

Chapter 5: Inside God's Stadium

August 9, 1959

Former Church Headquarters, Seoul, Korea

I Corinthians 9:14-27

Prayer

Father, Your sons and daughters have gathered here today. Many flocks of sheep have come to uphold the unfinished providential will and receive Your words of command. We have come before You as some of these people. Father, please have compassion on us as we stand or sit here.

If we have some individual concepts or ideas centered on our own selves, please remove them all. Our fate is to be created again and we have not yet alleviated the grief of the Fall. Hence, even if we possess something which we can proudly present to Heaven, it has no value as an ideal before the Father.

No matter how much we try to come up with excuses before Heaven and assert our own difficulties, we know that none of that can compare with the infinite goodness and toil of the Father.

We have learned that we did not become what we are based on our own efforts alone. We are not just ourselves. Please allow this to be an hour when we can long for our original selves and fathom our original hearts; an hour when we can bow our heads before our original Lord.

We know deep in our hearts that there is an absolute master of the entire universe. When we understand that this master is constraining our every action, please let us feel that this relationship has a clear purpose and that our fate is to live through an environment of being constrained by this purpose.

We yearn for the glorious presence of the Father and have come before the Father's knees. Yet those who gathered here do not know where their heart is directed or where their heart is guiding them. Please guide them to the direction where their original selves can rejoice with Heaven. Even though we may be shameful and unworthy, please allow us to look upon You in this hour with a longing heart and to bow our heads before You. If we still feel embarrassed and extend our shameful hands out toward You and call out to You, please promise us that You will hold those hands.

We want to bow while clinging to the Father's heart. We want to enter into a relationship with You. There is nothing else we want. No matter how glittering the treasures of Heaven may be, no matter what kind of glory may be found there, we do not want it. All we want is the promise that we can remain connected to the Father's heart and live together with You. Hoping that such things can be the signs of glory which we can take pride in for eternity, we have prostrated ourselves before You. Even if we are unworthy in some ways, please forgive us. Father, we sincerely wish that You will cultivate our hearts as You desire and secure an inseparable parent-child relationship with us.

Although many people are calling for You, they do not understand the Father's situation or heart. We do not want to become like them. Among us there are those who are like Your sons, those who are like Your adopted sons, and those who are Your true sons. We have no desire to be Your sons or adopted sons. We want to be Your direct children, the children who have inherited Your flesh and blood, who can live with the Father for eternity and never fade away from Your heart. We want to possess an undeniable eternal relationship of flesh and blood with You.

We know that to become these kinds of sons and daughters we must feel that the anguish the Father has suffered is our own anguish; the sorrow the Father feels is our own sorrow; the grief the Father feels is our own grief; the responsibilities that the Father has to fulfill are our own responsibilities. Please guide us to become this kind of children.

Father, I stand here, yet what words should I convey? Even though we may want to become the Father's sons and daughters, if we cannot sense that You are now trying to help us experience Your heart as our own reality and that You desire to build a relationship with us, no matter how profound the words I convey, our relationship with You can never be completed. Hence, please let this be an hour when we can become connected to the Father's heart; otherwise, we can never penetrate through the Father's heart or have the experience of clinging to the Father's body.

Please let the speaker's heart be in harmony with the Father's heart. Let the hearts of the listeners reflect the heart of the Father so that our moments of give and take may be an hour of glory. We know that You are driving us down this path for a certain purpose. This path is our ultimate fate, which we cannot avoid. Please let our determinations and actions become conditions of glory. Please allow us to be offered to the Father as sacrifices. Please raise us up as sacrifices who can be offered to the Father. Please do not let Satan find room to invade during this hour. We prayed in the name of the Lord. Amen.

It is written in I Corinthians 9:24: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." Centering on these words, I would like to speak to you briefly upon the topic "Inside God's Stadium."

Human Beings Are Racers in the Stadium of the Providence of Restoration

As it was for the many saints in history, the people in the present era are dashing toward some unknown purpose in their lives. Although that purpose may not be clearly defined, their way of life has unfolded in various ways based upon it. The experience and form of the people and history have unfolded in various forms. All of these outcomes are not unrelated. We have to understand that there is some relationship which underpins their experience in this world, and that they are moving toward a certain purpose. If their actions and experiences are not rooted in such a relationship and purpose, then there is no way to establish the existence of God or any such being.

If God exists, He would surely try to forge a relationship with fallen humanity. For this reason, it cannot be denied that we who are moving toward a certain purpose are living inside the sphere of this relationship.

We know that we could not forge a relationship of goodness with God due to the Fall. Rather, we entered into a relationship of evil with Satan. Still, God does not want to abandon us, but is trying to restore us. We know that God and humanity have been walking an incredibly difficult course in order to restore humanity.

History is headed toward the one time when this purpose can be fulfilled. For this reason, you should understand that you are racers who are sprinting toward the purpose based on the standard of your conscience and your daily lives. All those who ever lived have stood on the race tracks of God's providence of restoration.

God has been leading His providence concerning fallen people in various ways. God has been influencing them in various ways according to the differences between the people, differences between their prevailing ideologies and cultures. In the process, God has been fighting on humanity's side to destroy evil until the moment His purpose is accomplished, the moment the race comes to an end.

If we accept that every person stands in the position of a racer, we are faced with the question of what we must do. If we understand how much God has suffered to raise up each one of us, and that we are obliged to stand inside the stadium and run with all our strength, how will Heaven train us and guide us in our race? How will each of us persevere through the tribulations of the race until we reach the destination? This is an important question that every one of us must resolve.

Among the saints and sages of the past, there must have been people who were in charge of one aspect of the whole and who set a certain standard before they died. In other words, these saints and sages did not complete the entire providence of Heaven or the entire race up to the end. Rather, they must have been in charge of various parts of the race and brought them to a conclusion. We should understand that this is how the race is being carried on even now. God made this stadium of restoration. We should understand that we have the inescapable responsibility to risk our lives in the race throughout our entire lifetimes.

Today there are many thoughts and teachings. In the religious world, there are many denominations and sects. Thoughts, philosophies and religions have taken various forms depending upon the uniqueness of the people they were established for. Such thoughts and religions should have developed into an ideology and religion which contains the entire content of God's providence. Yet they failed to achieve that. All merely remained as thoughts and religions which were narrowly applicable to one nation or one era. We have to understand clearly that they were no more than parts of God's race; the religions and ideologies were responsible for only partial missions.

The Structure of the Race and the Day the Awards Are Given

In a stadium, they may hold a one-hundred-meter race, a five-thousand-meter race, a ten-thousand meter race, or a marathon. What kind of race would you be responsible for as racers who have entered the race tracks of God, who is guiding the providence of restoration? How can you find a place in the history of the universe? This is a crucial question. Even if there are differences in your

values and character, God certainly wishes ardently that you will fulfill your responsibility in the event that you are responsible for in the race, and that you will establish the standard God wants. Since you have entered the race tracks, you should give all your heart and soul to the race. We should understand which event of the race we are to accomplish through our life and finally stand before Heaven.

Although God has guided the providence for six thousand years, when you look at the entire course, there are still some events in God's overall race that have not been completed yet. The competition is still going on. The race will go on today and tomorrow. When the entire race comes to an end, God will give awards in each event to all humanity, all the people who ran in the race in the past and all those who will have raced by the day of the conclusion. When is the day the awards are given out? If we use Christian terminology, it is the judgment day. The judgment day is the day the awards will be given out. If we use the terminology used frequently in our era, it may also be referred to as the Last Days.

The important question is whether or not you will have established the victorious standard so that you can receive an award in an event. This is an issue that you will have to deeply reflect upon. There are many ways of racing. Although you are supposed to enter the stadium and race on the marked course, there will be many who disregard the race course. There may be those who run on the marked course but who collapse in the middle of the race. There will be those who run until the finish line but will not be able to receive awards. The number of people who will receive awards is limited. We have to understand this.

Although God guided the providence for six thousand years. He could not give an award even to one racer. For this reason, spirits in Heaven and people on the earth all wish for the day God can appear before humanity and give awards to the many racers who ran in each event of the race. This is the Last Days. You should understand this.

The Attitude a Racer Should Have

We are to run this race. Since we have to go, how should we run? We need to make certain preparations before we enter the stadium. What kind of preparations? We need to make internal preparations and external preparations. Internally, we should have some conviction that we are running toward a certain purpose. We are to run the course according to the commands we receive. If we run into a hurdle in our race course, we should have the conviction to jump over it. We need to make internal preparations so that we can run toward the right purpose based on our conviction.

In other words, by training our minds and bodies, we need to cultivate the determination that we will not fall down before we reach the final destination and that we will not lose to anyone but will stand as the final victors. We need to have such a strong conviction that even if our bodies were to run into some obstacles as we are racing toward our destination, we should be able to push that aside and continue on our race.

Many people are living on the earth today. Yet how many of them are ready to stand firm as a racer and start running toward the certain destination? If we cannot deny that we are under the control of this trend in history, based on both our words and the reality we face, we should then ask ourselves whether or not we have prepared ourselves properly as racers who can run towards the destination with aspirations to victory. You have not made the preparations yet.

Human beings are born to belong in a certain field or sphere. Those who do not have a position and circumstance where they can dwell are pitiful. Those who do not have the clear idea that they are on a certain course running toward a certain purpose are pitiful. Most of us are like that.

What we need here is the time to make the internal and external preparations to train our minds and bodies with determination and purposefulness that we may triumph in the battle against many enemies. If there is anyone here who has not had such a moment, he should examine himself closely.

What kind of internal preparation do we need to make? It must not be preparation for your own individual sake. Isn't this so? Suppose there is a marathon athlete who represents a nation. When he runs the race, if he has the conviction that he should glorify his people and his nation before the world rather than to obtain glory for himself, he will be able to overcome all difficulties. However, if he is running only for the sake of his own glory and personal ends, he will easily give up the moment he runs into tribulations.

Our conviction must not be centered on ourselves. We should have conviction for the sake of the people, for the sake of the world, and for the sake of Heaven and earth. If the runner is certain that he will determine the final victory of the universe, even if he were to collapse, he would have the strength to get up and continue running. If he runs for his own sake, the moment he encounters a difficulty that exceeds any difficulty he has otherwise experienced, he will collapse. When the difficulty exceeds the self-centered desire he has, he will be defeated.

This is the reason we need to train our minds and bodies to the conviction that we are running for the purpose and mission of Heaven and earth. People live for the sake of God and goodness, but thoughtlessly. Goodness is transcending the restricted environment. Goodness is not limited. Goodness exists beyond the boundaries of limits and constraints. Therefore, people live for such purposes without clear understanding or deep thought.

To Become a Winner in the Stadium

We cannot be haphazard. We should have a clear notion of being a winner in a certain event in the race. You have to approach the starting point with such a firm conviction and begin the race. The sages of the past did not teach people about specific fields of work. They did not teach us what we must do to become successful in a certain field. They instructed us on the path we should walk in our life, the path for our minds, our spirits, and for our life.

The path for our thoughts and life does not belong to any one of us alone. It is the common path in any era and is designed according to a certain formula. On it hangs the fate of many generations and human history. We should long for the citizens of Heaven who can fight on this path and bring victory.

If you do it unselfishly, the day you fulfill the purpose is the day that Heaven and earth can rejoice. When a racer representing his people wins in his event, it is tantamount to the victory of all his people. Even if that event is a small one, its value and glory will have an impact on everyone. For this reason, now you need the one day when you can develop this kind of internal conviction, when you can strengthen your conviction and value in order to attain a certain purpose under a certain standard. However, until today you did not have these kinds of thoughts or feelings.

Since we are already racing, we will either end up as winners or losers. To become winners, we need to have a strategy. Internally, we need to have the conviction that we will win, and an unswerving heart fixed on a purpose. Externally, we need to make preparations to facilitate the race. Those who are entering a race should be simple and innocent. We have to prepare our bodies so that they will respond quickly to the direction our minds give. This is why we need training.

The stadium, however, is not built to make it easy for us to run freely toward our purpose. There are many obstacles on the race tracks. Each of these obstacles represent the failures of our ancestors. No matter how proud and determined a racer may be, he may fall down before those obstacles. On our path lie the obstacles which our ancestors could not overcome and fell over. Therefore, as much as possible, we should maintain a simple attitude, so that when our hearts guide us, our bodies can respond quickly and in full harmony. We should train our bodies in this way.

Training cannot be done in a comfortable position. It is achieved when you are being treated harshly. To continue this kind of internal training, you need to harden your bodies so that even if you are attacked internally, you can make a breakthrough and move beyond it. Your internal determination must not change. Even if you run into tribulations which afflict your body, you must not be defeated. Hence, Heaven instructed those who seek the religious way to abandon everything they possess and follow. When Jesus called upon Peter, who was mending his fishing nets, he told him to abandon all and follow him.

There is a rationale behind meditating in the mountains in order to seek enlightenment. We are to cultivate external determination based on our internal determination, and the confidence that we will not deviate from our course, no matter what kind of obstacles we run into. Even if we fall to the bottom, we will support our minds and bodies. Without these convictions, there is no way we can run the race or even enter the stadium. Since each one of us is a racer who should be responsible for an event in the race, we should train ourselves with unchanging conviction in order to accomplish our purpose. Therefore, you must have the attitude of a devout believer, the attitude of a racer who is running the race, and the attitude of a person walking the path of enlightenment. Whether you are awake or asleep, you should have a burning desire to accomplish your purpose.

Among the people who have gathered here there must be those who thoughtlessly believe that they can enter the Kingdom of Heaven just by believing in Jesus. What is the Kingdom of Heaven like? It is composed of various groups of people who have successfully qualified in some event in the race. You should not blindly think that you can enter the Kingdom of Heaven just by believing in Jesus. Of course, there are areas that God will help you in, but there are also areas which require you to fulfill your responsibilities. To prepare for the race, you should make both internal and external preparations. Next, as a racer, you should understand thoroughly about the course that you will be competing on. You should know clearly where you will find what kind of obstacles, and so on. What you then must understand is that although many people have run on the course in the past, all of them failed. They did not win in their races. They quit in the middle of the course.

What a Racer Should Understand

The same principles apply to the path of religion. Since the birth of history, no one among all those who walked the path of religion and those who went before God in the name of religion were able to receive the award of God, proclaiming Him the ultimate victor. The race is still going on. The purpose of our race is to connect to the universe, which is the ultimate purpose of the race over which God presides. For this reason, no matter how small our own race may be, we should persist until the moment we can become connected to the universe. If there is someone who won the hundred-meter event at one particular time, that alone will not qualify him as a winner. He must maintain the value and glory of his victory until the Last Days.

We who stand in the stadium should know the stories of the many people who fell down on each obstacle of the course. We should know under what circumstances they fell and how they fell and how they were defeated in their fight.

Until now, people have been racing toward an unclear destination, but we in the present age should not run such an aimless race. Since we are running the race, we should understand every detail of the race course clearly.

We know that to run on the course of God's providence we must pass through the course of restoration. What must we do? We have come forward as racers seeking to find God. Where should we begin? We should begin from Adam's family. Where is the starting point for human beings? It is Adam's family. We have been running the race from that point. From that point, God and humanity have run the race together for six thousand years until today. Yet the race is not over. It is still going on.

What must you do? You should inherit the tradition and spirit of our ancestors. We should understand where we belong. Isn't this true? You should understand which race you are running, to which group you belong, and what role you are to play. Only then can you be the winner of the award. You should understand that all racers belong to certain spheres based on the historical spiritual tradition they associate with. You should understand which event you are participating in. You should understand who in the past set the record and who in the past failed. After knowing all

these good and bad conditions, you should be prepared to deal with all the bad effects of the conditions.

In the course of our life, many enemies have placed obstacles in our path and are blocking our way. The obstacles they placed are not visible; they are invisible. They are the very obstacles that many saints of history could not overcome. You should have an understanding of the past and knowledge of where the hurdles lie. We should understand history for this reason. We must understand the past, the present and the future. This is the essential knowledge that racers should have. In the middle of your race, you cannot be sure that the sponsors of the race will not change the courses designed under a certain purpose. Hence, you should understand the historical course of the saints of the past, the stories of their battles on the course, the present situation of our battle, and the plans by which the future battles will be fought. Only when you understand all this can you become the ultimate victor.

However, if we examine closely the lives of religious people today, they do not know how God has been working in history. They do not know God's program and plans, based upon which He is carrying out His work in the present. How can we call these people racers? You should understand clearly. In the six-thousand-year history, God guided the events of the race toward a certain direction. There is a central thrust. This is what we must understand. God has been working with a uniform program and purpose from the time of the first human ancestors to the last days of humanity.

Religions Which Can Act on Behalf of God's Providence

If you sense that you are a racer running throughout the rest of your life and desire to be a winner, you will have to find a historical religion. You will have to find a religion of this period and a religion of the future. These are the only religions which people can believe in and never despair.

Although there have been many religious people in the past, their life span could not surpass a century. Based on this, it is clear that God has been working in the background without people's being aware of it. God began His providence from the day human beings fell and will continue even in the future. If there is a religion which can represent God's providential work, what kind of religion would it be? It is a religion which has made a contribution in history and which has a relationship with the beginnings of human history. It must be a religion which discusses the origins of good and evil and which can embrace all aspects of history found in human life. It must have the ability to decide the outcome of the battle in the final destination of the future. From this perspective, Christianity today is problematic.

If we are to receive God's award, it cannot be just because we have been recognized in this age. Many racers of the past dwell in the next world. Countless people who raced on the race track of God's providence now reside there. Some of them died on the race track, and they have a myriad of stories to tell. If you are qualified to receive an award on behalf of all those people of the past, then you have to have won a victory that no ancestor of the past was able to achieve. You must

also have established some condition of victory which can be recognized by the people of this age. The people of the future must also be able to recognize your accomplishments. Only such a person can be awarded by God. Isn't this true? This is the reason we believe in God. We are racing on the course of our life. We are racing toward the ultimate destination of the Last Days.

What kind of being is God whom we believe in? He is an historical God. He is the God of this age as well as the God of the future. The purpose that God set is also the historical purpose, the purpose of the present, and the purpose of the future.

If this is the nature of the God we believe in and the hope that we cherish in our hearts, we should understand and believe in God as the God of the past, the present and the future. Only then would God be happy when He gives us an award. You have to reach the point where you understand the heart of God who is giving you the award.

Many religions survived for several hundred or several thousand years, during which time they were slowly pushed aside by the trends of thought of each age. Although Christianity has been around for several thousand years, now they have to make another breakthrough for the one time in the future. If there is some race course of God which originates from the deepest part of God, that course must be of the past, the present and the future. For this reason, we should have knowledge of it. If there is a new truth emerging in this age, that truth cannot be limited to this age. You young people should understand this clearly. The truth cannot be limited to an age. Any teaching or idea will fade away if it is limited to an era. What we need is a new truth, a new ideology which is rooted in the entire range of history and which can transcend the philosophical trends of this age.

A Racer Who Can Win the Victory and Rejoice with God

This is because God desires that we rejoice with Him and win the victory with Him. Since God is the God of the past, the present and the future, we should also have the qualities of the past, present and the future and be knowledgeable about them. Otherwise, we will be swept away by trends of thought in the future.

We should understand them more deeply and even understand the heart of the historical God. Members of a family are tied together in complex relationships. Given God's heart of the past, present and future, we should understand everything about the race that the Father is directing based on this heart and be in tune with the realm of His heart. God's desire is that we win the race after having done all this, so that we can become those with whom He can be fully satisfied; so that we can worship God and share eternal joy with Him.

Therefore, religion is not built on truth alone. A religious way of life is more than just the truth itself. Teachings and ideologies are built on truth, but religion contains both the truth and the heart. This is the difference. Thoughts and ideologies do not contain the heart. However, religion has a rich inner content similar to the silent love that we find between a parent and a child. There is some

content which transcends logic and theories. That is how religion is. But this is not true for doctrines. A doctrine is the fruit of an organization or group. It is not a fruit of the heart.

We today must have knowledge about the course and the situation of this age in order to be prepared properly as racers who are running toward a certain purpose. In order to race forward, we should also understand the future and have a plan. This is the basic knowledge that we racers should have. If there is someone who goes this heavenly course at the risk of his life, with God's heart of the past, present and future, who understands how much God has suffered to establish and pave this course, he will surely overcome any difficulty he will confront.

Next, we should not lose our fighting spirit as we are racing toward our purpose. No matter how well prepared and knowledgeable our enemy may be, we must have the determination to prevail. We must not lose. The sphere of our actions is the battle field. You should be a brave soldier who is determined to prevail over anything on earth and never submit, even if God were to strike you. This is how I see it.

The Religious Path Is Fraught with Tests

When you walk the religious path, you will meet with many tests. When you are running on the race track, besides the physical fatigue that you suffer, you will confront many unexpected tests. Many evil spirits, invisible to the naked eye, will test us. When that phase is over, the angels will test us. After that phase, the religious people and the founders of religions will test you. If you believe in Jesus, Jesus will test you. At first he will try to guide you, but at the end he will test you. God will also guide you in the beginning, but will test you at the end when He is about to give you an award. This is how it is. This is because human beings betrayed God. Although God created the universe as an award to be given to human beings, because they betrayed Him, we must pass through a test in order to restore the universe. God wants to give it to us without a test, but because there is a condition which requires that we be tested, we have to pass through it. God will abandon you like He abandoned Jesus, which led Jesus to say on the cross, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46)

While you are running the race as a brave soldier, you will experience a battle between your mind and body. It is not enough to deal with this merely with determination. When you are racing, the battle between your mind and body will be manifested in a complex manner. You will experience deep in your heart the internal anguish that God suffered in his fight with Satan during the many difficult moments in the six-thousand-year course. Such internal and external pains will be manifested in your life.

You are not just to run forward; you are to be engaged in the internal and external battles and at the same time overcome God's tests. To be victorious in your life, you must win this fight. That is what you have to do for sure. Why? Although six thousand years of history have gone by, no one has scored the goal. Although many were determined to reach the end, no one reached the finish line.

The Reason Christ Returns

You may believe that Jesus resides in the Kingdom of Heaven, but he actually resides in Paradise. Jesus said that he was going to Paradise. Paradise is the waiting room before one enters the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus is returning to go past the gates of Paradise and open up the gates to the Kingdom of Heaven. Since he could not complete this work on the earth, he will run the race again and score the goal at the finish line.

Therefore, the race we are running is the final course. It has the name of faith. It may be compared to a marathon. It is the most glorious of all races. Religion is the event that deserves the throne of the king of all races. How must we who have entered this race run? It is not enough to run the race relying on our determination alone. You have to understand that there are many battles which have piled up here. The world is pulling our bodies. Isn't this so? In our religious life, we sense that the world is pulling our bodies, while the teachings are pulling our minds. Where is the goal? It is not clear. On the path that we walk, many enemies are shooting arrows at us from all kinds of hidden places. Moreover, Jesus and God in whom we believe will not recognize you in the Last Days. This will take place one day.

As brave soldiers, what determination should we make? The moment we decide that the goal of the path we are racing on is the right one, we should make the determination to pursue it at the risk of our lives. Only then can we win the course. If we are to fail, we should be determined to fail most tragically. If we are to die, we should be determined to die most miserably. If we are to suffer, we should be determined to suffer most severely. We should be determined to suffer more than God has suffered.

To Become Sons and Daughters of Whom God Can Be Proud

Ladies and gentlemen, let us examine the reality we face today. We the members of the Unification Church are running toward a certain goal which has been described to us. Life in the race is a battle, and in a battle we push and pull our bodies. The concept of faith that we have held up until now is pulling us forward. This is where the enemies are coming in. When this is over, God will break in. He will ask you, "Are you My children? Are you confident?" Wouldn't this be true? If He were to ask you, "What victory did you bring?" you should be able to say, "I won in this and that field." If God then asks you, "Is that true?" you should be able to present Him with some accomplishments. Teachers test their students before they entrust them with a responsibility.

We should understand that we are the brave soldiers and racers who are running throughout the course of our lives and who will remain until the end. We should understand that we are the elite troop of Heaven and make a determination as such. If someone strikes your body, you should be able to say, "Strike me if you like. Strike me with any ideology or thought. I welcome any persecution. I welcome it, even if the nation, world and Heaven join forces and strike me." Even if God were to oppose you, you should be able to say, "Oppose me if You want."

If someone wins the victory in spite of the opposition of the entire universe, he will become a child of God whom God will be proud of eternally. If there is someone about whom God can say, "I submit to you. I have never met anyone like you since the beginning of the course of the providence of restoration, when I began to search for people." Everyone will surrender to that person. This is true for any fight, even a life and death struggle. I say this based upon my own experience.

If there is a racer who is running on the ultimate path of religion in the last days, a racer who is running with the hope of attaining the ultimate victory, he will have to make a determination. The founder of the religion he believes in is not the savior. He should understand that eventually he needs to fight the battle based on his own ability. Why? It is because the providence of restoration has not come to an end. As long as there still remains an event in God's stadium which has not been concluded, the battle will continue on until all the races have come to an end and God has given His awards.

The Providential Representative God Desires to Raise Up

Although Jesus worked to fulfill the mission of the Messiah who was to win in this stadium and represent the four-thousand-year history, Christians did not fulfill their responsibility. They were to receive the Messiah's baton of victory and glorify the two-thousand-year history from Jesus' time until now. Although Christianity established its form after the death of Jesus, it failed to complete its victorious foundation in the realm of the heart and in other areas. The standard of victory has never emerged.

You should endure Jesus' and God's opposition and gain their recognition so that they can raise their hands and bless you. To do so, you should overcome any obstacle. Isn't that true? If it is, what kind of providential representative does God want to raise up in His providence of restoration? God will want to find victorious sons and daughters to whom God and Satan will surrender. He will want to praise them before the satanic world and in Heaven. If that is what human beings desire, God's desire must also be similar.

We the members of the Unification Church who are walking the path of truth today will face God's test in the end. He will say, "Do not walk this path." Even then, there must be someone among you who says, "I will go. I will die running the race." If there is no such person, words of truth which surpass the Bible will not emerge. Words which surpass what Jesus left behind when he died will not emerge. Words of truth which surpass what God wanted to speak after the coming of Jesus will not appear.

When we are running this course, we should have the conviction, "Let there be a cross heavier than the one that Jesus bore; let there be suffering, sorrow and pain like God suffered during the six-thousand-year course of the providence. Let the 2.7 billion people of this world be mobilized and shoot arrows at me all at once. Let the humanity of the entire world be mobilized, since both God's providence and Satan's opposition are carried out through human beings. I will go to the end of hell and the highest place of the Kingdom of Heaven." If, after opposing and affirming in

your mind you decide that this is the right path, you should begin to run. Once you run, no one should be able to stop you. No matter what comes your way, you are to break through and go forward. Only then can you safely cross over the hill which has been blocked for six thousand years.

Members of the Unification Church, God is longing for brave people who can come and say, "Let us give it a try." Only then can the will be accomplished. If there are sons and daughters of God who are knowledgeable, have firm determination and are determined to fight, God will not ignore them. What will Heaven do? If you bring hope for the future and say, "Father, isn't this so? Isn't this how Your heart is? Isn't this how the Father's hope of the past, the present, and hope of the future is? Since this should not be done at present, shouldn't you ignore this and do this and that?" Then no matter who opposes you, God will say in recognition, "Yes, you are right."

The Awards the Winners Are to Receive

Many sages of the past and the Savior we believe in were sent by God to pioneer the world of that time and the world of the future. For this reason, if anyone were to come before Jesus and protest about the things that Jesus wanted to share about the future, Jesus would be grateful. If someone were to highlight the providence of the future and ignore the things of the present, saying, "God! Shouldn't you do this quickly? Shouldn't you do this rather than doing that?" God would not be able to strike him. In fact, he would commend him instead.

All that we have to do is to go forward with this determined fighting spirit. If God were then to recognize you, what kind of award would you receive? When you become a winner of some competition even in this world, the sponsor will give you an appropriate award. What will God give as an award to those who win the final victory in the six-thousand-year long race? Ladies and gentlemen, when you win an award in a competition, don't you feel good? But isn't that joy only temporary? After some time passes, another person will win in the same race and win an award, separate from your own competition. However, in God's races, there will not be a second person who scores the goal at the final finish line. There will be no one before and no one after. If it comes to an end, it comes to an end for eternity.

The joy of receiving an award in the final race will last beyond just today. It will be eternal. You may in fact see better things unfolding before you, but you will never fall lower. What glory will Heaven give to those winners? God will give them the glory of being God's sons and daughters. He will bestow upon them all the authority of Heaven and earth. If there is a palace in Heaven, He will allow them to live in it as Heaven's royal family. He will give them eternal and unlimited awards.

If there are such victorious sons and daughters, God will mobilize all of Heaven, which He has prepared for six thousand years, and hold a welcoming celebration. This celebration will not come to an end in one day. It will continue for eternity. That world is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. For this reason, you must become one of the racers, racing with this idea in mind.

The Group Who Can Win

There are many religions today. There are many religious sects today: Confucianism, Buddhism, Islam, etc. There are many tracks in the stadium. However, Heaven decides the specific track. It has been determined which event will be held on which track. It is an unfortunate reality that human beings are directed by a certain religious sect or denomination or some person. This is because human beings fell.

You must participate in God's race one way or another. You will have to run in one event. Yet you belong to different nations. The races that God wants are not to be divided among nations. They are international. In other words, they are like the Olympic games. Into that stadium, all the representatives of each nation will come. They all enter the stadium and run. The same thing can be said of God's providence of restoration. For this reason, Heaven has been working to find the winners of the marathon race on the world level. Religion may be compared to marathons, which occupy the most prestigious position among all the races.

Not all religions are good. Only when the tradition is properly set will a good religion emerge. Then there must arise common knowledge based upon that. If one lacks knowledge about that, no matter how much one may have prepared, there is no way he can become the winner. It cannot be taught. He will never win, because he does not have a clear sense of purpose.

Therefore, you should prepare your minds and bodies and develop knowledge, so that even if all of Heaven and earth were to be mobilized in opposition against you on the battle field, you would not surrender but overcome it. You should fight on with this kind of conviction. Only then can you participate in the group who will win in the final course.

Prayer

Our ancestors ran the race. Adam was responsible for one event in God's race, but while he was running it, he collapsed because he upheld himself. Ham, who should have attended Noah with the heart of attending Heaven, failed. Because of this, Noah also fell down mid-course. Abraham should have revered both small and large with an equally sincerely heart and established their relative value, but because he could not accomplish it, he also was broken.

When we examine the course of Moses, we find that the Israelites and Moses both fell. Moses should not have shown anger before God was angry. The Israelites should not have despaired before Heaven despaired. Yet Moses struck the rock twice in rage before God showed any anger, and the Israelites lost their faith in God. For these reasons they all fell down in the wilderness.

When we examine Jesus' time, what about the betrayal of the three disciples? Although they should have risked their lives and walked the course, they did not want to go. They disappeared out of fear for their lives. The miserable failure of the three disciples has become the tower of humanity's grief.

We have learned today through the principle of restoration that the path the saints of the past walked is none other than the path we should walk. We know that what was begun in Adam's family passed through many obstacles in history. Only in Jesus' time, when Jesus said, "Father, do not as I will, but as Thou wilt," did a winner emerge who fought at the risk of his life. Now we have come to understand that if we do not follow his example, we cannot run the race in the stadium.

Father, we have come to understand the content of the restoration. We have come to understand what our determination should be as we set out to engage ourselves in restoration and how fierce the battle is. Please protect us on these race tracks, that we will not fall as losers. We have pledged before Heaven and earth. Even if we are to face death, no matter what kind of difficulties and pain are to rush against us, even if all of humanity were to oppose us like a thunderstorm, and even if Heaven and earth were to change, please let our center remain unchanged and let us overcome all difficulties. Let us cast away the dark clouds and become victorious and glorious sons and daughters who can look up to the joyful grace of Heaven in a bright Heaven and earth.

Please have compassion on those of us who have gathered here today. Since we have already entered the race, even though some are running and some are unable to run, please govern them so that they will not escape from this fateful course they must run after repentance. Please guide us to welcome the tribulations and afflictions that come our way and to digest them so that we can establish conditions of pride and glory before the Father. Let us become worthy people who can use them as conditions of sacrifice.

We understand the great work which has been hidden deep inside the heart of the Father, who has desired to give awards for six thousand years. Based on this, Jesus said that he was the bridegroom and that we are the brides; that he is our true father and we are his true children, true family, true nation, and true world. However, today we do not have a family, a people or a country. We do not have anything adequately prepared. What hesitation and reluctance can we have before our parent, who is trying to restore everything? What hesitation and reluctance can we have before the heavenly family and the heavenly nation? We should pour out all of our determination and unswerving zeal to run the race without stopping and conquer the enemy camp. We should raise the flag of God's victory and say, "Father, please be liberated from all Your grief."

We have learned that to accomplish this we have to overcome any difficulty and win in the fight. Please protect us so that we will not fail as racers in our life. Please guide us not to lose the original ideal that the Father established and not to cause anguish to the Father's heart.

Please allow us to become children of Heaven who can risk our lives each day and run the race bravely. Please do not let us lose the race. Praying that You will allow us to become final victors in God's races and become precious sons and daughters who can glorify the Father before the entire universe and all things of creation, we prayed in the name of the Lord. Amen.