

Michael Balcomb Speaks at *Generation Peace Academy Workshop*

Mika Sasaki and Roland Platt
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Dr. Balcomb speaking to the congregation for Sunday Service

On Friday April 12, 2013 amongst the breath-taking, snowcapped forest mountains in Estes Park, Colorado Generation Peace Academy (GPA) gathered for a Families Workshop at the YMCA facility, the first in four years. Parents and siblings were met with hugs and kisses, shouts of joy and ecstatic smiles as everyone felt the joy of reunion. At the evening orientation, participants introduced their parents as the "Queen of the Universe" and "the Best Dad in the World." It was so beautiful to see the love between the children and their parents in the inspiring environment, which was an opportunity to experience God's dream of ideal families.



The GPA 2013 Family Workshop participants in front of the breathtaking Rocky Mountains at the YMCA in Estes Park Colorado

The schedule for the next day, Saturday April 13th, was packed. It started with a morning of presentations about the GPA module system and testimonies from the GPA participants. This flowed into an afternoon of free time where families took advantage of the opportunities available in the YMCA facility – people took off for hikes and horse riding while others opted for using the time to just catch up by the fire. The evening ended with a family talent show and ballroom dancing. It was touching to see sons leading their mothers out onto the dance floor. It was a day overflowing with laughter and life.



The GPA Choir performing at the talent night

The last day, Sunday April 14th, began with testimonies from parents and ended with a thought-provoking sermon by Dr. Michael Balcomb, the president of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) in the United States. In his sermon entitled, "God Gives the Increase," Dr. Balcomb spoke about the critical time we are living in and how he believes that God is eager to fulfill his ninety-

five percent of responsibility, if only we are willing to do our five percent. Our five-percent involves teaching Divine Principle, witnessing and testifying to God and True Parents. Dr. Balcomb shared his own experience, witnessing to his neighbors and the challenging and interesting journey that followed. So many times we tend to be held back by our own lack of desire, uncertainty or issues, but Dr. Balcomb pointed out the importance of accomplishing our responsibility in helping others grow in their life of faith because "God is ready to pour out His blessing that we cannot comprehend or imagine."



The Kellet couple joining in on the family dance

Dr. Balcomb encouraged the second generation to not wait to be leaders in the future but to take leadership now. He reminded us that the Unification Church was founded by teenagers – that True Parents were each called as young people and that our American movement was led by teenagers. Dr. Balcomb ended with an empowering prayer for the entire congregation and said, "True Parents have planted and it's our job to water that seed." For all the participants, it was a weekend full of happy memories and renewed hope.