

Challenges and Possibilities for World Peace

Sun Myung Moon

June 1, 1987

First Summit Council for World Peace

Lotte Hotel, Seoul, Korea



Photo date and location unknown

Honorable chairman, former presidents, former prime ministers, members of royalty and nobility, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen:

It is a great source of inspiration for me to address this gathering of world leaders joined together in the quest for peace.

It is certainly the case that throughout history, men and women have longed for peace. They have adopted a variety of strategies in their attempts to secure it. In some cases, people have tried to achieve peace through conquests. In others, they have tried to achieve it through surrender.

In this century we have seen two noble efforts made to resolve international differences without resorting to war: the League of Nations and the United Nations. In spite of all these efforts, however, humankind has not achieved peace, and history has continued to be a history of conflict, often erupting in devastating violence. Why has it been impossible until today to achieve peace?

The reason is that the internal struggle that goes on within each individual has not yet been resolved. World conflict is nothing other than the manifestation of the inner conflict of individuals. Contradictions exist between human ideals and human practice, and the focal point of these contradictions is the struggle within each individual between the spirit and the body. The human spirit aspires to lofty ideals. It is the human spirit that reaches up to God. The body is the instrument with which we can practice our ideals, but this requires effort, discipline and self-sacrifice.

We find in human life a tension between the pursuits of the spirit and those of the body. The spirit seeks within the realm of faith, while the body seeks within the world of reason.

Because of this, in human history, two parallel currents have developed. One of these, being more rational and external, has placed emphasis upon the physical body, on physical satisfaction, physical beauty and natural science based on empirical evidence. The other major current in human development, known as

the religious tradition, has emphasized values that are transcendent of the human body: spiritual laws, values and revelations from God, which cannot be verified by the natural sciences. These currents in human life are the basis of the two dominant ideologies that are in conflict in our world today.

The democratic world, or the free world, has developed out of the religious tradition. The modern concept of democracy is set forth in the words of the Bible itself: "So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Gen. 1:27) That is, the democratic world places value upon the individual person because each one is a child of God. The greatest care must be taken to assure each individual's liberty and freedom of choice, for without liberty, a person's actions have no value.

Communism, on the other hand, is an outgrowth of the more external and secular current of human history. Following the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, Karl Marx advocated the use of violence and social engineering to establish by force an orderly human society from which belief in God would be excluded. Marxist social engineering is based on a God-denying view of humankind. But what has been the result? Although today there are many individuals who defend this or that insight of Marx, the fact remains that after seventy years of the attempted practice of Marxism in the Soviet Union and elsewhere, the result is a tragic social failure. It is estimated that 150 million people have been killed in order to consolidate communist power, and the world of justice and prosperity which Marx promised is nowhere in sight.

Today these two ideologies and the nations that have adopted them are squared off in a global confrontation that threatens our world with destruction greater than we can imagine.

In this context, I would like to sincerely offer three steps as a solution in the quest for peace. These steps begin at the very foundation; they are fundamental. They may also appear to be idealistic, but any house standing on a false foundation cannot be restored unless we go down and rebuild the foundation.

My peace plan starts from the level of the individual. First, we must find peace with God, then peace with our fellow human beings, then finally we can secure world peace.

I have devoted my entire life to the search for the truth. To find the truth about the origin of the universe and the existence of God, I have suffered greatly. Through arduous personal searching, I came to know the very essence of God. I even experienced many unique encounters with Him. I came to realize that no one can achieve peace on earth without first making peace with God.

God, the First Cause of this universe, has created the world in all its magnificence. At the same time, He is our loving Father. Furthermore, He has carried out this work of creation in order to fulfill a specific purpose. That purpose is the fulfillment of love. God is the source of true love, but even Almighty God cannot enjoy love by Himself. He needs to have an object partner to whom to give his love and who is capable of returning love to Him. That object partner would be the pinnacle and culmination of His creation. That object partner is men and women. Because of this, human life also has a purpose. The purpose of human life is to reach maturity and live in the fullness of the relationship of true love with God for all eternity. This is the foundation for peace with God.

Once we establish peace with God, then we are ready to make peace with our fellow human beings. What is the fundamental relationship that brings peace with others? Again, it is the relationship of love.

Judaism, Christianity, Islam and the other great religions of the world teach that we are one family under God. This means that we are all brothers and sisters. We must understand that every person is made in the image of God; therefore, we are all children of God. The best way to honor and glorify God is by loving His children. This understanding is the foundation upon which we can establish a relationship of true love with others.

Achieving world peace is our long-cherished human dream. Yet the fundamentals of how to achieve it are essentially the same as those for achieving individual peace.

The conflict between the two worlds is real. But it is not simply a conflict between the free world and the communist world. More fundamentally, it is the conflict between two opposing value systems. One is God-affirming and the other is God-denying. The rise of communism is, in a way, a manifestation of the failure of human beings to live by God's original moral code. In one sense communism is an ideology of accusation. It accuses the God-affirming people of the world of having failed to fulfill their ideals. Because many of its accusations cannot be denied, communism has power. When the ideals of the God-affirming world are realized in practice, however, communism can be overcome. Therefore, the world problem is fundamentally a spiritual problem. The solution must begin with an affirmation of the reality of God.

What our world needs today to save itself is a spectacular spiritual awakening. The world must be

awakened to the reality of God and rearmed with a worldview based on God-affirming principles. This worldview is capable of eliminating the confusion in our value system. Of course, this spiritual reality will manifest itself in political and economic strength and military resolve, but the internal dynamic must be the spiritual foundation of faith in God and true love among human beings.

Based upon such an awakening to higher values, the nature of relationships between nations must be transformed. Until now, the driving force behind economic development has often been the desire for profit. In this way, a great amount of human potential has been unleashed, and remarkable world development has occurred. The time has come, however, for the developed nations to move beyond the profit motive. The principle of unselfish love must be applied on the level of international relationships. The developed nations of the world need to feel God blessed them for the purpose of helping others. They must be willing to sacrifice for the developing nations of the world. They must give of themselves to free other human beings from misery. If the prosperous nations adopt this attitude, do you think they will be diminished? Do you think they will experience disastrous decline? Not at all. The opposite is true. If these nations do not think in loftier terms than the desire for profit, their prosperity will slip away in spite of their efforts to retain it.

How can anyone be at peace with him or herself when one's fellowman is dying from lack of food, ravaged by disease or victimized by the darkness of ignorance? United together, the developed nations can launch a tremendous crusade to overcome the three scourges of humanity: hunger, disease and ignorance.

Finally, on the basis of unselfish relations among all countries, a world community of nations under God can be substantially established. Today, in the latter part of the twentieth century, we cannot help but realize that our world is shrinking every day. No nation is an island. No one can prosper without interaction with others. The world is fast becoming one global village. The survival and prosperity of all are dependent on a spirit of cooperation. The human race must recognize itself as one family of humanity.

Therefore, a world community of nations must be established to increase mutual understanding and respect. Cooperatively, we can protect our environment as we develop it, raise the cultural level of all people and secure freedom, justice and dignity for everyone. What can be the basis of such cooperation? The world community of nations must respect a common value system and certain unchanging and eternal principles that can have their source only in God.

We have a common dream. It is the long-cherished human dream of an ideal world. The prophets have called it the kingdom of God on earth. It is a lofty goal, but it is attainable. It must be, simply because it is the original ideal of the Creator. This is the meaning of securing world peace.

At this time, when we look at the world, the outlook may appear to be gloomy. Yet, I do not dwell on that despair. In the Bible, we find the expression of God's determination to restore His original ideal in this world: "I have spoken and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed and I will do it." (Isaiah 46:11) I am a firm believer that the ultimate peace of the world shall come about.

This Summit Council for World Peace is one of the highest-level forums ever assembled for the discussion of world peace. I feel that it is inspired by God. We have embarked together on a sacred and challenging mission for the peace of the world. What we accomplish will be our legacy to our children and to all humankind. You have traveled the long distance to Korea, a far corner of the world, to launch this peace initiative. I have confidence in your experience and wisdom and the combined expertise of your statesmanship. As we take up this task, our hope is that the twenty-first century will be a new era of peace. May God's glory and blessing be with you as you begin the Summit Council for World Peace.

Thank you.