



## 21 Days at the Top Gun Workshop 2015

M. Kim  
August 24, 2015



### The Truth Is My Sword August 23, 2015

Our Top Cannon Gerry Servito stayed a couple extra days to share content with us from Unification Thought. His presentation was called, “A Condensed Glimpse into Unification Thought”. Top Gun participants were moved by his passionate and engaging explanation of God’s heart and how we can align ourselves to become better individuals in our families. Following Gerry’s lecture, we engaged in a truly momentous and moving series of special lectures.



Our first special lecturer was Dr. Bo Hi Pak. Along with taking on many key leadership roles within our Unification movement, he was first and foremost True Father’s translator and interpreter. He brought with him a very personal gift to the Top Gun participants. We each received a neatly packaged USB card with a video file called, “The Truth is My Sword”. He projected this video recording and shared with us his strong defense in court against an accusation made on him and the Unification movement. It moved us not only to see this video but also to watch Dr. Pak reviewing a serious moment in his life. It was such an impactful and overwhelmingly uplifting video.



Our second special lecturer was Yeon Ah Moon, Hyo Jin Moon's wife. She is currently the President of the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP). She read True Father's words and asked us what we would like to hear from her. She touched on the topics of women in leadership, how we can support True Parents, and how to move forward toward Vision 2020, True Parents' international plan for networking in world peace projects. Her grace and poise made everyone feel comfortable and at ease. Following Yeon Ah Moon's talk, Rev. Ki Hoon Kim, Continental Director of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) North America, spoke to us, having just traveled from America to Korea. He emphasized studying the Divine Principle and True Parents' words, describing True Father's mission as the Second Coming of the messiah. His timely message prepared us in reflection for the upcoming third anniversary of True Father's Seonghwa (ascension). Dr. Kim also shared why True Parents came to America, and at the end of his talk our American brothers and sisters cheered, "USA! USA! USA!", acknowledging and showing conviction in America's role in God's providence. At the end of these special lectures, we shared a snack of coffee and donuts.



Now taking this time to reflect on the day, I simply feel blessed. Personally, it was inspiring to finally have a female special lecturer and also a member of True Parents' family. My perception about our

movement changed when listening to Rev. Bo Hi Pak's testimony of True Father and his dedication to fight for the truth. I realized the next generation leaders aren't limited to the current Unificationist-born young adults. It's also about establishing a lasting culture of ownership through us and our future descendants.



We all felt very encouraged to step up and lead, and not just within the movement. We clearly understood our role is to introduce the truth and True Parents to the world. We need to understand True Parents' heart so we can share that heart with the world. It's not something forced upon us; it's something we feel deeply within ourselves. Also, we can't give up no matter what happens. We inscribe this in our hearts.

### **Starting From Within** **August 22, 2015**



This afternoon, I took the opportunity to climb the mountain up to the Tree of Blessing, one of the four trees where Chung Pyung participants pray. Usually in our daily schedule we have time designated to climb up the mountain right after breakfast. It's nicer in the morning because it's cooler. Even though it was really hot in my afternoon hike today, the view was wonderful. On my way up the mountain, I noticed through the clear view that you can see the Cheon Jung Gung. Once seeing this, my heart instantly burst with happiness, since it reminded me of our visit to see True Mother the other day. I became determined to climb up the mountain every afternoon and use the view remind myself of my purpose for being at Top Gun.



Today, Justin O. and Naokimi Ushiroda offered their coaching sessions for this leadership training week. Justin coached the Top Gun participants by expanding on topics such as understanding integrity and judgment. Naokimi introduced his method of goal setting and provided Top Gun participants with material he developed to use in the goal setting exercise. The exercises included listing 10 accomplishments we made in our own lives, building affirmation statements and listing our strengths. These sessions guided participants to take the opportunity to look within themselves and draw out their true passions.



We then welcomed the Principal of the Universal Peace Academy (UPA), Rev. Dong Ho Kim. His passion for the young people and the Divine Principle shone through his UPA orientation. He shared a video presentation report on UPA's activities here in Korea and around the world. He expanded on the purpose and hope for UPA. He emphasized that True Mother established UPA as a place for young leaders to train, grow and apply their skills.



Rev. Kim shared the following goals of UPA:

1. Leadership education centering on the Divine Principle
2. Substantial leadership training
3. To be the light
4. Developing strong discipline
5. Becoming leaders who can witness to the world's 7 billion people about True Parents

The UPA orientation concluded with welcoming the current UPA cadets on stage, where they sang "Sarang Hae" and "Country Roads". Top Gun participants were very inspired to see such polished and poised cadets, and took the opportunity to network with them.

With so much coaching and the high standard expected from Top Gun participants, I began to ask myself, how can I become an excellent standard? We are told to be Cheon Il Guk citizens, citizens of God's heavenly kingdom who are individuals and families realizing world peace. We were reminded of True Father's mindset that everything he did was for God, our Heavenly Parent.



I realized how my actions do not always necessarily align with or intentionally connect with our Heavenly Parent. For example, I don't wake up every morning thinking, "I am waking up this morning for God and going to do work for God". Usually I struggle waking up early and think I go out to work because I need to pay for my expenses. I realized that changing my mindset in this way can allow me to recognize my life has purpose. Each step I take or each action I make can contribute to our divine Heavenly Parent and His children.

### **Launching Leadership Development August 21, 2015**



This week we switched gears and entered into our leadership development program, the next part of the Global Top Gun workshop. The goal of the leadership development is finding our purpose in building Cheon Il Guk (God's kingdom), fulfilling True Parents' vision of world peace and unification, and also having the empowerment to lead. We welcomed five consultants and coaches who will lead the leadership sessions, which they call "conversations". These young professionals are David Y., Justin O., Teresa R., Neil R. and Naokimi Ushiroda. Instead of lecturing, the coaches emphasize each Top Gun participant would take responsibility and initiative over their training.



The leadership development program began with our first coach, David Y. David reminded each participant that they responded to True Mother's calling by attending this workshop. David explained that in his sessions, each participant would take initiative and embrace self-discovery. The goal of his sessions was for us to find the greatness waiting to burst inside of us and engage in life with excitement.



David set four rules for this next week:

1. Share with each other
2. Listen actively
3. Show up on time
4. Respect each individual's privacy by keeping shared content confidential

Through pair sharing, activities and words of wisdom from our coaches, the Top Gun participants opened themselves to this new style of learning. Many already have shed tears and shared their determinations to do better in their own life and improve their relationships.



It was inspiring to see those who really took the exercises to heart trying to use the sessions to overcome their own obstacles. Along with acknowledging problems surfacing in their lives, the coaches made sure the participants coming on stage shared action steps toward resolving these issues. The hope for these next couple of days is for participants to take a step out of their Top Gun family groups, look at themselves as individuals, and then see where improvements can be made so our families can become

stronger.



Following the coaching sessions, we were honored with the opportunity to hear from the President of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Korea, Dr. Byung Ho Son. He explained the importance of the reunification of North and South Korea and how we can participate in achieving it. Prior to hearing his talk, I knew our movement had concerns for North and South Korea. However, after having an in depth explanation, historical details, and understanding it's relevance, I became inspired to contribute in helping the reunification efforts. North and South Korean reunification was True Father's dream. I felt sad it couldn't be accomplished during his lifetime. However, I hope it can be accomplished during True Mother's lifetime. This Global Top Gun workshop is giving me the confidence to step up and become involved in world-level issues such as the reunification of Korea. I hope it can be a dream that will be accomplished.

**Food Is Love**  
**August 20, 2015**



We completed our Divine Principle workshop with our final lecturer -- or as we like to call them: Top Cannon -- Rev. Andrew Compton. We appreciated the time each of our presenters spent to really share their hearts and also expand on the relevance of the Divine Principle in our daily lives. Many Top Gun participants enjoyed the lectures and the chance to build new connections with our international brothers and sisters.





Having received so much love, Top Gun participants were assigned to now start giving back by cleaning. Yes, even though we are expected to be great leaders, we still have to maintain a standard of cleanliness! Today, my group, or family, was in charge with helping to wash the trays after lunch.

This task required slipping into large pink aprons and blue rain boots. It's definitely an experience worth trying. In the back of the cafeteria, I was assigned to wash the eating trays -- there were over 200 of them! We weren't cleaning the trays for only the Top Gun participants; we washed trays of all the participants at Chung Pyung, including those residing there and participating in concurrent workshops. My initial thought and realization was how grateful I am to be taken care of and fed at Chung Pyung.



I placed a deeper appreciation for the simple things we have here. I didn't realize how much love the kitchen and cleanup staff have. All their work so far let us enjoy our time at Chung Pyung and focus on our internal growth. Not only does the inside of the training center always look clean, but the outside is constantly being taken care of, too.

Even though we are Top Gun participants, we are held to a standard here. This standard allows us to focus

and overcome our body's desire for comfort. Along with keeping things clean, we need to always store our sleeping bags and make sure we're not late for any of the sessions in our schedule. Honestly, it's not easy. But we each make the effort to adapt to the new environment and maintain this standard. This standard sets the tone for our Top Gun participants to achieve excellence in their daily activities.



Toward the evening we welcomed a special lecturer to our evening program. The Continental Director of Japan, Rev. Yong Chon Song, shared a report on Japan's progress towards cultivating leadership and focusing on the future generations of our movement. In addition, he brought along with him chicken and pigs' feet for dinner! For many, it was their first time trying pigs' feet.

I noticed that many of our special lecturers come with food. I wondered, why is this so? One sister, Yuri, shared with me, that's because food is love.

### **Visiting True Mother August 19, 2015**



We left at 9:30am today from Chung Pyung to go to the Cheon Jung Gung where we would have lunch with True Mother. Once stepping off the bus, we entered through the beautiful gates to the Cheon Jung Gung, which many Top Gun participants have already seen; however, this was my first time. Inside the walls, I immediately felt a sense of glorious serenity. There exists an element of grandeur, and the place feels colossal with the Roman-like architecture. The view from the Cheon Jung Gung is priceless, too; you can see distant mountaintops and nature at its best.



We visited True Father's resting place and offered a bow and prayer. The site is a large grassy mound on top of a well-carved base. When walking there, we have to go up a very steep path. It's an experience within itself. Then, actually seeing True Father's resting place brought me to a reality that True Father really isn't physically here anymore. And it felt heavy.



We gathered inside the Cheon Jung Gung, where we were welcomed with a beautiful arrangement. There were round dining tables and fine tableware set up for us. I literally felt like a princess. We were nervous, but at the same time excited and overwhelmed with how much was provided for us.

When True Mother entered the hall, we gave the loudest cheer and applause we could. Our intention was to send her energy and comfort. To begin the program, three Top Gun participants offered moving testimonies of their Top Gun experience so far. These included a couple from America, a brother from Korea, and a sister from Japan. They all spoke in Korean.



When True Mother thought about us, she prepared pizza and hamburgers for lunch! We were all very pleasantly surprised by the gesture, but most of all happy to see True Mother eating together with us. After lunch, True Mother took time to speak with us. It felt like she was very comfortable speaking to us as she stood up from her chair and walked around the room, trying to speak in every direction of the hall. She shared the solution to solving the internal and external problems of this world by connecting to True Parents. Her hope for us is to learn about Heavenly Parent and True Parents through this Global Top Gun workshop. She also acknowledged us as the first graduating class of the Global Top Gun workshop. She emphasized to testify about True Parents, and go together as one. It felt like this was just the beginning of our journey together as Top Gun participants.



As True Mother returned to her seat, the Top Gun participants prepared for entertainment. Each clan sang with three separate solo acts. The acts included:

1. Blue Clan – Amazing Grace / Waka Waka by Shakira
2. Green Clan – Hyo Jin Nim’s song
3. Solo Act – Dance solo to “Rather Be” by Rather Be (I offered a freestyle dance)

4. Black Clan – Korean song and dance
5. Orange Clan – Stand By Me
6. Solo Act – Song offered by James J. (He wrote the song)
7. Red Clan – We Are the World
8. Solo Act – Piano performance by Oswald

We concluded with a powerful arrangement of “You Raised Me Up”. True Mother immediately joined in the fun by singing “Sarang Hae”. Simply put, the hall was full of bright spirit and hope.



I am personally still reflecting on this unique experience. One memory that stuck out most is when True Mother asked if she should expect great things from us. And we all replied with a confident “Yes!”. Even though we have had a successful workshop so far, I feel she is now anticipating how we will move forward as Global Top Gun alumni. We welcome that, and we want to offer our lives for True Mother and become top cadets wherever we go.



## Building a Heavenly Culture August 18, 2015



We have reached the halfway point of our Top Gun workshop. I am learning that our movement is more intricate and carefully built by our True Parents than I ever imagined. In our Divine Principle lecture today, Rev. Kevin Thompson expanded on the 7 areas of culture that True Father hoped to influence in the world. They include:

1. Education
2. Sports/Entertainment
3. Science/Technology
4. Arts
5. Business
6. Media
7. Religion

We also added in politics as a cultural realm where True Father's vision had a great impact. This list made me realize that we are not just a religious movement. We are a movement moving toward creating a culture derived from God. Our hope is to inherit the heart and faith of the earlier generation of Unificationists who followed True Parents with dedication, expand through these cultural spheres, and most of all flourish within a strong family, as the family is our anchor when life throws challenges or changes.

Right now at Top Gun we have the opportunities to explore the arts and entertainment. We are preparing our hearts to see True Mother tomorrow, and we've been conducting singing practice and adding final touches to our songs that we chose during the pilgrimage to perform for her. Our songs have dramatically improved over the course of this week. When we were first assigned this task, for me it seemed impossible. I had thoughts about how difficult it would be to have everyone sing in the same language. Our first practice was rough, to be honest. However, I believe because we all took the initiative to play a part in the song and throw ideas around, after multiple run-throughs, we stood as one voice.

This taught me a profound lesson: even though something may seem awkward or difficult at first, if you keep practicing it can come more naturally. This can be applied to faith, too. I can see when I try to connect to my global family, the more I practice connecting to God and True Parents and loving others, the easier it will become.

I feel that the unison exuding from our song reflects the genuine connections we are making here at Top Gun. Participants are gradually opening their hearts and becoming vulnerable with each other. I was able to share about my father passing away when I was younger. The Korean members in my family immediately tried to find a Korean name for me, since my mother back at home and I couldn't remember the Korean name my father had given me. They chose Ka-yeon (가연), which roughly translates into "sophisticated beauty". This small change instantly made me feel closer with the Korean participants; whenever they call me they smile and say, "Ka-yeon-i!"

As I prepare my heart to be with True Mother tomorrow, I hope to go with an open mind and heart. As mentioned earlier, my father ascended to the spirit world when I was younger. This experience forced me to grow up quickly. As True Parents' family lost True Father, I hope to comfort True Mother's heart. It's only been almost three years since True Father passed away, and it must still be very hard right now. It's not just me, but I feel everyone at Top Gun just wants to give True Mother their whole heart and effort. So as we go visit True Mother, please join us. We are not visiting True Mother just for ourselves; we represent our global family and move forward together.

**My Heart, Reborn**  
**August 17, 2015**



I would like to share a story one of my friends told me before I left to Top Gun. The story goes:

In a mother's womb were two babies.

One asked the other, "Do you believe in life after delivery?"

The other replied, "Why, of course. There has to be something after delivery. Maybe we are here to prepare ourselves for what we will be later."

"Nonsense," said the first. "There is no life after delivery. What kind of life would that be?"

The second said, "I don't know, but there will be more light than here. Maybe we will walk with our legs and eat from our mouths. Maybe we will have other senses that we can't understand now."

The first replied, "That is absurd. Walking is impossible. And also, eating with our mouths? Ridiculous! The umbilical cord supplies nutrition and everything we need. But the umbilical cord is so short. Life after delivery is to be logically excluded."

The second insisted, "Well I think there is something and maybe it's different than it is here. Maybe we won't need this physical cord anymore."



The first replied, "Nonsense. And moreover, if there is life, then why has no one ever come back from there? Delivery is the end of life, and in the after-delivery there is nothing but darkness and silence and oblivion. It takes us nowhere."

"Well, I don't know," said the second, "but certainly we will meet Mother and she will take care of us."

The first replied, “Mother? You actually believe in Mother? That’s laughable. If Mother exists then where is She now?”

The second said, “She is all around us. We are surrounded by her. We are of Her. It is in Her that we live. Without Her this world would not and could not exist.”

Said the first: “Well I don’t see Her, so it is only logical that She doesn’t exist.”



To which the second replied, “Sometimes, when you’re in silence and you focus and you really listen, you can perceive Her presence, and you can hear Her loving voice, calling down from above.”

I hope this story is self-explanatory. For me, it metaphorically represents this earthly life and what is to come after -- the spirit world. This story helps remind me that we are fundamentally spiritual beings in a physical body. While on earth I should make an effort to acknowledge my spiritual self and let it grow beautifully.

One aspect of growing as spiritual beings, which I am learning here again, is developing a heart of total love, compassion and care for our Heavenly Parent and True Parents. At the workshop, we hear stories of Unificationists who stuck to True Father no matter what obstacle and supported him. I’m definitely not perfect at this, but was very inspired to hear about these early Unificationists and the shoulders we stand upon.





As part of the next generation of Unificationists, I have been asking myself, how can I be there for True Mother while she is still here on earth? I'm almost finishing up college, so my mind definitely has been only focused on my studies and career path these past three years. I haven't been in a place where I can fully answer this question. Being here in Chung Pyung and realizing how much love we receive from our Heavenly Parent, I feel extremely indebted to this movement and want to pay it all forward to my younger brothers and sisters. With this start, I hope to find my true calling as well as a way I can support True Mother and True Parents' vision.

