a tropical area are planted in a temperate zone, they don't grow very well. But if you transplant that whole pine tree from the tropical zone to the temperate zone and protect it for a while, then it will grow. Like a tree, if you are transplanted from an old place to a new one, where the temperature and everything is not suitable for you, you must become adaptable and try to absorb nourishment, even though it is a strange land. Suppose you are in a high-level university position and think the power of oppression cannot possibly push you into the ground; if that happens anyway and you cannot grow there, you will die.

If you are pushed into the ground you must spring back, but it is not such an easy task as it may sound. You must pour out all your effort to fight back and make a breakthrough to sprout again. You must be able to digest the poor nutrients. For example, if the young people who have been living in such free circumstances in the United States were to be brought under a regime of communist oppression, it would be hard for them to endure. They would probably be so shocked, appalled, and discouraged that they would submit to despair. That's very possible. But if you are always ready to receive what may come to you, even though the circumstances are unspeakably difficult, you will have excess power to survive the situation.

Even under communist oppression I was always making detailed plans as to how my people and I would survive the situation. I always had big plans, even under persecution. My mission was to discover how to make the breakthrough and overcome the oppression coming from the government. Established churches also persecuted us bitterly and used their influence to turn people against us. I always thought to myself, "If they come against us with a unified effort I will break through." I hoped that all of these groups—the communists, the established churches, and the government—might come against us all at once, so that I might break through every barrier at one time.

When I look back on my past, I'm grateful that I was persecuted by the communist regime, by the South Korean regime, and by the ministers and laymen of established churches in my native land. I overcame all this oppression. Now, in South Korea, both the government and the people think, "We will get nothing out of persecuting the Unification Church." The established church ministers and laymen think, "We will lose if we attack these people." In Japan, too, our people have been fighting against communist power; the communists have fallen into serious difficulties and are being defeated.

I never thought of escaping from the situation when the government and the established churches opposed our movement; not even when the communists attacked us. Now they have seen that no matter what persecution is launched against me I will not be defeated.

Are we still suppressed, or is our movement springing up conspicuously? We have already survived all those difficulties, and we are growing. If we have survived all these difficulties in Korea, can we not do the same in other countries? If the people of the world know that we can survive any situation in any country, then there's a way for us to break through until we reach every corner of the earth. We are wrestlers in the arena of life; if we win over our opponents, the majority of the people will follow us: people usually follow the winners. You must realize how miserable the defeated are. Are you going to survive all hardships, or dwindle and die away?

Do Not Fear Hardship

I'm going to tell you a story from my time in North Korean prisons. I went through much torture. But before I was taken to be tortured I was rather anxious to go through that kind of thing—to experience it, to know what it really was like. With each strike of the bat, with each jab, I was ready for it; I accepted the challenge. You must study everything. When faced with torture, you must know how to prepare yourself for it. If you are scared the pain will be greater, but if you are prepared to fight against it, you'll feel less pain.

When it comes, if you are concentrating on fighting back, then you can survive the torture. In my mind I always thought, "I'm fighting back spiritually," when the physical blasts came. However severely they beat me, it was they who got exhausted, because every moment I was thinking that I could never be defeated by them. My spiritual sword would pierce through their hearts. Therefore rumors spread through the prison that Rev. Moon was such a formidable man that he simply could not be defeated.

You don't know what prison life is like in North Korea. When I was in Hungnam prison, all the prisoners were supposed to put fertilizer into sacks. When you made rope out of this cloth, which still had the fertilizer on it, your flesh would be eaten away and sometimes your bones would be exposed. There was always blood dripping from your hands. If you were scared by that, you could not survive the situation.

All during that time I thought, "However hard they may drive me, I will survive the situation at all costs. Come what may, even if you torture me more severely, I can survive." Then I experienced how much greater is the power of spirit than that of the physical body. Instead of coming to my knees before those

conditions I found more courage to fight back. All the prisoners, even the jailers and warden, came to respect me. I was cited for being the best worker. So, however bitter and wretched prison life may be, you must know how to make a breakthrough and prevail over the situation.

The next thing is how to endure extreme heat or cold. It is easier to survive heat. To overcome sleeplessness is a most horrible thing. But I could overcome it. I thought that even though I might have to die there, my spirit would survive the situation, and so I did not die in the real sense. If I could not survive the situation even on the spiritual level, my mission could not be accomplished even by my successors.

The reason for my telling you about this is that you are going to be faced with many difficulties in the 130 nations you are being sent to. If the whole nation you are assigned to comes against you, you must be prepared to die there, like a seed buried deep in the soil; then a new life will spring up from the seed that was sown.

Wherever you go, I'm almost sure that the established churches will come against you. Communists are even more formidable enemies; they are all ready to fight against us. You have been faced with a considerable amount of difficulty here, but you can never imagine what is going to come to you in those unknown lands, especially where communism is rampant.

You must always be thinking of how to raise a leader from that nation who can succeed you in your mission, in case of difficulties. If you find yourself unable to remain in the country, be wise enough to raise a leader out of that people as soon as possible.

Don't ever dream of using the people of that land as if they were your servants, just ordering them to do this and that for you. You are to serve them. Don't ever think of being indebted to others. You must use and exercise your own power to do the job.

Drive yourself into the soil like a seed, endure the difficulties, and break through to grow in that land and its climate. You must be determined not to allow your eyes to be scared by the sight of evil things, and not to let your ears be frightened by what you hear. Don't let your mouth speak weak things, or you will fail. Use your whole being to fight against evil power in that land. You must have strength of character and power of life, as a tree will grow in spite of the pressure of massive rocks—it will grow sideways or somehow find its way out.

You must find ways to open the hearts of other people by giving lectures which will move them; you must know how to raise money in that country so you can stand on your own economically; and you must be able to do good public relations work so that you can open up a channel to reach out to all the people there. I want you to become people who can survive any and every situation. When you look at me you can see that I'm tough, strong, and elastic—like a ball; the harder you throw it, the higher it bounces. For people united with the will of God, difficult situations and rebuffs are only a greater challenge; you can survive and can utilize bad situations as fertilizer, to nourish your tree. Our movement is like a root and a tree coming from Father. You are in that way one with me; you are related to me, you are interested in whatever I'm doing, and you choose to act and think and speak as I do.

Before coming to the United States, I was prepared to survive any situation I would meet here. I knew that the Mafia was in this country, and I planned how to win over them. I expected that communists would come against me, and I was prepared for that. I knew that there was racial discrimination here, and I planned how to overcome it. I was determined to grow like a tree, to set my roots deep into the hearts of the people—be they black or white. If two powers collide with each other, a battle will ensue. Clashes will be heard during the fray, but we must take them as an omen of the coming victory we are entitled to after the hard fight. If we are a persecuted group in this evil world, that is a good sign, for the clamor about us is but the noise of the collapse of evil itself. We can never be defeated.

By my sending you out to so many nations, our message and way of life will spread to every corner of the earth. You will wrestle with people of power, and I will watch to see if you win over them or are defeated. Use every tactic you can in good conscience employ, and don't ever let them go until they surrender. If you let them go before bringing them to that point, they will become enemies. Then when they come to kill you, they will have more people on their side. So don't let go until the people of that nation bow to you and admire you.

Don't Make Enemies

You must also remember that it was not the Roman soldiers, but Jesus' own disciples who betrayed him and brought him to the cross. The same was true with the Mormon Church. It was not the enemies of Joseph Smith who caused his death, but his own followers. You must realize that your enemy is in your own home, in your own family, just as Jesus said. Those who oppose our movement and myself are often not outsiders, but those who once were members and left. I don't want to make enemies of anyone. Even if members fall away, I want them still to be able to respect me, and not hate me or call me names.

Wherever you are sent, you are going to be the ancestor of that nation under God's will, so don't make enemies with people!

You must be able to love even your enemies. That's the tactic for survival. When you are only a handful of people, you are apt to lose if you fight, so try to steer the way without fighting, without making enemies. Let people know that you are doing things for their own sake; that you are serving the people at the sacrifice of yourself. You must be able to love them, serve them, educate them, survive difficulties, and be an example to them.

We are training ourselves to be strong, so as not to die under persecution when we are planted in unfamiliar lands. Any organization that educates people to adapt themselves to any situation will be successful. Suppose you think that you are suited to be planted in a tropical zone; if you are sent to the arctic zone, you are sure to die. If you keep thinking that you are more suited for a cold place and you are sent to the tropical zone, you will wither away. You must be prepared to adapt to any kind of situation and surrounding. You must be able to enjoy nights as you would days, and glorify in whatever experience you are going through.

If you train yourself to think of a tunnel or cliff as if it were level ground, you will not fear any difficulties. In the army people are severely trained in order to enable them to survive any situation or difficulty. We don't know what kind of surroundings or circumstances you are going to encounter, so I want you to be trained in such a way that you will accommodate yourself to any situation. You are going to be transplanted into other soil. Are you confident that you will grow wholesomely there? Nobody will supply any nourishment. You must go on your own, absorbing nutrients out of that soil. I don't want you to beg for support from the United States headquarters. For the first few months or years we may give some assistance, but that will only play the role of fertilizer; not more. What is more important than gaining support from outside is that the tree you plant absorbs nutriment from the land's own soil.

You must be able to survive any and every situation. When I was under persecution back in Korea, I was not conspicuous. I was somewhere underground, raising my people. Suddenly I became conspicuous, and began to grow—not only myself but all my members. I was the detonator; when I commanded them to explode, they exploded from so many places at one time that they surprised the whole of Korea.

I want you to prepare during this training seminar to prevail over all the difficulties you will face in your assigned countries, so that one day in the future we can all meet together and rejoice in our heavenly victory.