

## Religious Education

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A report from summer programs in Chung Pyung (CP) and some thoughts on 2nd generation education.

Dear European regional and national leaders,

I hope you are well. I recently returned from teaching the 40 days university students second generation workshop at Chung Pyung and would like to give you a report about European participation. The previous two years I was teaching the high school workshop but this year was asked to teach the workshop for university students.

There were nearly 80 participants on the university workshop. 44 were from Europe. The USA by comparison sent 20. As to the breakdown from Europe: Germany 17 (Germany was very well represented this year with quite a few 2G in the general workshop as well), UK 12 (5 from my Sunday School), France 5, Sweden 3, Austria 3, Norway 2, Spain 1, Ireland 1, Monaco 1, Italy 1, and Bulgaria 1

These are the figures for the last 3 years of middle and high school workshops:

	2012	2011	2010
Andorra	1	0	1
Austria	6	2	1
Belgium	7	3	0
Denmark	0	0	2
Finland	7	0	2
France	4	23	5
Germany	2	7	4
Greece	0	0	2
Ireland	0	0	1
Italy	0	0	1
Luxembourg	2	0	0
Netherlands	3	1	1
Norway	3	3	5
Poland	0	1	0
Portugal	0	1	0
Spain	3	0	7
Sweden	9	10	7
Switzerland	2	2	3
UK	9	13	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>58 out of 150</b>	<b>66 out of 133</b>	<b>58 out of 127</b>
<i>United States</i>	58	60	47

The teenagers' workshop started a week earlier this year making it hard for students from England to attend as they don't finish school until the 3rd week in July.

When one considers that there are a couple of thousand 2G in Europe who are eligible to go to CP and maybe 12,000 around the world (excluding Korea, Japan and Africa) the figures are very disturbing. Very few 2G have reached the level where they wish to make a deeper commitment to their spiritual life by attending CP or STF etc. Of course, CP and STF are not the only paths to spiritual development but I think the absolute and relative rates of participation indicate something about the spiritual health of local and national 2G communities. After reading the final reflections of the participants I was struck by what profound and tearful experiences almost every single one had with God. I think it is helpful and important for them to go if they can assuming it is the right thing for them personally.

Of the 120 or so 2G from Europe at CP this summer 30+ came from either my North London Sunday School or workshops I taught last year in UK or Europe. (Last year 8% of 2G at CP came from my Sunday School although I don't teach 8% of the 2G in the world on a Sunday morning.) Last year I taught just one workshop in Europe – DONE (an excellent program run by Julius Alexy)– and of the 25 participants 10 came to CP this summer. It would be interesting to know if any other UC program in the world has such a good record on spiritually raising young 2G so they want to become more committed and go onto the next level.

One of the things I did was talk to the 2G from around the world about the education they receive in their own countries. Generally speaking they come despite the education they receive. Or rather the lack of it. The only countries in the world I have come across with a properly developed educational system for 2G are Sweden and Norway. This is why if you look at the figures they are always over-represented compared to the size of their church community. It would be instructive to have a look at the figures for Sweden:

- 67 second generation aged 4 to 29 years old.
- 64 are church members
- 12 are blessed
- 24 have been on STF or similar programmes (36%)
- 26 went to GOP in Korea for one year (38%)

Why are the outcomes for 2G in Sweden so different to nearly every other country or community? Tim Atkinson. He has developed a comprehensive Sunday School curriculum and other programs for young 2G. When children get older they naturally feed into the programs run at European and international levels. What would the worldwide Unification movement be like if it had developed and implemented similar programs? How would CP manage if 36% of 2G attended? It would be a happy problem.

So there appears to have been a systematic failure by national and local churches in nearly every country in the world to invest in the education of 2G. By not investing in 2G education the church has sacrificed the future for the sake of the present. Generally speaking many 2G feel pretty neglected and unappreciated and unloved by the church. This is partly why so few are interested in being involved or going to the blessing. Education for the blessing has to start early.

Earlier this year I attended a Sunday School teachers workshop in Seoul where we heard the statistics about 2G involvement and blessing attendance. They were pretty shocking. Four years ago Hyung Jin Nim and Yeon Ah Nim decided to initiate the development of a curriculum for Sunday School in Korea. It is still very much a work in progress and needs a lot of revision to which Tim and myself are contributing. I heard that the Korean church has generally not been interested in 2G education and indeed about half the teachers are not even Korean but blessed wives from other countries. This lack of interest and investment in 2G education seems to be common to the worldwide movement. (How often is Sunday School education and 2G education generally on the agenda at regional and national leaders meetings?)

The 2G area in Europe that does work well IMO is that which is run by the European Second Generation Department (ESGD). They have run a series of excellent programs over the years for teenagers and above. People come from around the world to attend European workshops and Special Task Force (STF). I have talked to American 2G who told me the American church has nothing to compare in quality with the Settlement Age Original Divine Principle (ODP+) Workshops run by Julius Alexy. European STF, superbly led these past 3 years by Garrun Abrahams, is the only one that is genuinely international with participants from many nations travelling and working together in many different nations. It is from these programs that a high proportion of 2G go on to attend Cheongpeong, STF and the blessing. The real weakness is at the national and local levels that don't have proper programs for younger children which is why few 2G enter the programs run at a European level. So I suggest more resources are invested in this area at least in East Europe where there are still many young 2G.

This all being the case, it is very disturbing to hear about the current turmoil in the European Youth Department (EYD) and ESGD. There are few things that concern us more than our children, who are our lineage, and that lineage is not merely biological but also a matter of faith and tradition. So it is important for the well-being of our children and also for the long term development of our spiritual community that the people who are best suited and most experienced and have a successful track record at supporting, guiding and educating 2G are in the relevant responsible positions. It is understandable that some aspire for them to be "promoted" to other positions within the wider movement but this should not happen at the expense of the well-being of the 2G community. In any case what position is there that is more important than children's education? When Moses lead the people out of Egypt and into Canaan God gave the people this direction:

"Listen, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and you shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."  
Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Love God and teach your children. Everything else follows on from that. Our children are the future and so we should make sure that they receive the best possible support today. If our children do not inherit our faith and tradition our spiritual community will soon be extinct. If 10% of 2G go to the blessing, as is the case in some places, what happens next?

There has been a lot of concern expressed about the changes to the EYD and ESGD and the manner in which they were made. While we know the decisions were well-intentioned and made in good faith it would appear that many people – parents and 2G – think they were a mistake. Some suggest that in light of this personnel decisions that have been made with regard to the ESGD are reconsidered. It is important that there is a consensus within our spiritual community about such matters and that before decisions are taken there should be wide ranging consultations and a rational and evidence based approach.

Best wishes,

William Haines

Developing a Relevant Sunday School Program:

[www.tparents.org/library/unification/publications/cornerst/Cornerstone-050300/6.htm](http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/publications/cornerst/Cornerstone-050300/6.htm)