

Chicago Can Do It!

Demian Dunkley
June 13, 2016



The Chicago Family Church hosted the fourth We Can Do It Tribal Messiahship seminar, led by Demian Dunkley, director of evangelism at Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) USA, on the weekend of June 11-12, 2016. The two-day program is designed to help participants explore, understand and set goals for Tribal Messiahship.

Fifty-one people, including 18 young Unificationists, filled the seminar room with high spirits. Each participant received a Tribe Kit, with resources such as a collaborative workbook and a three-month planner, to help Tribal Messiahs track their efforts in a measurable way.

In his opening remarks, Demian explained that the hope of the “We Can Do It” seminar is to shift our traditional church model into one that is more family-centered, where the Tribal Messiah has ownership. He expressed a desire to see more creative freedom, and more space for our collective genius to contribute to God’s providence. Demian stated, “In such an environment, we will start to feel that sharing True Parents’ teachings is something that we can do more naturally and freely together because it will be a natural expression of our family culture.”



“I asked Demian and his team to come here because I believe in this concept,” said David Rendel, pastor of Chicago Family Church. “I think it’s the future of God’s providence in America. I think it’s our destiny, and the sooner we begin to take it on, the better. True Father has been talking about Tribal Messiahship for forty years. He first started talking about it in the ’70s. So it’s time we take up the mantel and start working. It’s the way we can experience a working relationship with True Parents. It’s the way we can really stay connected with out True Parents, even as they ascend and move on to the next life.

“As I look at the situation in America today, I know we can’t just sit back and do nothing. Satan is destroying this nation. But we know that the messiah came, and we know that we are the ones to really

build the kingdom—that if we don't do it, it will be a great tragedy. Demian was so fantastic and we thank him for sharing this content with us.”

As an introduction to the new model of trinity-centric Tribal Messiahship, Demian said, “It's important to know that growth is not just body-count. True Father has been trying to transition us into a family-centered movement for some time. But for the movement and our work to become more family-centered, we need to develop an increased level of ownership for the family.

“Some of us feel that perhaps we don't have enough time or energy for that; but True Father foresaw this possibility a long time ago when he suggested that we work in trinities. In terms of Tribal Messiahship, True Mother was one of the first to say, work together. Yes, 430 is a very high number, but don't think that you have to do it all alone. Not only will your new tribe members be able to help you connect with even more people through their enthusiasm and their networks, but we can nurture our tribes by working together, with one another, first.”



During the workshop, participants were encouraged to think about their personal passions, and the unique way that God is asking them to make a difference in the community. One attendee, David Kasbow of Detroit commented,

“When I joined the church, and I feel that many of us had a similar experience, it was very clear that my life was severed. I had to begin a new life centering upon True Father's course. Before I joined, I studied psychology, and was also very interested in theater and arts. That part of my life was virtually cut out.

“Over the last couple of years, though, I've started taking care of a garden in my backyard. That keeps me going. And every once in a while, I go down to the art museum and just enjoy it. Art has slowly been creeping back into my life.

“Recently, I was speaking to a pastor, and he asked me if I had any philosophy having to do with art. So I ordered a copy of Unification Thought for him. As I started looking through it myself, I discovered that there's a whole chapter called, 'Theory of Art.'

“Today was like a flood of inspiration for me, trying to put this all together. Because I know that there are a lot of things I'm supposed to do, but there's this other part of me coming up now that feels more me. So, my project from today is to start nurturing that part of myself to support my work with initiatives like the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC). What if I organized a one-day conference on Unification Thought and the Philosophy of Art? Then I'm reaching out, but through that whole world of art that I left behind, which really needs to be brought back to God and which I enjoy.”

“If we allow ourselves to care about what we really feel called to do, then we're better placed to care about what other people want to do,” said Demian. “That's why we can't leave ourselves behind.”

Participants were then guided through a goal-setting session, that began with setting a large goal for the year 2020, and then breaking it down so that they have a measurable outcome. Everyone was then given five minutes to take that first step towards their goal.

One participant reflected, “There are two things that I learned today. The first, that your life is the best sermon you can ever give. So instead of teaching the principles, you have to just start living the principles. And the second thing I learned is that we don’t have to look at how far we have to go, you just have to start walking. We’ll get there. We always look at 430 families to reach out to, and we can’t even start because we’re already scared by the number. But today, I learned that I just have to start with the person next to me; sooner or later you’ll reach 430.”

The next morning, Demian gave an impassioned sermon about the importance of America and Tribal Messiahship. “We are the Family Federation. We want to make healthy families the center of the nation and the world. And we’ve been given the commission of blessing 430 families. But the goal is not just the blessing. It’s the process, and it’s the quality of our own families. How can we sell what we’re not living? I cannot tell my child to wait while I build the Kingdom of Heaven.”

The workshop continued after the service, this time to go through the three-month planner together. Demian asked the participants to think of two other families that they would like to work together with for the next three months. If they were not a part of the workshop, he asked them to call them to confirm their trinity and set up a first meeting date for the next week. Each trinity was asked to decide how many couples to bless within the next three years, and collectively, the participants committed to blessing 683 families. The day ended with workshop testimonials and exuberant cheers.



Another participant, Jasmine, shared,

“I was kind of stuck a few weeks ago. The feeling came to me, what am I doing? I can’t do it myself. My trinity is not very strong, everyone has their own schedule, there’s conflict, and we have to reschedule our meetings. I started to think, what can I do? Even with the support of a couple of people, I can’t do it. We need a lot more support, and more structure, and more guidance.

“Then this workshop happened, and I’m really so inspired that we can work together to make one tribe. That was so inspiring, not just my tribe and her tribe and her tribe—but it’s our tribe, the Chicago tribe. That’s most important for me. Because we are all working towards one common goal, and we are not raising our own spiritual children, but God’s children.

“As long as we have that mindset, we will naturally feel inspired to support each other with everything we have, to take care of God’s children. So with that kind of motivation and attitude, we can truly support True Mother. Within three months, we can grow tremendously if we all work together. I’m so inspired, and I want to thank God for this Chicago tribe.”