

An Introduction to My Seven-Day Workshop: Where the Treasure Awaits

Ali Mahjoub
July 17, 2025



The Intriguing Child Life of Rev. Sun Myung Moon.

An Introduction to My Seven-Day Workshop: Where the Treasure Awaits

The Seven-Day Workshop would become my Egypt.

This modest training center tucked in the Tennessee hills was not just a log house; it was my Pyramid. And within its humble walls, hidden beneath layers of confusion, heartbreak, and divine breadcrumbs, lay the treasure I had been searching for.

The workshop didn't begin with doctrine or commandments. It began with a story - a tale that stirred the soul and gripped the heart. It was the story of a boy from the Far East. A boy whose life began in light and warmth - surrounded by love, song, and the beauty of creation - but who was soon thrust into a storm of sorrow, loss, and awakening. A boy whose cries reached the ears of Heaven. A boy whose destiny would one day reshape history.

What follows is the tale I heard that day... a tale that felt both distant and eerily familiar. A tale that mirrored the pain and longing in my own heart. A tale that, though I didn't know it yet, would lead me to the treasure hidden in my own soul.

The Story

Far in the mist-covered mountains of northern Korea, in a quiet village called Sangsa-ri, lived a humble family whose love transcended tradition. They were known throughout the region not for wealth or status, but for their open hearts - welcoming strangers, feeding beggars, and offering kindness to all who crossed their threshold.

From this soil of warmth and compassion, a remarkable boy was born. His love for life, for people, and for the natural world seemed boundless. With a spirit as free as the wind, he would roam the hills from sunrise to dusk, singing to the trees, mimicking the calls of birds, and chasing grasshoppers through the tall grass. Nature was not a place to him - it was a companion, a teacher, a living presence that embraced him as one of its own.

Each morning, the moment he devoured his bowl of rice, he would dart out the door barefoot, disappearing into the streams and forests that had become his playground. Hours would pass, and the sun would begin its slow descent behind the mountains. Sometimes, lost in play and wonder, he would drift into sleep right there among the hills.

When evening came and he hadn't returned, his father would climb the slopes calling his name - "Yong Myung! Yong Myung!" - his voice echoing through the valleys.

The boy, hearing his father's voice in the distance, would smile to himself. He wouldn't answer. He loved this part. He would pretend to be asleep, knowing what came next.

His father would find him, gently scoop him up, and carry him home on his back. The warmth of his father's back, the steady rhythm of his footsteps, the tender care - it was a joy the boy cherished more than words could ever capture. Safe, loved, and nestled between earth and sky, he drifted back to sleep in peace.

The boy grew strong - but wild. Stubborn as the wind, he was nearly impossible to control. Once he made up his mind, no one could reason with him. He earned the nickname "Day Crier," not without cause. If he was upset, he wouldn't simply sob - he would erupt. His tantrums became household storms. He'd jump up and down, run in circles screaming, and even hurl himself into furniture until he bled.

His cries echoed beyond the walls of the home, piercing the still air of the village like sirens. The neighbors would shake their heads, murmuring, "There he goes again." His parents, for all their love,

were helpless. Years later, his mother would confide to one of his followers, "I could never discipline him. That child... he disciplined us."

The villagers had long noticed there was something unusual about the boy. One afternoon, his uncle - an elder respected by all - stood at the doorway, having silently observed the boy playing outside. After a moment of reflection, he said with conviction, "That boy will either grow to become a great king... or a terrible traitor."

Until he was old enough for school, the boy remained blissfully immersed in the world of childhood - an innocent realm of hills, streams, and dreams. His young heart hadn't yet grasped the anguish that clouded the Korean skies. He did not know the pain his parents carried, nor the storm the Japanese occupation had cast over his country. But the shadow was already falling. And the bliss of childhood would not last much longer.

Though his spirit was unyielding, something began to change as he grew. Around the age of ten, the boy began to mature - gradually turning from impulsive wrestling and mischief toward more deliberate thought. He became more aware of his words and actions, as if an inner shift had begun to take root.

Yong Myung's earliest education took place in the traditional setting, where children studied Chinese characters and Confucian classics. These characters had been Korea's written language long before Emperor Sejong invented Hangul in the 15th century. By the time he was thirteen, Yong Myung had already mastered many of the essential Chinese characters and was recognized as the top student in his class.

But he was not content. One day, he told his father with striking clarity, "I don't want to continue in this informal school where we only learn calligraphy. I want to attend a formal school, where students learn how to build and fly airplanes." It was an unexpected declaration - but his father, recognizing his son's seriousness, agreed.

At age fourteen, after passing the preparatory exam, Yong Myung transferred into the third grade at Osan School. The school had been founded by Yi Sung Hun, a passionate member of Korea's independence movement, and it carried the spirit of resistance. Japanese, the language of the occupiers, was not taught there; in fact, it was forbidden. But Yong Myung had his own view. "If we are to defeat our enemy," he believed, "we must understand them." And so, he took it upon himself to learn Japanese fluently.

By the time he graduated grammar school, he shocked everyone with the boldness of his spirit. On graduation day, in front of town officials, the county chief, and even the Japanese police chief, he delivered a speech - entirely in Japanese. The words struck like thunder: "The Japanese should pack their bags and return home as soon as possible!"

Gasps rippled through the crowd. No one dared speak like that in public - especially not in front of the authorities. But Yong Myung was undeterred. He said he was following the legacy of his great-uncle, Yun Guk Moon, one of Korea's celebrated independence fighters. He had inherited that same bold spirit and sense of destiny.

Nothing happened to him that day - but the Japanese marked him. When he later attempted to travel to Japan to continue his studies, the police chief denied his application. That denial would create greater complications for him down the road. But he had already set his course - one not defined by fear, but by purpose.

At age 16, Yong Myung's childhood years came crashing down. Five of his siblings died within one year. No words could describe the heartbreak his parents endured, losing five of their thirteen children. Strangely, mysterious deaths spread to neighbors and clan members. Livestock perished overnight in other homes too. Acting on the advice of his uncle, Kyung-chu, Yong Myung's family and their extended relatives joined the village church in Sangsa-ri, hoping to end the misfortune by aligning with the Christian God.

What began as a plea for divine protection evolved into something deeper. Their grief led them into sincere faith. For Yong Myung, the loss of his siblings and his parents' suffering became personal echoes of God's own heartbreak - a core revelation that would later define his teachings: that God is the grieving Parent of a lost humanity.

He couldn't understand why such suffering fell on good people. His heart wrestled with the despair of his family, his country under occupation, and a world drowning in conflict. "Why, God?" he asked in prayer. "If You are all-powerful, why do You let the innocent suffer? Did You create this world just to see it weep?"

Desperate for answers, he turned to the Bible and immersed himself in deep prayer. Night after night, he

knelt on a nearby hill, pleading for clarity. His prayers became long vigils through the night. Then, one Easter morning, everything changed.

After a night of intense prayer, Jesus appeared to him - suddenly, like a gust of wind. He saw the sorrow in Jesus' eyes and heard His voice: "God is in sorrow because of the pain of humankind. You must take on a special mission on Earth to fulfill Heaven's work."

Yong Myung was stunned. "Why me? I'm only a boy!" he cried out. He was afraid and overwhelmed.

But he couldn't forget that moment. It changed everything.

From then on, his life took on new meaning. He devoted himself to prayer and scripture study with a fierce determination. The same stubbornness that had defined his childhood now became the force driving his spiritual quest. Often, he would weep for hours, struggling with the profound truths he was beginning to uncover.

As he once reflected, "God's words were like coded messages. God had placed in my hands the key to unlock the door to secrets."

With this covenant, Yong Myung's life was forever changed. To find a standard for his faith, he studied and prayed about the biblical figures and Christian saints. In his prayers and meditations, he met spiritually with Jesus and the disciples, analyzing their revelation of truth. It was in this period of analysis that he came to know the truth about Jesus that no one had known before. "I have studied science. I am a very scientific person and I do not want any blind faith. I do not want the God of concept. I want the God of life, and God is life, itself. That God I seek."

He realized that no system of thought, no religion, not even Christianity with its promise of salvation, had provided mankind with a complete way out of Hell. No Christian had reached perfection after Christ. He wanted to know why not. If we fell away from God and no one has climbed back, then something is missing. What is it that blocks us from God?

In his prayer, Yong Myung battled with evil forces, and, at times, he was overwhelmed by the fear that billowed through his soul. Yong Myung once tried to explain those dark forces he encountered in his prayers. He said, "If you knew what it was like, your heart would stop." He said faith kept him going. "I knew that God was living. I knew that God had chosen me for this mission."

Over the years, the inner search kept pointing him again and again to the origin of the fall of Adam and Eve. Whenever he came to the fall of Adam and Eve, he felt as if it were his own business. He felt the sadness of God to see Adam's fall. He also felt Adam's sorrow in himself. In each event, Yong Myung put himself in the position of those involved and felt their pain with them and with God. As he said, "It is not someone else's history, but my own life."

In his journey into human history, he saw that the life of God's people is one of suffering and sorrow. God has also been experiencing grief and sharing the suffering of His children throughout history. He too felt pain and loss.

In explaining the biblical story of the Garden of Eden and man's fall from God, he asked, "What happened? Did it really all begin with eating fruit?" He felt the idea was too ridiculous. In churches, preachers sermonized about Adam and Eve's disobedience, but surely God, as a loving father, could forgive disobedience over something as trivial as eating food. He felt the story had to be figurative. For it to be so devastating and final, the fall of man had to involve love - the heart of God's creation. He thought, God created Adam and Eve and placed them on Earth to multiply and fill the world with children of goodness.

As Yong Myung read and reread the Bible, praying and meditating on its contents, it seemed to him that the central events after Adam kept coming back to this story of Adam's family. The lives of Noah, Abraham, and Jesus seemed to be an echo of Adam. Why? As the first family, Adam's family was to be a model for God's purpose for creating man. Instead, it became a model for failure. When his praying and meditation were over, Moon said he confronted Lucifer, the archangel, who he believed had caused the fall of Adam and Eve. He believed the fall was caused by illicit love.

As noted in his story, Yong Myung said, on days when he was receiving answers to many of the questions with which he had struggled over the years, he would fill an entire diary. It was as if his years of prayers and search for truth were answered. It happened in a short time, as if a ball of fire were passing through him. During this period he discovered that the relationship between God and mankind is that of a father and his children, and God is deeply saddened to see their suffering.

At the height of his spiritual struggle, when he was sure of the truth he had discovered, Yong Myung

sought confirmation before he started his public mission. He began a 40-day fast. He said that, during this period, he met Confucius, Buddha, Mohammed, Jesus, and other religious leaders in the spiritual world. Although he came from a Protestant background, Yong Myung recognized that all major faiths contained truth. In his spiritual communication, he said, he was given their approval of his discoveries. His search for the truth lasted nine years, and when he was sure of the revelations he received, he published them in a book titled Exposition of the Divine Principle, which became the main teachings of the Unification Church.

Dear reader, this boy's story is no fairy tale. It is the true origin of the man leading this movement - the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, the founder of the Unification Church.

As I sat in the hall, listening to this story unfold during the opening session of the Seven-Day Workshop, I felt something shift inside me. It wasn't just admiration or curiosity. It was as if someone had reached deep into the vault of my soul and turned a key. My own buried memories - of dreams, of loss, of searching for meaning - rose to the surface. This wasn't just his story. Somehow, it was mine too.

The treasure I had been chasing across for years and continents was shimmering through the fog. Not fully visible yet - but unmistakably there.

And this was only the beginning.

The lectures were about to begin.

The opening session of the Seven-Day Workshop shattered every expectation I held. It didn't just stir my curiosity - it overwhelmed me. I sat there, spellbound, as the story of a boy from the Far East unfolded before my eyes. From a childhood bathed in joy, innocence, and the gentle warmth of a loving home, his world collapsed without warning. In the span of a single year, five of his siblings died - one after another. I could barely breathe as I listened to the grief that swallowed his family whole, especially the silent, devastating sorrow of his parents.

To carry such a burden as a child... it broke something in me just hearing it. And yet, it was through this agony that something extraordinary was born. A divine fire ignited within him - a bolt of spirit that pierced the darkness, catching hold of his heart and soul. In that pain, he turned to prayer. Not the routine prayers of religion, but the desperate cries of a soul bleeding for answers. He hadn't even known this God before, not until his family joined a Christian church in search of solace. And then, God became real - unshakably real.

What came next left me breathless: as a teenager, broken but burning, he encountered Jesus - not as a concept or figure in a stained-glass window, but as a living presence. That moment transformed him forever. His heart was set ablaze with a mission, a calling forged in the crucible of sorrow.

I had never heard anything like it. It wasn't just a story. It was a living fire. It leapt from the speaker's lips into my own heart, and I could feel something shift within me. His tears, his questions, his longing - they became mine. And I knew, in that sacred moment, that I was not merely a witness. I was a participant in something much greater than I had imagined.

This is it! I whispered to myself. This is why God connected me with this group. I felt it in every fiber of my being - God had led me here with unmistakable intention. This wasn't chance. This wasn't coincidence. This was design. Divine design.

I couldn't ignore it any longer. God had something to say to me - something urgent, something life-altering. And He chose to deliver that message through the very hands of the Unification Church missionaries. But why? Why this group? Why me?

Before diving into what I would soon discover in their teachings, I had to take a breath - to pause and reflect on the path that had brought me here. Looking back, from the echoes of my childhood to the whispers of prophetic dreams, to the thunderclap of heartbreak that shattered my world - it all pointed to this moment. The chain of dreams, the improbable coincidences, the faint yet insistent voice within me... none of it was random. They were guiding stars in a carefully orchestrated journey.

To me, these spiritual encounters weren't accidents. They were milestones - divine markers - guiding me with surgical precision. And that raises an unsettling yet fascinating question: With countless religious groups and spiritual paths scattered across the world - why was I led here? Why, out of all possibilities, was I brought to perhaps the most controversial, misunderstood, and fiercely debated movement of the 20th century?

There must be a reason. Let's walk forward now - with eyes open, heart awakened, and soul on fire - and explore what God had to reveal.