

CARP Las Vegas | February 2020 Two Day Retreat



Is there something *more* we are meant to experience in our lives? On a cloudy weekend in Las Vegas, CARP Las Vegas hosted their weekend workshop to ask themselves exactly that question. A total of 19 students attended - 4 first-time guests, 1 returning guest, 1 community member, and 13 CARP members. The theme of the workshop was "Hyo Jeong - Filial Piety." CARP Las Vegas prepared four members to give lectures that covered the Divine Principle sections from the Introduction / Principle of Creation, to introducing the concepts from Restoration. They prepared their lectures with the hope to connect people to what God is going through and that their lives were meant to be an expression that can bring the greatest joy to God.

Throughout the workshop, there was a good balance of reflective activities that probed the participants to dig deep, as well as lighter ones of fun and play to bond as brothers and sisters. The day started with an energizer to shake off any bit of lingering sleepiness, then an activity to introduce a habit of prayer and reflection. New CARP member, Yeon Ju Chiba shared her testimony of how prayer has helped console her heart through recent "emotional roller-coasters" that eventually guided her to come to CARP. The day proceeded with lectures given by M. Taguchi, C. Katayama, M. Cordero,



and J. Batino. A new element to the lectures was that the last one implemented concepts from CARP America's Principled Curriculum content. They also shared very naturally and proudly about CARP founders, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon in a way that allowed the participants to also feel respect toward them. The lecturers delivered their presentations with the intent to bring relevance to the students' lives while adding their own unique touch with their personal lives and stories. Between lectures, the students gathered in groups to share insights amongst one another.





The weekend retreat came to a close with a final meal within their family groups and a night of singing songs and sharing their experiences. There were lots of laughs as they sang classic Disney songs and even one solo guitar performance by a first-time participant who sang a Spanish song. The testimonies that were shared all attested to the sense of community and belonging that they felt in the workshop. Many of them even shared that they came from a place of hurt and neglect, even in their own church or families. Yeon Ju, who is a second generation from Korea, shared how her greatest inspiration was seeing the lecturers share so proudly about the Principle, because she hasn't seen that before, and it inspired her to strive to have that same pride as them. Here are a few more testimonies to bring alive the experience of the workshop:

"I never understood the concept of God, so I'm really happy that I am able to now, I was always very confused about what God does, why, and now I understand (at least according to the Divine Principle) what his goal / purpose is."

- Mackenzie H., first-time participant, new member

"[I learned about] the duality of our God. Masculinity & femininity are both passed down from our Father so I should not feel bad about my emotions as if they are a danger to my masculinity."

- Dre., first-time participant, new member

“I realized the importance of sharing. In Korea & Japan, I actually didn’t have much time to share after lectures. All I did was receive the lectures in Korea. From today’s workshop, I shared every time (about 30 min.) after each lecture. By sharing, I was able to organize my thoughts and inspiration and also broaden my perspective by listening to what other people had to say.”

“I realized my duty as a global citizen who loves God and True Parents. I usually considered society and church to be two different worlds. Therefore I acted differently when I was in society and when I was in church. However I felt I have to break down the world and love society as God’s children.”

- Y. Chiba, 2nd Generation from Korea, CARP Las Vegas member since Jan. 2020

Despite the various backgrounds they came from, the participants gained a new insight about God and themselves. They expressed their desire to keep learning and the core CARP members were committed to help them by already planning the next steps in their journey of faith.

