

FFWPU Europe and Middle East: Michael Balcomb on Inner Kingdom and Outer Kingdom

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September 24, 2026



Dr. Michael Balcomb speaking online from London September 20, 2026

The inner kingdom is essential, but it was never the final goal - it must become an outward reality

The Kingdom Within

Part 2 of a sermon by Dr. Michael Balcomb, President of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) in [Europe and the Middle East](#), given online at an international Sunday worship service for the Nordic countries on Zoom 20th September 2026.

Continued from part 1: [The Kingdom Within](#)



Detail from Duccio di Buoninsegna (1255-1319) - Christ Accused by the Pharisees

A Word in Defense of the Pharisees

I want to go back again to Luke 17, with the Pharisees demanding of Jesus to tell them when the [Kingdom](#) is coming.

I'm going to be a little controversial here. I'm going to put in a good word for the Pharisees. Normally they get the short end of the stick, in that we portray them as a monolithic group of hypocrites who wanted nothing more than to trip Jesus up and trap him. There might have been some Pharisees like that, of course, but the reality is the Pharisees and Jesus shared a lot in common - similar beliefs in the [Kingdom of Heaven](#), the spirit world, the resurrection of the dead, and the authority of Scripture.

In those days, it was natural to ask really robust questions. In educated Jewish society, vigorous questioning and challenging was not a sign of disrespect; it was the norm to "argue for the sake of heaven" to find the truth. Actually, even today, if you go to a Jewish seminary in Jerusalem, you will hear what sounds like a riot going on with people arguing with each other at the top of their voices.

This tradition, started by Rabbi Hillel [See editor's note below] might well show the fact the Pharisees asking these demanding questions was a way of showing that they were taking him seriously. Jesus sometimes criticized their motivation, or the barriers they set up for themselves and others, but he never said they asked too many questions. And this was a very legitimate concern because the people of Israel were oppressed and occupied by Rome. Everyone wondered "Where is the [Kingdom](#)?"

The Two Courses: External and Internal

To be clear, Jesus' response "The [Kingdom](#) of [God](#) is within you [or among you]" didn't please anybody at all:

The traditionalists didn't like it because they spent a lot of time in prayer, purification, and devotion, believing in a supernatural intervention from heaven in response.

The Zealots - the freedom fighters who believed Rome could be overthrown by physical force and unified politics (probably Judas Iscariot was a zealot) - didn't like it because it sounded too other-worldly.

The common people didn't understand it either. On that particular day, they might have liked it, but a few days later during the last week of Jesus' life, they were calling for his crucifixion. They were starving and suffering and didn't want to hear that the [Kingdom](#) was within them.



Jesus preaching about his plan A. Illustration: ChatGPT

And I think we're like that today, right? We don't want to just be told the [Kingdom of Heaven](#) is within us, or it's in our midst, when we can see that the world is really not like that.

Let's remember that at the beginning, Jesus talked about the [Kingdom](#) coming in no uncertain terms. Both he and John the Baptist proclaimed, "Repent, for the [Kingdom of Heaven](#) is at hand!" The [Divine](#)

[Principle](#) makes it very clear that this was Jesus' primary course, and that the failure of people like John the Baptist and other religious leaders contributed to the Savior eventually going the way of the cross.

More recently, through the Champumo-ron [a two-volume series published in 2025, composed of excerpts from [True Parents'](#) messages and arranged by topic], [True Mother](#) has emphasized another important fact: that Jesus should have married and become the [True Parent](#). Both agree that this led to the tragedy of Jesus dying on the cross.

Where we differ from the traditional Christian view - all those millions and millions of people who call us heretics - is that Christianity came to believe that the cross was plan A all along, and that the people who blocked Jesus were in some way just acting out the destiny of [God](#). But Jesus contradicted that view when he said, "Woe to the man by whom offense comes. It would be better if they had not even been born."

The external, earthly [Kingdom](#) was always plan A. It was the cross that was plan B.

The Danger of Escapism and the importance of all Three Blessings



[Sun Myung Moon](#) in September 1965



[Mother Han](#) speaking in South Korea

And you may ask,

"Then, is this theological pivot to the idea of a '[Kingdom](#)' within' actually just a way of coping with a harsh and inconvenient reality? We didn't see the [Kingdom of Heaven](#) come, so let's be satisfied with the internal kingdom?"

No, that's not the meaning.

However, it is certainly true that without internal, personal change, nobody can live in a [Kingdom](#) of peace, regardless of the external circumstances. That's why people with good fortune - like winning the lottery - often end up miserable. That's why [Father](#) said: - and we always quote it - "Before seeking to dominate the universe, seek to dominate yourself!"

[Mother](#) puts it a slightly different way:

"I'll be more grateful today than I was yesterday, and I'll be more grateful tomorrow than I was today."

However, neither [Father](#) nor [Mother](#) ever said that was enough. Both insisted that the goal of life was to build the [Kingdom](#) of [God](#) on earth, in substance.

Continued from part 1: [The Kingdom Within](#)

To be continued. Part 3 coming soon.

[Editor's note: Rabbi Hillel the Elder (c. 110 BCE - 10 CE) was one of the most influential Jewish sages of the late Second Temple period. A leading teacher and legal scholar in Jerusalem, he founded the House of Hillel, a major school of Jewish interpretation. His teachings emphasized compassion, ethical conduct, humility, and careful interpretation of the Torah. He was a contemporary of Shammai, whose school often differed with his.

Hillel's teachings later became foundational to rabbinic Judaism and provide important context for understanding the Jewish world of Jesus. The teachings of Rabbi Hillel provide an important Jewish context for understanding some sayings attributed to Jesus rather than treating them as ideas emerging in isolation. Hillel is particularly interesting when studying the historical Jesus, because he was a prominent Jewish teacher living around the same period. There are some striking parallels between sayings attributed to Hillel and teachings attributed to Jesus.]

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The building housing Seoul High Court, where [Mother Han's appeal case](#) will be tried, and where also Seoul Central District Court is located. AI-illustration: ChatGPT, 5th July 2026

Seeking bail while her lawyers request continued medical release beyond the 30th September deadline

The legal position of [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자) – also called [Mother Han](#) – leader of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#) (FFWPU), has entered a new procedural phase following her [two-year prison sentence](#) at first instance. On 23rd September, several South Korean media outlets reported that her defense team had applied for [bail](#) before the [Seoul High Court](#), where her appeal is now being heard. The news agency Newsis writes that the application was handed in with the 13th Criminal Division with Kim Mu-shin (김무신) as presiding judge, and Lee Woo-hee (이우희) and Yoo Dong-gyun (유동균) as associate judges.

The media reports also make clear, however, that bail is not the only issue: According to [News1](#), [Mother Han](#) is **already outside detention under a temporary suspension of the execution of her detention**, and her lawyers have simultaneously asked for that [suspension](#) to be extended beyond its current expiry date.

These are related but legally distinct procedures. Under South Korean [criminal procedure](#), [bail](#) (보석) is a mechanism by which a defendant who is detained may be released subject to conditions, potentially including a security deposit, restrictions on residence and other requirements. The court can cancel bail if, for example, there are grounds to believe that the defendant may flee or destroy evidence, fails to appear, or violates the conditions imposed.

Suspension of the execution of detention (구속집행정지) is **different**. Rather than constituting ordinary bail, it temporarily suspends the enforcement of an existing detention order. Article 101 of South Korea's [Criminal Procedure Act](#) allows a court, when there is sufficient reason, to suspend detention, including by entrusting the defendant to an appropriate person or restricting the defendant's residence. In [Mother Han's](#) case, this mechanism has already enabled her to remain outside detention, with the present order keeping her released until 6 p.m. on **30th September**.

공감연결 뉴스시스
NEWSIS
The logo of Newsis (뉴스시스), the largest privately owned news agency in South Korea

According to [Newsis](#), her lawyers submitted a new application on 23rd September to extend this [suspension of detention](#). [News1](#) and [Edaily](#) likewise report that the existing [suspension](#) is approaching its

expiration and that [Mother Han's](#) side is seeking continued release, citing health difficulties including surgery following a shoulder fracture and problems with her eyesight. Thus, the request for an extension is important in its own right: unless the court extends the existing order or grants another form of release, the temporary basis on which she is currently outside detention will expire.

There is a further procedural development that [News1](#) **emphasizes**. The special-prosecutor team headed by Special Prosecutor Min Joong-gi (민중기) had **appealed against the court's decision extending Mother Han's suspension of detention**, but the



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[suspension of detention](#), but the court rejected that appeal on 23rd

September. In other words, the prosecution sought to challenge her [continued temporary release](#), while the court did not accept that challenge. [News1](#) reports that [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자) therefore remains temporarily released under the existing order until 30th September.

This should not be confused with the **appeal against the criminal conviction itself**. [Mother Han](#) and the special-prosecutor team have both appealed the 31st August first-instance judgment. The criminal appeal therefore concerns the underlying conviction and sentence, whereas the dispute over [suspension of detention](#) concerns whether she should remain outside custody while that appeal proceeds. Under the [Criminal Procedure Act](#), decisions concerning detention, bail and suspension of detention in an appeal case are handled in accordance with the procedural rules governing the appellate court.

이데일리

Logo of *Edaily* ([이데일리](#)), one of South Korea's leading financial and economic news outlets.

The background is the 31st August first-instance judgment. [Newsis](#) and [Edaily](#) report that [Mother Han](#) received one year for violating the *Political Funds Act* and a further year for violations of the *Improper*

Solicitation and Graft Act and occupational embezzlement. [News1](#) writes that the court found her guilty of providing 100 million won in cash to former lawmaker Kweon Seong-dong (권성동), making so-called "split donations" to *People Power Party* lawmakers, and providing Kim Keon-hee (김건희) with luxury items including a Chanel bag and a Graff diamond necklace.

At the same time, the first-instance court did **not** convict her on every allegation. [Newsis](#) and [Edaily](#) report that the court dismissed the indictment concerning alleged obstruction of an investigation into overseas gambling and acquitted her of the alleged embezzlement of [Family Federation](#) funds.

The immediate procedural picture, therefore, is: **Mother Han is appealing her two-year sentence; she is currently outside detention under a temporary suspension; her lawyers have applied both for bail and for a further extension of that suspension; and the special prosecutor's challenge to the existing suspension has been rejected.** The next question is whether the appellate court will extend the present [suspension](#), grant bail, or otherwise alter the conditions of her release before the 30th September deadline.

Text: Knut Holdhus, editor

Featured image above: [Mother Han](#) arriving in the heavy rain at Seoul Central District Court on 31st August 2026. Photo: Michael Balcomb

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