



interview

양창식 세계평화통일가정연합 한국총회장

“소외된 이웃을 내 가족처럼... ‘따뜻한 종교’ 되겠다”

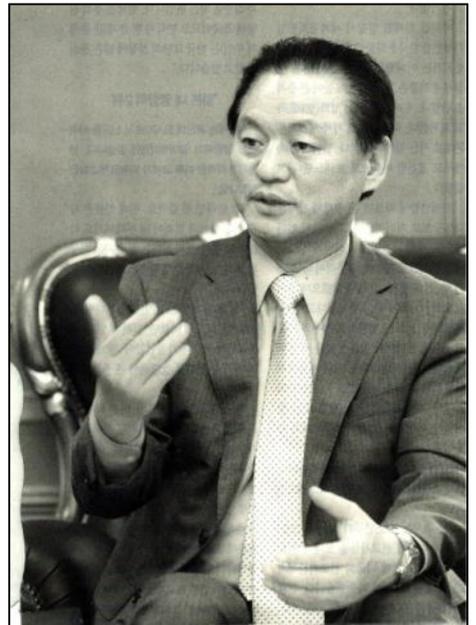
통일교 문선명 총재 1주기를 맞아 여러 해체가 관련 기사를 내보내고 있다. 문 총재 타계 후 많은 이가 문선명은 어떤 인물이었나? 문선명 없는 통일교는 어떻게 될 것인가? 라는 물음에 관심을 두기 때문이다. 서울 용산구 청마동 세계평화통일가정연합통일교의 정식 명칭인 본부에서 양창식 한국총회장을 만나 이런 주제를 놓고 대화를 나눴다.

허만섭 기자 | mshue@donga.com |

문선명 세계평화통일가정연합(이하 가정연합 또는 통일교 총재는 지난해 9월 3일 92세를 일기로 세상을 떠났다. 국내 소셜네트워크서비스(SNS)는 뜨거운 반응을 보였다. CNN, BBC, 알자지라 방송, 뉴욕타임스, AP, 오마이뉴스 등 해외 언론이 문 총재 부고 기사를 일제히 대서특필하는 것을 목격하고 놀라움을 금치 못한 것이다.

가장 중요한 신종교운동가

“문선명이 이렇게 대단했어? 라는, 일종의 ‘문선명의 재발견’이었다. 당시 인터넷 매체 머니투데이는 트위터러인들의 표현을 기사화했다. “빨-CNN이 문선명 사망을 단신이 아니라 라이브로 현지 기자 연결하네” “미국에선 한국 대통령 이름은 몰라도 김정일과 문선명은 아는 사람이 제법 많다” “일본 트위터 트렌드도 문선명 사망 소식” “논란도 많지만 정말 영향력이 큰 인물인 듯” “호·불호를 떠나 20세기 한국이 낳은 가장 유력한 국제적 인물의 하나” 등이었다. 예일대 바커 헌민경제대 교수는 워싱턴에서 “문선명은 1960~70년대 서구를 휩쓴 신종교운동에서 가장 중요한 인물”이라



<ShinDon-A, September: Nationwide oldest Monthly Magazine in Korea>
“To be a warm, friendly religion . . .
to treat neglected neighbors like my family...
Dr. Chang-shik Yang, Chairman of the Unification Movement in Korea”

With the first anniversary of the passing of Unification Church founder, Rev. Sun Myung Moon's, numerous media have published articles relating to his life work. Following his death, many people became interested, asking “What kind of person was Rev. Moon?” and “What will happen to the Unification Church without Rev. Moon?” I met Dr. Chang-shik Yang, Chairman of the Unification Movement in Korea in Cheongpa-dong, Yongsan-gu, Seoul, at the headquarters of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (the official name of the Unification Church), and we spoke about these topics.

Rev. Moon, leader of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (hereafter Family Federation or Unification Church) passed away on September 3, 2012 at the age of 92. SNS Services revealed feverish reactions to his death among Koreans, because they were so surprised to see that the international media, including the New York Times, CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera, AP, and Yomiuri Shinmun had reported Rev. Moon's death as top headline news.

The Most Important Emerging Religious Activist

“Was he that famous?” This is the question that characterized the “Rediscovery of Sun Myung Moon.” At the time of his death, the Korean internet news outlet Money Today published an article on Twitterians' reactions. “Oh, my goodness. CNN is handling the death of Sun Myung Moon not as a short news item, but with live local coverage;” “In the United States, people do not know the name of South Korea's president, but many of them know Kim Il Sung and Sun Myung Moon;” “The Japanese Twitter trend is also following the death of Sun Myung Moon;” “A Controversial but very Influential Figure;” “Beyond good or bad, the most influential figure Korea produced in the 20th century,” and so on. In an interview with foreign news correspondents, Eileen Barker, Professor of Political Economy at the University of London conjectured that Rev. Moon was the most important figure among all of the emerging new religious movements that swept the West in the 1960's and 70's.

We asked Dr. Chang-Sik Yang, Chairman of the Unification Movement in Korea, “What was the funeral like?” He responded, “It was a shock to believers all around the world. We describe death using the term 'Seonghwa', which means going to heaven to live as a divine being. Although we felt regret, we sent him to the next world with a heart of reverence.”

고 평가했다.

자리를 함께한 양창식 세계평화통일가정연합한국총회장에겐 지난해 장례식 분위기는 어찌했는지부터 물어봤다. 양창식 총회장은 "전 세계 신도들이 큰 충격을 보였었다. 우리는 죽음을 '성화(聖化)'라고 표현한다. 하늘나라로 가서 성스러운 존재로 사는 일이라고 본다. 안타까운 속에서도 경건한 마음으로 보내드렸다"고 말했다.

가정연합에 따르면 문 총재의 장례는 13일장으로 치러졌으며 그 장면이 인터넷으로 세계 각지의 추모시경과 신도들에게 실시간 중계됐다. 조문객이 국내 25만 명, 전 세계 805만 명에 달했으며 조의금으로 500억여 원이 모였다고 한다. 문 총재는 1920년 평안북도 정주에서 기독교 집안에서 태어나 일본 유학을 마친 뒤 목회자의 길을 걸었다. 1954년 서울에서 독자적인 교회를 만들었고 가정연합의 전신인 '세계기독교통일신명협회'를 창시했다. 이어지는 양 총회장의 대화 내용을 이다.

-대한민국 교회의 현재(2012년)는 어는 참도인가요.

"문 총재는 1958년부터 일본에, 1969년부터 미국에 선교사들을 보내기 시작했어요. 1975년엔 미국의 선교기관에서 120개국 선교사들을 파송했습니다. 현재 194개국에 300만여 명의 신도가 있어요. 한·미·일을 중심으로 43개국에 선택

과 중흥을 하는 편입니다. 한국은 우리 신앙의 조국(祖國)인 한자(韓)인 총재의 부인은 한국 교단의 성장에 많은 관심을 갖고 있습니다."

"일본 내 영향력 2위"

-문 총재는 교단의 창시자로서 신도들 사이에서 영향력이 절대적이었던 걸 겁니다. 문 총재가 타국에 이주 교세가 위화되게 하신 것입니까?

"그 반대인 것 같아요. 원래 믿음은 사후에 그 생애와 업적이 더 부각되기도 하잖아요. 문 총재의 성화는 문 총재의 이상과 교리, 가치관을 정립하는 계기가 되고 있습니다."

7월 20일자 일본 잡지 '슈켄다이(週刊新報)' 보도에 따르면, 일본 내 26만 개 종교단체 가운데 가정연합이 '양가화(兩家化)'에 이어 두 번째로 영향력이 큰 종교단체라고 한다.

양 총회장은 "기독교 등 어떤 외래 종교도 일본에선 뿌리를 내리지 못하지만 가정연합은 예외이며 굳건하다. 러시아, 중국은 물론 인도네시아 등 이슬람권역에서도 교세를 확장하고 있다"고 전했다.

가령 말레이시아 국회의원 중 50여 명이 문 총재의 이름을 따르며 지지하고 있고, 이 가운데 20여 명이 10월 가정연합 행사에 참석하기 위해 일주일 예정이라고 한다.

-한민족이 많은 종교가 일본에게 어떻게 다스리니까요. 그 이유가 무엇입니까?

"제2차 세계대전 후 일본 사회가 고도

화되고 있다. 서울 여의도 파크원 부지, 용산구 용인고 본부, 용산구 총재 공관, 마포구 도원빌딩, 상봉구 어린이예술단 부지, 경기 이천 선문총회대학 부지, 경기 가평군 천주정령수원원 일대, 경기 파주시 통일고 공원보치 등이 있다. 브라질에선 총장보도만한 면적의 땅을 보유하고 있다.

통일교회 기업 활동을 활발히 하는 점에 대해 양 총회장은 "문 총재의 지론"이라고 설명했다.

양심제일, 가정제일

-종교기관이 대기업처럼 여러 회사를 경영하는 것은 좋지 않아요.

"대부분의 종교는 내세 지향적이지만 문 총재는 '지상에서 천국이 이뤄져야 한다'고 봤어요. 그러기 위해서 물질도 필요했습니다. 비즈니스 기반을 만들어야 하는 거죠. 문 총재가 맨 처음 손을 들게 공작가계사업이었고 정남 창원에 통일중공업을 세웠습니다. 이 회사 출신 기술자들이 현대, 삼성, 대우로 대거 진출해 우리나라 중공업의 기초를 닦았죠. 문 총재는 우리나라가 '파워'도 가져야 한다고 봤어요. 게임에서 별건국을 처음 만들었는데 박정희 대통령이 직접 와서 시험 발사를 했어요."

-강원 용평리조트, 전남 여수의 디오스타리조트 같은 대규모 레저 단지를 지어 운영하는데 '지상 천국' 차림이네요.

"인간이 마지막으로 정착해야 하는 것

According to the Family Federation, the mourning period for Rev. Moon's funeral was held over a 13-day period and the events at the memorial site were transmitted around the world in real time through internet broadcast. The memorial service was attended by 25,000 mourners in Korea, joined by 8.05 million people around the world and a total of 500 billion won in memorial donations was collected. Dr. Yang continued saying that Rev. Moon had been born to a Christian family in Jeongju, Northern Pyeongan Province in what is now North Korea and after studying overseas in Japan, he became a minister. In 1954 in Seoul, he compiled his distinctive doctrine and founded the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity.

-It looks like a very large scale funeral. How widespread is the influence of the Family Federation today?

"Rev. Dr. Moon began to send missionaries to Japan in 1958, and to the United States in 1959. Currently, there are about 3 million followers in 194 countries. With South Korea, Japan and the United States at the center, the movement's work is primarily focused on 43 countries. Since Korea is the homeland of the faith, the current leader of the movement, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, Rev. Moon's widow, is particularly interested in the growth of the church in Korea."

Second Largest Influence in Japan

-As the founder of the church, it seems that Rev. Moon held a position of absolute influence among his followers. After Rev. Moon's death, was there reduction in activity or in the number of followers?

"I think it's the opposite. It is often the case that the accomplishments of public figures become better known after their death. Rev. Moon's Seonghwa became an opportunity to establish Rev. Moon's values, ideal and doctrine."

In their July 20 issue, the Japanese magazine Shukangedai reported that the Unification Church is the second most influential religion among 260,000 religious organizations in Japan, ranked directly after Soka Gakkai.

Dr. Yang continued, "Christianity and other foreign religions have not been able to take root in Japan, but the Family Federation is an exception. It is strongly and firmly rooted in Japan, and its influence is expanding in Russia, China and Indonesia, as well as in the Islamic region." In Malaysia, for example, more than 50 members of Congress have actively supported Rev. Moon's ideas and about 20 of these will be visiting Korea to attend to attend a Family Federation event this October.



그리스도교 통일교 총재로 취임한 문 총재

예요, 갈등을 할 이유가 없어요. 평화는 관계성입니다. 나와 상대 중 상대를 우선하는 관계성, 이기적이 아닌 이타적인 관계성을 지향하고, 통일과 평화, 통통해 큰 비전이 현실에서 실현되는 이상적인 상태로 나아가고 있다고 보는 거죠.”

이와 관련해 문 총재는 문 총재의 말에 기반을 둔 '천상경'과 '평화경' 정부모형을 편찬할 계획이어서 성경보다 더 시대감각에 맞을 것이라고 말했다.

그러나 문 총재에 대한 비판의 견해도 적지 않은 것 같습니다.

“성경을 보더라도 선지자는 교향선처럼 휘는 것 같아서, 한국인 문선명을 가장 비판한 나라가 바로 한국이죠. 그러나 문 총재는 사육을 부린 적이 한 번도 없어요. 한강이나 사립으로 들어

갈라지 않고 오직 평화만 이야기하며 살아왔을 뿐인데, 세상은 내 이름자 없애 수많은 평생을 뒷받치고 거부하고 줄을 던져...”라고 답답한 심정을 드러내기도 했다.

국내의 통일교 비판자들은 문 총재가 예수 그리스도와 비슷한 구세주(彌賽亞)로 용어로 참부모로 위치 지우자는 부분에서 통일교를 이단으로 규정한다.

문 총재에게 직후 일부 위원은 “문 총재가 2004년 3월 미국 워싱턴 상원 연회에서 자신을 인류의 구세주로 스스로 일명했다. 기이한 사건이었다”고 보도했다. 다른 위원은 “문 총재는 종교의 이름으로 어떤 일도 가능하다는 것을 보여준 인물”이라고 했다. 이런 기사들은 ‘구세주 문선명’에 대한 거부감을 근거에 두고 있는 것이다.

양자 간 인성의 괴리가 그저 종교의 자유 영역에 속하는 한 정도 규정될 수 있을까, 통일교에 우호적인 정경은 그렇게 규정되고 할 것이다. 문 총재를 ‘참부모’로 두는 통일교 교리가 현재 한국, 일본, 미국 등에서 불만이 아니라 찬미가 커져서, 그러나 만(萬)통일교 측은 문선명을 인류의 구세주라고 하는 전 상식에 반하는 과도한 주장이므로 종교의 자유 영역에 속하는 논쟁이라는 결론을 내릴 수 있다”고 할 것이다.

“참부모 문선명”에 대한 비판은 신념을 고수했다. 이어지는 그의 대화 내용을 이다.

“남북 화해에 실질적 도움 줄 것”

“고려에서 기독교의 이름이 다름니까. 성경을 사용하라고 찬송가를 부르고 예수 그리스도를 구세주로 고백하는 점에선 같아요. 다만 하나님의 구원사역사에서 기독교는 예수의 제자를 중심으로 모인 성리 왕권을 이어받았지만, 문 총재는 예수님이 많은 말씀을 하시고 선포하셨지만 그걸 다 이루지는 못하고 가셨다고 말해요. (문 총재가) 그 뜻을 상속해야 한다는 측면에서 다른 거죠.”

그러면 문 총재는 예수 그리스도와 같은 반열에 있는 건가요?

“예수님은 인류를 구원해 하나님의 아들딸로 만드셨고 했어요. 그러기 위해 예수님은 땅에 와서 아담 가정에서 이루어졌고 했어요. 참된 이상 가정을 만드셨다고 할 거고, 그거지 못하고 가셨고. 다시 오신다고 했는데... 통일교는 문 총재가 그러한 사명을 인계받아 성장 발전 완성시킨 분이라고 보는 거죠. 이런 뜻에서 제임스 ‘참부모’로 두는 통일교 교리가 현재 한국, 일본, 미국 등에서 불만이 아니라 찬미가 커져서, 그러나 만(萬)통일교 측은 문선명을 인류의 구세주라고 하는 전 상식에 반하는 과도한 주장이므로 종교의 자유 영역에 속하는 논쟁이라는 결론을 내릴 수 있다”고 할 것이다.

문 총재가 가진 연한은 남북사업에 적극적이었습니다. 문 총재는 1991년 북한 김일성 주석을 만나 남북정상회담과 경제교류

류 등에 합의했다. 통일교가 자본의 70%를 소유한 평화자문자는 북한에서 자문차 생산, 판매, 영입을 하고 있는 유일한 회사다.

문 총재가 타계하자 김정은 북한 국방위 제1위원장은 문 총재의 유가족들에게 위로 전문을 보냈다. 문 총재는 김일성 주석과 김정일 위원장 사망 각각 박보희 당시 세계일보 사장과 아들인 문형진 통일교 세계회장을 보내 조문한 바 있다.

박근혜 대통령이 DMZ평화공원을 추진하는 것과 관련해 박상권 평화자동차 사장은 최근 방북한 뒤 “개성공단이 절대야 DMZ평화공원 조성도 잘될 수 있다”는 김강민 북한 노동당 통일전선부 부장의 메시지를 전달하기도 했다. 양 총회장은 “우리 교단은 앞으로도 남북 화해에 실질적 도움을 주기 위해 노력할 것”이라고 말했다.

“백근해 대통령의 DMZ평화공원의 구상을 어필해 줬다.”

“문 총재는 2000년 6월 유엔 총회 연설에서 DMZ평화공원을 만들자고 북한에 제안한 적이 있습니다. 공원을 조성할 수 있으면 통일교 소유 브라질의 땅을 내주겠다는 구체적인 내용이었어요. 마침 박 대통령이 평화공원 구상을 봤는데 아주 시의적절한 발언이라고 생각합니다.”

“그러나 현재 남북교류가 거의 중단된 상태인데...”

“우리는 자기 형제에게 이성으로 복된

“가족 가치 부각 노력했다”

양 총회장은 한국 사회의 문제점으로 가족 가치의 붕괴를 꼽았다. 그는 다문화 가정과 저소득층 가정을 돕고 가족의 해체를 막는 일에 노력할 것이라고 했다. 문 총재 조의금 500억 원 등 1000억 원으로 인모평생재단을 만들어 저소득층 학생을 위한 장학사업을 펼치고 있다고 한다.

양 총회장은 “가정연합은 사회 속으로, 생활 속으로 뛰어들어 봉사할 것”이라며 “소외받은 이웃을 내 가족처럼 살리는 따뜻한 종교가 되겠다”고 말했다.

It is impressive that a religion founded by a Korean became relevant to the Japanese. What do you think is the reason for this?

After World War II, Japan became a highly industrialized society and many Japanese were alienated from society and even now suffer from a poverty of spiritual values. Rev. Moon brought an answer to this problem. It seemed that many Japanese think of Rev. Moon not so much as a Korean but as a life-long friend. Most of Japanese who attend our church are college graduates and there are many from prestigious universities.

The Unification Church has a complex nature combining business enterprise and religion. The core of the religious sector is the Family Federation and that of the business sector is Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity Operating Foundation (hereafter called Tongil Foundation). After Rev. Moon's death, both sectors have come under the leadership of Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon.

The Tongil Group of businesses managed by the Tongil Foundation includes businesses in a number of sectors, including leisure, manufacturing, construction and media affiliates. These include Sunwon Construction, the Segye Times daily newspaper, Seil Tour and Travel, Shinjung Development, Asia Marine, Yong Pyong Resort, Ilsung Marine, Ilshin Stone, Tongil Sports, JC, TIC and others. These companies have a combined 1.8 trillion won in assets, and annual sales estimated at 600 billion won, based on the 2011 annual report. Dr. Yang holds the responsibility of coordinating the activities of the Unification Church and the Tongil Group.

In addition, there are a number of education, health care and foreign media organizations connected to the Unification Church, including Sun Moon University, Cheongshim Graduate School of Theology, Cheongshim International Middle and High Schools, Sun Hwa Arts Middle and High Schools, Kyungbok Elementary School, Sunjung Middle School, Cheongshim International Hospital, Cheongshim Village, the University of Bridgeport, the Washington Times and UPI Communications in the USA.

The Unification Church also owns a number of real estate properties both in Korean and abroad. These include the Yoido Park 1 property, the Unification Church headquarters in Yongsan-gu, the Church Headquarters office building in Yongsan-gu, the Dowon Building in Mapo-gu, the Children's Art Troupe site in Seongdong-gu, the Sun Moon University site in Ichon city, Gyeonggi Province, the Heaven and Earth Cheongpyeong Training Center in Gapyeong, Gyeonggi Province, the Unification Church burial ground in Paju, Gyeonggi Province and others. The Church also owns a tract of land in Brazil as large as North Chungcheong Province. Dr. Yang explained that for the Unification Church, actively conducting business activities is one of "Rev. Moon's cherished convictions."

Conscience and Family come First

It is unusual for a religious institution to run many companies.

"Most religions are oriented toward the afterlife, but Rev. Moon firmly believed that 'the Kingdom of Heaven must be built on the earth.' In order to accomplish this, material goods are needed. This makes it necessary

establish a foundation through business. The first industry that Rev. Moon became involved in was the machine tool industry and Tong Il Heavy Industries was established in Chang Won. Technicians who worked here later moved to Hyundai, Samsung and Daewoo and were instrumental in building up the foundation of heavy industries in Korea. Rev. Moon felt that it is necessary for Korea to have 'power.' One of his companies manufactured the Vulcan light artillery cannon and President Jung-Hee Park came to the weapon's test firing."

Is operating larger leisure complexes such as Yong Pyong Resort in Gangwon and The Ocean Resort in Yeosu part of creating 'Heaven on Earth?'

"The last thing a man has to accomplish in his life is pursuing hobbies. Rev. Moon wanted to expand the possibility for people to feel an abundance of time and space in their lives."

-Holding a lot of real estate also attracts attention.

"None of the properties we own are for real estate speculation or investment purposes. Though we buy properties, we seldom sell them. Besides this, all the assets of the Unification Church are publicly registered as church assets. Rev. Moon lived his entire life without owning any property."

I heard that a lot of top international reporters were scouted when the Segye Times was launched.

"We had a big dream when we started that newspaper. We started with a motto of "Love Heaven, Love Humankind, Love the Nation" and goals based on our political strategy for the unification of Korea, a desire to motivate the national spirit and a hope to realize moral doctrine and righteous action. On July 27, our editorial headquarters moved from Gasan-dong to Gwanghwamun. The reporters are happy with the new location and I think this will bring new life to the paper, as well as help us to regain our original vision."

How did you meet Rev. Moon?

"43 years ago, I was attending high school my hometown of Hampyeong in South Jeolla Province. I was vaguely troubled about such things as "Where do we come from, how should we live, and where are we going?" Then, by chance I heard, "There is a man living in Seoul who has a great vision." During summer vacation, I walked for a week to get to Seoul and met Rev. Moon for the first time. I was moved by what he said and I decided to study philosophy (Korea University) and then I studied theology (New York Theological Seminary Doctorate program)."

What is Rev. Moon's most noteworthy message for the public?

"Rev. Moon said, 'People live ten months in the womb, 100 years on earth and for eternity after their Seonghwa. Life on earth is a preparation process for the afterlife. Man must live in accordance with his conscience. 'Conscience is the first priority, more than parents and even more than the absolute. The second priority is family. 'Heaven on earth is in the family.' The family is the base of heaven and without family, personal peace, peace in the nation and world peace are not possible. Keeping chastity before marriage and maintaining marital fidelity protects the love and trust between family members and resolves much of the suffering that comes after marriage, making it possible for happiness to come. The Unification Church has spread throughout the world because it promotes the family as universal, as a value at the heart of human life."

Contentions of Heresy

Why do you use the words 'unification' and 'peace' in the name of the church (Family Federation for World Peace and Unification)?

"We pursue the unification of the body and mind as individual unity, unity between family members, unity between North and South Korea, racial unity and unity between religions that are in conflict. In our view, 75% of all religious teachings contain the same information. There is no reason for conflict. Peace is a relationship. We seek to make relationships where we put the other before ourselves--not selfish, but altruistic relationships. We

believe that the only way to get to an ideal state where the grand vision of peace can be realized is through 'unity' and 'peace'."

Mr. Yang explained the plans to publish the Cheon Seong Gyeong, Pyeong Hwa Gyeong and Cham Bumo Gyeong based on Rev. Moon's teaching and said that they will fit our current time better than the Bible.

However, there seem to be a lot of people with a critical view of Rev. Moon.

"In the Bible, we can see that the prophets were often unwelcome in their hometowns. Korea is the country that is the most critical of the Korean Sun Myung Moon. However, Rev. Moon has never had personal ambition or greed. Donations or money coming into businesses were used without hesitation for helping poor neighbors, the work of unification and the settlement of disputes between religions. I think this criticism comes from a lack of understanding. In particular, Rev. Moon has been criticized by Korean Christians."

Controversy: 'The Unification Church is a Heresy'

A Heresy

"Yes. There is a lot of debate about heresy. Christianity in South Korea is very conservative. They rejected Confucian culture and put down Korean's traditional culture as Shamanism. They took the attitude of a conqueror. Conversely, the Unification Church has embraced Western Christianity on South Korean soil. The reason Korean Christians have criticized the Unification Church seems to stem from a desire to protect their vested interests. I think that is much different now."

Rev. Moon exposed his frustration in one of his 2009 books, saying "I have pursued only peace during all my life instead of desiring money or fame; but the world has put numerous aliases in front of my name and has rejected me and pelted me with stones . . ."

Critics both in Korean and overseas have described Unification Church teachings as heresy in reference to the teaching that Rev. Moon is placed in a similar position as Jesus Christ as the Savior of mankind (in the terminology of the Unification Church, True Parents).

Soon after the death of Rev. Moon, some foreign media reported. "Rev. Moon appointed himself as 'savior of mankind' at the US Senate in March 2004 and at a banquet in Washington and it was a bizarre incident." Another foreign media source reported that "Rev. Moon is the character who showed that anything is possible in the name of religion." These articles are written on the basis of the rejection of "Savior Moon." On the other hand, those who believe in the Unification Church outspokenly refer to Rev. Moon as the 'True Parent.'

Could it be possible that this gap in interpretation is a controversy that belongs to the realm of religious freedom? The camp in favor of the Unification Church will say it will. The evidence is that the doctrine of Unification Church which refers to Rev. Moon as 'True Parents' is currently not illegal in Korea, Japan or the United States. However, the anti-Unification Church side will not concede that this debate belonged to the area of freedom of religion. This is because they feel that referring to Rev. Moon as the Savior is contrary to common sense and is an excessive claim. Chairman Yang stands firm in his belief in 'Rev. Moon as True Parents'. Further conversations with him follow...

Substantial help for North-South dialogue

What is the doctrinal difference between Christianity and the Unification Church?

"Use of the Bible, singing hymns and confessing Jesus Christ as Savior are the same. However, in the history of the providence of God's salvation, Christianity's focus on the second coming of Jesus is regarded as completion of providence. Rev. Moon asserted that Jesus proclaimed many things but he couldn't accomplish them all and that Rev. Moon had inherited the missions of Jesus and accomplished them all. That is the difference in the completion of the providence between Christianity and the Unification Church."

Then Jesus and Rev. Moon are the same in rank?

"Jesus came to save the human race, to make them sons and daughters of God. Jesus came to earth in Adam's family and to try to achieve this. But that was not what happened, so he said he is going to come back ... the Unification Church thinks Rev. Moon is the person who took on that mission and took it through its growth,

development and completion. In this sense, the Second Coming of Jesus is Rev. Moon, the True Parent, who accomplished the mission for humankind....That is the belief of Unification Church followers. If Jesus were to come, he would do the same as Rev. Moon has done."

Rev. Moon and the Family Federation have actively worked for North Korean business ventures. In 1991, Rev. Moon and Kim Il Sung, the leader of North Korea, held high-level talks and agreed on economic exchange between their two parties. A 70% stake in Pyeonghwa Motors automotive business in the North is owned by the Unification Church and it is the only company that runs automotive production, sales and operations in North Korea.

After the death of Rev. Moon, Kim Jung Un, First Chairman of the National Defense Commission of North Korea sent a telegram of condolence to Rev. Moon's surviving family. In a similar fashion, Rev. Moon sent Bo Hi Pak, the President of the Segye Times, to make a condolence when Kim Il Sung died. And when Kim Jong Il passed away, he sent HyungJin Moon, the President of the Unification Church, with a condolence delegation.

In relation to promoting President Park Geun-hye's DMZ Peace Park, Sang-gwon Kim, President of Pyeonghwa Motors, visited the North. He passed the message to North Korean Workers' Party Chief Kim Yang-geon that if the DMZ Peace Park goes well, the Gaeseong Industrial Complex will also go well. Dr. Yang stated that the Unification Church will continue to support reconciliation between the North and South through substantial projects.

What do you think of President Park Geun-hye's DMZ Peace Park Initiative?

"Rev. Moon proposed the construction of a DMZ Peace Park in a speech at the UN General Assembly in June 2000. If it is possible for them to create another park of this kind, the Unification Church will donate land they own in Brazil for that purpose. It was a timely message because President Park also announced her plan to create a Peace Park at the DMZ area."

However, the current state of inter-Korean exchanges is on hold...

"We must have true love for the North Koreans even greater than the love we hold in our heart for our brothers and sisters. Don't you think such an attitude can melt a frozen heart? We have been doing business with the North in order to provide them with practical help. We have tried to open the door to lead North Korea into modern society. For a long time, Rev. Moon has tried to help the North to join the industrialized world. For that purpose, we established Pyeonghwa Motors, the World Peace building and the Pyongyang Botong River Hotel."

Since Dr. Han took over the church, have any changes been made?

"Rev. Moon was a man with a great vision who developed businesses in many diverse fields and Dr. Han has been watching as Co-President for 50 years. Now she is organizing his large inheritance. She is working on making a road map to move forward and revive Rev. Moon's vision for next 100 years."

Preventing the collapse of family values

Dr. Yang pointed out the collapse of family values as key among the current problems of Korean society. He emphasized the need for effort to help multicultural families and low-income families and try to prevent the breakup of families. He said that the Wonmo Pyungae Foundation was made to provide scholarships for low-income students with an endowment of 100 billion won, including 50 billion won in memorial donations for Rev. Moon.

He continued, "The Family Federation will work within society, reaching into people's lives and providing help for disadvantaged neighbors, treating them just like family, making every effort to be a warm, friendly religion."