

## Testimony of Someone Who Has Not Known Faith for About Ten Years

Andrew Compton  
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*On March 2nd, a group of four gathered at the International Peace Education Center (IPEC) in Las Vegas to attend the first weekend Divine Principle Seminar of 2018. There, guests joined lecturer Andrew Compton for three days of study and discussion. One guest, A. Gustafson, joined her fiancé N., a young Unificationist, for the workshop. It was beautiful to see N. introduce his future bride to his life of faith. A. was deeply moved by the experience, and has agreed to let others hear her story, which is below.*

As someone who has not known faith for about ten years and has had a rocky relationship with God, this weekend was both significant and helpful. From a very early age, I have felt condemned by members of the Catholic Church for things that were out of my control. My experience in the church was never a pleasant one. Fast forward 11 years, and my view on faith has shifted from disdain and disbelief to a journey of exploration. My father's sudden passing was the most humbling moment of my life. Now, five years later, I have met an incredible, kind, and patient man of faith who has held my hand and helped guide me back.

What an amazing weekend. The retreat was short and to the point, and I've come to truly appreciate the teachings of the Unification movement. I am overwhelmed with a sense of love and belonging. Never in my life did I think my faith in God would be restored. I have seen, felt, and understood God's intention and heart in such a new way. I feel that I can finally relate to Him and let go of the suffering I have been through. This was always His plan. He has always been with me as a light in the darkness. I see now this was my path, my journey, back to Him and His love.

Although I grew up in the Catholic Church and have done studies of scripture, it has never made sense to me like it has this weekend. I no longer feel burdened by faith – or lack thereof. I feel so much peace moving forward. My hope leaving this weekend is that I can fulfill my responsibility as a woman of faith and child of God. I have always known deep down that my life was meant for something great and to serve a higher purpose. It has become undeniably clear that this is how I was meant to do that. I am finally free from the constraints of my past. A new future has emerged. I move forward humbled, loved, and excited. Thank you! And thank you for accepting me. –A. Gustafson, 26