

Newsweek International Interviews Sun Myung Moon

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'God Speaks Through Me'

Recently, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon gave a rare interview, his first in three years, to Newsweek International's Executive Editor Richard Z. Chesnoff and General Editor Andrew Nagorski. Below, excerpts from their three-hour conversation:

Chesnoff and Nagorski: How does the Unification Church differ from other Christian denominations?

Reverend Moon: My new revelation has made the will of God crystal clear. And what is that will? It is to save the world. So the Unification Church is not another denomination — it's a movement to save the world and through the teaching of the word of God, each individual in our movement becomes absolutely clear about the concept of the God-centered individual, the God-centered family, the God-centered nation and the God-centered world.

Q. How was God's will revealed to you?

A. At the age of 16, I had a very spiritual, deep experience encountering Jesus Christ in the Korean countryside. That was the beginning of the revelations. Ever since that particular encounter, I have been in constant communication with the living God and the living saints in the spirit world, including Jesus, in my own search for truth. This cannot be explained in words too well.

Q. Why did God speak to you?

A. In accordance with God's timetable, God has ordained or handpicked me. But why? We must ask God that question. I know just one thing: that mission came to me. God has three major headaches. First, moral corruption is rampant. Second, the Christian churches are divided and declining and their spiritual power must be restored. And third, Communism, an evil force in the sight of God, is rising — this is the foremost obstacle to the creation of the Kingdom of God on earth. When those revelations were completed and organized into the Divine Principle, I began to organize a movement and that is the Unification Church.

Q. You are obviously saying that you are a prophet, but do you also consider yourself the new Messiah?

A. We are in a new messianic age. But 2,000 Years ago Jesus Christ never spoke of himself as a Messiah, knowing that would not serve his purpose. I am not saying, "I am the Messiah." I am faithfully fulfilling God's instructions.

Q. But you don't rule out the possibility that you are the Messiah?

A. Let God answer you, let God answer the world.

Q. You have specifically said that a second Messiah, who is a married Korean, is coming and that the new ideology will be born in Korea. Why Korea?

A. Korea is the chosen nation of God. Korea is divided. The line-up in Panmunjom is like a line-up between the heavenly world and the Satanic world. We must make a showdown in Korea. Korea's victory, particularly in the fight against Communism, is not Korea's alone. I came to America to bring it back to the scene of the struggle. America has been retreating from its responsibility to the world — that has happened in Vietnam already. America will decide the world's destiny, including the destiny of God because God needs a champion. America is destined to fight

Communism on a worldwide scale — the ideological confrontation is inevitable.

Q. Are you linked to the Korea/I Government or the Korean CIA?

A. That is absolute nonsense. Ours is a religious movement and we get no instructions from the government. Actually in many cases in the past, people in South Korean Governments have tried to undermine and curtail our movement. But right now our contribution to the over-all goal of Korea's national purpose is so great they certainly have to recognize our achievements. On our own initiative, over 20 million people have listened to our theory about Victory Over Communism. But this is not an alliance or cooperation. President Park does his job; I do my job as a religious leader.

Q. Have you received aid in the past from anti-Communist groups in Korea and around the world, from Japan's Yoshio Kodama, for example?

A. Not a penny. I have never met Mr. Kodama and there has never been any communication with him or his organization. Communists are planting those rumors, trying to make us look bad.

Q. You have said, "I will conquer and subjugate the world. The time will come without my seeking when my words will serve almost as law." What are your political goals?

A. I have no political goals. That particular quotation has been taken out of context. When you pick quotations from long, impromptu speeches, they can be misinterpreted. There are also problems with translating from Korean.

Q. So you are saying you have no intention of "subjugating the world?"

A. Of course not, not in the political sense. God is the ruler of the world and I am not putting myself in the position of God. But the spirit of God speaks through me and it's really God who speaks out. That's why so many young people follow me.

Q. Is one of your goals to get your members elected to high offices?

A. That is not the business of the church or under its control. We would like to have millions and millions of members and great leaders may emerge. I would welcome that. But my goal is not to obtain any political power for myself or my organization.

Q. You are a millionaire businessman, you live in a \$625,000 house, you have yachts at your disposal and so on. Why do you have this financial empire?

A. God has been very good to me. But I am not a millionaire businessman. I am a religious leader. A great deal of blessing has been poured upon me. And many people say that whatever I touch turns to gold. To a certain extent, that is true. But I know why God gave me this blessing — because God knows nothing belongs to me, not even a penny for my own savings. All the work is [for] God. If I were taking advantage of dedicated young people, not a single soul would follow me. But they recognize my honesty and dedication.

Q. What is the extent of the church's financial holding around the world?

A. I don't know. Truthfully, I do not keep the figures, as they do not interest me. I give spiritual guidance.

Q. Who keeps the figures?

A. Each national leader. There is no central management.

Q. Your followers live very simply but you live very comfortably. Why the personal opulence?

A. Although I have lived most of my life in simple surroundings, whether I like it or not I am becoming an

international figure. There are many great people who come to see me — it's a matter of protocol. Then people tell me I need protection and a certain dignity.

Q. Security is very evident all around you and your church. It looks almost obsessive. What is the reason for that?

A. My mission is life-risking. My life is threatened by Communists; there have been many threats. As my movement gets stronger, the more possibility there is for organized plots against my life. North Korea's Kim Il Sung for example has publicly announced that I am the number one threat to his revolutionary tactics. But one thing the plotters do not know is that if I falter for some reason, then millions of new Reverend Moons will spring up. The work of God will go on.

Q. Why do your church and your followers constantly raise money? Why the emphasis on materialism?

A. I do not reject material values. But it must be in the service of God. Vast resources are necessary for the movement to physically implement the concept of the ideal of God on earth.

Q. Why don't you allocate at least part of those resources for such projects as feeding the hungry?

A. We are doing some welfare work. However, I want you to understand that many people can feed and are feeding the poor and orphans. My unique role is to bring men an awareness of God.

Q. Is it true that your industries in South Korea have been involved in manufacturing weapons?

A. Our machine shops have some defense contracts — this is a national obligation in Korea and there is no major company not involved in defense. Five or maybe ten percent of our production is under contract for defense purposes.

Q. What specifically do you make, parts of weapons?

A. That information is classified by the government. But certainly, some... parts of weapons.

Q. Do you have plans to develop industries in the US and West Europe as you have in Korea and Japan?

A. I do have plans to develop certain industries. [And] I am concentrating very much on the movement in Germany because it is the backbone of Europe. We must save that nation from Communism.

Q. Do you brainwash your disciples?

A. The same question arose when I spoke to a group of congressmen on Capitol Hill. I answered, "Are you Americans foolish enough to be brainwashed by Reverend Moon of Korea, particularly when I use an interpreter?" Young people who come to the church are not dumb or mediocre — they are smart, idealistic and determined. When they detect this power and love of God, they seem attracted like a magnet. The doors to our centers are open 24 hours a day. Anybody can come in, anybody can leave.

Q. You stress the importance of the family, but haven't your methods caused rifts within families?

A. If one of my disciples denounces his parents, he is not really my disciple. A truly good disciple will gain the respect of his parents. Many ...young people are neglected, they're thirsty for love. When they come into our movement they're really inspired, they're really happy. For the first time, they see something and somebody they can trust and love. So they become dedicated followers and members of our family. Some parents feel jealousy and others have no other opposition except for the fact that their sons and daughters are following me. Someone who comes from Korea.

Q. Were you ever ordained by another Christian church?

A. I was ordained by God, as many prophets in history were ordained by God. I am in daily communication with God; the living God is with me. There is no better ordination than that one.

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