

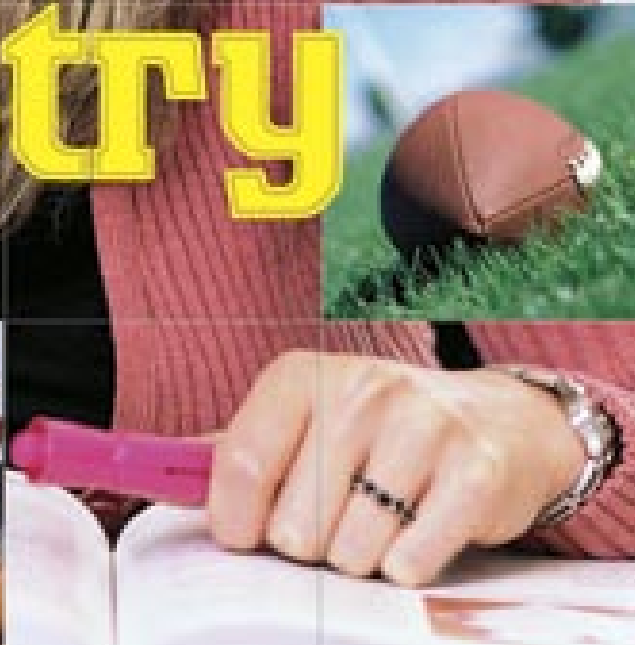
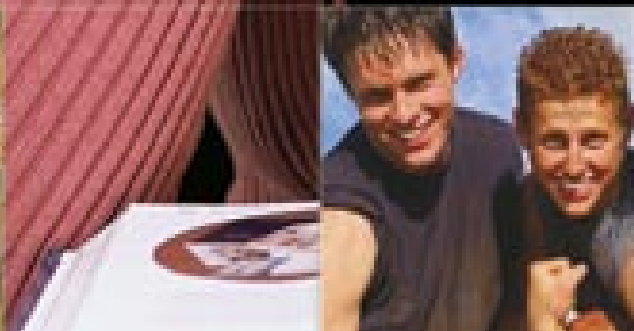
THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAMPUS MINISTRY • THE LAYMAN'S ROLE IN CAMPUS MINISTRY

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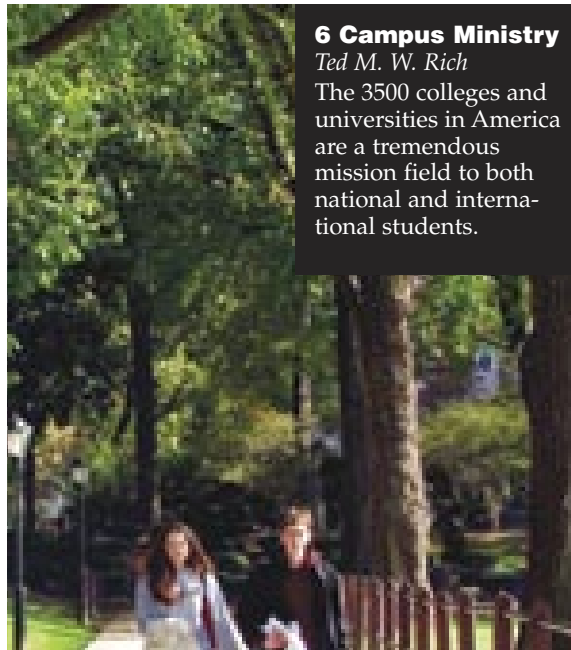
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I applaud Charles Phelps' courage in tackling a difficult subject ["Considering Cremation," Nov-Dec '04] that puzzled me as a younger preacher. As a beginner in ministry, I once refused to officiate a funeral where cremation had been chosen on the grounds that, having searched the Scriptures, I could not participate in faith with a good conscience (Rom. 14:22, 23). . . . However, some time after this, an older brother in the Lord with a strong background in science explained to me how the chemical process in cremation and natural decomposition is in fact the same.

I share Bro. Phelps' revulsion at the crassness of the Swedish government's use of cremation-as-heating fuel, and find as well that the Scriptures he cites are convincing in presenting at least, a Biblical norm and perhaps, even a preferred mode of preparation. Church history supports this as

well, although not always reliable, and certainly not necessary for doctrine (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16). There is at least one notable exception, however: though usually linked with judgment and ignominy, certainly the cremation of Saul and his sons by the men of Jabesh-gilead (1 Sam 31:11-13), after the humiliating display of their corpses upon the wall of Beth-shan by their enemies, was by contrast an act of humaneness, decency, and respect.

What left me somewhat uncomfortable and compelled me to write, was how the article seems to wish to have it both ways by concluding, "Neither can believers afford to be unscriptural about this. The Scriptures are clear—bury, don't burn!" Yet the postscript indicated that the author will still participate in funerals where the body of the deceased has been dealt with, presumably, unscripturally. I do not understand how this can

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Brighten the Campus Where You Are!

Recently it occurred to me that I might find a little information about a hymn online. I found a very interesting site, www.cyberhymnal.org, just by typing the hymn title into my search engine. I was delighted to find not only the story of the hymn but also brief biographies of both the author and composer, which I read while the hymn played softly in the background. I returned to that site as I pored over the articles in this issue of *FrontLine*.

I learned there that Ina D. Ogden of Illinois wrote the words to "Brighten the Corner Where You Are" in 1913. In fact, she wrote several precious hymns in collaboration with Charles H. Gabriel. Gabriel composed the music to many of our favorites, such as "Help Somebody Today," "His Eye Is on the Sparrow," "Let the Sunshine In," "He Is So Precious to Me," "Since Jesus Came into My Heart," "Will the Circle Be Unbroken," and many others. When she was very young, Mrs. Ogden had wanted to be a preacher! But she knew that her first duty was to her ailing father. The words to "Brighten the Corner Where You Are" are her testimony of what she learned by submitting to God's will rather than her own desire.

Mrs. Ogden became a teacher and married fellow teacher James Weston Ogden. Their ministry was in a very real sense a "campus ministry," as they reached out to the students under their influence. It is interesting that the word "campus" is derived from the Latin word for "field," or "corner." Her life was a testimony that we are called to witness on the field of God's choosing, often through unexpected circumstances. Many college students today look forward to their careers or

even a calling. Mrs. Ogden's advice is still worth hearing:

*Do not wait until some deed of greatness
you may do,
Do not wait to shed your light afar,
To the many duties ever near you now
be true,
Brighten the corner where you are.*

The enemies of the gospel have certainly taken advantage of the opportunity for influence on campuses around the world. Thank God for those ministries that have taken the gospel to this vast mission field. It is hard to imagine the humanity now enrolled

in the many universities that are larger and more complex than many cities. But even the little colleges on the corners of our large cities are populated with young minds being filled with ideas and aspirations, many of them wise and noble, but many of them dead wrong.

It would be wonderful if every Bible-believing church near

It would be wonderful if every Bible-believing church near a college campus could have a fruitful outreach to that campus.

a college campus could have a fruitful outreach to that campus. Like military bases, their transient residents do not always seem attractive as a source of stable church members, but there may be young people from Christian homes that can provide a ready connection to unsaved classmates or even teachers who can be reached. Paul's mission field was enormous, and included a campus ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19:9), as he was "disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus." The strategic value of this outreach is stated in the following verse, "And this

continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." Even today, the transient students on our campuses are an international community who return to their homes around the world.


We are to be salt and light. As Fundamental Baptists, we often enjoy the saltiness, but we are often accused, perhaps rightly so, of having a few "dim bulbs" among us. Campus ministries present us with a wonderful opportunity to reach those seeking knowledge with God's wisdom. To show them that "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." Brighten the campus where you are!

NOTE: On December 19, 2005, Faith Baptist Church of Taylors, South Carolina, received into membership Dr. and Mrs. Rod Bell with a unanimous and enthusiastic vote. On December 12, the Tabernacle Baptist Church of Virginia Beach held a send-off fellowship for them after having received a unanimous vote of restoration and commending them to us as members in good standing. We are thrilled at this milestone for the Bells and look forward to their ministry in our midst. In the next issue of *FrontLine*, we will feature an interview with Dr. Bell. When he resigned from the FBFI, the painful circumstances were printed in this space. We believe it is important and right to print this testimony

of brokenness and restoration. Many of his friends have asked when it would be appropriate to contact Dr. Bell about coming to their churches to speak. As his pastor, I commend him to anyone who desires to have him come. You can reach him by e-mail at theoldcrookedstick@charter.net or by phone at 864-627-0632.



DR. JOHN VAUGHN



CAMPUS MINISTRY

Ted M. W. Rich

Imagine with me for a moment a mission field. This particular mission field is an incredible mixture of different people, a cornucopia of cultures, and a rare gathering of the world's religions. It is similar to one of the mission fields where the apostle Paul spent at least two years (Acts 19:8–10). The field you need to imagine is similar to Paul's place of ministry, in that from this particular field God brings forth some choice trophies of His grace. From this often-neglected mission field God has drawn thousands of people to salvation and has picked out pastors, youth workers, evangelists, missionaries, church planters, and dependable lay people for the Church.

One of these mission fields has even produced a *Tale of Two Atheists*. One of the atheists hails from an old American Bible-belt city, the other from Mainland China. One grew up having churches all around him, the other had never been around church. One atheist was a red-white-and-blue patriot and political conservative, the other was known as a Red Communist. Yet both arrived at this mission field as atheists. While on this mission field the two atheists encountered missionaries who loved them with God's love and who shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with them many times.

The missionaries answered their questions and exposed their hearts to the truth of God's Word. Finally, after months of study, both atheists raised the white flag of surrender to Jesus Christ and were gloriously saved. They were two different people from two different worlds. Both of them had claimed that there is no God, but now both of them are my brothers in Christ. This was certainly a mission field of opportunity!

This mission field is at times a place where missionaries find a wide open door of opportunity, but where, more frequently, authorities attempt to hinder the open presentation of the gospel through the handing out of tracts or Bibles. This field is becoming an arena where authorities place restrictions and regulations on ministry events and outreaches. They even try to force the homosexual agenda upon the ministry for Christ. It is a place where conformity to the world is the norm and true Bible Christianity is openly mocked.

This mission field is a place where, on average, over seventy percent of the people openly admit that they are shackled by addiction to drugs, alcohol, gambling, sexual perversion, and other forms of ungodly behavior. But, incredibly, they are religious people. Their various religions include Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Baha'i,

Pantheism, Evolutionism, Relativism, Humanism, New Age, Universalism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Catholicism, and Liberal Protestantism. Many others claim to be atheists. In other words, this mission field has every kind of ism, schism, and cult—and they are growing at alarming rates.

It is obvious that this mission field illustrates the truth of Ephesians 6:12, 13 every day. In that text Paul described spiritual warfare by warning that “we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” Such a field might seem difficult to reach. It is. But there are many opportunities on a field like this.

Many of the inhabitants on this mission field are considered to have some of the brightest minds in the world. There are thousands of them, and they come from every nation around the globe. These people are the world's next political, business, family, and church leaders. They are searching for something or someone to fill that emptiness, that void, in their souls. They long for, they search for, real peace in their lives. As they live on this mission field, they also search for knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and a brighter future. Unfortunately, most of them have never heard a presentation of their only true hope. Most of them are unfamiliar with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is a great mission field! The amazing fact is that there are over 3,500 mission fields just like this right here in our nation. The population of these fields totals around 20,000,000 people. Of that massive number, 650,000 are considered international students. The 3,500 colleges and universities in America are a tremendous mission field. They present the opportunity to reach both national and international students at the same time. There are many nations or cultures in this world where conventional missionaries are not welcome. Some people refer to a large segment of these closed countries as the 10/40 Window. Most of the nations located in an area from West Africa to East Asia, from ten degrees north to forty degrees north of the equator, are closed to the gospel. It is impossible for missionaries to get into to many of these nations. How will we reach them with the good news? It is significant that the three largest international groups on the college campuses in America are Chinese, Indian, and Islamic. Christians are prohibited from taking the gospel to these people groups, so God has brought many from the groups to us. God has sent the brightest students from these hard-to-reach nations and placed them in our own backyards.

While it is a wonderful fact that God has placed these three international people groups on our campuses, we must not forget that American youth are often Biblically illiterate. This generation of college students is notorious for rejecting God and His Word. Many of them are religious at best and atheists at worst. They need the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the mission field to which our Great God and Savior has called me and my family. It is an incredible opportunity that God has put before us to

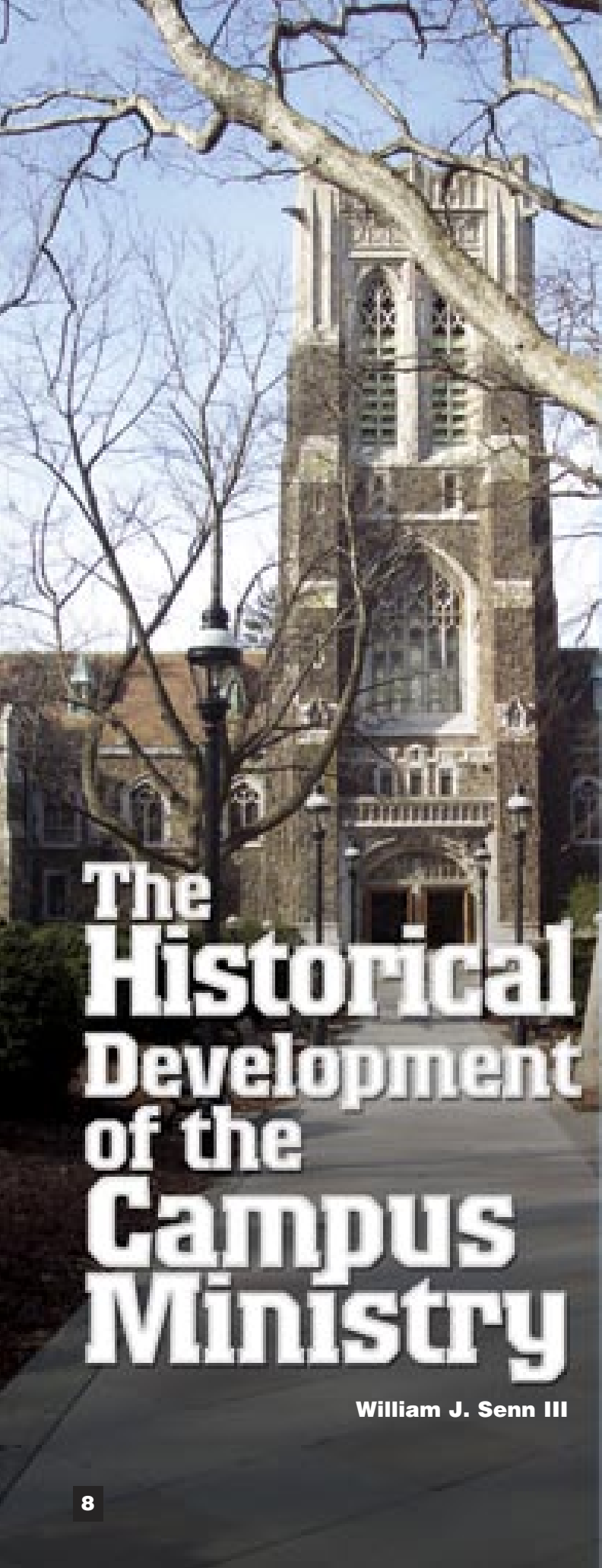
take the cross of Christ to the campus through the vehicle of the Spurgeon Foundation Campus Ministries, an independent, Fundamental, Bible-believing local-church-based ministry.

The opportunities are great. Yet in Fundamental Bible-believing circles there are less than fifty campus missionaries working full-time. One can easily see the dilemma, with fifty missionaries spread among 3,500 mission fields. Only a few of the colleges and universities in this nation are touched with Fundamental Bible-believing Christianity. That averages out to about 0.27% of the 20+ million students, faculty, and staff having a clear gospel message on their campuses.

Dr. Bob Jones Sr. used to preach that “evangelistic unction makes orthodoxy function.” A chief focus for every ministry must be evangelism. The heart of the campus ministry is reaching collegians for Christ's Kingdom. But it appears that Fundamentalists might have fumbled the ball. We have, for the most part, left this amazing opportunity for the cults, isms, Modernists, and those who cloak the gospel under the guise of frivolity. We need to pick up the ball of opportunity again and run with it. Pastors and Christian laymen who live in college or university cities must be aware that God has given them this opportunity to reach collegians for Christ. There are well-established campus ministries that can help or give advice for starting a ministry on campus. Some churches run an effective campus ministry through laymen. Often these people catch the vision their pastor has for college ministry and get involved on the local campus because they know that evangelism is not an option but a command. They take the command to “go” into all the world and preach the gospel seriously (Mark 16:15).

Our prayer is that more pastors will come to grips with the fact that God has providentially given them an open door of opportunity to be a part of an exciting ministry to reach the world, and in many cases it is just a stone's throw away from them. If a campus is not close by, churches can help support campus pastors/missionaries and come alongside to help in this way. The college campus provides an abundant mission field that is “white unto harvest.” God's people need to be diligent to take the cross of Christ to the campuses of America. Paul confessed that “unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you” (1 Cor. 9:20–23). We too can be partakers in the campus ministry for the gospel's sake.

Ted M. W. Rich is Campus Pastor/Missionary/Intern-Trainer with Spurgeon Foundation Campus Ministries based in Clemson, South Carolina, at University Baptist Church. He has been a speaker at conferences and churches on reaching collegians for Christ and has helped in the production of various tracts and discipleship materials.



The Historical Development of the Campus Ministry

William J. Senn III

New Testament Days—School of Tyrannus

The Priority of the Church of God

The roots for campus ministry are found in Acts 19:8–10, with the apostle Paul ministering at Tyrannus University (TU) at Ephesus. Tyrannus was either the owner of the school or its most famous Dean of Doom, “the Tyrant.” The result of Paul’s daily teaching at TU was that “all they which dwelt in Asia [Minor] heard the word of the Lord Jesus.” How much did Paul’s choosing to meet at the “hall of Tyrannus” factor into such rapid growth of the church? Are there any parallels in church history that indicate that America’s “learning halls” are the ripest seedbeds for evangelism, revival, and recruiting volunteers for world evangelism? Church history suggests that one of the most strategic sites to target ministry is on the college campus, secular or religious. In fact, the church can trace much of her growth in the past four hundred years to various student movements. It is important to note that whatever ministry Paul had to the students at the “hall of Tyrannus,” it was based out of a local church context. One of the greatest errors in campus ministry throughout the church age is to divorce the campus ministry from the institution of the local church.

Student Movements in English-Speaking Europe

The Primacy of the Word of God

From 1320 to 1384 at Oxford University (the oldest English-speaking college in the world), there was a man by the name of John Wycliffe who influenced all English-speaking Christians with his English translation of the Bible. Later the King James Version was produced by the translators at Westminster Abbey, Cambridge University, and Oxford University.

As early as 1523 Thomas Bilney and his friends met secretly at the White Horse Inn at Cambridge University. Such student meetings had at their heart the study of Scriptures, the foundational textbook for any campus ministry. One can imagine Hugh Latimer reading his Greek New Testament in the candlelight and articulating the doctrine of justification as he read from the works of Martin Luther. Why was there the need for Christian students to meet secretly on the campuses of universities that were linked with the church? Why on October 16, 1555, would a godly Hugh Latimer and a faithful Nicholas Ridley be charged for heresy by the Divinity School at Oxford and be burned at the stake? The answer: education, divorced from the Word of God, sharpens the attack on the people of God. Sadly, schools like Oxford and Cambridge have fulfilled the earlier prophecy of Martin Luther, who said, “Every institution where men are not unceasingly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt.”¹

The Holy Club at Oxford—1700s: The Preeminence of the Righteousness of God

“A brand plucked out of the fire”² was John Wesley who, following his father’s and grandfather’s footsteps, marched off to Oxford University in 1721 at the age of

17. While John was serving a curacy at Wroth, his younger brother Charles, a King's scholar, entered Oxford in 1726 at the age of 19. Charles dedicated himself to "serious thinking" and to pursuing a disciplined, religious life as an ordained deacon, which earned him the name "the Methodist." Charles was able to influence several of his friends to accompany him in such a disciplined lifestyle, resulting in the inauguration of the Holy Club in 1728 with three members: Robert Kirkham, William Morgan, and Charles Wesley. When John returned to tutor at Lincoln College, he was asked to be the Holy Club's head. In 1732, George Whitefield was added to the Holy Club.

As Arnold Dallimore summarizes, the Holy Club was not famous at first and was hardly known on campus.³ It was not evangelical in nature. Members did not preach the gospel but taught a works salvation and adopted a view of the Lord's Supper that bordered on the heresy of transubstantiation. Consequently, the Holy Club did not produce revival but death, and with the dispersal of its members in 1735, the club also died.

In many ways the Holy Club at Oxford was the schoolmaster that brought the Wesleys and Whitefield to Christ. Often Whitefield would refer to Oxford on his spiritual birth certificate. In a sermon entitled "All Men's Place" he declared, "I know the place! It may be superstitious, perhaps, but whenever I go to Oxford I cannot help running to that place where Jesus Christ first revealed himself to me and gave me the new birth."⁴ Today, there are still some on the college campus who have enrolled in the Holy Club of self-righteousness and who need to transfer their faith to Christ and mark the spot of their new birth. Two continents were awakened by the ministry of the men of the Holy Club. How many Whitefields are enrolled in America's state colleges today?

The St. Andrews Seven: The Participation with the Spirit of God

Scotland's oldest university is St. Andrews. While Oxford emphasized the classics and Cambridge emphasized mathematics, St. Andrews's forte was philosophy. Such an academic setting was conducive for the life work of the St. Andrews Seven, which comprised its famous six students and their faculty advisor: Alexander Duff, John Urquhart, John Adam, Robert Nesbit, William Sinclair Mackay, David Ewart, and Professor Thomas Chalmers.

The St. Andrews Seven had intellect on fire. They had received a solid academic base in research, analysis, and synthesis and had made the Bible the touchstone of all truth. The vehicle for applying their Biblical knowledge was the formation of the St. Andrews Missionary Society on December 6, 1824. These students knew that it was their responsibility to preach the gospel. The question for them now was where to direct this gospel machine. They heeded Chalmers's suggestion to study the missionary model of the Baptist missionary William Carey. Urquhart, the president of the society, then challenged eighty of the students to surrender to foreign missions. After his heart-stirring message Urquhart took ill and died. Six months after Urquhart's death, Robert Nesbit departed for India. The second of the St. Andrews Seven to sail to India was John Adam, then Duff, followed by William Sinclair

Mackay and finally by the last of the St. Andrews Seven, David Ewart. By 1857, over five hundred British missionaries had gone to serve in India. One-tenth of such missionaries were Scottish Presbyterians who could trace their roots back to the St. Andrews Seven. Alexander Duff became the most renowned missionary in India's history after William Carey. Duff started a college in Calcutta, which became the model for missionaries to follow. Who was Duff's model for such a school? It was none other than Thomas Chalmers of St. Andrews!

The Cambridge Seven: The Promotion of the Work of God

In the late 1800s, D. L. Moody had tremendous spiritual freedom to preach to the college students at Cambridge University. As a result of the revival at Cambridge, one of the students converted during an evangelistic service with Moody founded a student organization called the Cambridge Christian Union. This student, Stanley Peregrine Smith, was a man's man, the captain of the Cambridge rowing team and a man of high energy. Alongside Stanley Smith stood a revived C. T. Studd, the captain of the cricket team. Another member of the Cambridge Seven was "Will the Silent" Wharton Cassels, an ordained Anglican minister who was a "Holy Club" man but with the indwelling Spirit to match. Dixon Hoste was another member on the Mission Dream Team who loved order and precision. He too had been converted during the Moody revival. Then there were two brothers, Cecil and Arthur Polhill-Turner, a lieutenant in the Royal Dragoons and a priest respectively. Completing the team was Montague Beauchamp, who was as rich and colorful as his name.

These seven men, known as the Cambridge Seven, volunteered to go to China and departed for Shanghai in February 1885. In Shanghai they met Hudson Taylor, who divided the team and delegated responsibilities to each.

As a result of the Cambridge Seven's willingness to go to China, the China Inland Mission (CIM) was catapulted from obscurity to "almost embarrassing prominence."⁵ The example of these visionaries led hundreds of other students and volunteers to give their lives to world evangelism. In 1885, when the Cambridge Seven arrived in China, the CIM had 163 missionaries; by 1890 the number of CIM missionaries reached 800, and by 1900 one-third of the entire Protestant missionary force was represented by the CIM. The Cambridge Seven not only impacted missions to China but also directly opened new doors to India and Africa.

Student Religious Meetings and Societies in America

The Prayer for the Servants of God: Harvard University

In America, eighty-eight of the first one hundred colleges were organized to preach the gospel.⁶ In 1636 the first of these, Harvard, was founded in Cambridge, Massachusetts, by Puritans who had the goal of training ministers of the gospel. The mission statement for the college was stated by John Harvard: "Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well the main ends of this life and studies; to know God and Jesus Christ, which is eternal life."⁷ Sadly, like Oxford,

Harvard began to let its "Orthodox Ox" cross back over "the ford." In the years that followed, the university drifted from the vision of its founders and became intolerant to those who held to its puritanical roots. Consequently, students met in secret to exercise their spiritual muscles. The first record of an organized student religious meeting in America was dated January 10, 1723. It was called "The Private Meeting Instituted at Harvard College" and was attended by twenty-six students.

Revivals at Yale University and Princeton University

In 1701 Yale College was founded in New Haven, Connecticut, by Congregationalists. Fifteen years later, twelve-year-old Jonathan Edwards matriculated there. The young Edwards was saved to enjoy "sweet delight in God and divine things" just after his graduation at Yale and prior to his return to Yale in 1722 to pursue his master's degree.⁸ Edwards would be known as the man who fueled the Great Awakening with his sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," preached in 1741.

After Edwards, the next leading American preacher of the Great Awakening was Gilbert Tennent. Gilbert's father William, educated at Edinburgh University, pioneered for his children the little Log College, which was a twenty-foot-by-twenty-foot log building in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania. All thirteen members of the college's first class became the pioneers of Christian education in America. The founders of some fifty-one colleges were graduates of the Log College.⁹ After the death of William Tennent Sr., the school was moved to New Jersey and was called the College of New Jersey, now known as Princeton University. In 1757, Jonathan Edwards would be one of Princeton's presidents. John Witherspoon, another president of Princeton, stated his philosophy of education in these words: "Cursed be all learning that is contrary to the cross of Christ. Cursed be all learning that is not coincident with the cross of Christ. Cursed be all learning that is not subservient to the cross of Christ."¹⁰

Revivals would continue at Yale, depending on its leadership. The leading revivals were under the leadership of Timothy Dwight, who challenged the students to be saved and surrendered to the will of God. In 1814 he advised the student body, "Christ is the only, the true, the living way of access to God. Give up yourselves to him, with a cordial confidence, and the great work of life is done."¹¹ Revivals at Yale influenced men to indeed "Give themselves up to Christ." Two of the men influenced by these revivals were Borden of Yale and Asahel Nettleton,

who surrendered to the Lord during the revival at Yale in 1807 to 1808.

The Haystack Revival at Williams College

In 1806, five students at Williams College in Massachusetts were overtaken in a thunderstorm during their prayer meeting and sought shelter under a nearby haystack. While waiting out the storm, the five talked about the need of world evangelism and how someone needed to go into the world and preach the gospel. Suddenly, Samuel Mills came up with a "novel" idea: "Why should we not be the ones?" Luther Rice and the other three students agreed that this was a great idea. Rice would later be one of the key leaders for the Baptists in foreign missions, and Samuel Mills would eventually lead the Congregationalists to form the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, America's first foreign mission board. Such campus groups as those at Williams College were formed to promote devotional life, theological thinking, evangelism, and missions. These student groups helped spawn organizations such as the YMCA and the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM). The SVM alone, conceived in 1886 at a conference led by D. L. Moody in Mount Hermon, Massachusetts, sent out approximately 4,500 missionaries between 1899 and 1914; in addition, the SVM has motivated approximately 20,000 North American students to become missionaries.

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Adoniram Judson of Andover

Theological College

The first answer to the prayer of the Williams College students was Adoniram Judson, the son of a Yale graduate. On December 12, 1808, at Andover Theological College, Judson "made a solemn dedication of himself to God."¹² It was on this day that Judson gave his heart to the Lord, either in salvation or assurance of salvation. Regardless, he was now the Lord's, and what mattered most to Judson was to do the Lord's will. God's will for the Andover graduate was to be America's first missionary to a foreign field, the golden shore of Burma. Judson was not the only student at this time who surrendered his heart to God on the college campus to missions, nor would he be the last.

At Andover in 1811, a student organization was formed called the Andover Seminary Society of Enquiry, which was designed to challenge every divinity student with the possibility of foreign missionary service. There was a great moving of the Spirit of God for the students to look to the world's fields which were "white already to

harvest.”¹³ “The flood-tide of missionary enthusiasm had reached the universities.”¹⁴

And indeed, since the days of the Reformation, nearly every major awakening or missionary movement can be traced to a college campus where professors and students were stirred by the Spirit of God. In addition, the historical development of campus ministries has influenced Bible translations in English and in other languages, the development of theological thinking including the roots of separatism, the vision for starting new Bible colleges, and the burden to evangelize the student body as well as the world.

The need today is for campus ministries to be based out of the local church, with campus ministers unceasingly being occupied with the primacy of preaching the Word of God and the preeminence of Christ and His righteousness. The need of the hour is to pray that “the Lord of the harvest . . . would send forth labourers”¹⁵ to the campuses of America.

From 1984 to 2002 Dr. William J. Senn III was the pastor of University Baptist Church in Clemson, South Carolina, establishing Spurgeon Foundation Campus Ministries in 1986. Currently he serves as senior pastor at Tri-City Baptist Church in Westminster, Colorado, where he continues to be involved in campus ministries.

¹ Paul Lee Tan, *Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times* (Rockville,

MD: Assurance Publishers, 1979), 159.

² Zechariah 3:2.

³ *Whitefield*, 71–72.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁵ Alwyn Austin, “Missions Dream Team,” *Christian History*, no. 52 (Fall 1996): 19.

⁶ Tan, 157.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 158.

⁸ Sidwell, 34.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Tan, 158.

¹² Courtney Anderson, *To the Golden Shore* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1989), 50.

¹³ John 4:35.

¹⁴ Piggin and Roxborough, 43.

¹⁵ Matthew 9:38.

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Burt Campbell

The Layman's Role in Campus Ministry

As a senior in a liberal college, I was under great conviction when an older gentleman named Bruce Galloway showed up. "Papa G" was in his mid-seventies at the time and was reaching out to athletes at the college. He invited several of us to a weekly Bible study in his home, and that was the beginning of discipleship for me. I had never been exposed to the Word of God in the way it was presented in his home. He and "Mama G" made us feel at home, and we looked forward to going every week. Later when I moved to Clemson, it was through the influence of Dr. Charles Dunn and many visits in his home that I was introduced to University Baptist Church. It was there that I met my wife and where we continue to serve. (There are still jokes today about how I would always show up at the Duns around mealtime. I will not deny it.) In fact, the burden we have for students is a direct result of what the Galloways and Duns did for us.

The Campus Home

Few things are more attractive to a college student away from family than the opportunity to visit and have a home-cooked meal. To be away from institutional living for brief respites is a tremendous blessing to the student and creates great opportunities for the family to minister. Many years ago a Clemson graduate student showed up at our doorstep. He had come to Clemson as a self-proclaimed atheist. Through the influence of a man in our church, this young man started a Bible study with our campus pastor. He was soon saved and started coming over to help us with our computers. He would always show up just before dinner. One night he asked Gretchen if he could bring some of his co-workers from school. That started a tradition of having students over on Wednesday nights before church. Today this young man teaches Sunday school in a Fundamental church in Virginia. We have seen hundreds of students come through our home from all around the world. Usually our campus pastor and his family join us, and it creates a wonderful environment for all of us to get to know students.

The local church's campus ministry is greatly enhanced when families come alongside the pastor and church and make themselves available. There are many things that families can do to make this a viable ministry. For example, students often need rides, they always appreciate a meal, and they like to be able to just hang out. To take a student home after church or invite him or her over to the house during the week will pay great dividends. You establish relationships that will last forever.

Ministering to students is as easy as setting another place at the dinner table. It does not require a great amount of preparation over and above what one would do for his own family. It does, however, require awareness that there is a need, and a willingness to open the home. We have found that the home is a great bridge to introduce students to the church. We

have had meals on Wednesday nights so that students could come to our house and then be encouraged to go to church. Many times it results in new students showing up for a service. We also have found that Sunday night after church is a great time to have students in the home.

A Family Ministry

Ministering to students brings a great blessing to the entire family. Young children are a delight to the students, and the children love the students. Our children have grown up with students in the home and as a result are more outgoing and willing to minister. Our twin girls are finishing college this year, and since they have been in college have befriended students from Clemson in an effort to win them to Christ. When he was in high school, our son met a Clemson student at the gym and introduced him to us. The result of his outreach was a Bible study with this student. Our youngest daughters, who are still in high school, interact with college students at church and at home on a regular basis. What a great blessing it is to see children reaching out to others. Recently one of our daughters sent a two-page email to a Clemson student that she had been witnessing to for two years. It was a thorough presentation of the gospel that challenged the young lady to accept Christ. It just happened that the student was deeply troubled at that time. Recently we have been privileged to see that student in our home and at church. We continue to pray that she will be saved.

A Critical Time in Students' Lives

The need to reach students for Christ is great. The college years are pivotal—the transition from childhood to adulthood is occurring. It is also a frightening time for young people as they are faced with the life decisions of marriage and career. As a rule, life is fairly simple for young people until they enter college. In high school students seldom need to make big decisions about to do the next year, because the predetermined answer is “move up to the next grade.”

But as a student nears graduation from high school, things begin to change. This is a stage when students often begin to search for truth and are open to exploring options. The college campus has plenty of opportunities to explore, from cults to the occult. Liberal thought is the rule, and the society's conventions are scoffed. A perverted idea of intellectual freedom reigns, and “anything goes” . . . except Bible Christianity. If God's people do not present God's Word to these exploring students, someone will offer the students a substitute to fill the gap in their lives. However, with a focused campus ministry and families who are willing to help, the opportunities for giving the gospel are tremendous. If we can help others see this great mission field in our own backyard, then by God's grace we will see students reached for Christ.

Encouragement and Financial Assistance

There are other opportunities for Christian laymen to help reach the college campus. One very necessary ministry is for the laymen in the local church to encourage

the campus pastor. Students don't keep regular hours, and the campus pastor is on call 24/7 even when it is not convenient. Crisis seems to occur at odd hours, and the campus pastor is often exhausted from trying to salvage a straying sheep, or from pouring his energy into evangelizing sinners. Our campus pastor received three calls in the middle of the night last week. At times like that, campus pastors need encouraging. There is also the opportunity to provide financial help to the campus pastor. Many of the activities and events that are held to attract students require funding. It is a great blessing to the college ministry when a layman is willing to sponsor an event or pay for a mailing. Also there are situations when a church cannot afford a campus pastor and a missionary model is used. In these cases regular monthly support can provide enough income so that the campus pastor is free to minister to students on the campus.

The Simplicity of the Truth

The layman can also help by conducting Bible studies and mentoring students. The campus pastor is limited to the number of students he can work with at any one time, so to have men and women who can meet with students to answer their questions and befriend them is also helpful. One fear many people face in working with students is that a student will ask questions that are beyond their theological ability to answer. Quite frankly we have found that the simplicity of the gospel presented from a pure heart in a loving manner has the greatest effect. There is nothing wrong with telling someone you do not know the answer or referring him to the pastor. Students are looking for transparency and intellectual honesty. When we approach a student prayerfully, understanding that God will use us as we obey Him and that He is responsible for results, then we have great freedom. There are times when we are disappointed and other times of great joy, but at all times we are mindful that it is God who is working out His will. Only in Heaven will we see the full impact of the campus work. Certainly only God knows how He will use our testimony and the distribution of the Word of God on the campus.

What Can You Do?

Our hope is that this will encourage others to get involved. Many of God's people live in communities that are home to college campuses. If more of God's people were burdened to reach these young people, then probably more churches would begin campus ministries. I know one pastor who has been praying for several years for a family who is willing to help with the college ministry to come alongside his work. He understands that for a campus pastor to be successful he needs a family who will help. All Christians should be available to serve God in this capacity. We can at least encourage others to consider the ministry of the college campus. Our prayer is that God will call others to this field of ministry.

Burt Campbell, president of ACI Financial, serves as deacon at University Baptist Church in Clemson, South Carolina. He was the layman to be involved in Spurgeon Foundation Campus Ministries.



Involving College Students in Ministry

Michael D. Cruice

Ministry to college students should be considered under the single-adult ministry umbrella. Being such a student is a transitional stage, such as a caterpillar would experience en route to becoming a butterfly. A fundamental issue is an understanding that these individuals are adults choosing to go to school and that they ought to be approached in a fitting manner. The “college student” category is not Biblically defined, such as being a single adult would be. For the purpose of this article, therefore, a broader consideration will be given to involving single adults in ministry since individuals may drift in and out of student status. The nature of this article will allow application in either case.

The local church must exercise care that the effort to effectively incorporate single adults into the work of the ministry is not so specialized that the single adult becomes isolated in the community of believers. As one leader observes “there are two basic images of singles ministry; singles as a separate colony or as a necessary part of the whole.”¹

Any deliberate, conscientious approach to ministry to single adults should have in sight the goal that those singles will indeed serve others. According to one leader “the proof that a church has this kind of vision is not in the number of programs offered for singles, but in the number of singles involved in all the programs of the church. Approximately one-half of the work force is single. What percentage of the church work force is single?”²

As a single approaches a church, his perspective should be more focused on how he may serve the Lord in that setting rather than what that ministry has to offer him. Such thinking is expected of the more mature believer, while the unchurched and newly saved must be disciplined to understand their role in God’s plan for His local assembly. The effective functioning of the local body comes from an innovative approach on the part of the church to minister to single adults while the single adult actively seeks ways to be integrated into the church.

To more thoroughly consider this matter of integrating the single adult into the local, Fundamental church, we must understand the mandate and the method of integration.

The Mandate for Integration

Essential to a Local Body

Ephesians 4:13, “Till we all come in the unity of the faith,” holds forth a goal for each believer: we are to work together, especially in light of the illustration of the parts of the body working in conjunction, as illustrated later in that same chapter.

A further elaboration of this truth is found in 1 Corinthians 3:5–7:

Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos,

but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

Successful ministry in the local church requires both married and unmarried alike to fulfill their God given responsibilities as outlined in 1 Corinthians 7.

Contingent upon Membership

One of the general impressions of single adults is that they hesitate to make commitments. This is often true when joining a church family. Often, the single adult reserves making this decision, keeping open his options for a better opportunity that might come his way. Membership is foundational to this idea of integration, since most churches restrict the extent of involvement in their local congregations to those outside of membership.

Leaders in the church should be quick to take single adults under their wing and get to know them, along with introducing them to as much of the church family as possible. Single adults must have a grasp of the basically unrestricted possibilities for members for both married and unmarried adults alike.

Such integration begins with developing relationships that should be initiated upon the single adult's first visit to a church. Since singles tend to transient and move quickly from one ministry to another, their first impression of the local assembly is paramount and should be saturated with an image of an encouraging and hospitable fellowship. While there may be a call for satellite ministries to single adults, the truth of the matter, as observed by one leader, is "the most effective single adult ministries are invariably solidly attached to a strong, local church and are operating as a healthy, contributing part of the body."³

The single adult must understand that the church is God's instrument by which He provides growth, accountability, encouragement, and opportunities to serve Him. As one leader notes, "A species becomes extinct when its environment does not give it the opportunity to grow and thrive."⁴ The question then becomes, "Is your ministry one in which the single adult will grow and thrive, or will he become extinct?"

Dependent on Service

Regardless of the preconception that single adults may be selfish and self-seeking, the local church must challenge them to practice godly principles. One such principle is stated in Galatians 5:13: "For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love, serve one another."

The true success of integration will parallel the single adult's desire to serve. Their incorporation into the rest of the ministry will depend on their willingness to serve wherever needed, not simply in those areas which might give them exposure and recognition. Are they as willing to clean dishes for a churchwide fellowship as they are to be an usher? Is their attitude one that says, "Use me wherever needed"? Their idea of service should not be what such an act will do for them, but how it will reflect on their Savior.

There was a single adult in a large ministry who was challenged by the singles pastor to become involved in a ministry. The young man admitted that he had not actively served in any ministry capacity in almost two years because he wanted to be a fifth grade boys' Sunday school teacher. The pastor informed him that the primary quality for a good Sunday school teacher was first of all to be a good servant. Upon hearing this observation, the young man decided to leave the church. He failed to understand that a good servant seeks to elevate his Master, not himself.

The Method for Integration

Establish Relationships

Meaningful contact must be made with the single adult upon his first visit. The church family should be hospitable and quick to embrace the single adult visitor. A quick contact should be made by leaders in the single adult ministry to both welcome and inform the visitor of the excitement of being a part of such a ministry. A meal after the service is the best way to effectively connect with

such a person, since most single adults enjoy company for a Sunday lunch or dinner.

Explore Interests

Single adults often feel as if they are a square peg in a round hole. The leaders should soon establish the areas of interests of the individual along with any particular gifts or talents. A visitor should clearly sense an active effort not simply to inflate the congregational role but to find a place of service for the Lord for the individual. The mentality of service should be paramount, and the single adult should realize that the intent of the ministry is not to gather a plethora of pew sitters.

Invest Time

Quantity of time produces a quality of time. The single adult ministry is labor intensive. An effective ministry conveys the idea of genuine concern for the individual. Frequent calls, contacts, and other gestures of interest should be displayed as a foundation is established for the single adult to develop an attachment to the ministry and desire a place of service.

A variety of service and fellowship activities should

The single adult must understand that the church is God's instrument by which He provides growth, accountability, encouragement, and opportunities to serve Him.

be made available just to allow numerous opportunities for the individual to connect and develop relationships within the ministry. Consequently, a sense of ownership rather than "observership" begins to develop.

Engage Resources

Most single adults are healthy, willing, and able. The possibilities for service are limited only by one's imagination once we gain a wholesome view of them as valuable resources. The ministry at Hampton Park Baptist Church has benefited by having the Single Vision Ministry spearhead numerous churchwide events. (The theme verse for Single Vision is Matthew 6: 22: "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.") The single adult choir along with special instrumental and vocal presentations has been an important asset to the worship services. Community involvement through caroling in various parts of the community, along with other active efforts to minister outside the bounds of the church property, has been challenging to others in the congregation. Singles' ready availability has been the front-line resource to help New Horizons, a ministry for women in our church whose husbands are no longer in the home. These single adults actively seek ways to serve and challenge each other to greater heights of service.

Conclusion

While some single adults are distracted by the prospects of marriage, Single Vision promotes singleness as an opportunity to serve the Lord according to His design in 1 Corinthians 7:35: "And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction." As the single adult is encouraged to serve, the prospect of a life mate is committed to the Lord. After all, what better place to meet a future spouse than in the midst of service?

Michael D. Cruice serves as assistant pastor at Hampton Park Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina, and is a board member of Spurgeon Foundation Campus Ministries.

¹ Mary Graves, *Singles Ministry Handbook* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1988), 244.

² Graves, 243.

³ Jim Dyke, *Single Adult Ministry* (Colorado Springs, CO, 1991), 172.

⁴ Terry Hershey, *Single Adult Ministry* (Colorado Springs, CO, 1991), 29.



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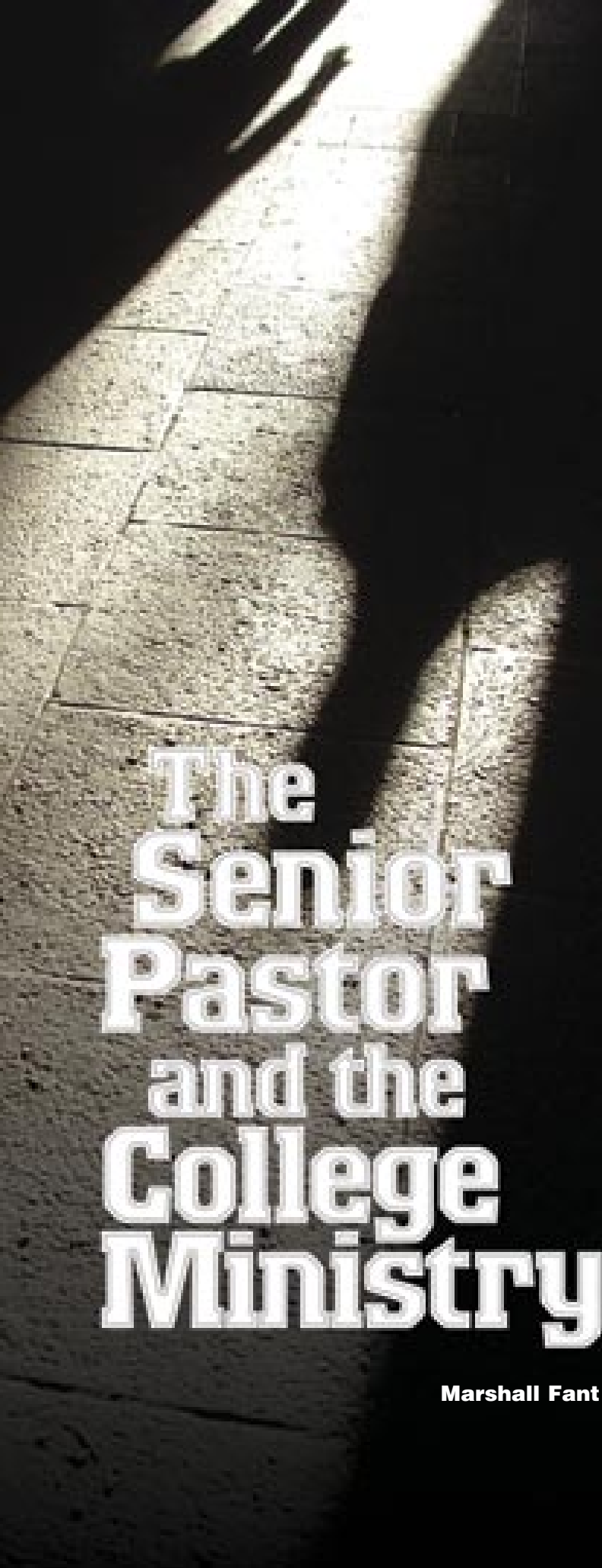
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The Senior Pastor and the College Ministry

Marshall Fant

How can you know if your church is ready for a college ministry? If you've ever tried to take the cross of Christ to the secular campus, you know that it doesn't just *happen*. Like most ministries, a college outreach presents challenges that must be matched by a spiritual burden, determination, and a philosophy of ministry that drives it. A church may have individuals who have a passion for college students, but if the senior pastor does not play a key role in developing and executing a proper philosophy of ministry, campus outreach will be short-term and mostly ineffective. A proper philosophy of ministry is the foundation that not only begins a dynamic college work but also energizes it and maintains it for the long term.

What Is Your Pastor's Personal Philosophy of Ministry?

Does your pastor have a burden for the college ministry? Colleges, and especially university campuses, are home to an incredibly diverse population. Has your pastor realized the opportunity at his back door? Does he comprehend that the mission field has come to him? If the senior pastor of a church does not have a burden to reach the secular campus, it is likely there will never be an effective, lasting college ministry in his church.

Evangelizing

Your pastor's philosophy of ministry must be Christ-centered. According to 1 Corinthians 1:23, the goal of the Christ-centered ministry is to present the simplicity of the gospel to all: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." Although the college/university population is diverse, it is fundamentally no different from any other. The needs are great, but the one underlying need that transcends all others is the need for the gospel. This can present a special challenge in the intellectual, postmodern atmosphere of relativism that thrives on today's campus.

Equipping

Your pastor's philosophy of ministry must also emphasize the equipping of the saints. This was Paul's philosophy, as he states in Colossians 1:28: "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." The pastor's goal should be to train believers so that, when they stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, they are not ashamed: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). This includes those who come to know the Lord while living on the campus as well as those who are already believers. Believers on the campus are

often intimidated, and spiritual growth is critical for survival in an atmosphere where intellectual pride reigns.

Spirit-Dependent

A Christ-centered philosophy of ministry must also be dependent on the Spirit of God. Again, in Colossians 1:29, Paul is our example: "Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." To "labour" means to grow weary, even exhausted, with toil, burdens, or grief. "Striving" carries the idea of contending, or struggling with difficulties and dangers. The word "worketh" is used only of superhuman power, whether of God or the Devil. On the college campus where believers often feel isolated and overwhelmed by the philosophies of this world, we need power beyond our human capabilities to carry on the Lord's work.

What Is Your Church's Philosophy of Ministry?

For an effective college ministry, the church (meaning the congregation and the leadership other than the pastor) must have a philosophy of ministry that is consistent with the pastor's philosophy. Two common sources of conflict are (1) the senior pastor has a burden to reach the college campus, but his congregation does not; or (2) the congregation and/or church leadership has a burden to reach the college campus, but the pastor does not.

The question is, do you and your senior pastor even know what your church's philosophy of ministry is? Is your church body unified in its burden to reach the college campus? If there is inconsistency in this area between the senior pastor and the congregation, what can they do to "get on the same page"?

Setting Goals

The business world sets goals and evaluates products on an ongoing basis to determine success in the market. In a sense, a similar mindset needs to prevail in the church. Ministries must not be started on a whim. Goal setting is the means by which a senior pastor and his congregation can clarify the burden and direction of their church. In every area of ministry, setting goals is an effective way to ensure that ministries are serving the overall purpose of the church.

Asking Key Questions

Here are some key questions to ask before starting a ministry on the college campus: (1) Where has God placed you (i.e., how does the location of your church affect your decision)? (2) Where are you going (i.e., what is the direction of your church, and does a campus ministry fit into that direction)? (3) How will you get there (i.e., practically speaking, how do you plan to start and grow a campus ministry)?

Where Has God Placed You?

Have you stopped to think about the demographics of your area? Your local chamber of commerce usually will provide basic demographical information at no charge. A current world almanac contains information on enroll-

ments, including the number of faculty members in various institutions.¹

How many schools are there within a ten-mile radius of your church? How many faculty and staff members are there in each school? Do you have a major university, a four-year college, a technical school, or a combination of the three? If you have a university near your church, do most of the students live on campus, or is it more of a "suitcase college," where the majority of the students are gone on the weekends? Be cautious if you seek to pattern your ministry after someone else's; the kind of institution you target will dictate the kind of ministry you start. The fact that a particular ministry works well in a different location does not necessarily mean it will work well in yours.

Where Are You Going?

Does your church have any specific, written, agreed-upon goals? It is Biblical for God's servants to plan according to His will (James 4:15). It is also personal, in that God will direct our plans and give the increase as we determine to line up our goals with His (Ps. 32:8; 1 Cor. 3:6).

Planning must be an ongoing practice. In 1 Corinthians 16:5, Paul planned to go back to Corinth. His motives were pure; he was driven by the relationship he had established with the Corinthians in his first visit. But it was not God's will. In 2 Corinthians 1:15-17 we see that the Lord redirected him. Ongoing planning means asking, "Do we continue this activity simply because we have done it in the past? Does it still fit in and accomplish our goals?"

Goals should be "SMART": Specific, Measurable, Agreed-Upon, Realistic, and Time-and-money conscious. Once goals are set, they need to be communicated to the congregation in a way that the congregation will take ownership of the goals.²

How Will You Get There?

When considering a college ministry, many practical questions need to be addressed as well. For example, where will the ministry fit in? Will it be a part of your youth program, with your youth pastor splitting his time between the high school and college youth? Will it be a part of your young adult program, with adult volunteers handling the Bible studies and activities? Or would you rather your campus ministry be a "stand alone" program—with a campus pastor doing the major part of the outreach and discipleship?

Establishing a college ministry is not an income-generating endeavor. What resources are you willing to commit? Often the financial commitment a church is willing to make to a ministry gives an indication of how important that ministry is to them. If you have a campus missionary working through your church and supported by other churches and individuals, very few of your church resources are necessary. However, a part-time staff member who also serves as part-time campus missionary creates a greater financial obliga-

tion. A third option, requiring the greatest financial commitment, would be to add a staff member who is fully funded by the church and hired specifically to minister to the campus.

Making It Happen

Establishing church philosophy and goals may seem a rather elusive task when faced with the pressing burden of taking the cross of Christ to the secular campus. But it is the responsibility of the senior pastor to lead a congregation into realizing the great ministry potential on the campus, and then to oversee the building of an outreach that is effective and long-lasting.

On the college campuses of America, the fields are truly "white already to harvest" (John 4:35). The Lord Himself commands us to "teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19) and to be "witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). We do not have to travel any farther than the closest college or university to meet this challenge.

Marsh Fant is the pastor of Harvest Baptist Church in Rock Hill, South Carolina. He was saved while a freshman at Clemson University. He and his wife, Gretchen, have five children. You may reach him at mfant@compurium.net.

¹ For helpful, extensive information and consultation, contact Joe Miller at Discovering Life Ministries. Mr. Miller will provide a thorough, professional study at a nominal fee (www.buildmychurch.com).

² A sample of church goals may be found at <http://www.HBCRockhill.org/ministries.asp?ID=44>.



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Chaplain Update

I have been in Iraq now for 41 weeks. I have traveled thousands of miles on the most dangerous stretches of roads known in the world. I have preached over 160 times while here. I have been directly involved in combat operations. I had a front-row seat in the battle for Samarra in September and October. I have been present for the deaths of many soldiers. Why? Because these soldiers need Christ. They need to know the care and provision of the Good Shepherd. These soldiers need to feel the safety that He affords them. I must be with my soldiers . . . go where they go . . . experience what they experience. I go to

pray, sustain, and encourage them to keep going. I travel weekly between two bases, providing counseling and encouragement. I conduct services at both locations. I have seen soldiers respond to the hope of the gospel—my presence here, I pray, has made a difference in their lives.

As the war on global terrorism continues, we as chaplains battle for the souls of men. Satan, the great deceiver, has mounted a complex and coordinated attack to steal the hearts of our young people. We must offer them the truth. God bless the FBFI! May the Lord bring more chaplains on board to keep a conservative, Bible-believing presence in uniform.

Chaplain Gary T. Fisher

Chaplain Fisher is currently serving in Samarra, Iraq, Mackenzie Base, and travels to cover Wilson Base in Ad Dawr (where Saddam Hussein was captured).

Holy Land Tour

The *FrontLine* trip to the Holy Land, originally scheduled for February 16-25, has been rescheduled for December 26-January 4. This would make a memorable Christmas gift! For more information, call 800-376-6856 or e-mail info@fbfi.org.

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SOUND WORDS

HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS—2 TIMOTHY 1:13

First Partaker

Preaching on Catastrophes

As I write now, it's just weeks since monstrous tsunami waves overwhelmed the perimeters of twelve Asian nations and yanked over 200,000 souls out into eternity in just a few shocking minutes.

Preachers are called to interpret to a bewildered world its catastrophes. But preaching commentators schooled in Yahweh's messages are as rare as "one among a thousand" (Job 33:23), or "thin on the ground," as William Perkins put it over four hundred years ago. In their absence or due to their silence, "the blind lead the blind" and "both . . . fall into the ditch" (Matt. 15:14).

"This is the finger of God," Pharaoh's magicians once conceded (Exod. 8:19). "God is angry," muttered Indonesia's Muslim imams to the world's media just this morning. So much for natural disasters. But what God is responsible, then?

Enter the only man qualified to interpret. "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken . . . shall there be evil [calamity] in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos 3:1, 6).

"That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil [calamity]; I the Lord do all these things" (Isa. 45:5–7).

"The mountains quake at [because of] him" (Nah. 1:5). "He overturneth the mountains by the roots" (Job 28:9). "Thou rulest the raging [swelling] of the sea" (Ps. 89:9). He "divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar" (Jer. 31:35). "For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places" (Ps. 135:5, 6).

To those who bitterly shake their heads and fume an angry "Why?!" toward Heaven, Jeremiah retorts from the smoldering ruins of Jerusalem, "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" (Lam. 3:39).

And to forestall the self-righteous, our Lord probes, "Think ye that they were sinners above all?" Right answer? "Nay" (Luke 13:4, 5).

These are the urgent revelations the world needs in its final hours. "It is the last time" (1 John 2:18), and "He hath promised . . . I shake not the earth only, but also heaven" (Heb. 12:26). "All these things shall be dissolved" (2 Pet. 3:11).

The Christian interpreter alone holds the key to this knowledge. To use it, however, he must be of a certain stripe. "If evangelical Christianity is to stay alive she must have men again, the right kind of men," A. W. Tozer warned the churches half a century ago in *Of God and Men*. "She must repudiate the weaklings who dare not speak out," he directed. "She must seek in prayer and much humility the coming again of men of the stuff prophets and martyrs are made of."

The Church has known such insistently interpretive voices in its past. What did they say to the world about its calamities? How were they received? Here are examples of two who seized catastrophic moments to wring out of them something for Christ.

Charles Wesley on Earthquakes

It was February 1750, and forty-one-year old Charles Wesley was at his home in Bristol, on the English Channel, when he received word that London had experienced an alarming earthquake. His brother John wrote, "It was about a quarter after twelve that the earthquake began at the skirts of the town. There were three distinct shakes, or wavings to and fro, attended with a hoarse, rumbling noise, like thunder."

That was the 8th of February. Exactly one month later, March 8th, Charles was preaching at a 5:00 A.M.

"The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits"
(2 Tim. 2:6)

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London service when the city was again shaken by an earthquake. This one, however, was far more severe. "I was just repeating my text," Charles related, "when it shook the Foundry [the chapel on City Road which still stands to this day] so violently that we all expected it to fall upon our heads. A great cry followed from the women and the children."

Wesley exhibited remarkable self-possession and, no doubt due to the Holy Spirit's enablement, was able to immediately recall and cry out assurances from Psalm 46, "We will not fear, though the earth be removed, and the hills be carried into the midst of the sea: for the Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." God "filled my heart with faith, and my mouth with words," Wesley gratefully recounted.

The quake must have been particularly prolonged, for people were able to observe that it first moved west, then east, and then west again. It included "a strong, jarring motion, attended with a rumbling noise, like that of distant thunder." Yet remarkably, there seem to have been few people who were actually injured, though houses were shaken, chimneys tumbled, and some of the large stones in Westminster Abbey's newest spire were thrown down.

In a letter addressed to his wife, Sally, on March 17, Charles wrote, "Blessed be God, many consider this day of danger and adversity. . . . Our churches are crowded as at the beginning. . . . I preached again this morning. . . . The poor weavers, English and French, filled the place and heard me gladly."

All London panicked, and the next morning the Foundry was packed. "Many flocked to the morning word, and were yet more stirred up thereby," Wesley wrote in his diary. "I have scarce ever seen so many at intercession."

On March 10 Charles took his text from Isaiah 24. There he had found verses that he had scarcely noticed before: "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. . . . The foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down; the earth is clean dissolved; the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again."

For several days he found that his preaching seemed to be accompanied by unusual revival. "Very great

awakening power," he noted.

Not surprisingly, the event became the occasion for the Devil's work as well. A "madman," as Wesley termed him, predicted a return of the quake during the night of April 4. The result was a general panic. Hyde Park was filled with men, women, and children who ran crying, "An earthquake! An earthquake!"

But Christ's servants turned it all for good. George Whitefield went down to Hyde Park at midnight and preached to the frightened people. Wesley did the same at the Foundry.

In a letter to Mrs. Gwynne, a friend, Charles wrote, "Yesterday I saw the Westminster end of the town full of coaches and crowds flying out of the reach of divine justice, with astonishing precipitation. . . . Most of them watched all night; multitudes in the fields and open places, several in their coaches, many removed their goods. London looked like a sacked city. . . . Many came all night knocking at the Foundry door, and begging admittance for God's sake." Happily he was also able to report, "Our own poor people were calm and quiet, as at another time."

Wesley seized the strategic opportunity not only for preaching but also for writing. This included a series of nineteen hymns published under the title *Hymns Occasioned by the Earthquake, March 8th, 1750*.

"They describe in strong and glowing terms the power and sovereignty of God," he explained. "His merciful and righteous government over men; national and personal sins; the divine forbearance and longsuffering; the uncertainty of life, and all earthly possessions; and the durable nature of the joys which are connected with Christian godliness, both in time and eternity."

One can only imagine the offense it must have given to godless men upon being informed that Wesley's followers were singing such lines as the following.

How weak the thoughts, and vain,
Of self-deluding men;
Men who, fix'd to earth alone,
Think their houses shall endure,
Fondly call their lands their own,
To their distant heirs secure!

Or,

Now, Lord, to shake a guilty land,
Thou dost in indignation rise,
We see, we see thy lifted hand
Made bare a nation to chastise,
Whom neither plagues nor mercies move,
To fear thy wrath, or court thy love.

But many seem to have humbled themselves. In a letter addressed to his wife, Sally, on March 17, Charles wrote, "Blessed be God, many consider this day of danger and adversity. . . . Our churches are crowded as at the beginning. . . . I preached again this morning. . . . The poor weavers, English and French, filled the place

and heard me gladly.”

What they heard was stout. In a sermon titled *The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes*, later printed for the general populace, Wesley boldly confronted Londoners with a Biblical interpretation of the alarming events. He first proved from Scripture that earthquakes are the work of God. “Earthquakes are set forth by the inspired writers as God’s proper judicial act, or the punishment of sin: Sin is the cause, earthquakes the effect, of his anger. So the Psalmist: ‘The earth trembled and quaked; the very foundations also of the hills shook, and were removed, because he was wroth.’ (Psalm xviii. 7.) So the Prophet Isaiah: ‘I will punish the world for their evil,—and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible:—Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger’ (Isa. xiii. 11, 13).”

Then he tersely asked, “If we provoke him to lay waste our earth, and turn it upside down, and overthrow us, as he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, shall we not have procured this unto ourselves?” He pressed convicting questions: “Had we no reason to expect any such calamity? no previous notice? no trembling of the earth before it clave? no shock before it opened its mouth?” Finally he appealed for repentance. “In the name of the Lord Jesus, I warn thee once more, as a watchman over the house of Israel, to flee from the wrath to come. . . . The Lord was in the earthquake, and put a solemn question to thy conscience, ‘Art thou ready to die?’ Is thy peace made with God? Was the earth just now to open its mouth, and swallow thee up, what would become of thee? . . . Hadst thou perished by the late earthquake, wouldest thou not have died in thy sins, or rather gone down quick into hell? Who prevented thy damnation? It was the Son of God! O fall down and worship him! Give him the glory of thy deliverance, and devote the residue of thy days to his service.”

For those interested, the complete text of the sermon can be instantly obtained by typing its title into Google’s search engine. Judge for yourself whether Wesley’s energetic response to catastrophe isn’t the right one for all of us when the world shakes.

Spurgeon on Calamities

Tuesday, September 3, 1878, was a warm sunny day in southern England, perfect for enjoying an outing. Thousands of Londoners spent it enjoying a river trip on one of the several paddle boats that offered a few hours of relaxed cruising from the capital to points up and down the Thames and back by nightfall. One of them, the *Princess Alice*, was returning to London Bridge that evening jammed with seven hundred happy excursionists when suddenly a gigantic steel coal ship loomed up out of the dusk and sheared almost entirely through her. In just five minutes she sank.

Even today it takes at least hours, sometimes days after a disaster to determine the number and names of

the missing. It’s no wonder that two nights later, when C. H. Spurgeon entered the Metropolitan Tabernacle’s Thursday evening service, there was still great uncertainty over many who had been passengers on the lost steamer.

Spurgeon took as his text that night David’s inquiry over his son after the battle, “Is the young man Absalom safe?” In these words he saw the natural response of a distressed father at the prospect of having lost his son. He observed that his congregation could certainly sympathize due to the event on the Thames just forty-eight hours earlier.

[Spurgeon] advised the entire assembly to turn the anxieties created by the recent calamity into a “direction which may be really useful, and tend to the glory of God.”

“How many there are at this present moment who have, no doubt, other very weighty businesses, but whose one only thought just now is, ‘Is the young man safe? Is my son safe? Is my father safe? Is my wife safe?’ A vessel has gone down in the river with hundreds on board, and weeping friends are going hither and thither from place to place, hoping and yet fearing to identify the corpse of some beloved one; longing to find one who has not been heard of since the fatal hour, and trembling all the while lest they should find him or her among the bodies which have been drawn from the cold stream.”

The preacher related that in the case of one family who lived near him, a household servant had been left with the baby while the rest of the family had booked the day on board the *Princess Alice*. “Nobody has ever come home,” Spurgeon reported sadly. “You may imagine the anxiety of that servant with her little charge,” he went on, “to find master and mistress and the rest never coming home.”

Taking advantage of the tender feelings possessing most of his congregation that night, Spurgeon directed his sermon both to parents who ought to be faithfully inquiring into the spiritual state of their children, and to children who ought to be heeding their parents’ counsel to seek the safety of their souls. He advised the entire assembly to turn the anxieties created by the recent calamity into a “direction which may be really useful, and tend to the glory of God.” The sermon (#1433 in the 24th volume of the *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*) is an outstanding example of a preacher’s sensitivity to a nationally grieved disaster and his employing it wisely for spiritual good.

By the Lord’s Day, September 8th, most of the *Princess Alice* passengers had been accounted for. Only sixty-nine had managed to escape. Six hundred and forty

men, women, and children had perished in the Thames' polluted, murky depths in a matter of minutes.

With the news now in, Spurgeon shared his own heart in that morning's service: "I do not know how you feel, my brethren, but as for myself, a heavy cloud seems to hang over me all the day. The overwhelming calamity of last Tuesday, so crushing and so far reaching, of which we must have spoken to each other, I suppose, every hour during the past week, cannot be removed from the thoughts of our minds or from the affections of our hearts."

He then sorrowfully announced that he knew "five, at least, of those who are in church membership with us have been removed." There was no doubt an audible collective gasp throughout the congregation at that news.

The preacher went on to note that the whole City of London was perplexed. Everyone was asking friends if they'd sustained a loss in the disaster. So, "we had better think of it with some practical purpose," Spurgeon counseled.

Spurgeon addressed a question often asked at such times. If God is truly omnipotent and in control, why doesn't He intervene miraculously?

Spurgeon then wisely turned his hearers' attention to the only subject that ultimately soothes in the face of tragedy—Divine sovereignty: "I believe that this sudden grief comes, like every other event, from God, and comes as a voice from God to this our city—a voice which, we trust will be heard and regarded."

"I know," Spurgeon acknowledged, "that many minds are so stunned by this tremendous blow, that they can hardly think of God in connection with it, and half wish to believe that the Omnipresent was not there." But "if he be not everywhere, he is nowhere" and "if his hand ruleth not over evil it is not omnipotent."

In addition to offering his congregation several passages that explicitly assert God's control over all His creation, including even the terrible consequences of crimes, Spurgeon addressed a question often asked at such times. If God is truly omnipotent and in control, why doesn't He intervene miraculously? Over twenty-five percent of the message is in answer to this question and includes at least half-a-dozen insight-

ful principles concerning the consequences of God's always preventing tragedy. For instance, Spurgeon pointed out, "if God were to interpose in the case of all calamities it would involve many evils." Farmers would be encouraged to idleness, knowing God would not allow famine. Men would neglect sanitary laws in the complacency that a merciful God would not allow poor people to die of disease. Men would carelessly pollute and defile God's earth in every imaginable way, turning "the whole earth into one monstrous globe of rottenness." But on the contrary, Spurgeon said, "Pests and plagues and fevers have their good side. . . . They arouse man to discover the laws of his being, and thus they benefit the race."

Spurgeon's handling of Divine sovereignty in this sermon is masterful. But no more so than his example of then turning the message to comfort sore hearts with the assurance that God does, in fact, miraculously intervene in human affairs in order to spare men from disaster. His entire third point confronts troubled listeners with the superlative instance of this, taking as its text words which could not have been more apt in view of the week's sad event, "He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters" (Ps. 18:16).

"Oh, the matchless uplifting which he gave to us when he drew us out of many waters by his own suffering life and agonizing death," Spurgeon exclaimed. "Fix your eyes, brethren, upon the work of Jesus. See the human race all sinking. Behold how hopeless and helpless it is; and see him descending, walking the waters, snatching with his own right hand sinking men and women from the billows of destruction, and landing them on the Rock of Ages."

It was a natural time for sharing personal testimony. Spurgeon related his own self-wreck before God took him by his Holy Spirit. "I began to feel his grip tightening upon me," he recalled. And then, at last, "he drew me right out of the many waters and made my heart to sing for joy." Application followed for the backslidden and for those fearing death. The whole sermon ends upliftingly with words the preacher could have either whispered convincingly or shouted triumphantly, "To His name be praises."

John Newton and the Newspaper

"I read the newspaper," said John Newton, "that I may see how my heavenly Father governs the world." An excellent example for preachers. In God's Word we read what He's going to do. In the newspaper we read when and how He's done it. We stand in the pulpit with a Bible in one hand, the newspaper in the other, and the only infallible interpretation of the world's events on our lips. Therefore we are unique among the news commentators of the age, so that by God's design, the world will reel blindly under its disasters unless it hears our preaching. "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it" (Prov. 3:27). ☞



Dr. Mark Minnick is the pastor of Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina, where he has served on the pastoral staff since 1980. He speaks frequently in churches and at conferences across the nation and ministers regularly on mission fields around the world.

Bring . . . the Books

Warrior for God—The Life of Ulrich Zwingli

For God and His People: Ulrich Zwingli and the Swiss Reformation

Jean Henri Merle d'Aubigné

Translated by Henry White

Edited by Mark Sidwell, Ph.D.

© 2000, Bob Jones University Press

Recently, researching a project led to reading through the history of the Protestant Reformation. I was reminded that God raised up scores of men, well-known and little-known, who were instrumental to the success of the Reformation. One of the more significant influences was Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli. Fortunately, BJU Press has produced a very readable version of Henry White's translation of Jean Henri Merle d'Aubigné's classic biography on Zwingli, *For God and His People*.

Zwingli was born on January 1, 1484, just seven weeks after Martin Luther. Though their lives would scarcely intersect, both of these men would play similar and significant roles in establishing the true gospel of Christ on the European continent. Zwingli received his Master of Arts at Basel in 1502, staying on to continue his studies. In 1505, an instructor arrived on the campus whose views profoundly affected Zwingli. He proclaimed, "The hour is not far distant in which the scholastic theology will be set aside, and the old doctrines of the church revived. . . . Christ's death is the only ransom for our souls." Later as a young parish priest under the pressure of pastoral responsibility, Zwingli turned in desperation to the Scriptures for help. He determined to learn Greek that he might better understand and interpret the Bible. In 1516 he moved to Einsiedeln where he continued studying the Scriptures in order to meet the needs of the flock in his care. During these years Zwingli memorized all of Paul's epistles. God was reforming the heart and soul of a future Reformer.

In 1518, Zwingli was called to serve at the great cathedral in Zurich. So powerful were his sermons that in a short time more than two thousand people had come to know Christ. Although Zwingli continued to preach as a Catholic priest, his message was very similar to Luther's.


Works done out of Jesus Christ are worthless. . . . Since everything is done of Him, in Him, and by Him, what can we lay claim to for ourselves? Wherever there is faith in God, there God is; and wherever God abideth, there a zeal exists urging and impelling men to good works. Take care only that Christ is in thee, and that thou art in Christ, and doubt not that then He is at work with thee. The life of a Christian is one perpetual good work which God begins, continues, and completes.

The pope attempted to win Zwingli by means of flattery and feigned friendship, but his delegates actu-

ally mounted several fruitless attempts on his life. By early 1523, leaders of the opposition posted articles forbidding the preaching of "Lutheranite doctrines." Zwingli appeared before the Great Council at Zurich and presented sixty-seven counter

theses establishing that salvation is found in Christ alone. The die was cast irrevocably, and though it would eventually lead to the establishment and preservation of truth, it would come at great personal cost to the Reformer and his family. The more Zwingli studied and preached the Scriptures, the greater the reforms he introduced to his people. One of these reforms allowed priests to marry. Zwingli married a young widow in his congregation, Anna Reinhardt, who proved to be a worthy companion equal to the task God had given her warrior husband.

In 1525, Zwingli successfully argued for the abolishment of the mass and established a more Biblical view for the observance of the Lord's Supper. It was on this point that Zwingli and his fellow Reformer, Luther, differed. In 1526, after an extended and difficult meeting, Luther declared that while they agreed on all other points, their disagreement over the Lord's Supper disallowed him from viewing Zwingli as a fellow Christian. He could extend to him kindness and appreciation as a friend, albeit one who was yet outside of Christ. Nonetheless, the Swiss Reformation was clearly advancing against Rome along the same lines as the Reformation in Germany.

In Germany, Luther rejected the aid of temporal earthly powers as the primary means of bringing about his religious reforms. However, Zwingli and his followers took a different path, and "in stretching out their hands to the mighty ones of the earth and grasping the sword, were fated to witness a horrible, cruel, and bloody catastrophe fall upon the Word of God—a catastrophe which threatened to engulf the evangelical cause in the most furious whirlpool." As Zwingli's reforms began to divide the Swiss Church, the Swiss states found themselves at cross purposes. The political leaders determined to unify the religious leaders by force. An army was mounted and marched against Zurich to settle the rebel province and deal with the schismatic priest, Zwingli. Zurich mounted an army and compelled Zwingli to accompany them as their chaplain. On October 11, 1531, Zwingli was killed at the Battle of Kappel. Soon, the advances made for the gospel were all but reversed, and the heavy hand of Catholicism forcibly returned Switzerland to her fold. But all was not lost. Out of these ashes the embers of the gospel still burned, to be fanned to full flame in the city of Geneva by another reformer, John Calvin. 

*"... when
thou comest,
bring with thee
... the books"
(2 Tim. 4:13)*

Dr. Sam Horn is Vice President of Academic Affairs and Ministerial Training at Northland Baptist Bible College in Dunbar, Wisconsin.

Straight Cuts

Adding to Our Faith? (2 Peter 1:5)

Second Peter establishes that our *salvation* is secured by means of a faith that gives us equal standing with the apostles themselves because our faith, like theirs, is not *attained* but *obtained* (1:1). Everything necessary for our *sanctification* has also been provided by God (1:3), accessible to us via priceless promises (1:4). Then comes the “catch.” You must “add” to your faith, by your own “diligence,” a catena of graces and virtues (1:5-7). Several of these are identical or parallel to graces described elsewhere as aspects of the fruit produced by the Spirit. How can we be commanded to “add” by “diligence” what only the Spirit can produce?

The imagery conveyed by the word “add” unlocks the door of verses 5 to 11—a significant door to unlock, since possessing these qualities is *vital for our fruitfulness and usefulness* (1:8-9), *crucial to confirming our election by God* (1:10), and *essential to our expectation of an abundant entrance into Christ’s kingdom* (1:11). Peter chose his words carefully, and so should we. Other words could have conveyed the conventional sense of “add” (*epitithemi* or *prostithemi*). Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, Peter selected a distinctive term: *epichorege*.

Biblically, this term appears in contexts of (1) God’s provision for those who share financially with other believers (2 Cor. 9:10), (2) God’s supply of the Spirit to believers (Gal. 3:5), and (3) God’s furnishing of our ability to minister to others (1 Pet. 4:11). God does not do the sowing for us, but supplies what we need (seed) to sow. God does not minister for us, but furnishes the ability we need to minister.

Etymologically, this word is related to the root for words such as “chorus” or “choreograph” (see *choros*, “dancing,” Lk. 15:25). In general contexts it came to mean “furnish.” How do we get from “dance” to “furnish”? William Barclay elaborates on Galatians 3:5, “In the ancient days in Greece at the great festivals the great dramatists . . . presented their plays; Greek plays all have a chorus; to equip and train a chorus was expensive, and public-spirited Greeks generously offered to defray the entire expenses of the chorus. . . . The word [“ministereth”] underlines the generosity of God” in providing the Spirit that is essential for our salvation and security and Christian living.

Peter’s word choice originally described the action of a wealthy patron who agreed to sponsor the training and production of a form of classical Greek drama known as a *chorus*: “Greek tragedies consisted of dra-

matic episodes separated by choral odes. . . . A chorus danced and sang and chanted the odes to musical accompaniment. . . . A wealthy citizen called the *choregus* provided the money to train and costume the chorus” (*World Book Encyclopedia*). No patron wanted an inferior production to give the impression that he was too poor or stingy to provide the very best. Consequently, the verb came to denote a *lavish expenditure* that furnished everything necessary. *But the patron did not do the performing himself.* That’s the analogical significance in Peter’s choice of words.

Leaning exclusively on etymology for interpretation may be an “exegetical fallacy.” But ignoring the etymological imagery suggested by a rare word choice is like insisting that a modern writer cannot purposefully choose a word with a known etymological connotation. The image conveyed by this word’s original meaning survived in its primary sense of “furnish[ing] (at one’s own expense)” what is necessary (BAGD).

Our task is not to “add” graces that are ultimately beyond our power. “Supplement” (ESV) is small improvement, but “supply” (NASB) is nearer. The best connotative translation is probably “in your faith, *furnish* . . .” Just as a patron *furnishes* whatever is necessary without personally producing the end result, or a stage crew *furnishes* the stage with all the props and backdrops necessary for a successful production, *our task is to furnish, set the stage, make full provision for the divine drama of sanctification to be produced by the Spirit of God in our lives.*

I like the paraphrase *bankroll* or *finance* because it implies that we “pay the price” without personally producing the end result. *Cultivate* is helpful since you do *nothing* to *make* a seed grow; but you do *everything* in *your power* (“applying *diligence*”) to insure conditions *conducive* to growth—weeding out negative influences and providing positive conditions (water, fertilizer).

I am to exercise *diligence* in *furnishing* the means and influences through which the Spirit of God can produce these characteristics in my life. Negatively, I remove influences (literature, companions, entertainment options) and habits (laziness, poor priority choices) that will choke out the Spirit’s production of these qualities. Positively, I “set the stage” by pursuing and exposing myself to the influences that the Spirit uses to produce these qualities (Scripture, focused prayer, Christian literature, godly fellowship). We do not “add” these virtues to our lives, but furnish the necessary means, “finance” their production, lavish abundant opportunities for the Spirit to produce a first-class performance of sanctification in us (Hiebert, 2 Peter, 177-178). Then Christ will *furnish* (*epichorege*) for us a spectacular entrance into His kingdom (1:11). ☞

“Rightly
dividing
the Word
of Truth”
(2 Tim. 2:15)

Dr. Layton Talbert is a professor of Theology and New Testament Exposition at Bob Jones University and Seminary in Greenville, South Carolina.

Saved . . . Not of Works

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. 2:8, 9)

Special occasions such as Christmas and Easter provide great opportunities to proclaim the clarity of the gospel to the lost. Often at these times folks come to church who trust religion but don't truly know Christ. They are seeking to establish their own righteousness and must see their lost condition.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said of Ephesians 2, "We are here face to face with one of the most crucial statements that is to be found anywhere in Scripture. . . . We can never repeat that too frequently" (*God's Way of Reconciliation*, p. 128). But a person must understand the simplicity of the gospel message. "If we are not right at the beginning, we shall be wrong everywhere" (p. 129). Yet many people fail to recognize their situation.

Trapped and Helpless

At 11 a.m. on Mother's Day 1998, fifty-year-old Ray Shipway prepared to enter the murky, chilly waters of the California Delta. He was a marine salvage operator who had been hired to raise a sunken yacht that had become a hazard to boaters. His plan was to dig a trench through the mud under the boat and then slip a cable under the keel, to which airbags would be attached. When the bags were inflated, the boat would be raised.

The visibility in the water was about two feet. Shipway left his son Ray Jr. and coworker Ryan Contioso above as he swam to the sunken boat. Using a high-pressure hose called a water blaster, he dug a tunnel on one side. He then began working on the other side to connect the tunnels. After about forty minutes he had a tunnel two feet wide and fifteen feet long with walls of hard-packed mud. Lying on his stomach he pushed the water blaster ahead of him as he began to crawl under the boat through that narrow tunnel. He worked his way forward until his head and shoulders were under the boat.

Suddenly the walls of the trench behind him began to cave in. He felt tremendous pressure on his legs. Then the mud and sand collapsed around his shoulders and face, pinning him! The water blaster was pinned under him in a position that kept his mask clear so oxygen could flow through his regulator. Ray tried to tug on the air hose to signal his helpers on the surface that he was in trouble, but it too was pinned in the mud.

For almost an hour he clawed at the mud before giving up exhausted. He fought the urge to panic, for he knew if he panicked, he would die. One hour turned into two, and then three. Finally Ryan entered the water to check

on Ray's progress and found the air hose buried in a collapsed tunnel. He was able to reach into a small hole and squeeze Ray's foot sending a silent message of hope.

The call for help went out, and rescue boats converged on the sight. A sixty-foot marine salvage crane was brought to the scene and hooked to the sunken, rotating boat. After being connected by a strap through the portholes, the crane began to lift the boat that pinned Ray. He felt the pressure being lifted off him, and every instinct urged him to swim away, but from experience he knew that a load didn't always get lifted on the first try. With tremendous self-control he fought the impulse to flee. The strap tore through the rotted wood, and the boat sank back down. Fear swept through the hearts of those on the surface.

Divers rehooked the boat to the crane, and finally, after almost five hours of being trapped, Ray Shipway was free. As he broke the surface of that cold, muddy water a cheer went up! Ray Shipway was saved.

Imagine the exhilaration Ray Shipway experienced that day! How would you feel? How would you react? Would your life ever be the same? Ray commented, "Down there in the darkness, it was crystal clear to me what really matters in this life." But greater than life is eternal life. Have you ever felt that sense of hopelessness, trapped in the mud of sin and pressed down by the rotting boat of guilt? The only hope is in Christ to set you free ("Diver Down!" in *Reader's Digest*, April 1999, pp. 100ff.).

Trying or Trusting

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:3, 4).

Verse 3 explains what they are "doing," while verse 4 tells what Christ has "done." The contrast between DO and DONE is probably one of the most complete contrasts in the English language.

- If you're doing, you're not done. If you're done, you're not doing.
- You do until you are done.
- How long do we eat a meal? Until we are done.
- How long do we drive to church? Until we arrive. (<http://www.angelfire.com/ky/dodone/DOD.html>)

"It is not what I do that I trust in but what Christ has done for me" (D. L. Moody, *The Biblical Illustrator*, Ephesians, ed. Joseph S. Exell, p. 158).

"To every preacher of righteousness as well as to Noah, wisdom gives the command, 'A window shalt thou make in the ark.'"

Charles Spurgeon

Puritan preacher Stephen Charnock reasoned, “Nothing in the world can raise itself to a higher rank of being than that which nature has placed it in; a spark cannot make itself a star, though it mount a little up to heaven. . . . So neither can our corrupt nature bring forth grace, which is a fruit above it. *Effectus non excedit virtutem suae causae* [The effect cannot exceed the power of its cause]: grace is more excellent than nature, therefore cannot be the fruit of nature” (<http://www.puritansermmons.com/charnock/charnoc3.htm>).

Martin Luther stated, “There is no such thing as merit; but all who are justified are justified for nothing (gratis), and this is credited to no one, but to the Grace of God. . . . For Christ alone it is proper to help and to save others with His merits and works” (quoted by R. C. Sproul, *Faith Alone*, p. 133).

Pope Leo X authorized a commission to evaluate Luther’s teaching, and on June 15, 1520, a papal bull was signed condemning Luther as a heretic, declaring that “a ‘wild boar is loose’ in the vineyard of Christ” (*ibid.*, pp. 63–64).

Tell Them That Again

Charles Spurgeon considered punctuality one of those “little virtues that may prevent greater sins,” but on a certain occasion, due to circumstances beyond his control, he was late for a preaching engagement. When he arrived, the service was in progress and his grandfather, who was preaching from Ephesians 2:8, said, “Here comes my grandson! He may preach the gospel better than I can, but he cannot preach a better gospel; can you, Charles?” Together they co-preached the wonderful message of salvation by grace alone, not of works. At times, as Charles Spurgeon spoke, his grandfather would say, “Good! Good!” Once he said, “Tell them that again, Charles.” We too must “tell them that again,” that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, and not of works (<http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/3479.htm>).

Yes, There Is Hope

At 7:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 23, 1939, a newly built submarine, the USS *Squalus* (pronounced “skway-lus”), left the Portsmouth Navy Yard and headed out of the Piscataqua River (the border between Maine and New Hampshire) to run a test off the coast of New Hampshire. This nineteenth and final test for the 310-foot diesel-electric sub was designed to insure that the sub could avoid enemy attacks. The vessel was to reach her top surface speed of sixteen knots and then dive to fifty feet in sixty seconds. On board that day were 59 men, five officers, 51 enlisted men, and three civilian inspectors. At 8:40 a.m. the commanding officer, Lt. Oliver Naquin, gave the order, “Take her down!”

As the vessel submerged, it suffered a catastrophic failure with an air intake valve, and within five minutes came to rest on the ocean floor in a cloud of churning

mud, 243 feet below the surface. Three compartments were flooded, killing 26. Of the unflooded areas, the control room had 23 men, and the torpedo room ten. Over 240 feet below the surface, with the water temperature surrounding the vessel just above freezing, 33 men waited—trapped in a prison house of death.

After several hours communication was briefly established through a buoy telephone, but soon lost again. Each one of the crewmembers was aware that if a submarine went down the crew was as good as lost. In the entire history of the submarines, no rescue attempts over twenty feet had been successful.

When the rescue squad reached the stricken sub, one of the divers tapped with metal on the hull in an effort to locate the sailors. He then placed his helmet up against the side of the vessel. He heard the familiar tapping—the longs and the shorts—of the Morse Code. What was the message that was being spelled out from within? It was repeating the same question. The question was, “Is . . . there . . . any . . . hope?”

That is the cry of the ages: “Is there any hope?” The hope for sinners is proclaimed in Ephesians 2. “But God, who is rich in mercy,” has provided the way of salvation not by human achievement. For the 26 men trapped in the *Squalus*, there was a ray of hope because others were trying to figure out how to rescue them. Lt. Commander Charles B. Momsen (“the Swede”) sought a viable plan of rescue. As the *Squalus* sat at the bottom of the ocean, divers worked to free the trapped men. Swede Momsen adapted a diving bell that had never been tested at such depths, and he, along with many others, labored to free the trapped men. Finally, after forty hours on the ocean floor, the last man was freed! Yes, there was hope! But the hope was not in themselves, but in Lt. Commander Momsen and the others. They were saved, but not of *their* works. (Adapted from several sources including information posted at the following websites: www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq99-1.htm; www.subnet.com/fleet/ss192.htm; <http://www.cisatlantic.com/trimix/other/squalus.htm>; <http://www.hampton.lib.nh.us/hampton/history/military/usssqualus/>; <http://www.nlag.net/Sermons/Transcripts/mjisthereanyhope.htm>; http://sonrisechurch.com/easter_2003.htm.)

Nothing I Bring

“There are only two kinds of religion in the world. The one says, ‘Nothing in my hands I bring’; the other says, ‘Something in my hands I bring’” (Walter B. Knight, *Knight’s Treasury of Illustrations*, p. 338).

Together the redeemed may glorify God, and together sing:

Could my tears forever flow,
Could my zeal no languor know,
These for sin could not atone—
Thou must save and Thou alone:
In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to Thy Cross I cling.

(“Rock of Ages”, Augustus M. Toplady) 

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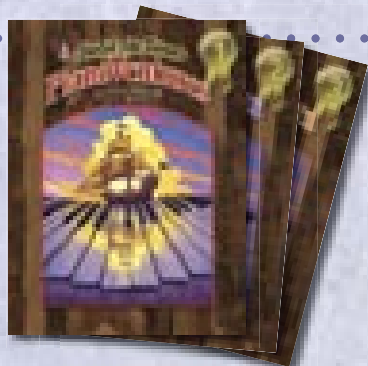
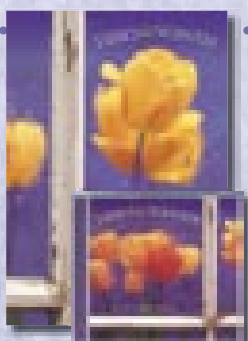
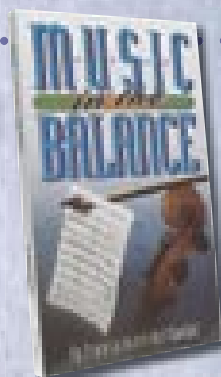
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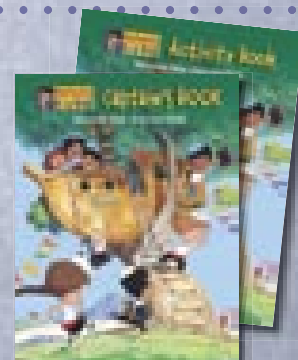
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The Place of Apologetics in Campus Ministry

David W. Greear II

Today's secular college campus is truly a "marketplace of ideas." The typical student is exposed to a plethora of new ideas, philosophies, and worldviews. Many of these students are also away from home and are thus forming, perhaps for the first time, their own personal philosophy of life. They are often sifting through the various worldviews they encounter in search of truth and answers to life's "big questions." Thus they are very impressionable and open to both truth and error. Many students are more open to the gospel than they have been in the past or ever will be again in the future.

This is also a critical time for students from Christian homes who, unlike their peers in Christian college, will often either fully accept or reject the faith of their parents during this period of life. This is because they will typically be forced to defend or deny their beliefs in the face of postmodernism, multiculturalism, humanism, socialism, atheism, Darwinism, and various other "isms."

For these reasons it is wise to include an apologetics emphasis in a secular college campus ministry. First Peter 3:15 commands us to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." Apologetics can be used "offensively" in order to share with students the "reason[s] for our hope." Apologetics can also be used "defensively" against all intellectual or philosophical attacks against God, the Bible, or the Christian faith.

Practically speaking, such an emphasis can be implemented in several ways. One method is by presenting apologetic themes in lectures or Bible studies (stand-alone or in a series). These could be led by the campus worker or by guest speakers who are specialists in the subject matter. Themes might include the creation vs. evolution debate, the Bible and archaeology, the reliability of the Bible, the uniqueness of Christianity, the resurrection of Christ, and similar themes. If well-advertised, such lectures have the potential of drawing a good crowd, especially if they are scheduled early in the semester.

A variation of the apologetic lecture is to present both sides of a topic with a campus debate or forum. The benefit of a debate is that it will inevitably draw a better crowd than a lecture and give your ministry much visibility on campus.¹ However, there are drawbacks to this method. An obvious negative is that we are giving opponents of Christ an open forum to espouse their unbelief, and we never know exactly what they will say. Therefore, we need to be careful about whom we select to represent us in a debate and to bathe him in prayer for wisdom! It is also important to find an opponent who is willing to keep the debate cordial and stick to the issues; otherwise both sides could

look bad and the Christian's testimony could be harmed. In light of 2 Timothy 2:23–26, we should give serious consideration to this danger.

There are also many good apologetic videos available that can be used effectively on campus or in an apartment or dorm setting. These work well with small groups or with individuals. Excellent titles are available on the subject of creation² and other apologetic themes. Often, unsaved students who feel intimidated about attending a Bible study (or more likely are simply too apathetic or lazy to do so) are willing to watch a video. It requires no effort on their part!

A second useful tool to use on campus is apologetic literature. Officially recognized student organizations are given the opportunity to set up literature tables at various locations on campus. In addition to gospel tracts and brochures about church and the campus ministry, tracts with apologetic themes can be used.³ We have used several over the years and have found that students are much more likely to take these than the ordinary tracts. The apologetic tracts typically try to answer difficult questions and therefore rouse the attention of curious students. Books on apologetic themes are also excellent, but the expense can be prohibitive in some cases.⁴

Finally, we should simply make it clear to students that we are available to answer their difficult questions. In addition to personal assistance and literature we can also direct them to a few good websites that provide excellent Biblical answers to tough questions.⁵

There are many benefits to such an apologetics emphasis. One of the most obvious benefits is that unbelieving students can be exposed to God and His revelation of Himself, be it "natural" revelation (Ps. 19:1–6; Rom. 1:18–20) or "special" revelation. Many students who would never come to a Bible study or church might be willing to come to a lecture, video, or debate that revolves around an apologetic theme.

Not only can apologetics be used to draw a crowd, but often it can be an effective means to grab the attention of unbelieving students. At the very least this results in an open opportunity to share the gospel. Students who would never read a tract might listen to a presentation of the gospel that follows an apologetic presentation. Apologetics grabs their attention and arouses their curiosity so that we can present the gospel message.⁶

A third benefit of an apologetic emphasis is that it presents the opportunity to answer legitimate questions about the Bible. Such questions are often obstacles for unbelieving students, but when they are answered it prepares a way for the gospel message. As a result of the anti-Bible climate in their classrooms (and in many parts of our society),

students have false opinions or legitimate questions about the Bible and Christianity that serve as intellectual roadblocks preventing them from receiving the truth about Christ. It is as if we need to remove the weeds of humanistic and postmodern thinking in order to prepare the soil for the seed of God's Word.

A fourth benefit of using apologetics is that the arguments reveal the objective truth of the gospel in a real world. These arguments establish a basis of evidence or faith that is far more likely (under the Spirit's control) to produce genuine conversions. A subjective, self-centered presentation of the gospel appeals to perceived human needs but is not a sufficient motivation for true salvation. Many presentations of the gospel, both on and off campus, offer a "try it and see" attitude about God's marvelous plan rather than an absolute trust that relies on Christ alone as the means for salvation from sin. It is possible to persuade students to "pray the sinner's prayer" when they really have no understanding that their sins are an offense against the holy Creator God. This is particularly true on the average secular campus where the postmodern/multicultural mindset rejects any kind of objective reality, especially in the realm of religion. Students with this mindset may actually believe in God in a vague sense and be attracted to the promises, real or distorted, of the gospel. But if they have doubts or misunderstandings about truths, such as their accountability to a Creator God or the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, their hearts are not prepared for the gospel. If students struggle with the exclusiveness of the gospel for salvation or even the character of God (in light of the existence of evil and suffering in the world, for instance), they are probably not ready to trust Christ fully. Apologetics should establish the foundational truths of the gospel.

Finally, although we typically think of apologetics being primarily for the purpose of reaching the lost, it is equally useful for strengthening Christians' faith. Christian students, who are accustomed to having their faith attacked, can be greatly encouraged in their faith through the use of apologetics as it verifies the Bible and their beliefs. Apologetics can also help believing students become better equipped to share their faith with their peers.

In spite of the many benefits, it would be unwise to proceed with the use of apologetics in a campus ministry without first considering the potential dangers and excesses. First, there is the danger of intellectual pride, which uses apologetics simply to win arguments (Col. 4:6; 2 Tim. 2:24, 25). It is possible to win an argument and lose a man's soul in the process. If we convey a proud and arrogant attitude; if we are unwilling to listen; if our tone is angry, harsh, or demeaning, even the most brilliant of apologetic arguments will probably not have a positive effect on the students.

Second, there is the danger of underestimating the depth of man's depravity and thereby substituting apologetics

for the indispensable elements of the Word of God and the Spirit of God in a man's conversion (John 16:8; 1 Pet. 1:23).⁷ No one can argue a man into the Kingdom of God! Unless the Holy Spirit illumines and draws a man, the greatest of apologetic arguments will have no effect on him. His mind is blinded (Rom. 3:11a; 2 Cor. 4:4) and his will is hardened (Rom. 3:11b, 12). "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still!"⁸ For this reason, debates and apologetic lectures alone are never sufficient to bring a man to Christ. They must be joined with or followed by a clear gospel presentation.

Third, there is the danger of using outdated, disproven, or even blatantly untrue apologetic arguments. It is never ethical or wise to use arguments from questionable sources, such as the Internet, that cannot be reasonably authenticated. To do so is to harm the cause of Christ by inviting skepticism against ourselves, the Bible, and the Christian faith in general. The use of spurious apologetic arguments could potentially harden a thinking student for years to come. Therefore, it is important to do our homework and verify our facts as much as possible. Examples of spurious or dubious Christian evidences that pop up frequently today might include:⁹

- NASA computers have found evidence of a missing day, proving Joshua's "long day."
- Fossil footprints in the Paluxy River bed in Texas prove that dinosaurs and man co-existed.

- A dead plesiosaur caught by a Japanese fishing vessel near New Zealand in 1977 shows that dinosaurs still exist today.

- The Ark of the Covenant, Noah's ark, the Ten Commandments, and a sample of Christ's blood have been discovered.¹⁰

Trying to tie all loose ends together to answer questions or explain dilemmas is another potential danger. The key here is that none of us have all the answers. Although legitimate science, archaeology, history, and philosophy can help us by supplementing and verifying Biblical data, the Bible never claims to tell us everything there is to know (Deut. 29:29). There are some questions that Scripture simply leaves unanswered, and we are unwise if we attempt to dogmatically prove our theological preferences to students in such areas. The thinking student will demand proof and see through unfounded dogmatism.

Finally, and perhaps most important, is the danger of trying to "prove" Scripture with apologetics, thus unintentionally placing human reason above the authority of Scripture. We should always begin our apologetics with the presupposition that the Bible is true and accurate, regardless of the findings of science or philosophy. Then we can use legitimate arguments from science or philosophy to confirm and defend the Bible. However, if we assume that

*Many students
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or ever will be
again in the
future.*

the Bible must fit with the prevailing theories of science or philosophy, it will be necessary to reinterpret the Bible in order to force it to fit.

In conclusion, apologetics can be a useful tool in the ministry toolbox, but it is only a tool. It has limitations. It can never substitute for the Holy Spirit's application of God's Word in the human heart. Because this is true, students will not be born again through apologetics alone. However, the potential benefits of apologetics used appropriately and in conjunction with the gospel message are great, especially on a college campus. Apologetics may not be a tool that appeals to every student, but it appeals to many students. Therefore we should strive to use apologetics wisely for God's glory and submit it to the Lord of the Harvest for the results.

David W. Greear II serves as Campus missionary with Campus Light Ministries at Marshall University (Huntington, West Virginia) and at West Virginia State University (Institute, West Virginia). He also speaks periodically on campuses and in churches on the subject of creation vs. evolution.

¹ The assumption that more will likely be saved from the larger crowd is not necessarily valid, however. It is actually harder to work the gospel into a debate format. We did hold one such debate, and although it was our best attended event ever, we know of no professions of faith as a result.

² *A Question of Origins* is particularly good on this subject.

³ One example is the "Questions" series of tracts published by *Answers in Genesis*. Each features a perplexing/controversial question. Titles include: *Is There Really a God? What Really Happened to the Dinosaurs? Where Did Cain Get His Wife? Why Is there Death and Suffering?* Also good, but brief, is *Radio Bible Class's* "10 Reasons to Believe" series. Titles include *10 Reasons to Believe in the Christian Faith, . . . in Christ Rather than Religion, . . . in a God Who Allows Suffering, . . . Christ Rose From the Dead*, etc.

⁴ *Refuting Evolution*, by Jonathan Sarfati, an excellent anti-evolution book, is available for greatly discounted rates from *Answers in Genesis* for free distribution to public high school or secular college students.

⁵ Examples include www.answersingenesis.org, www.icr.org, www.christiananswers.net.

⁶ Note Acts 17:16–34.

⁷ See John C. Whitcomb Jr., "Contemporary Apologetics and the Christian Faith," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 134 (April-June 1977), pp. 99–102, for a real-life example from the college campus.

⁸ Henry M. Morris, *Many Infallible Proofs* (El Cajon, CA: Master Books, 1974), p. 99.

⁹ See Jonathan Sarfati, *Refuting Evolution 2* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2002), pp. 210–24, for more details and examples.

¹⁰ "Has the Ark of the Covenant Been Found?" *Creation ex Nihilo*, Vol. 21 (2), pp. 10–14.

Mail Bag Continued

be a consistent conclusion. If it is clearly unscriptural, then we'd best not be part of it. However, I would maintain that the lack of a clear directive on the subject leaves it in a Rom. 14 category, as a matter of conscience. . . .

Having said that, I would welcome further articles on debatable subjects such as this (even ones that may not sew up every loose end) because they can be genuinely helpful in helping believers think Biblically through the issues we all face in real life.

A Brother in Kansas

I always enjoy reading the *FrontLine* magazine and usually receive great benefit from the articles. Thank you for producing such a high quality and spiritually uplifting publication.

I would like to express some disagreement with the article in the November/December issue regard-

ing cremation. We are missionaries in Japan where few people have a choice for disposing the remains of the dead other than cremation. Should we teach the people here that cremation is really not right but we have to do it anyway? That would be very confusing and could easily lead to justification of doing other wrong things because we have no choice.

It is certainly true that cremation was and is practiced by false religions around the world. Preserving and burying the body is also practiced by many unsaved people and false religions worldwide. Actually, the cult of preservation was developed by the ancient Egyptians for totally misguided and unbiblical reasons. A case could be made from that perspective that embalming and burying the body is wrong.

I believe a better approach to the subject would be to have opinions given from both sides of the

issue. How to conduct funerals and the proper disposal of the body is not something taught in Scripture. Culture usually dictates how people dispose of dead bodies and hold funerals. Christian Americans usually think cremation is strange because they are not used to it. Japanese would generally think that burial of the body is a waste of space and unhealthy. By the way, cremated remains are also considered buried when they are placed in the tomb.

When the Bible clearly speaks, we must obey. When such is not the case, we need to acknowledge the issues involved and allow that practices different from ours may also be acceptable. That is the way God intended it to be; otherwise He would have detailed every aspect of our lives.

May the Lord bless you and give you wisdom in your vital ministry.

*John Knox
Missionary to Japan*

"I suspect that, after all, there is only one heresy. That is, the sinner's quarrel with the authority of God."
—John Duncan

"Truth must be spoken however it be taken."
—John Trapp

"When men have orthodox judgments and heterodox hearts, there must be little love to truth."
—William Gurnall

"The brain is as strong as its weakest think."
—Eleanor Doan

"As every divided kingdom falls, so every mind divided between many studies confounds and saps itself."
—Leonardo da Vinci

"The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of Hell, and a hell of Heaven."
—John Milton

"Evangelicals at the moment appear to be divided into two camps—those who trust the human intellect to the point of sheer rationalism, and those who are shy of everything intellectual and are convinced that thinking is a waste of the Christian's time. Surely both are wrong."
—A. W. Tozer

"It is well to open one's mind but only as a preliminary to closing it . . . for the supreme act of judgment and selection."
—Irving Babbitt

"If you keep your mind sufficiently open, people will throw a lot of rubbish into it."
—William A. Orton

"Write down the thoughts of the moment. Those that come unsought for are commonly the most valuable."
—Francis Bacon

"There is no expedient to which a man will not resort to avoid the real labor of thinking."
—Sir Joshua Reynolds

"If the student fails to learn the teacher fails to teach."
—Anonymous

"To spend too much time in studies is sloth."
—Francis Bacon

"Reading after a certain [time] diverts the mind too much from its creative pursuits. Any man who reads too much and uses his own brain too little falls into lazy habits of thinking."
—Albert Einstein

"Many persons think they have open minds; actually their minds are just vacant."
—Wingspread

"The mind should be an eye to see with rather than a bin to store facts in. The man who has been taught by the Holy Spirit will be a seer rather than a scholar. The difference is that the scholar sees and the seer sees through, and that is a mighty difference indeed."
—A. W. Tozer

"The mind is the atmosphere of the soul."
—Joubert

"Drudgery is as necessary to call out the treasures of the mind as harrowing and planting those of the earth."
—G. E. News

"Little minds are tamed and subdued by misfortune, but great minds rise above it."
—Washington Irving

"I am what is called a *professor emeritus*—from the Latin *e*, 'out,' and *meritus*, 'so he ought to be.'"
—Stephen Leacock

"When a man assumes a public trust, he should consider himself as public property."
—Thomas Jefferson

"If I had only three remaining years of ministry, I would spend two of them studying."
—Donald Grey Barnhouse

"The most important things in life are the thoughts you choose to frame."
—Marcus Aurelius

"What we think about when we are free to think about what we will—that is what we are or soon will become."
—A. W. Tozer



"... I've been wondering Pastor, . . . how do you get down to teach the adult Sunday school class after the nine o'clock service and finish in time for the service at eleven?"

Compiled by Dr. David Atkinson, pastor of Dyer Baptist Church, Dyer, Indiana.

Do You Have Power?

Martha Mazzaferro

Early one Sunday morning as I was communing with the Lord, the phone rang. It was our oldest son who lives next door.

"Hi, Ma."

"Good morning, Tony."

"Do you have power?" I knew we did because our electric fan was cooling our house of the summer heat. I soon learned that he did not have power, but for some reason, we and his neighbor on the other side still did have power. I know now this was no mistake. God had something He wanted me to think about.

As I was later driving the thirty minutes to church, the Lord brought to mind my son's question: "Do you have power?" This time, though, it had a different meaning—a spiritual one. For weeks I could not get this thought out of my mind. Things I read and meditated upon kept bringing me back to this question.

About two months later, I awoke early, as usual, to keep my daily appointment with the Lord. The days were growing shorter, so it was still dark. While walking to my special spot, the power suddenly went out. This is not unusual, as we live in a small town that has its own independent electric power source. I knelt in prayer, thinking it would soon be back on, but it wasn't. I lit an oil lantern so I could read my Bible and write in my journal. The day had begun with no electrical power in the house. I thought about the inconvenience that can turn into hardship as I recalled those who had lost power for many days after Hurricane Floyd. Then I remembered the devastating winter storm where we lost our power for about seventy-two hours.

No power for us means no lights, no cooking facilities, and, because we have a well, no water. We do have a wood stove that heats our whole house and can be used for cooking. There is a gas grill on the outdoor deck that can be used if the storm winds are not fiercely blowing the snow and ice around. God is good. My hubby and I and our two elderly moms did manage through this power outage. We filled buckets with snow and melted it on the wood stove to have water, and I cooked on the same stove. Every room in the house has either an oil

lantern or candles so that we are always prepared.

How many of us really think about the electric power we use? We flip a switch and expect the lights to go on or the heat to rise from our stoves or furnaces. We turn on the faucet and don't even think about the water not flowing out—that is, until we lose the power. It isn't long before we realize how difficult it is to function without it. Oh, it can be done, especially at first. It may even be fun when we think it will be for only a short time. We can make a game of it; light the candles, start the fires for our food and heat, and pretend we are in the pioneer days or just camping out. But what happens as the minutes turn into hours or even days?

The fun disappears and may even turn into despair. The strong may become weak, and the weak become weaker, maybe even to the point of death if the power is not soon restored.

As I was writing this, the electricity came back on. The feeling was uplifting when the lights went on and the hum of the refrigerator began. The power is back—all is well. It reminded me of the feeling I experienced after the winter storm and hours of no power. Everyone's temperament, which had become uneasy, soon became calm. The fear disappeared. The daily routine of life is much easier to deal with when there is electric power surging through the home.

What an eye-opener this should be! All man's intellect that has given us these wonderful inventions is useless without the blessing of God!

One gust of wind, one heavy deluge of rain, one lightning strike can put out all the electric power we depend upon for our "necessities" and comforts. I love the way God speaks to us in His Word: "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding. When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures" (Jer. 51:15, 16). The next verse says, "Every man is brutish by his knowledge." "Brutish" could be "dull-hearted" or "unreceptive."

*His power is seen
in the works of
His creation. He is
the one who gives
the power to have
wealth and health.
He has power over
life and death,
both physical and
spiritual. . . .
Again the question
haunts, "Do you
have power?"*

When it comes to God and His power, this is so true.

Power belongs to God. God is all power and thus the source of all power. Jesus Christ, God's Son and one with God the Father, is power. By God's power Heaven and earth were made "and all that therein is." His power is seen in the works of His creation. He is the one who gives the power to have wealth and health. He has power over life and death, both physical and spiritual. To those who receive and believe on the name of Christ, He gives power to become His children and have eternal life with Him. With this belief and repentance comes the gift and power of the Holy Spirit. Again the question haunts, "Do you have power?"


Does my day begin with the power of God? The power of the Spirit convicts us of sin so we can live the Christian life and be holy, for He is holy. It is the power of the Spirit that gives us the understanding we need as we daily read God's Word. This then enables us to die daily to self and not be conformed to the world but to have His transforming energy flow into our mind so it is daily renewed. So then, we might ask ourselves; "Why are there times I am weak and weary? Why is the lack of the power of God evident in my life? Have I quenched the Holy Spirit's power? Has there been a break in the direct line? A power outage? Has there been a gust of sin that has blown debris into the heart and broken the line? Has a deluge of worldly pleasures flooded the ear and eye gate of my soul? Has a strike of sudden disaster hit and destroyed

the faith and trust I had in my God?"

Just like losing electric power, we may be able to function for a time without the full power of God, but as the days go on we will become weaker. The "fun" of sin we thought we were having will turn into despair. The power needs to be restored. When we repent, God mends the break in the line so the power is back and all is well. Then when someone asks, "Do you have power?" we can say most assuredly, "Yes!"

In the physical world, we are told to set up a watch for an approaching storm. In the spiritual world we are told to "watch and pray." There is definitely an enemy who would seek to sabotage Christians' power in some way, but "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). To those who look for their power source from something or someone other than God, beware (2 Peter 3:17, 18)! There is a day coming that God's full power will be known and then every knee will bow before Him and say, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. . . . We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. . . . Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Rev. 4:11; 11:17; 19:6).

Martha Mazzaferro is a freelance writer living in Anderson, South Carolina.



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Advertising for Evangelistic Meetings

Advertisement is a crucial matter in promoting evangelistic meetings in our local churches. We know that the business world will spend huge amounts of money for just thirty seconds of advertisement for their product. They know that in the long run it will pay for itself and be the means of sizable profits. In like fashion, we know it will cost our local churches to advertise well for a meeting. The cost of posters and cards is not cheap; paying for advertising on the radio or in the newspaper can be expensive. However, the cost will never outweigh the blessing of seeing someone saved or a Christian restored to fellowship with the Lord.

Many years ago in Fairmont, West Virginia, our church was preparing for a revival meeting with evangelist Bill Hall. Our pastor made 8½" by 11" fliers to promote the meeting. Many people in our church put them on the side windows of their cars. My cousin Forest Summers, who was instrumental in bringing me to the Lord, also placed one of these fliers on the window of his car. A young man who worked with my cousin saw the advertisement and came to the meeting. That night he accepted Christ as his Savior; he began to grow spiritually and eventually went to Bob Jones University to prepare for the ministry. He is now the pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Morgantown, West Virginia, and his name is Bennie Moran. Pastor Moran was reached for the Lord because he saw that flier for the revival meetings.

On another occasion we had a week of meetings in Michigan, and the pastor had placed an advertisement and a picture of me in the newspaper. Two ladies saw the ad, and when they saw my name they became curious about my nationality and wondered if I might be Lithuanian—which I am. These ladies came to the morning service, and as I started preaching I mentioned that I'm part Lithuanian. Both of these ladies were also Lithuanian, and their hearts became open to the preaching of the Word. They both came forward to accept Christ as their Savior! These are just a couple of examples of what can happen when we advertise for our meetings—we never know how God will use our efforts.

I'd like to give just a couple of suggestions that might be helpful in catching people's attention in advertising. Before the Lord called me to preach, I worked for a newspaper company in West Virginia; they always strove to be succinct in their columns and headings for articles. We can apply this same principle. First, give specific dates, times, and the location of the meeting. Second, give a brief statement for the purpose of the meeting. Third, try to include a short biography of the speaker. It's interesting to see the responses this will arouse.

Once I had a meeting in St. Cloud, Minnesota, with Pastor Dennis Campbell. In his advertisement in the newspaper, he included the fact that I was a converted Roman Catholic. The head nun of the convent in St. Cloud called

Pastor Campbell and told him she was upset about the ad. She then asked him if I would come to the convent and talk to the nuns about why I left the Catholic Church. Pastor relayed the message, and I agreed to talk to them. When I arrived, the head nuns and several other nuns questioned me for almost an hour. I used the Word of God to answer every question. At the close of the conversation, I asked the head nun how long she'd been there. She told me that she'd been a nun for twenty-six years. I told her I was shocked that she didn't know any more about the Bible now than she did when she first began, and that she and the rest of the nuns didn't give me one single Bible verse; all they used were the traditions of the Church. The nun bowed her head in shame and couldn't answer me. There won't always be negative responses like this one; most of them will be positive and effective in bringing people to the meetings. I personally believe that the Lord allowed that experience to occur just so I could share the Scriptures with those nuns.

I believe the best advertisements for a meeting come from the lips of church members who invite others to the services. In John 1:41, Andrew said to his brother Simon Peter, "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." Peter was brought to Christ through Andrew, whose mouth was the most effective means of advertising. When Christ talked to the Samaritan woman at the well and revealed that He was the Messiah, she went back into the city and said in John 4:29, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Many were saved because of her verbal witness for Christ.

I challenge all of us to never give up advertising, either in the newspaper or by our own lips; the Lord will use both to further His cause and save the lost!

Jerry Sivnksty may be contacted at P.O. Box 141, Starr, SC 29684 or via e-mail at evangjivn@aol.com.

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ANTIDOTE TO FALSE TEACHING:

The single most effective method for studying any book of the Bible is accessible to every believer. You do not need to know Hebrew or Greek, earn a seminary degree, or purchase a shelf-full of commentaries. All these are helpful, of course. No carpenter spurns tools that will make his work more efficient and more polished. But these tools are not essential to acquiring an accurate understanding of the major themes and distinctive message of the various documents that make up God's Word to us. If you are reading this paragraph, you already possess the most important hermeneutical tool you need to study any book of the Bible. The question is, how best to use it.

I am, of course, referring to the tool of reading. But not just any kind of reading. When you receive a letter from someone important to you, you probably do not read a few paragraphs and then lay it aside to finish over the next couple of days. Letters—even long ones—are read in one sitting. There is no substitute for reading the letters of the New Testament (including the longest ones) in single sittings. Several times. (In fact, there is no substitute for reading any book of the Bible in a single sitting, except perhaps Psalms.) No other study method allows you to get your mental hands on the major themes and emphases and message of any of the Scriptural writings.

Reading Letters as Letters

Versification is a mixed blessing. It allows you to locate specific passages efficiently. But it also creates a tendency to read any portion of the Bible as a collection of artificially isolated sacred sayings; it distracts from the sense of flow and context. All Bibles have verse numbers, but many now are at least printed in paragraph format (as opposed to dedicated versification, where each verse is indented as an individual unit), which is an enormous aid to contextual reading and interpretation. But thanks to personal computers and Bible programs, you can also create your own customized Bible text. If you have never made this part of your study of the NT epistles (it is workable but more unwieldy with longer books), try it. Copy the text of an epistle from a Bible program into a word processor document, eliminate all the verse numbers, run the verses end-to-end according to the punctuation, and divide the document into paragraphs—something like it might have appeared when it was composed as a letter by the original writer. Now print it out, sit down, and read it through in one sitting like you would any other letter you receive. Read it several times, like you would any other important letter that you either cherished or wanted to be sure you understood clearly.

Our focus in this column is 2 Peter, which you can read aloud (another helpful practice) and with ease in about ten

minutes. We refer to it as the "book" of 2 Peter, but Peter did not write this as a "book" of sayings subdivided into chapters and verses. He wrote it as a unified letter. As you read it that way, look for repeated words or phrases that tip you off as to the major subjects he is addressing and the most important things he is trying to emphasize. Try to identify key exhortations or warnings. Use different colored pencils or highlighters to distinguish recurring themes.

"Wait a minute," you may be tempted to think. "Isn't that being kind of overanalytical? If I am reading this as a *letter*, doesn't that imply some degree of casualness? After all, most of *my* letters are not riddled with 'key words' and 'theological themes.'" But when we write any letter of importance, we have one specific thing in mind (sometimes more than one). If the recipient's response is important to us, we weigh our words and choose our vocabulary carefully. There will usually be a strong thematic flavor not only to what we say but also to how we approach our topic and to how we express ourselves. Sometimes it even affects how we open and close the letter.

One characteristic of NT epistles is that they are *occasional*. That doesn't mean "periodic" but that they are *occasioned* by some need or event; they were not merely "casual." Paul and Peter and John didn't just "drop a note" to see how folks were doing and catch them up on the latest apostolic goings on. They wrote with specific things in mind, specific needs to be addressed, specific ends in view. And more importantly, they wrote under the directive influence of the Holy Spirit. In fact, this epistle contains one of the key NT affirmations of this doctrine of inspiration (1:19–21).

Initial Impressions of Peter's Second Letter

Having read Peter's letter at a single sitting (preferably more than once), how would you divide up the major sections of the letter? What themes or recurring words do you notice? Let's start from the end of the letter.

The Coming of the Lord. This theme is the dominant focus in chapter 3. Peter mentions it directly in 3:4, 10, and 12. But if you read carefully, you notice that everything he says in 3:1–16 revolves around this emphasis on the Lord's return: its certainty (3:4–7), its apparent delay (3:8, 9), its suddenness and inescapability (3:10), its effect on our present life (3:11–14), and its practical application to the point of his letter (3:17, 18).

False Teachers. This theme is even clearer in chapter 2. Though "false teachers" are directly mentioned only once (2:1), there are nearly thirty more pronominal references to them throughout the rest of the chapter. This is clearly the particular threat that prompted Peter to write. The

STABILITY AND GROWTH IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST (2 PETER)

introduction of chapter 1 sets the stage for this, and the focus of chapter 3 on the certainty of the Lord's return (about which some, he says, had been generating doubt) drives home the point of our ultimate accountability to Him.

Stability. Summarizing a single theme for chapter 1 is a little more difficult. Peter's concern for his readers surfaces in chapter 1 and keeps re-emerging throughout the letter. How would you sum up the essence of Peter's burden for his readers? He wants them not to *stumble* (1:10), even though they are already *established* in the truth that they have (1:12), because the *unstable* are particularly susceptible to false teaching (2:14). The *unstable* twist and misuse the Scripture (3:16); in contrast, he wants them to beware lest they fall from their own *steadfastness* (3:17). I don't think you'll find a better single summary word for Peter's burden than the word "stability." And just as with animals and plants, stability comes from *growth*—a secondary theme that surfaces regularly.

The Knowledge of Christ. Their stability is rooted in something quite specific and concrete. Peter urges his readers to be grounded in the knowledge of Christ (1:2, 3, 8). But a mere surface knowledge of Christ that is not vital and productive and life-changing is still susceptible to deception (2:20). Believers must continue to grow in their knowledge of Christ (3:18).

The Centrality of Scripture. Stability and growth in the knowledge of Christ is not a mystical experience. It has a very tangible source—the *word(s) of God*. Note the many and diverse references to the Scriptures, and its indispensability for their stability and growth in the faith (1:4, 15, 19, 20, 21; 3:1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 13, 15, 16).

Putting It All Together

How do all these themes relate to one another? The essence of Peter's second letter can be summed up this way: *Spiritual stability, (growing in your knowledge of Christ through the Scriptures) is the antidote to the dangers of false teaching.* Peter's central concern in this letter (occupying the middle chapter) is the threat of false teaching (chapter 2). If his readers are not to "fall" for it (1:10; 2:14; 3:17), they must be stabilized in their faith. Their knowledge of Christ must not be a shallow, nominal, surface profession; it must be a living, fruit-bearing, progressively life-changing force (chapter 1). There are serious consequences for what we believe and how we live, for Jesus Christ is returning as Judge (chapter 3).

Value of Spiritual Stability: Personal Assurance (chapter 1)

- *Stability starts with apostolic faith* (1:1). This faith gives us the same acceptance and standing before God as the

apostles, because we get our faith the same way they got theirs. This faith is not attained (something we ourselves produce or acquire by our own effort) but *obtained* (granted, given by God).

- *Stability is rooted in knowledge of Christ* (1:2, 3, 5–6, 8; 2:20; 3:18). Stability does not come from how much we know, but how *well* we know *Him*. Knowledge of Christ is not mystical but practical.
- *Stability is possible because of divine power and promises* (1:2–4). God has already provided everything we need to grow in grace and escape the corrupting influences of the surrounding world. We access it through His promises.
- *Stability comes from growth in Christian graces* (1:5–11). Why? Because our growth confirms the reality of our calling and election (1:10–11; cf. 1 Thess. 1:4–7). The assurance that "you will never stumble" implies stability.
- *Stability is reinforced by constant reminding* (1:12–21). Note Peter's burden to *remind* his readers (1:12, 13, 15; 3:1, 2). Remind of what? The word of God (1:15, 19, 20). We already noted the emphasis on the importance of Scripture for spiritual stability.

Necessity of Spiritual Stability: Danger of False Teachers (chapter 2)

- Why you need to be spiritually stable: so you won't be led astray or fall away. As Peter reminded believers in his first letter, the Devil is always actively on the prowl for victims, whether through temptation or false teaching (and often the two go hand-in-hand, 2:18–20).

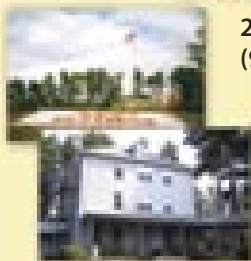
Encouragement to Spiritual Stability: The Coming Day of the Lord (chapter 3)

- *Remember our words* (3:1, 2).
- *Recognize the scoffers* (3:3–7).
- *Realize the divine perspective* (3:8–13).
- *Final call to spiritual stability* (3:14–18).

Beware . . . but Grow

In his closing words (3:17, 18), Peter succinctly sums up his double-edged message to the believer, one edge a negative warning and the other a positive exhortation: *beware . . . but grow*. Peter crams into this conclusion almost every thematic element of the epistle, confirming all our instincts about the sum and substance of this letter: *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before [knowledge of Scripture], beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked [warning of false teaching], fall from your own steadfastness [spiritual stability]; but grow in grace [exhortation to progressive growth] and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ [knowledge of Christ].*

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The Twixters

Sociologists are now classifying a new group in society: "the Twixters." They view them as "betwixt" adolescence and adulthood. Estimates range from 18–25 years of age to 18–30 years of age. Formerly, the 21st birthday was viewed as the beginning of adulthood. "A recent US Gallup poll found that 90 per cent of young people report being very close to their parents, which contrasts with 40 per cent of baby boomers in 1974 who said that they would be better off without their parents. Twixters and their parents get on with each other. . . . This group can afford to take their time to grow up as they have the luxury of having relatively affluent, cashed-up parents who act as a safety net or a financial back-up in times of need. Oh, and a large number of them still live at home." (<http://ezinearticles.com/?Meet-The-Twixters!&id=12990>) A *Time* magazine poll of 106 adults, ages 18–29, found that only 61% of respondents considered themselves adults for varying reasons. "Adulthood" was defined as

- "Having first child"—22%
- "Moving out of parents' home"—22%
- "Getting a good job with benefits"—19%
- "Getting married"—14%
- "Finishing school"—10%

(<http://www.time.com/time/covers/1101050124/graphic/index.html>, accessed 2/9/05)

High-Risk Drinking

"The average age that students have their first drink of alcohol is 12 or 13 now," said Brandon Basteed, founder and CEO of Outside the Classroom, which offers an online alcohol education course that UConn and many other colleges are requiring students to take. "Thirty percent of high school students describe themselves as binge drinkers. By the end of the first semester in college, the number spikes to 60 percent," Basteed said. Experts say that alcohol consumption has not changed among college students in the last few years, but what has changed is high-risk drinking.

"Alcohol is being more linked to competition. They are not just drinking to be with friends and to socialize. They are drinking to see how far they can push it," Basteed said.

"Tom Szigethy, UConn's new substance abuse director, agreed that competition and a desire to push drinking to the extreme are behind the trend. 'There definitely is a level of extremism, like extreme sports and all the other extreme stuff you see. Everything is living on the edge,' he said. 'The attitude among people in that age group is that if such and such drank to this level and had a good time, then I'm going to drink even

more and have an even better time.'" (Hartford *Courant*, 10–10–2004)

Binge Drinking on Campus

"Nationally, 44 percent of college students report binge drinking—five drinks in a row for men, four for women—at least once in the previous two weeks. Half of those students do it more than once a week. While the percentage of binge drinkers has stayed about the same over the past 11 years, the amount they drink in one sitting has increased. . . . Members of fraternities and sororities tend to drink more than other students. Nationally, there are more than 1,400 alcohol-related deaths among college students each year, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Most die in traffic accidents.

(<http://www.journalstar.com/articles/2004/11/29/local/doc41aa8de30713f284825611.txt>, accessed 12/18/04)

Suicides on Campus

"Suicide, the second leading cause of death among college students according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, ranked only behind accidents. In the last 25 years, the suicide rate among 15- to 24-year-olds has nearly tripled, averaging one suicide every two hours and eleven minutes as indicated by the National

Vital Statistics Reports of 2002. The American College Health Association surveyed 16,000 college students from 28 campuses in 2000. Results showed that 9.5 percent of students had seriously contemplated suicide, while 1.5 percent had actually made a suicide attempt. In the one year period of the survey, more than half reported feeling very sad, over a third reported feeling hopeless and 22 percent reported feeling so depressed they were not able to function. However, only 6.2 percent of males and 12.8 percent of females surveyed reported a diagnosis of depression, leaving a large number of students without treatment or diagnosis." (<http://www.ksusentinel.com/news/2005/02/09/News/College.Suicides.Escalate.In.Numbers-857535.shtml>, accessed 2/9/05)

Mixed Message

Rolling Stone magazine has accepted an ad for Zondervan's new Bible translation entitled *Today's New International Version*. The ad, which was originally rejected by the magazine, is apparently aimed at young people. (http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20050127/news_1c27relbrief.html, accessed 1/30/2005)

Saving the Planet, Not Souls?

"The preachers in England have fallen on hard times since they pretty

much turned Jesus out of the church, but the archbishop of Canterbury has come up with a novel idea to make himself relevant: If you can't get 'em to church, get 'em to the greenhouse. The churches of England—the churches of the Church of England—are going eco-friendly. Dr. Rowan Williams wants his vicars to serve only organic bread and wine for holy communion, to urge parishioners to ride to service in car pools, recycle 'waste products,' and to sell only 'fair trade products' at church fairs and Bingo suppers. Anglicans should consider the ethics of the High Streets and shopping malls. If he can't save the world, the well-meaning archbishop has set out to save the planet, one weed at a time."

(<http://washingtontimes.com/national/20050204-121603-5206r.htm>, accessed 2/9/05)

Care for Creation

Over 1000 religious leaders from 35 states have signed a statement entitled "God's Mandate: Care for Creation." "The statement objects to Bush's policies on global warming, toxic emissions from coal-fired power plants and lack of emphasis on conservation. The National Council of Churches is circulating the statement to 250,000 clergy and lay leaders across the country." (washingtonpost.com, *God's Mandate: Putting the White House on Notice*, 2/6/2005)

American Idol Worship Leader

The Southern Baptist Convention news site (bpnews.net) reports that one of its "worship leaders," Jeff Johnson, is still in the running in the highly publicized *American Idol* competition. Johnson reports, "Back in

NOTABLE QUOTES

Nationwide, suicide is the second leading killer of college students. —nami.org

A 10,000-student campus can expect one student suicide a year. That doesn't count all the highly disturbing attempts. —Hara Estroff Marano, "Crisis on Campus," <http://cms.psychologytoday.com/articles/pto-20030501-000005.html>

To seek tranquility by stopping our ears to the cries of human pain is to make ourselves not Christian but a kind of degenerate stoic having no relation either to stoicism or Christianity. —A.W. Tozer, *The Next Chapter after the Last*

If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works? —Proverbs 24:11, 12

The environment is a values issue. . . . There are significant and compelling theological reasons why it should be a banner issue for the Christian right. —Rev. Ted Haggard, president of the 30 million-member National Association of Evangelicals, quoted in the *Washington Post*, February 6, 2005, p. A01

We Christians have never been the whole bolt of cloth—always just a remnant. We have never been the loaf of bread—only the leaven. We have never been the side of meat—only the salt. But as leaven lifts the loaf and as salt preserves the meat so the Christian community has before it the challenge to influence the degenerate society in which it exists. —Grantland Rice

The ideal environment does not guarantee perfect performance. Remember, Adam was in paradise when he fell. —Vance Havner

The first duty of the church is not to evangelize but to get ready to evangelize. —Vance Havner

Dost thou see a soul with the image of God in him? Love him, love him. Say to thyself, "This man and I must go to heaven together someday." —John Bunyan

September, I auditioned in New Orleans with around 8000 other people. At first, I just thought it would be fun to be part of the craziness of auditioning for the show. But, four auditions later, the judges said, 'Yes, you're going to Hollywood!' for five days of taping last November." The article by Leann Callaway insists that "Johnson's faith was evident during the show's Jan. 25 episode, when he was shown praying with a group of contestants and, in a voice-over, told of his ministry as a worship leader and said he hopes to use his *American Idol* experience to share his faith." (<http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?ID=20082>, accessed 2/9/2005)

PA Hate Crimes Law

Opponents of Act 143 of the Pennsylvania Hate Crimes Law passed in November 2002 denounced the inclusion of "sexual orientation protection" in the law. They pointed out that the law could be used to deprive Christians of the right to free speech. This criticism was largely ignored by Pennsylvania legislators until a pro-homosexual event in October of 2004. There, outspoken Christians were charged with "ethnic intimidation" under the law. Now 17 legislators have co-sponsored House Bill 204 which would remove the wording included in November 2002. Five of the Christians arrested at the event are facing decades of imprisonment and heavy fines because the city prosecutor maintains that the bullhorn used was "an instrument of crime." (<http://headlines.agapepress.org/archive/2/72005b.asp>, accessed 2/9/2005)

This news is presented to inform believers. The people or sources mentioned do not necessarily carry the endorsement of the Fundamental Baptist Fellowship.

Your Church and Student Mission Trips

Pearson Johnson

College students frequently ask us what we recommend they do in the summers. Of course, we recommend that students consider taking at least one summer during their college years to participate in a cross-cultural mission trip. Mission trips never fail to be eye-opening and life changing experiences for those who go. Trips can be organized through a board, a school, or with an individual missionary. Regardless of who organizes and promotes the trips, however, we must encourage students to connect with their local church before leaving, while on the field, and upon returning from the trip. In this issue focusing on college ministry, we want to encourage college students and churches to purposefully partner together in their missions experiences so that students are launched effectively from their local churches into the regions beyond. A college student mission trip can be a life-changing experience not only for the student but for the entire church. Here are six specific launch points to keep in mind when preparing for a mission trip.

Launch Point 1: Go Local before Going Global. Students should develop habits of service through their local church at home first, before they hit the field. Conversely, churches should purposefully provide opportunities for their students to get involved in the church and exercise their gifts at home. The priorities of evangelism and discipleship are molded in your culture before they are transferred to another culture. While serving in your church, the church people and pastors can observe and evaluate your giftedness and thus give counsel for improvement. Only then can they launch you with confidence.

Launch Point 2: Get to Know Your Co-Laborers. Paul makes it clear in Romans 15 that those who sent him were co-laborers, striving together with him in the cause of the gospel. Do not assume that because you are from a church, people will pray for you. Get to know them while serving. Ask them to pray for you. Tell them you depend upon their prayers, and spend time praying with them as you prepare to launch.

Launch Point 3: Inform Your Pastor. Students who are considering mission trips should do so with the counsel of their pastor. Get his advice and support. Call him from school. When you are home, ask for a meeting with your pastor and tell him what you plan to do, provided your church supports you. Perhaps he knows of missionaries who could really use your help. Do not let your letter asking for money be the first communication with your pastor and church!

Launch Point 4: Communicate, Communicate, Communicate. Those who inform their local church of their progress and experience regularly are those who will be prayed for most. Bother people so that they pray for you. Most people want to be kept up-to-date. If you believe in the power of prayer, communication is vital. Keep your church in the know so you can be effective when you go.

Launch Point 5: Reciprocate. A missionary recently sent a card asking for requests from our church so his family could pray for us. We were thrilled to know that while we were laboring in prayer for him in Southeast Asia, he was striving with us in Allen Park, Michigan. With e-mail you can gather requests from individuals and encourage them by praying for them. Relationships are greatly strengthened by reciprocal prayer.

Launch Point 6: Report Back after the Trip. When you return from the trip, ask your pastor for the opportunity to report to your church. God will be glorified when you report and the people of your church praise Him together with you for what was accomplished. Your report can be used of God to mobilize others for future trips as well.

Mission trips, if launched correctly, provide opportunities for both individuals and churches to grow. Students who go on their own will miss the resources available from their church through prayer, and churches who let them go without being connected will miss out on many opportunities to praise God. This summer, let's focus on launching students from our local churches!

A college student mission trip can be a life-changing experience not only for the student but for the entire church.

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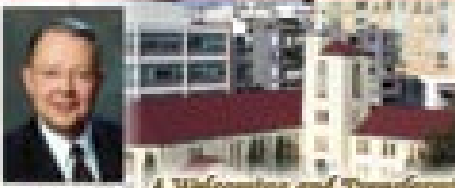


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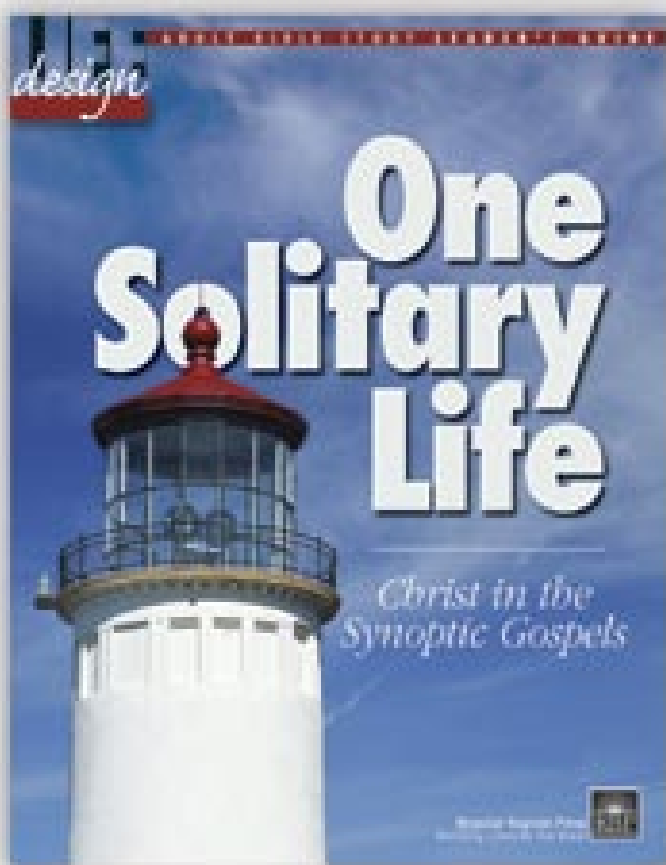
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Campus Ministry—What's the Big Deal?

This issue of *FrontLine* is focused on the need for campus ministries. Perhaps you have scanned the articles and asked, "What's the big deal?" I would like to share a partial and personal answer to that question.

When I close my eyes, I can still see my parents standing outside of our home in West Virginia waving good-bye. I was seventeen years old. I was looking out of the back window of my friend's car through tear-filled eyes and doing my best to "be a man" as we left for college. It would be four long months before I would be back in the hills with Dad and Mom. That was nearly thirty years ago, but the memory of that emotion-filled day has never left me. The fear of the unknown and my dreams of the future were suddenly and indescribably combined with the pain of parting. This experience is common to all those who "go off" to college. Leaving home for the first time is an earth-shaking experience for most, and those who know God's Word know that earthquakes open hearts (see Acts 16).

Studies indicate that adolescence is a time of keen spiritual interest and unparalleled spiritual openness. Evangelist Tom Rees of England conducted an extensive study that indicated that 75% of those attending his meetings came to Christ before the age of fourteen, 20% between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one, and only 5% after the age of twenty-one. Lionel Hunt came to a similar conclusion, noting that 85% of Americans are converted between the ages of four and fifteen, 10% between the ages of fifteen and thirty, and only 4% after the age of thirty.* Groups like Inter-Varsity, the Navigators, and Campus Crusade

have long understood the opportunity available to those who would seek to reach the college campuses. Just as wise farmers learn to plant during times of optimum opportunity, we too must prayerfully consider that the college campus is a ready-plowed field awaiting the life-giving seed (Matt. 13).

We send missionaries to remote areas of the globe to "tell the sweet story of Christ and His love." All the while we are sending out our missionaries, other nations are sending their best to study in our universities. I am not denigrating the need to go to lands far off. I am, however, recommending that we give consideration to those who are coming to us. Foreign nationals are often open to more than the facts that may be found in our schools. They are often open to finding faith in our Savior.

College is a time when critical decisions are made. College students meet lifelong friends, make career choices, and often find their life's mate. Let's not forget that while sitting in class their eager minds are often being "[spoiled] through philosophy and vain deceit" (Col. 2:8). Patterns of thought discovered in college will lead to patterns of life developed in careers. We who love the Lord must consider the importance of countering the traditions of the world with the truths of God's Word before the student becomes the teacher (John 17:17; Rom. 10:14, 15).

News reports of binge drinking and alcohol poisoning among college students often cause us to shudder with amazement. Immorality among co-eds is an ever-increasing problem in an age of casual relationships

without moral absolutes. Is there any hope? Psalm 119:9–11 reminds us that the ways of the young are cleansed by "taking heed" to the Word of God! We dare not stand idly by, expecting the youth of America to be set on the right path through the influence of peers or academia. College students need exposure to God's Word to keep them from the pollution of this age.

Last spring our eldest daughter finished her undergraduate program and began to seek admission in graduate school. After seventeen consecutive years of study in Christian schools, our "little girl" would soon be renting an apartment and taking graduate classes on a secular campus. Suddenly the need for college ministries became very real to our family. As we prayed and planned with our daughter, we considered first the Christian community in which she would be grounded while attending a secular school and then the catalog offerings of the school. We have been very pleased by our daughter's excellent grades during her studies these past several months, but our joy in her academic performance is inconsequential as it compares to the joy we have experienced as she has told us of her local church attendance, those to whom she has witnessed, and the Christian friends that she is making through her on-campus Bible studies.

If you ask me, campus ministry is a "big deal"!

Chuck Phelps pastors Trinity Baptist Church in Concord, New Hampshire.

*Irving and Zuck, *Youth and the Church*, Chicago: Moody Press, p. 14.



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