

Faculty Salt

A GUIDE FOR
CHRISTIAN FACULTY
& GRADUATE STUDENTS



JOHN W. ALEXANDER, PH.D.

Graduate & Faculty Ministries

InterVarsity's Graduate & Faculty Ministries involve a staff of 100 men and women serving groups of Christians at over 85 universities and colleges. Currently we are serving over 3,000 graduate students and over 3,000 faculty.

We have described our philosophy of ministry as "building spiritual formation as the center of our life as Christians in the academic world." Our ministry is then expressed in three kinds of activity: evangelism and service, community, and faith-based learning and practice. Thus all of our activities are shaped to develop Christian men and women who are growing into an integrated life of faith and practice within a community of believers reaching out to share the life of Christ and to serve the needs of others.

On a few campuses there are chapters consisting of faculty and administrators, and there are approximately 150 campus fellowships of graduate and professional-school students.

We are working to help Christian faculty be more effective as salt and light on their campuses. We publish a biannual *Faculty Newsletter* and hold conferences of various lengths to bring faculty together for mutual encouragement and equipping to achieve the goals described above.

For more information see our Web page <www.ivcf.org/faculty>, contact Dr. Terry Morrison (tmorrison@ivcf.org) or write InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, P.O. Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707-7895.

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INTERVARSITY
CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP

Madison, Wisconsin

InterVarsity Graduate & Faculty Ministries

P.O. Box 7895

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Cover photograph: Science Hall, University of Wisconsin—Madison, where Prof. John W. Alexander had his office. Courtesy of 2100 Productions

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Foreword

How can a Christian professor make any kingdom impact on the university or college world of today? Here's the story of one professor who made a number of different impacts on his campus—conversions, renewals and lots of good evangelism. Graduate students watching this took it as a model for their own faculty life, and they have in turn passed it on.

Here are reflections from two of these former graduate students at the University of Wisconsin at Madison who watched John W. Alexander's life. They are followed by my own perspective as a former professor of chemistry, Butler University.

As an undergraduate at the University of Wisconsin (Madison) in the latter 1950s and a grad student in the early 1960s, I enjoyed the benefits of the spiritual and intellectual stimulus offered by our InterVarsity faculty sponsor, Dr. John Alexander. Prof. Alexander, then chair of the department of geography of UW, inspired respect and confidence by modeling intellectual respect and spiritual confidence himself in the quiet, persistent manner of the "gentleman scholar."

Transparent and honest, able to say "I don't know yet" or "Why don't you help me search this out in Scripture?" Dr.

Alexander was a “living epistle” of Christian faith and grace to believers and unbelievers alike. The latter were never “prey” to him; they were simply his equals who had perhaps never had the opportunity to know the good news of Christ and to see the gospel lived out practically before them. He knew how to “put himself in their shoes” and speak to their most profound yearning without ever overstepping the bounds of good taste and propriety.

Colleagues and students alike wanted what John Alexander had because it was an attractive treasure, not a “product” being marketed. Dr. Alexander’s monthly “Future Faculty Firesides,” where grads headed for academic careers could “huddle” at his home for discussions and mentoring, helped prepare a whole generation of us for lives of conscientious research, teaching and witness. His words merit careful attention, for he speaks carefully and thoughtfully from a rich lifetime of experience.

Dr. Mary Lou Daniel, Emeritus Professor of Portuguese, Fellow, UW Teaching Academy

* * * * *

I remember how he would participate in InterVarsity “debates” with unbelieving faculty. He was never in the least rancorous or hostile; he would simply say what he believed and why. At a debate with an unbelieving Wisconsin prof, a student asked in the question period if John thought he was better than his opponent because he was a Christian. John evenly replied: “No, but I am better than I would be if I were not a Christian.” It was a tremendously effective answer, probably more for the Christians there than the non-Christians. John knew how to calmly be a presence for Christ.

Dallas Willard, Professor of Philosophy, University of Southern California; author and speaker on the subject of spiritual disciplines and spiritual formation

* * * * *

As a young professor, I too heard of John Alexander's ministry with wonder and worry—shouldn't I be doing this too? Before long, my wife and I set out exactly in the pattern John and Betty had set. We had begun a good ministry on our campus before InterVarsity leaders invited us, as they had invited John, into their staff ranks.

Now, as I travel trying to equip and encourage Christian faculty to be salt and light on campus, John's example keeps me encouraged. It can be done! There seem to be many more warmly evangelical professors on campus now than in decades past. May this book describing John's example and offering his encouragement and guidelines help you to see your university or college as your mission field to which God has called you. May God use this story to equip you to step out in ministry and to bring glory to his name in your part of academe.

Terry Morrison, Ph.D., Director of Faculty Ministries, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship

Preface

The purpose of this book is twofold.

First, it is designed to be a *tool* in the hands of individual Christian men and women who occupy faculty positions at colleges and universities in the United States, a tool that will be useful in their walk with Jesus Christ through the halls of academia. We hope it might also be useful in similar educational institutions in other parts of the world.

Second, it is designed to be a *strategy plan* that a group of such faculty might use as they endeavor to influence the faculty sector of their college or university.

The main themes of the book harmonize with the following statements by Jesus Christ:

You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Mt 5:13-16)

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

ONE

Report of an Experiment

The experiment to be described was conducted at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where I taught for almost twenty years in the department of geography. During most of that time I was privileged to serve as faculty advisor to Badger Christian Fellowship, the University of Wisconsin chapter of nationwide InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF). It was a joy working with those students, watching them grow toward maturity as followers of Jesus Christ, watching many students go through the conversion process of becoming Christ-followers.

One day back in 1958, I received a visit from Jim Nyquist, an InterVarsity field staff member whose territory included

Wisconsin. His travels brought him to our campus two or three times per year. On one of those visits he came by my Science Hall office and, in the course of conversation, asked, "John, have you ever thought the Lord might want to give you a ministry to faculty like the one he has given you to students?" Occasionally I indeed had thought of it, but the question so frightened me that I had put it out of mind. I felt incompetent to attempt so difficult a task.

Jim sensed my discomfort, so he simply said, "Would you be willing to pray about it? And I'll be praying too." I agreed.

I was too timid to commence such an undertaking alone; I knew of no other University of Wisconsin faculty who were Christians and interested in such evangelism. Hence my first request was that the Lord would either guide me to one faculty peer with similar concerns or else import a faculty member with those attributes.

One day I was surprised by a phone call from a newly arrived instructor named Ed Maibenco, who said, "I've just accepted a position in the oncology department here at Wisconsin. I heard before I got here that you're a Christian. Could we get acquainted? Perhaps I could be of help with campus witness?" Promptly I walked over to his building to get acquainted.

We discovered that we had a lot in common and agreed to meet once a week for twenty minutes to pray for faculty evangelism. His office was private, and in that office we began meeting for prayer every Tuesday from 8:00 to 8:20 a.m. Those were genuine prayer meetings, keeping conversation between ourselves to a minimum. We prayed for each other, that the Lord would produce Christlike character within us, would enable our academic work to be good, would lead us to other faculty who belonged to Christ, and would reach out

more widely by calling other faculty peers to himself. We constructed a list of faculty members for whom we prayed, by name, every Tuesday.

For four months we met like this, laying a prayer foundation beneath our endeavors. Eventually one or two additional faculty members met occasionally with us to pray.

Then came the question: what should be the next step? Prayer, then what? We decided to learn from Christian students in terms of the evangelistic Bible studies which for years they had been conducting in their dorms, fraternities, sororities and apartments. Such studies had been successful both in locating other believers and in introducing non-Christians to Jesus Christ. If such efforts worked among students, might they work among faculty? We decided to conduct an experiment.

Since most faculty eat lunch and many already were bringing their lunches to campus, we decided to try a sack lunch Bible study Friday noons in Ed's office—a weekly event to which faculty friends would be invited in hopes that some might be found to be followers of Christ (and want to come regularly), while others might find an opportunity to encounter Christ personally.

Next question was whom to invite. We began by inviting colleagues for whom we had been praying Tuesday mornings. Also we approached faculty for whom students had been praying. By this time the InterVarsity students were praying for faculty. A student who felt a prayer burden for a teacher would inform Ed or me, and we would make contact.

Our invitations commenced with a phone call which went something like this, "Bill, this is John. I've got an idea to which I'd like your reaction. It will take only three minutes to explain. May I come to your office and see what you think of

it?" Invariably the reply was affirmative and an appointment was made.

During the visit, the explanation went something like this.

Bill, another faculty member and I have launched an unusual project in which you might be interested. We're probing for answers to five questions. What did the world's greatest teacher say? Why did he say it? What did he do? Why did he do it? What might be the relevance of all this to us as Wisconsin faculty members? [pause, long enough for the five questions to sink in]

The world's greatest teacher? Jesus Christ. The data reservoir we're probing for answers? The New Testament. I thought perhaps you might be interested in getting in on this. We meet every Friday noon with sack lunches and New Testaments—and adjourn at 1:00 sharp so that nobody will be late for 1:20 classes. We want you to feel welcome. Would you like to come some Friday to see what it's like?

Admittedly, calling Jesus the world's greatest teacher was a basic premise that many colleagues might dispute. When they did dispute it, I simply confessed it without debating it on the spot. If they desired to debate it at the moment I gladly did so.

That's all there was to the sales talk. If listeners were interested, they usually reached for their desk calendars. If they indicated a desire to visit, I would say, "I'll stop by at 11:50 Friday and pick you up." This was important. Rarely did a newcomer arrive alone.

By this time, Ed and I had constructed a long list for whom we prayed by name every Tuesday. We set a goal of contacting at least one of those peers per week, inviting them for Friday noon.

At that first Friday lunch there were three members

present: Ed and I plus one visitor—the man I had invited. He never came back. The second Friday there again were three. Same result: the visitor never returned. On the third Friday there again were three, but this time the visitor became a regular. He was the university archivist, a quiet, humble, deeply committed follower of the Lord.

In subsequent months we attained the goal of inviting at least one faculty peer per week, a total of 200 in the five years before I resigned from the university to accept the national presidency of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.

The responses of those 200 varied. I had been prepared for a 90 percent rejection rate; in fact, I would not have been surprised if 50 percent had been coldly unresponsive. To my surprise only four colleagues reacted unfavorably, one being the university president, who curtly replied, “Not interested. This is something the churches should be doing, not a university.” A few weeks later he slumped over dead at his office desk. I don’t know what he will experience in Life’s Final Exam, but I know I did my feeble best to arrest his attention to consider the God who created him.

Another replied, “You’ll never get anywhere solving world problems by sitting around talking about the Bible.” The remaining 196 responded with at least some interest; almost 120 said they thought it might be a good undertaking but were too busy; 80 responded by attending at least once.

One replied, “How did you know I was interested in this? I’ve changed membership four times among Madison churches in an effort to resolve this thing down in here”—as he pushed his fists against his chest.

Another colleague began attending and then said, “This is encouraging. I thought I was the only person in this entire faculty who read the Bible seriously.”

Another responded, with a laugh, "You fellows don't want me in your group. I just don't believe that stuff." I smiled and said, "You're just the kind we do want. You'd be good for us, and perhaps we'd be good for you." At that he stopped laughing and said, "Okay. If you put it that way I'll go once to see what it's like. When and where do you meet?" He too became a regular.

Procedures for the noon meetings were simple. People began arriving at noon and sat around a large table, eating and conversing. Around 12:25 the leader for the day (Ed and I took turns at first, and later recruited volunteers) called for quiet, asked one of the group to lead in prayer, then asked another to read the "next paragraph" in the New Testament. At the outset we began with Matthew 1:1 and went straight through the Gospel.

On some Fridays we got through only one verse; other times we covered two or three paragraphs. Each Friday we began reading where we had left off the week before. As soon as the paragraph was read, the leader simply asked for questions and comments. Never did we formulate an organized study plan, for the simple reason that we wanted the session to be a seminar in which peers could bring *their questions* and *their responses* to what the Word was saying. There was always somebody with questions ready for the asking.

It was amazing how the Holy Spirit directed those discussions week after week (in spite of the unstructured format), keeping them from wandering off on tangents. As far as the human leader was concerned, his unofficial title was "timekeeper," and the duty was rotated informally among those who volunteered. At 12:55 the bell rang, and the timekeeper called a halt to proceedings, invariably having to interrupt the flow of questions, answers, comments. The session closed

with a brief prayer by someone who volunteered.

It is impossible to measure what the Lord did in those faculty Bible studies. Attendance grew slowly but steadily. An average of six people attended our first year; ten the next year; sixteen the next. One Friday in the fourth year attendance reached twenty-six. Doubtless some Christians in Wisconsin would find it hard to believe that twenty-six faculty members at their state university deliberately would budget a noon hour for Bible study. By that time there were forty faculty members participating in those Friday sessions, although schedules never permitted all to be present at any one time.

The main question is whether growth in numbers was accompanied by spiritual growth. We know of at least one spoken testimony of conversion. Several believers were "smoked out of the woodwork." Many expressed how much the fellowship meant to them, how they were encouraged by seeing faculty colleagues taking clear stands for Jesus Christ, and how much they learned of the Scriptures.

Here's one example. A professor in his late fifties began attending the meetings as an avowed skeptic. Week after week he continually raised questions.

One day he told me privately, "When I was a teenager I went forward in a church service to be saved. I led street meetings and jail services. Then I went to college and learned that all this had been just a traumatic experience, that I had been brainwashed, and that if I wanted to be intellectually respectable I'd have to throw it all overboard. So I did. But year after year I've never had peace of heart—I've been unable to synchronize what I believe in my heart with what I chose to believe in my intellect. I haven't been able to discuss these problems with my wife; she would be devastated if she

knew how deep my doubts were. Nor have I discussed these doubts with preachers in our church; they wouldn't know what I was talking about. Not until I got involved in your Friday group have I had a chance to unburden my load. Now I find myself anticipating these Friday meetings. And I'm thinking thoughts I haven't thought for forty years."

The Holy Spirit in his faithfulness was drawing this man back to Christ.

In brief, the Lord used the experiment (1) to convert at least one faculty member, (2) to strengthen the faith of several who already were believers and (3) to develop a sense of community by knitting together a circle of men and women who became bonded together as Christ-following faculty members.

In conducting the experiment, our aim was simple: *to make Jesus a viable option—intelligible, attractive and desirable—in such a manner that faculty would have their attention drawn to him and would understand enough to respond to him.*

TWO

Basic Principles

Our experiment revealed at least nine basic principles at work, principles that apply equally to other Christian faculty and to other colleges and universities.

1. The campus must be viewed as a mission field, with the faculty sector a smaller mission field within the larger field.

2. Christian faculty members must view themselves as missionaries—instruments in the Lord's hand as he goes about the business of calling faculty members to himself.

3. A foundation of prayer is crucial.

4. Good works play a significant role.

5. It is important that specific witness be given.

6. There will be difficulties.

7. There will be temptations to be avoided.

8. Opposing forces will play their roles.

9. Thinking Christianly is hard work.

Let's consider each of these principles in turn.

Principle 1. The Campus Is a Mission Field

The first principle we encountered was that the campus is a mission field consisting of three categories of people: faculty, graduate students and undergraduates (see figure 1). Note: *college* and *university* are used synonymously in this book. The term *faculty* is defined broadly to include teachers, researchers and administrators.

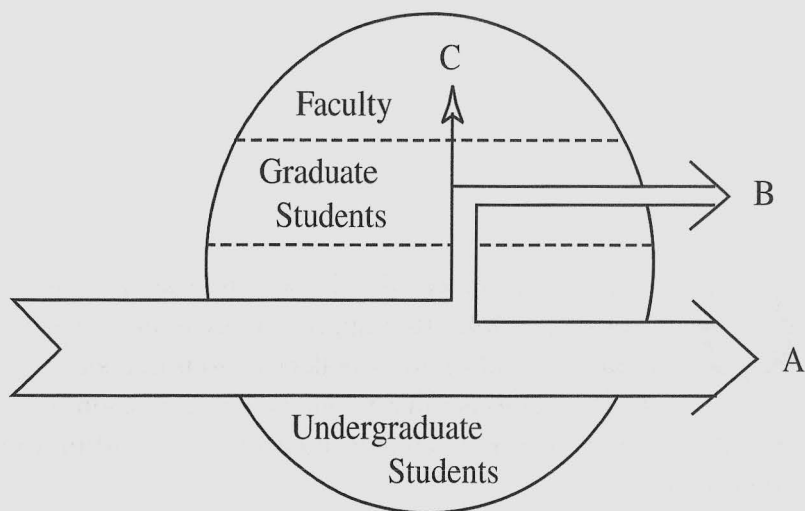


Figure 1. Three flows of personnel

On this diagram, three flows of personnel are discernible. The largest flow (A) consists of undergraduates entering college and proceeding out into society. A smaller flow (B) consists of students who proceed to do graduate work before moving out. The smallest flow (C) consists of students who enter the faculty. Doing graduate work with distinction, they

are recruited by colleges to serve as faculty. Theirs is then the opportunity to impact the thinking of peers as well as students.

My thesis is this: Christians entering a college or university are entering a mission field. For Christian undergraduates the main mission field is undergraduate peers. For Christian graduate students the main mission field is fellow graduate students. For Christian faculty members the distinctive mission field is the faculty sector.

A closer look at that faculty mission field reveals three categories of peers, which can be illustrated by three types of circles (see figure 2): circles containing a + indicate members who are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ; empty circles represent those who are not Christ-followers; circles containing a dot represent non-Christians who are spiritually hungry and quietly searching for God.

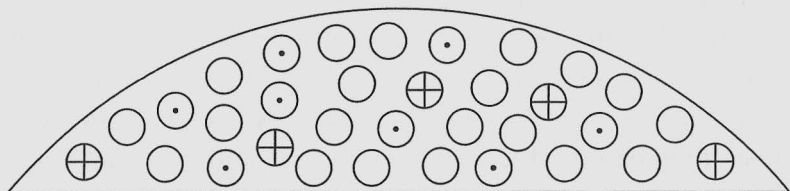


Figure 2. Three categories of peers

Questions: Are the persons represented by the empty circles and the circles with dots entitled to hear the good news of Jesus Christ? Is Jesus interested in them? Does the Great Commission apply to them? When Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," did he include college faculty among those creatures?

I believe the answer to those questions is yes, for at least three reasons: for God's benefit, for each faculty member's

best good and for the good of society. Let's briefly consider that trio.

For God's benefit. Colleges and universities are God's idea. They are part of his great creation through the Lord Jesus Christ, "for in him all things . . . were created . . . all things have been created through him and for him . . . and in him all things hold together" (Col 1:16-17). God is entitled to receive from those institutions the quality and quantity of production that will satisfy and bring him pleasure. "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will [King James Version says "for thy pleasure"] they existed and were created" (Rev 4:11). As faculty members respond to Christ, the fruit of their minds will bring pleasure to God.

Colleges and universities are analogous to vineyards with many fruit-bearing vines. The Lord owns those vineyards and is entitled to receive high-quality fruit production.

Again, they are analogous to symphonic orchestras playing for the benefit of an audience consisting of God himself. The Lord owns those orchestras and is entitled to enjoy the best music they can produce. Our point is that the vineyards and orchestras need to be penetrated by the gospel so that their fruit and music will bring pleasure to the Lord who created and sustains them.

For each faculty member's best good. Faculty men and women have needs that only Jesus Christ can meet. They are entitled to hear the good news of how he can meet them. Vast as their knowledge may be, they are missing the knowledge that matters most if they fail to connect with him. Moreover, some of them are spiritually hungry. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty" (Jn 6:35) and "I

am the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). His statements apply to faculty members as much as to anybody else. Furthermore, faculty are entitled to know that life has a *final exam* where the verdicts are pass-fail, with Jesus Christ the examiner, and that Jesus has made clear what the pass conditions are.

In a few situations the sense of need is so strong that faculty members pursue desperate measures. One of InterVarsity's faculty staff specialists, Charles Hummel, described an experience that illustrates such need.

Last fall I visited a state university in Washington. At a faculty luncheon someone mentioned a recent suicide by a colleague. He had seemed well-adjusted and at peace with the world. So it was a shock to hear that he had suddenly taken his life. The faculty present expressed regret that they had never taken time to know him personally. We then considered ways of following the example of the apostle Paul: "We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well." (*Inter-Varsity News*, September 1980, p. 3)

For the good of society. Universities influence the direction in which society goes. Charles Malik says, "The university is one of the greatest creations of Western civilization. . . . It dominates the world today . . . more than the church, more than government, more than any other institution." Students influenced by today's faculty will become teachers in colleges, secondary schools, primary schools, while others go on to become journalists, artists, homemakers, business leaders, politicians and other professionals who influence the thinking and the values of society. In different words, today's college faculty comprise a fountainhead from which flow ideas influencing (directly and indirectly) society's future. The fac-

ulty sector needs to hear the gospel because of the influence it has on the way society goes.

Who then is responsible for implementing the Great Commission by witnessing to college faculty members—responsible for seeing that the empty circles and the circles with dots (figure 2) hear the good news of Jesus Christ? Do we expect radio and television evangelists to reach them? Do we expect preachers in churches to reach them? Do we expect Christian magazines and books to do the job? Do we expect Christian students to do it? To be sure, Christian radio and television speakers, preachers, magazines and books are doing something, at least a little, in reaching that mission field. And there is evidence that some Christian students are witnessing to teachers.

But who should be expected to be the main impactors on the unreached faculty sector? Answer: *Christian faculty members whom God has placed within that mission field.*

Principle 2. Christian Faculty Are Missionaries to the Campus

This second basic principle harmonizes with Christ's statement, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). It is essential that Christian faculty men and women choose to believe that "the ends of the earth" includes colleges and universities in general and their own faculties in particular.

James Pruyne at Illinois State University has written:

Carrying on a ministry in our public universities is today no different from carrying on a ministry in Africa or India or China. My parish is not a community of Christians. It is a large, thoroughly secular, largely irreligious, pluralistic public

university. Figuratively, for several years I have had above my desk the name of William Carey, first Protestant missionary to India, who served there for seven years before anyone became Christian. (November 17, 1987, letter to Great Rivers Presbytery)

Accordingly, the major thesis of this book is: The Lord ordains that some of his followers serve as members of college and university faculties impacting the faculty sector for his name's sake. They are there because God has chosen to place them as lights in a dark milieu, as salt in an environment that needs preserving and flavoring.

Here's where the salt concept fits. In conversing with his followers, Jesus once said, "You are the salt of the earth . . . you are the light of the world." For us today it is a matter of turning on our lights in the darkness, getting the salt out of the saltshaker. (For further consideration of the salt concept, see Rebecca Manley Pippert's *Out of the Saltshaker* and Paul Little's *How to Give Away Your Faith*, both from InterVarsity Press.)

The apostle Andrew is one model: Shortly after he encountered Christ he found his brother, Simon, and brought him to Jesus. Is not that one of the results for which we yearn, to bring faculty colleagues to Christ? Furthermore, we assume that the Holy Spirit is active on our campuses in at least two ways. One, he is energizing Christian faculty to be Christ-honoring witnesses to his glory. Two, he is turning on the power of his mighty magnet in drawing faculty men and women to himself.

The basic fact remains: Until Christian faculty men and women perceive themselves as missionaries, there is little likelihood that they will introduce many of their faculty colleagues to Jesus Christ. We need to take seriously Proverbs

24:11, we should not “hold back from rescuing those taken away to death, those who go staggering to the slaughter.”

Principle 3. A Foundation of Prayer Is Crucial

The secret behind the growth of the University of Wisconsin Friday noon faculty Bible study was prayer. We discovered that the prayer foundation consisted of two components: prayer by Christian faculty themselves and prayer by other Christians who were upholding those faculty members.

Faculty prayer. As our experiment progressed we discovered a few faculty peers who were committed Christ-followers responding to the idea of praying for fellow faculty. In brief, there was an increase in the number of faculty men and women who, in their private prayers, were part of the prayer foundation which undergirded faculty witness.

In addition to private, personal prayer there was at least one faculty prayer partnership meeting weekly. There may have been others that we never heard of. Occasionally our partnership expanded as a few joined us on Tuesday mornings. Also, in the privacy of our homes we joined our spouses in praying for faculty witness.

Whatever the situation, we faculty prayed that God would guide, equip, protect and energize us to be Christian witnesses within the faculty sector. We felt that if we failed in doing our part to lay the prayer foundation, we had no right to expect others to be laying it for us. I continue to believe that if Christian faculty will not pray, and will not meet to pray, they have no right to expect God to work through them in impacting the campus for Christ.

Prayer by other Christians. In an effort to expand the foundation we contacted pastors, informing them of our experiment, asking them to pray for us. It was our hope that

they would then ask their congregations to uphold us. I invited several pastors, on a one-by-one basis, to be my luncheon guest on campus, sometimes in the Faculty Club, sometimes in the Memorial Union. During the meal I would briefly describe the size and nature of the university, in hopes they would realize that the University of Wisconsin was a strategic institution whose faculty were a highly strategic sector, and that they would uphold us Christian faculty members with prayer.

Their response was gratifying. Most said that they had never perceived the university in this manner and that they indeed would pray for us. Several shared this conviction with their congregations, who began praying for us. Slowly but surely the word got around among Christians to pray for faculty at the University of Wisconsin.

For example, a university postman told me, "Every time I put mail in your Science Hall mailbox I try to remember to pray for you." A maintenance man in the Memorial Union told me, "As I push this broom along these corridors I include you in my prayers—and your faculty Bible study also." A women's prayer group in the state of Oregon heard of it and prayed weekly for us. In brief, the prayer foundation came first.

Principle 4. Good Works Play a Significant Role

"Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works" (Mt 5:16). "Show yourself in all respects a model of good works . . . Jesus Christ . . . gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds" (Tit 2:7, 13-14). The good works to which Christian faculty aspire are teaching, research and administration plus the host of inter-

personal relationships woven throughout college life.

We aspire to produce quality works in those endeavors for several reasons: we wish thereby to bring pleasure to God; to enjoy them ourselves; to have an impact on non-Christian peers in hopes that the number of faculty Christ-followers in the *vineyard* or *orchestra* will increase.

We hear Christ's directive, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart . . . soul . . . mind . . . strength" (Mk 12:30). In academic pursuits we take seriously his charge to love him with our total potential but particularly with our *minds*, synchronized with our hearts, souls and strength.

What, then, does it mean for us to love the Lord with all our mind? It means to give the Lord preeminence in everything that our minds do: thinking, formulating questions, constructing answers, identifying truth, identifying error, observing, analyzing, associating ideas, employing imagination creatively, formulating presuppositions, recognizing presuppositions even when they are not articulated, deducing inferences, constructing hypotheses, being open-minded to evidence, being willing to consider all pertinent ideas, recognizing the roles of reason and faith and utilizing both complementarily, recognizing both the realm of certainties and the realm of the ambiguous—and all to the glory of God.

As we discover truth, irrespective of the realm being investigated, we are thinking God's thoughts after him. Surely the thrill of thinking God's thoughts is one of the greatest joys available to our minds and hearts.

One reason for investing our thinking in all realms of knowledge is to procure ideas with which to generate praise to the Lord—praise designed to bring pleasure to him. Notice how Psalm 148 refers to numerous realms of intellectual activity. Scholars investigating each of those realms are pro-

ducing ideas with which to compose hymns of praise to the Lord.

For example, every Christian (including young children) looking at the stars can praise the Lord for creating those stars and placing them in their positions in the heavens. But a Christian astronomer can formulate praise in a way none of us amateurs can because, with his or her mind, the astronomer understands astronomical ideas about stars and the heavens far beyond what our untrained minds comprehend.

Loving the Lord with all our minds means developing our ability to recognize and appreciate beauty in all its forms.

Loving him with our minds also means evaluating values systems to answer such questions as these: What is worth knowing, and why? What is worth doing, and why? What is worth saying or writing, and why? What is worth seeing, and why? What is worth hearing, and why? What is worth experiencing, and why? Who is worth knowing, and why?—and all other questions dealing with value and worth.

Loving him with our minds also means evaluating options and solving problems while giving him the glory.

Several Christian scholars have devoted attention to the issue of what it means to love the Lord with the mind. Some helpful books are *Christ and the Modern Mind*, ed. Robert W. Smith (InterVarsity Press, 1972); *Discipleship of the Mind* by James Sire (InterVarsity Press, 1990); *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* by Mark Noll (Eerdmans, 1994).

Mark Noll says, “The effort to think like a Christian is . . . an effort to take seriously the sovereignty of God over the world he created, the lordship of Christ over the world he died to redeem, and the power of the Holy Spirit over the world he sustains each and every moment. From this perspective the search for a mind that truly thinks like a Chris-

tian takes on ultimate significance, because the search for a Christian mind is not, in the end, a search for mind but a search for God" (*Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, p. 253).

It is no small order, to develop our minds to the glory of God.

Principle 5. It Is Important That Specific Witness Be Given

Jesus said we were to be his witnesses. Our good works constitute what can be termed *general witness*, but if peers are to encounter Jesus Christ knowingly, they must receive a *specific witness* which communicates information about him. (Sometimes the general witness is called *silent witness* while specific witness is termed *spoken witness*.)

Specific witness can be the result of initiative from either of two directions.

Non-Christian peers may observe our lives (general witness) and come with questions about distinctives they have noticed. Much of Jesus' dialogue with nonfollowers originated thus. They were impressed by what they observed; they asked questions about who he was, what he was doing, why he was doing it. Our prayer can be, "Lord, let the aroma of my life impact my peers in such a manner that they will ask why I am as I am, setting the stage for me to tell them about you."

Or, from the other direction, we may take the initiative. The apostle Paul used this approach in Athens. Would this not be a valid prayer for us, "Lord, show me which of my colleagues you want me to bring to you. Supply me with courage, tact and wisdom." Or, "Lord there are x number of Christian faculty in this college. Guide us in locating the individuals you want us to contact; stimulate us to go, make contact and bring them to you."

At this point the words of Christ's parable of the sower come to mind.

A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground . . . and they sprang up quickly. . . . But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain . . .

When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it . . . but . . . when tribulation or persecution arises . . . that person immediately falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit. (Mt 13:3-8, 19-23)

As we are faithful in specific witness we will encounter all four types of responses.

Let us be optimistic and choose to believe that the Holy Spirit is moving through our faculty sector preparing peers to respond to our specific witness. We assume that the results of that witness will follow the pattern experienced by Paul in the intellectual center of Athens: "some scoffed; but others said, 'We will hear you again about this.' . . . But some of them joined him and became believers" (Acts 17:32, 34).

Also, we want peers to know that our Christian life is based on *five presuppositions*.

1. There is a living God. We cannot prove that there is, but

nobody can prove that he is a myth.

2. God has manifested himself uniquely in Jesus Christ. We cannot prove this, but nobody can disprove it.

3. God has spoken in the Bible. We cannot prove, but nobody can disprove, this proposition.

4. God wants us to know what we can expect of him—and how much he loves us.

5. God wants us to know what he expects of us—and how much he yearns for our love.

For each of those five presuppositions there is some evidence but not enough to constitute either proof or disproof. Further, failure to prove a proposition does not constitute disproof. It is a matter of faith. And *faith is the capacity to make a choice when evidence is partial but inadequate for proof.*

In other words, our specific witness aims at helping our peers encounter, amidst the enormous amount of knowledge before them, the knowledge that matters most. What is the knowledge that matters most? I like the way Timothy Dwight spoke to that question almost two hundred years ago when he was president of Yale. In his baccalaureate address of 1814 he said, “Christ is the only, the true, the living way of access to God. Give up yourselves therefore to him with a cordial confidence, and the great work of life is done.” Those words are inscribed on a brass plaque in the lobby of Timothy Dwight Hall on the Yale campus. I wonder how many Christian members of faculties in colleges and universities today would agree with Timothy Dwight.

In brief, we want our faculty peers to know the truth of the anonymous but profound adage, “Man’s ultimate destiny depends not on his ability to make new discoveries or to learn new lessons, but rather on how well he can learn the

lessons taught nearly two thousand years ago.” As a young faculty member on an eastern trip in 1947 I saw this statement emblazoned on the wall of the lobby of the RCA Building in New York City. When I looked for it again on a trip in 1986, the lobby had been redecorated. The statement had disappeared.

Being a Christian witness in the faculty sector is no easy task. It is difficult for most of us to converse with non-Christian faculty about Jesus Christ. May the Lord strengthen and enable us for the task.

The aim at this point is simple: that every faculty colleague will possess enough information about Christ to make an informed response to him.

Principle 6. There Will Be Difficulties

As missionaries we can expect to face difficulties and discouragement. Here are some examples.

There is certain to be disinterest. Some will say, “Not interested.” Some will say, “You can’t seriously believe that stuff.”

There is likely to be opposition—resistance and perhaps even hostility. In those situations where opposition threatens our academic freedom we need to recall a basic principle articulated a century ago by the University of Wisconsin regents:

Whatever may be the limitations which trammel inquiry elsewhere, we believe that the great State University of Wisconsin should ever encourage that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found. (Taken from a report of the Board of Regents, 1894)

In such an atmosphere, we encourage non-Christian colleagues to sift and winnow the evidence concerning Jesus, his

Word and their relationship to him. Since the campus is a mission field, some campuses will be open to such sifting and winnowing; others will not. We believe Christ's mandate in Acts 1:8 encompasses both.

Another difficulty is that the validity of truth will be denied. In some quarters of academia (e.g., social sciences and humanities) there are faculty who say that there is no such a thing as truth, and even if there were, it would be impossible to recognize once we found it. Even if we found it, it would be pointless, since there would be no value to it. Imagine the discouragement that bedevils fellow missionaries caught in such an environment. Surely this constitutes a call to prayer by members of the body of Christ interceding for missionaries (especially graduate students) living on a mission field where the existence of truth is denied.

Indeed, there is only one Person who can convince intellectuals that truth exists—the Holy Spirit. One of his functions is to convince the world of truth (Jn 16:7-15). This assurance of his working is the foundation for hope in the midst of hopelessness.

We might become fearful. Prejudice against Christian academicians can be fierce on some campuses, in some departments. It is easy for us to fear ridicule; easy to fear the threat of denial of academic tenure if we become known as committed Christians.

Our faith might weaken. Engrossed in the cares of life, we easily lose sight of the Holy Spirit's power to convince peers of their needs and then draw them to Christ.

Pressures will handicap us. The pressure of *too little time* and the pressure *to produce* can gradually erode our concern for witness to colleagues. Take, for example, our difficulty in getting together as Christians for mutual encouragement, for

helping one another to improve, for developing a sense of community with a common purpose. Our culture provides a prevailing experience of individualism which can foster an aloof sense of independence and competitiveness.

We might forget Christ's promise, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8) and God's ancient promise, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the LORD of Hosts" (Zech 4:6).

In brief, we Christian faculty run the danger of getting so caught up in life's routines that we lose the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit in all of life. We may end up relying on our own power. We may become so busy that, if we are not diligent, we will neglect our children, will neglect our marriages, will neglect our daily quiet time alone with Christ and his Word.

Principle 7. There Will Be Temptations to Be Avoided

Let me mention a couple of common ones that attack faculty members in a special way.

The pitfall of pride. Intellectual arrogance is a besetting sin in the faculty sector of academia. I recall an incident during orientation for new graduate students when I began Ph.D. studies at UW. We were receiving advice from a world-famous social scientist who, speaking on the challenges of graduate work, included this statement: "You now are entering an aristocracy of brains." Without denigrating the marvelous intellects God gave human beings and without abdicating responsibility to develop our minds, we need to guard against pride. Many of us are proud both intellectually and spiritually. We feel superior to other Christians. Pride can lead to a destructively critical spirit. Too many of us are negatively critical of fellow Christians, of local churches, of Christian leaders.

We do well to take our pride to the Lord in prayer as phrased by Thomas Wistar over a century ago:

Our Father in heaven, Creator of all,
O source of all wisdom, on thee would we call.
Thou only can teach us and show us our need,
And grant to thy children true knowledge indeed.
But vain our instruction and blind must we be
Unless with our learning comes knowledge of thee.
So pour forth thy spirit and open our eyes
And fill with the knowledge that truly makes wise.
From pride and presumption, O Lord, keep us free
And make our hearts humble and loyal to thee;
That living or dying in thee we may rest
And prove to the scornful thy statutes are best.

Potential idolatry. Good scholarship is fundamental to good teaching and good research. We work and pray that our scholarship will be good. Good scholarship is a portion of our good works. However, the challenge to be a good scholar can slowly evolve into a siren song. It is possible to be seduced by that song and fall into the idolatry of scholarship. I wonder how many Christian faculty novices enter academia intent on serving the Lord with good works of scholarship, only to succumb eventually to the temptation of bowing at the altar of scholastic achievement and worshiping it as a god. Mark Noll succinctly makes the point, "Scholarship is not the most important thing in the Christian life" (*Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, p. 55).

We are tempted to revise Christ's statement to read as follows: "You shall love your mind with all your heart and soul and strength." We need to remind ourselves again of the adage, "Man's ultimate destiny depends not on his ability to make new discoveries or learn new lessons, but rather on

how well he can learn the lessons taught nearly two thousand years ago.”

Frequently, when trying to witness to peers about Jesus, we are tempted to talk about *it*—*religion* or *Christianity* or *churchianity*—rather than about *him*.

Again, too often we are tempted to bypass the Bible. We dialogue and debate in the strength of our intellects alone, without using Scripture in argument. It is easy for intellectuals to forget the sword of the Spirit. Then, focused on our own abilities, we may gradually abandon the vision for perceiving the faculty sector as a mission field, sometimes becoming so involved with local church responsibilities that we have no vision for faculty witness.

When ensnared by temptations we do well to recall God’s promise, “If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land [university]” (2 Chron 7:14). What are the wicked ways from which we Christian faculty should turn? Are not personal pride and idolatry of scholarship—as well as prayerlessness—some of them? It is not easy for us Christian intellectuals to comply with 2 Chronicles 7:14.

Until we are willing to humble ourselves, and pray, and make our confession, it is unlikely that we will see much evidence of the Lord’s using us in bringing fellow faculty to Christ.

Principle 8. Opposing Forces Will Play Their Roles

On any mission field there are two types of protagonists: one is natural, the other supernatural. The natural consists of interacting human beings: those committed to Jesus interacting with those who are not. As Christians we intend to stimulate

other people to face basic questions about life, its problems and principles, and to acquire information about Jesus and his relation to life. Such engagement will produce dialogue, debate and argument, some of which can wax hostile. Wisdom dictates that we refrain from combating hostility with hostility. Our battle is not with people but with the intellectual errors that hold them captive. I remember hearing it said that “our unconverted peers are not the enemy; they are the victims of the enemy.”

The supernatural protagonists are Christ’s Holy Spirit and the god of this world. Within any mission field, regardless of its degree of social sophistication, Christ’s witnesses encounter opposition from Satan. This is certainly true in institutions of higher learning where the universal principle continues to hold: “Our gospel is veiled . . . to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ” (2 Cor 4:3-4). In faculty witness we are opposed by an active agent, *the god of this world*, who is blinding our faculty friends to the message of Jesus Christ.

We are engaged in nothing less than spiritual warfare. We are instruments in God’s hand as he wars with Satan for control over the minds and hearts of faculty peers. How many of us really believe this? I wonder how many of us resonate with Paul’s statement “We do not wage war according to human standards; for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds” (2 Cor 10:3-4). I wonder if we are in tune with “Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the

authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil" (Eph 6:11-12).

The battles between those opposing forces make our task difficult, but are they the basic reasons why there are so few faculty conversions to Christ? If so, then we are conceding that the Spirit of God is incapable of overcoming the power of Satan, incapable of overcoming the resistance of faculty men and women to the good news of Jesus Christ.

I believe two other factors are basic in explaining the dearth of faculty conversions:

1. Christian faculty members do not perceive themselves as missionaries to the faculty mission field.
2. The church is not undergirding the faculty mission field with a solid foundation of prayer. More on these two factors later.

Principle 9. Thinking Christianly Is Hard Work

The terms *thinking Christianly* and *thinking biblically* are viewed here as synonyms. Our question at the moment is this: What does it mean to think Christianly or biblically? In brief, our answer: *To think biblically about any idea, issue, concept or problem is to show the relationship between biblical truth and other truth about that idea.*

If I desire to think Christianly, or biblically, I would do well to implement several self-disciplines.

1. *Prayer.* First I pause to worship God, the one who created everything, who knows everything, whose intellect thinks truthfully and without error. I bow in adoration and praise of such a Person. I petition him to grant me intellectual energy and give me guidance as I proceed to think. When I'm interested in thinking about a particular idea— x —I worship him as the one who thought of x first, who knows all

there is to know about x , and I ask him to direct my thinking about x .

2. *Study of the Bible.* I go to the Bible to learn what God has said about x . One of my presuppositions is that God has spoken in the Bible and placed there basic information which he wants people to know about x .

3. *Presuppositions.* I take time to articulate the basic premises (assumptions) which I have chosen to undergird my thinking regarding x .

4. *Research.* I take time to research what other people already have learned about x . There is no point in trying to reinvent the wheel. Moreover, there is danger in my becoming inflated with pride if I proceed on the basis that there is nothing I can learn from other thinkers. Knowledge they have acquired can prevent my making mistakes.

5. *Probing.* I then proceed to do my own research (that is, probing the unknown) to see if there is anything new I can discover about x .

6. *Interacting.* I interact with other people who are interested in x . I share my thinking with them and invite them to share theirs with me. Such interaction with Christian thinkers will enable me to clarify my understanding of relationships between biblical truth and what I know about x . Interaction with secular thinkers may improve my understanding of x and also, perhaps, enable me to explain something about biblical truth which they have never heard.

7. *Sharing.* I go public with what I have learned about relationships between biblical truth and x . This might be done in talks to small groups, in speeches to large groups, in contributing to the literature. The purpose of such sharing is to bring pleasure to the Lord and to help listeners/readers think biblically about x . Also there is the possibility that such sharing

might contribute a little to the solving of problems that society faces.

In oversimplified idioms, such thinking can be said to be looking at x through Bible-colored glasses or running all we know about x through the Bible's grid.

Witnessing to faculty peers is costly. There is a price to pay in terms of time and energy if we are to lay an adequate prayer foundation beneath our efforts, and if we are to hammer out a mature concept of what it means to encounter university peers with the issue of Christ Jesus.

Now let's turn to suggestions for groups of Christian faculty who are willing to perceive themselves as missionaries to the faculty mission field.

THREE

Suggestions for Christian Faculty

We come now to the heart of this book. These suggestions are based on the Wisconsin experiment and on lessons learned by Christian faculty elsewhere. Remember the basic strategy: *The prayer foundation comes first*. Then what?

This book is designed as a partial answer to that question. It is a tool for faculty members desiring help in being grains of salt in a needy milieu. In addition, it is a strategy for applying Acts 1:8 to a college or university: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth [including colleges and universities]."

Suggestions herein are cast in terms of goals which such missionary-minded faculty might construct. Some goals are for individual faculty members; some for small groups; some for large groups. Others are universal goals regardless of group size.

Goals for an Individual Faculty Member

For the sake of clarity and to avoid hortatory expressions, these goals will be cast in the first person singular. Six goals will be considered.

Goal 1. To develop the discipline of a daily quiet time with Christ—a time set aside in advance to be alone with him and his Word, the Bible. This is a setting in which I take time for

☐ *Thanking* him for what he has done for me: choosing me to be a member of his kingdom; dying at Calvary and rising in his mighty resurrection so that my sin could be dealt with; drawing me to himself; guiding and protecting me thus far; and for a host of other blessings.

☐ *Confessing* my sin. There is need for daily confession of sin(s) if I expect to be an effective ambassador for Christ. I pray a personal prayer or use a general confession somewhat like this one (which I composed for my own use, using some phrases adapted from the *Book of Common Prayer* and other sources):

Almighty and most merciful Father, I have sinned and strayed from your way like a lost sheep. I am a self-centered person, not a Christ-centered person. I am guilty of arrogant pride. I have not loved you with my whole heart. I have not loved my neighbors as myself. I have broken your holy laws. I have done things I ought not to have done; I have not done those

things which I ought to have done. And there is no spiritual health in me. But you, O Lord, have mercy upon me, a miserable sinner.

All of this leads to yielding myself for daily cleansing in his blood, daily filling by the Holy Spirit.

☐ I *commit* myself at the start of each day for his Spirit to use as salt and light; to be an earthen vessel fit for the Master's use (2 Cor 4:7). Such commitment tells the Lord that he is number one on my totem pole of priorities; that walking with him through the ups and downs of my daily routines takes priority over all else. I declare that he is the most important factor in my life; that my relationship with him is more important than even my career. "Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee."

☐ I *spend time in the Bible*, the written Word, meeting him in its pages. I like the way John Stott said it, speaking at one of the Urbana conventions: "We need to soak our minds in the Bible until our thinking becomes bibline." I want my thinking, speaking and working to be rooted in Scripture, so that I am a faculty member nourished therein.

Goal 2. To recognize God's call throughout the day: that he has called me to serve as a faculty member at the school where he has placed me. Without that sense of call, my place on the faculty will be a job rather than a ministry. Without that sense of call, my criteria for success will be absorbed from the secular culture in which I swim.

Goal 3. To ask of God several petitions regarding my character:

☐ for wisdom that I might communicate wisely with faculty peers and students, might ask effective questions of non-

Christian colleagues in an effort to stimulate their thinking about him and his Word, might formulate helpful answers to their questions; wisdom in knowing what and how to communicate in other kinds of dialogue.

□ For love for faculty colleagues, God placing within my heart some of the love which he has for faculty who are separated from him. Spoken witness without genuine love is likely to drive people away rather than draw them toward the Lord.

□ For power energizing me for all aspects of my life. It may be that my influence on fellow faculty is weak because I lack the power of the Holy Spirit.

□ For help in developing a strong intellect and fervent heart. Christian faculty seem to be lured to one extreme or the other: sharpening their intellects while letting their hearts grow cold, or stoking fires of fervent hearts while intellects become dull. An excellent small book to help with this problem is *With Heart and Mind* by Prof. Kenneth L. Pike (Eerdmans). This 140-page paperback greatly encouraged me when I was a young professor.

Goal 4. To ask him concerning my works—that he will guide and enable me to do good teaching, good research and other good works that will constitute salt and light, having an influence on those around me and bringing credit to his name.

Goal 5. To pray by name for other Christian faculty peers, that the Lord will do his work in their character and stimulate them to have good motives and do good actions.

Goal 6. To pray by name for the salvation of at least one faculty peer.

Goal 7. To become familiar with basic literature analyzing factors explaining the spiritual conditions of university people. Examples of such books are *A Christian Critique of the University* by Charles Malik (InterVarsity Press, 1982), *Handbook of Christian Apologetics* by Peter Kreeft and Ronald Tacelli (InterVarsity Press, 1994), and the previously mentioned *The Universe Next Door* by Jim Sire and *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* by Mark Noll.

(Permit me to interject a personal note. If I were a young faculty member and came across a manuscript containing those seven suggestions, my head would begin swirling with more to be done than time in which to do it. If you are experiencing the same feeling, please take heart. Before long I will offer some ideas on how to deal with it.)

Goals for a Small Group of Faculty Members

Now let's consider a small group of Christian faculty getting together (once a week, once every two weeks or whatever) as members of a minority element. They need to agree on their basic goals.

Goal 1. To pray together. This is where faculty prayer partnerships are crucial. Is it not true that one factor explaining our weakness in encountering the university for Christ is our weak prayer foundation? I wonder how many faculty prayer partnerships exist in today's colleges and universities. I wonder how many Christian faculty reading this document are involved in a prayer partnership on campus. God alone knows those answers, but I'm convinced our first strategy as a small group should be faculty prayer partnerships.

If you are not already involved in a faculty prayer partnership that meets once a week for at least fifteen minutes,

please ask the Lord to guide you to such a colleague. Keep asking until you find one. Until our campus is dotted with faculty prayer partnerships, we can expect to accomplish very little.

I cannot emphasize this enough: *Failure to build that prayer partnership may not weaken your influence on Christian faculty at other institutions (indeed, you might become widely known) nor your standing among Christian non-faculty people in your local community (indeed, you might be highly respected) nor your influence on students in your university (indeed, many may look up to you). But it will handicap your ability to introduce faculty peers to Jesus Christ.*

Some partnerships will grow into threesomes, foursomes or more. *Getting Christian faculty together for any purpose is difficult; getting them together to pray is the most difficult of all.* Why do we shy away from meeting by twos and threes to pray? Are we fearful of being rejected by fellow Christians if we ask them to meet to pray? Are we fearful they will judge us as being superspiritual?

I believe Satan is aware of the powerful influence of colleges and universities. He is aware of the influence of faculty on the way their colleges and universities go; therefore he cripples the influence of Christians within those faculties. One of his strategies is to combat our praying together. We must not let him succeed in this; we must resist and pray against him.

We do well to remember S. D. Gordon's principle, "You can do more than pray after you have prayed; but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed." Surely one reason there is so little evidence of faculty evangelism is that so few of us are getting together to pray for the salvation of faculty peers.

(An aside to pastors: A major intercessory support that we need from your congregation is asking the Lord to stimulate us to get together on campus to pray.)

Goal 2. To provide mutual encouragement—to enjoy being with one another for sharing problems we’ve encountered, sharing burdens (Gal 6:2) and developing a sense of community. It is in small get-togethers that we hammer out strategy for making a dent in the secularism and materialism bedeviling society.

Goal 3. To formulate responses to questions confronting us not only as Christians, not only as academicians, but as *Christian* academicians. Here are several examples:

- ☐ How do I, as a specialist in my academic discipline, probe its basic presuppositions—and the superstructure of knowledge built thereon—from a biblical perspective?
- ☐ How do I, as a professor of literature, proceed to read literature from a worldview that is Christian?
- ☐ How do I, as an economist or an economic geographer, study the economic life of a Third World nation sunk in poverty?
- ☐ What does it mean to “take every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Cor 10:5)?
- ☐ How can my colleagues and I best encourage, critique and strengthen each other as we endeavor to think Christianly/biblically about every aspect of our fields of study?
- ☐ What does it mean for me to be a faculty witness for Jesus within my department, college, university?
- ☐ What does it mean for me to be a witness for Christ within my academic specialty nationwide?
- ☐ How can I and Christian peers impact our college/univer-

sity in such a manner that following Jesus is perceived as a live option in tertiary education?

☐ How can we present information about Jesus in such a manner that faculty colleagues must deal with it—with him! Indeed, how can I/we present ideas in such a way that faculty cannot avoid dealing with Christ? Here is where Pontius Pilate's classic question comes to the front: "Then what should I do with Jesus?" (Mt 27:22).

☐ How can we communicate with non-Christian academics? If we were missionaries to a foreign nation we would learn its language. Likewise in academia. What terms and idioms are colleagues using as they communicate with each other? How can we learn those terms—and associated concepts, especially their presuppositions—in order that we can communicate with them? Admittedly we cannot read all their literature to learn their thought patterns. But that doesn't mean we will read none! So what of their literature is essential if we want to dialogue with them about our Lord?

☐ Does our university need to reform its curriculum? If so, what might be the role of Christian faculty in helping to revise that curriculum?

If we who know the university from the inside are unable to answer these questions, whom do we expect to provide the answers? Our students? Are we expecting some outside Christian organization to provide the answers? Are we expecting the clergy to do it for us?

No! We have no right to expect others to do our homework for us. As missionaries within the faculty mission field we should expect ourselves to know the issues better than any outsider. If we are unable to answer those questions, we need to explore the reasons for such disability—and do something to improve the situation.

Goal 4. To sharpen our potential for producing good works. “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven” (Mt 5:16). If our works are not good, our specific witness will fall on deaf ears. Regardless of our specialties (teachers, researchers, administrators), we need each other’s encouragement and critique for producing high-quality works.

Potential for producing good works varies. God has given some of us ten talents of intellectual ability and energy; some five; some one. He has given some of our atheist colleagues ten. Their deeds may surpass ours by a wide margin. The point is not that fewer-talent Christians should produce works more eminent than ten-talent atheists, but that each of us should do the best we can with whatever potential God has given us.

Goal 5. To help each other develop character traits which will reflect credit on our department, our college, our academic field—and our Lord. Again, we need each other. We need each other’s prayers, encouragement and correctives. We need brainstorming on how to improve the quality of our character—all of those attributes of Christlikeness which we want manifested in our lives: integrity, honesty, patience, love for other people, joy, self-control and so on.

Goal 6. To establish a network of Christian faculty on campus. One reason our impact is weak is that we Christians do not know who each other is. The fragmentation among Christian faculty is distressing. Can we not set a goal to achieve a spirit of unity among us for the sake of Christ’s name?

Goal 7. To conduct a weekly Bible study designed for fac-

ulty interested in knowing about Jesus Christ. The aim is to have an atmosphere of mutual respect between believers and nonbelievers, a forum to which nonbelievers can bring questions and opinions without encountering antagonism.

In our Wisconsin experiment, we quietly asked any newcomer who turned out to be a Christian kindly to refrain from splitting theological hairs in the discussion, deferring rather to non-Christians so they could have ample time for questions or get comments off their chests. In other words, our objective was singular: *to provide a forum to which non-Christian faculty could bring questions and comments.*

Goal 8. To improve skills for dialogue with non-Christians. Such engagement calls for interaction at two levels: the intellect and the will.

Goal 8a. Dialogue at the intellectual level. We sharpen each other's intellects by constructing questions and formulating responses/answers pertinent to basic issues confronting the university in general and faculty in particular. The apostle Paul knew how to communicate on the intellectual wavelength of hearers. He was familiar with their literature, their thought patterns. The strategy of his intellectual approach in Athens (similar to the university realm of our day) is described in Acts 17:16-34. He knew how to engage unbelievers in vigorous debate. And we too—"we try to persuade others" (2 Cor 5:11).

One reason peers have rejected Jesus is that their intellects possess insufficient information. They are rejecting an unknown. It is our responsibility to see that information about Jesus is communicated to their minds. In this post-Christian age many colleagues know little about him.

We utilize two basic channels to communicate such information:

□ What non-Christian peers *hear*. We attempt to talk with them about Christ; we try to persuade them to listen to other Christians talk about him. Colleagues are well aware of the value of the spoken word. We want them to hear about Christ, his Word, their relation to him.

□ What they *read*. We attempt to persuade them to read about Jesus Christ in hopes that they will build a data base adequate for responding to him.

“But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent?” (Rom 10:14-15).

This is where you and I come in. Non-Christian faculty are not likely to go to church, tune in to Christian radio or TV programs or pick up literature for information about Christ. But they might listen to you and me. We may be the only “preachers” who have credibility with them.

In communicating about Jesus we need to know our Bible so that what we communicate is rooted in Scripture and not solely in our opinions. We need to know our basic textbook.

If peers are to hear what we say and read what we write, it must be in the frame of reference of what they perceive in our character, in the quality, the *aroma* of our general witness.

In 8a we are in combat for the minds of people. Confronting intellectual issues is a responsibility for which we need, under the Lord’s guidance, to hammer out questions, responses, answers for engagement with non-Christian peers—and then to get on with the task of confronting people

with ideas about Jesus.

Why is it that Marxist peers have had such a powerful impact in academia? Are Marxists smarter than we? More committed? Better trained? More willing to take risks? Why can't we have as much influence as they? One reason is our failure to communicate information about our Lord.

Goal 8b. The level of the will. The intellectual is not the only level on which we engage non-Christians. The other is the will.

I once heard John R. W. Stott recount an experience with a young man at a British university. The two were conversing about intellectual questions which the man posed about God, Christ, the Bible, Christianity, sin and so on. With his considerable experience and brilliant mind, Stott provided substantial answers. But with every question they reached a point where Stott had to admit he did not as yet know the complete answer. At length, convinced that the student's intellect possessed enough information, Stott asked, "Suppose I were able to answer fully every one of your questions, would you then choose to confess your sin to Jesus, ask him to forgive you, commit your life to serve and obey him as your Savior and Lord?" The student hesitated, then replied, "No."

Impacting the university for Christ involves engagement in the realm of the individual human will as well as in the intellect. It is in their wills that people choose the basic presuppositions upon which they will construct their lives. It is in the realm of the intellect that people come to know *about* Christ; it is the realm of the will that they come to *know* him. As Christ's ambassadors to the faculty sector, we desire that peers come to *know* Jesus.

It is in this realm that many colleagues have made a wrong

choice. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. . . . So they are without excuse . . . they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools" (Rom 1:18-22).

The apostle Paul prior to his conversion had engaged in intellectual debate with Christ-followers from whom he had gleaned considerable intellectual information. But his conversion did not occur directly as a result of intellectual persuasion. It was the direct action by the Lord himself who, not bypassing Paul's intellect, went beyond the intellect and wrought a change in Paul's will.

The god of this world is powerful. He influences the intellect, thus blinding people to spiritual truth so that seeing they do not see and hearing they do not understand. Indeed, as 1 Corinthians 1:18 points out, our basic message about Jesus—his life, death, resurrection, ascension and coming again—is foolishness to non-Christians. "Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor 2:14).

The god of this world impacts the will, paralyzing the decision-making power of people, keeping them from choosing to respond to Christ. Spiritual warfare becomes intense in the realm of the will. "We do not wage war according to human standards; for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds" (2 Cor 10:3-4).

In this warfare Christian faculty are tempted to rely on our

own ability, to make an impact for Christ in our own strength. We do well to recall the Lord's words in Zechariah 4:6, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit."

In brief, Christian faculty meet together periodically in small groups to prepare both for debate on the intellectual level and for combat on the spiritual level—knowing that the effort to persuade non-Christian peers intellectually, important as that might be, is not enough. The crucial work is done by the Spirit working in the wills of nonbelievers, removing the spiritual blinders which the god of this world has placed over their eyes.

The problem is not minds alone. The problem involves both the mind and the will. You and I can do at least something to engage their minds, but only the Holy Spirit can do combat with the god of this world in engaging their wills.

(Again a personal note. If you feel overwhelmed by a pile-up of suggestions in this manuscript, please take heart. Later I will offer ideas on how to deal with that problem.)

Goals for Large Groups of Christian Faculty

There are several goals which a large group of Christian faculty might adopt, depending on each member's intellectual strength and style, personality type, energy, academic load, self-discipline, type of department/college/university, circumstances within their personal and family life and so on.

But before these large group goals are cited, there needs to be a word of caution. We first must lay a groundwork of attained goals in A and B (the goals for individuals and for small groups). Failure to lay that groundwork might not prevent our attempting goals in C, but such failure will guarantee that the results of large-group goals will be short-lived. The importance of the prayer foundation is so fundamental

that I will take a moment here to illustrate it.

Useful buildings need strong foundations. So do endeavors of groups of Christians. In figure 3 the superstructure of the building is shown above ground level; the foundation is shown beneath ground level.

Where large groups of Christian faculty have constructed a solid prayer foundation as per this diagram, they are ready to work toward goals such as the following:

Goal 1. To conduct a monthly seminar dealing with world-views and problems. Again, once the prayer foundation is laid, an occasional faculty get-together might be held where a colleague presents a paper or gives a talk concerning (1) relationships between his or her academic field and truths in

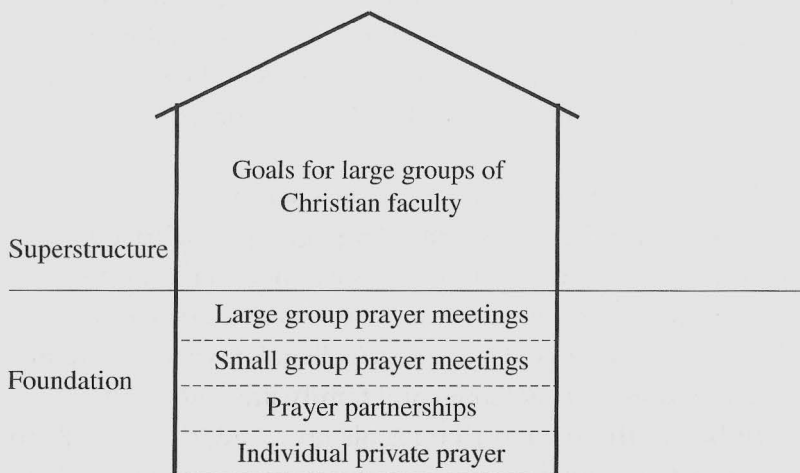


Figure 3. Prayer foundation undergirding large groups of Christian faculty

Scripture or (2) relationships between a certain problem and biblical truth.

Robert Frykenberg, professor of history at the University of Wisconsin, for several years led a ministry consisting of monthly dinners at which faculty members presented papers on such topics as "The Bible and Politics in Ireland," "The Brain/Mind Problem: Do We Have Free Will?" and "The Logic of God Incarnate: An Assessment." Attendance averaged between ten and twenty, some of whom were advanced graduate students.

Goal 2. To present a public lecture series. In a few instances Christian faculty have banded together in presenting a short series of weekly lectures (usually during a noon hour) on campus with each member speaking on some aspect of his or her area of scholarship in relation to biblical truth.

In recent years at UW, six faculty members have participated in an annual "Dissenters Forum" one noon per week for six weeks. Each member presents a lecture showing the relationship of principles in his or her field to truths in Scripture, the topic being phrased in terms of dissent from prevailing myths which clash with Scripture. Average attendance has been 150 to 200, mostly graduate students with a sprinkling of undergraduates and faculty.

A large group could also present a Veritas Forum designed to bring outside Christian speakers, specialists in their fields, to visit and speak on campus.

Goal 3. To penetrate the infrastructure of the university. If we possess adequate ability and energy, could we attempt to deploy ourselves strategically among committees which determine the institution's values systems?

Goal 4. To develop and utilize a body of literature. This goal contains three parts:

Goal 4a. To become familiar with the wealth of literature produced by our predecessors and contemporaries analyzing aspects of academia from Christian perspectives. James Sire has prepared a bibliography, *Christ in the Grove of Academe: A Very Basic, Very Selective Bibliography*, available from InterVarsity Faculty Ministries.

Goal 4b. To produce essential new literature. In probing the literature we become aware of voids which have not been filled, concepts treated inadequately. This sets the stage for those with writing skills to fill the voids. At this point we do well to recall words spoken, I believe, by C. S. Lewis: "We do not need more Christian books; we need more books by Christians about everything with Christian values built in."

We need to produce a body of literature at a high scholarly level—a body of Christian writing that by force of argument will gain an audience in the great intellectual centers of the English-speaking world.

Goal 4c. To place carefully selected materials—booklets, pamphlets, books, tapes, videos—in the hands of peers as thought stimulators which the Lord might use to arrest their attention. "Joe, here's an item you might be interested in. Would you be willing to peruse it and give me your feedback?" That is at least one method which might be employed. Today's flood of Christian literature pouring from publishing houses simply is not reaching our mission field. Unless we place stimulating material in colleagues' hands, nobody else is likely to do so.

In brief, we aspire to use literature and videos to help us show relationships between God's revealed truths in the Bible and those which scholarship has discovered. Again, all truth is God's truth.

Universal Goals Regardless of Group Size

Here are a few additional suggestions for viable goals whether we are a lone witness, a small group of believers or a large group.

Goal 1. To lead questing peers into the Bible. Normally a person comes to know Christ by meeting him through the Scriptures. "It is via the written Word that we come to know the Living Word." Recalling the circles in figure 2 (p. 23) showing peers within the faculty sector, we may feel discouraged by the hopelessness of such a task. Yet the principle holds: the faculty sector will be impacted for Jesus *one member at a time*. Let's not forget that much of human history is changed one human being at a time.

Goal 2. When the Lord brings a non-Christian colleague into Christ's kingdom (Col 1:13), we need a strategy for helping the newborn Christian begin growing toward maturity in Christ. We work with him or her, encouraging participation in a local church and development of self-disciplines for growth.

Goal 3. To impact academic specialties nationwide via a network of Christian faculty at different institutions developing a strategy for exerting influence in that profession.

Some scholars at the annual meetings of their professional associations get together for breakfasts or lunches, sometimes succeeding in getting the session listed in the official

program. One Christian colleague received permission to list a breakfast titled "What Is the Knowledge That Matters Most?"

An encouraging sign is the launching of several societies of Christian scholars specializing in academic fields. Anybody interested in procuring mailing addresses for such associations can write InterVarsity Faculty Ministries, P.O. Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707-7895, for a list originally developed by Charles Hummel.

Universal Goals and Variable Goals

I believe goals in group A (for individual Christian faculty members) are universals; regardless of academic specialty, type of department and college, our age or personality, it is wise to discipline ourselves to make progress toward all the goals in A, in brief:

- ☐ to spend time alone with Christ and the Bible every day
- ☐ to ever be mindful of God's call to me for faculty service
- ☐ to ask him to make my character more like that of Jesus, particularly in terms of wisdom, love, intellect and heart
- ☐ to ask him to guide me and empower me to do good works, especially in teaching and research
- ☐ to pray for Christian colleagues, that their works will be of good quality
- ☐ to pray for the salvation of at least one faculty peer
- ☐ to become familiar with basic literature analyzing needs in universities and colleges

I believe goals in group B (for small groups) also are universals. Unless there are mitigating circumstances, would it not be wise for all of us to aim at the following?

- ☐ to participate in prayer partnerships or small prayer groups

- ☐ to develop a sense of community for sharing problems and burdens, for rejoicing together and producing mutual encouragement
- ☐ to hammer out answers to questions and problems confronting us in secular academia
- ☐ to meet corporately for sharpening our potential for effective works
- ☐ to meet corporately for developing character traits
- ☐ to establish a network on campus
- ☐ to conduct a seekers' faculty Bible study
- ☐ to meet corporately for developing skills in dialogue

Goals in group C (for large groups) are variables. With differing situations from department to department, school to school, time to time at the same school, it may or may not be timely to aim at goals in group C. But, where possible, would it not be wise to aim with God's help at the following?

- ☐ to conduct worldview/social problems seminars
- ☐ to conduct a public lecture series
- ☐ to penetrate the infrastructure
- ☐ to meet corporately for maximizing use of literature and videos

Goals in group D, it seems to me, are universals:

- ☐ to assist questing peers in probing the Bible
- ☐ to help newborn Christians, one by one, to grow in their new life in Christ
- ☐ to impact academic specialties nationwide

All of the foregoing goals begin with commitment and prayer because without commitment and adequate prayer foundations, all else runs the risk of being done in our own strength. "Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build

it labor in vain" (Ps 127:1). Unless the LORD builds our faculty witness, we labor in vain in building it.

Checkpoint: Let's ask if strategies proposed thus far are applicable to academic disciplines within a university:

- ☐ Natural sciences. Are the ideas presented in this book applicable to faculty members in the natural sciences?
- ☐ Social sciences. Are they applicable in social sciences?
- ☐ Humanities. Do they apply in the humanities?

If our answer to any of those questions is negative, we ask each other, "What changes should be made in order to strengthen our witness to Christ in our sector of the faculty?"

Salinization and Desalinization

"You are the salt of the earth." Salt makes a difference. It preserves from decay—and it adds flavor. The Lord's strategy was to send his followers into all parts of the world, into all sectors of society—to make a difference. He wants us as Christian faculty to make a difference in the value systems of our colleges and universities—changes which will improve the lives of individuals based on God's criteria for quality of life. We his followers do this by salinizing society, by salting our colleges and universities.

There is a danger that we will lose our saltiness, that we will be desalinized by the world's values, which permeate much of the academic world. Indeed, if we face the question, "Why have we Christian faculty members made so little difference in our colleges and universities?" the answer may well be that we have failed to salinize academia because we have permitted academia to desalinize us. The only prevention against losing our saltiness is to walk so closely with the

Lord Jesus Christ that his Holy Spirit within us maintains the saltiness he desires.

Long-Range Overview

Recalling all the circles in figure 2 (p. 23), our faculty mission field, would it be realistic to *ask* the Lord to move throughout the faculty in such a manner that every member will be contacted at least once concerning his or her relationship to Christ?

Is it possible for us to *attempt* to apply Acts 1:8 to the total faculty? Such a target may seem hopeless ("Who are we among so many?") but could we begin by reaching out—to one colleague at a time, to one circle at a time in the diagram? The faculty sector will be changed one faculty member at a time.

Would it be presumptuous to *expect* by faith that God's Spirit would move through our entire faculty, magnetizing the sector, drawing every individual toward Christ—and setting the stage so that, in time, every blank circle plus every circle containing a dot in that diagram will be reached by at least one Christian for at least one conversation? This would follow the model of Philip with the Ethiopian: "Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus" (Acts 9:35).

Unless the Lord indicates that such asking, attempting and expecting is wasting time, let us recall the old hymn lines, "We are coming to a king; large petitions let us bring."

Our overview is based on the conviction that God has a plan for our campus—including faculty. "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope" (Jer 29:11). We choose to believe he will guide us in implementing that

plan if we walk closely with him and make ourselves available to do what he wants done in terms of individual commitment, prayer partnerships, and total service as a group of missionaries on campus mission fields.

Responsibility for witness to faculty is ours. We are the indigenous Christian faculty. If we fail to do such witnessing, whom do we expect to do it? Students? Radio and TV preachers? Local clergy? Doubtless the Lord will use their ministry to reach some faculty. And they might be able to assist us occasionally. But it is up to us (1) to devise a strategy for faculty witness and (2) to implement that strategy. The burden of proceeding rests squarely on our shoulders under God's good hand upon us.

A Personal Word

Now a personal aside to my brothers and sisters on faculties of secular colleges and universities. If somebody had given me this document when I was a young faculty member at the University of Wisconsin, my head would have been swimming by the time I reached this paragraph. I would have felt inundated, exclaiming, "This is impossible. I'll never be able to do all that!"

If you have that overwhelmed feeling, permit this suggestion: forget (temporarily) goals B, C and D above. Attend only to goal A. Even there you may feel overwhelmed; if so, postpone all goals in A except the first five. Start small. Ask God to help you get started with that quintet of disciplines: recognize that God has placed you on that faculty; commit yourself each day to Jesus for his working in and through you; confess your sin(s); daily spend time alone with God and the Bible; pray that your works will be good. As time goes by, gradually add one other goal in A, then another, until you are

working on all of the A goals. Keep asking the Lord (in his good timing) to lead you to a faculty prayer partner; then commence working on goals in B. Anticipate that the Lord—again in his own good timing—will indicate what (if any) of the large-group goals he wants you to work on. Take heart in the wonderful promise, “It is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Phil 2:13).

A Final Word on Prayer Foundation

This long-range plan for Christian faculty is certain to fail unless undergirded by a strong foundation of prayer. If we are faithful as praying faculty members, we can expect additional support from students, pastors and other Christians if we take initiative in asking them for help.

Basic principle: *The prayer foundation comes first.*

FOUR

Suggestions for Pastors and Churches

Through the years Christian faculty have found encouragement and support from many pastors and local churches, particularly those who perceive the campus as a mission field.

Question: where are the local churches—not only in college towns but elsewhere—which, when calling a pastor, will screen for candidates who see our nation's colleges and universities as mission fields?

Regardless of where in the world a mission field is located, it is essential that the church undergird that field (and missionaries within it) with a foundation of prayer. American churches send missionaries to numerous areas both in Amer-

ica and abroad. Within such church buildings are bulletin boards bearing pictures of missionaries supported by that congregation, with indications (often with maps) of where they have gone to serve.

The purpose of such displays is to stimulate the congregation to pray for those missionaries. Another tactic for stimulating prayer is to list missionaries, by area served, in Sunday bulletins and other publications.

I wonder how many local churches in America have posted pictures of faculty members in their congregations who serve as missionaries to local colleges and universities. How many churches list names of such faculty in church bulletins reminding the congregation to pray for them? I hope their number will grow.

Occasionally one hears of a church with such a vision—one which, at the start of each academic year, holds a commissioning service for faculty members going as missionaries into their colleges and universities. The analogy is with the Antioch church: “after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off” (Acts 13:3).

My impression is that few churches view their faculty members as missionaries, and that few churches are praying for them. Little wonder that there is little evangelization of faculty in colleges and universities in America.

If you are a pastor, please consider addressing the problem by calling your people to pray for the campus, and particularly for faculty on the campus.

Conclusion

Where do we go from here? Let's be bold. Let's ask great things of God, attempt great things for God, expect great things from God—as William Carey did almost two hundred years ago as a missionary to India.

Where now are the Christian faculty who will ask, attempt, expect—and are willing to begin small with one step at a time?

Where are the pastors and local churches who will ask, attempt, expect—and all with the mission of penetrating the entire university faculty realm with a witness to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ?

A related thought: Would the same strategy be applicable in high schools as well as colleges and universities? How about middle schools? And elementary schools? Could

Christian teachers whom God has placed in high schools, in middle schools, in elementary schools find this strategy workable in their schools?

If Christians are concerned for the witness to Christ throughout their nation's education, they would do well to view as mission fields not only the faculties of college and universities but also the faculties of primary and secondary educational institutions.

There is only one way to penetrate the faculties of colleges and universities today, and that is the biblical way of individual Christ-followers going into that milieu as missionaries (witnesses) impacting unbelieving colleagues one by one. We need more indigenous faculty who will do just that, fleshing out genuine "Christ-followership" as lights in the darkness, salt in the culture of the campus mission field.

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“YOU ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH” (Mt 5:13)

This book tells the story of “the Wisconsin experiment,” an effort by Christian faculty members at the University of Wisconsin in Madison to be a presence on their campus—a presence that would help colleagues learn about and be drawn to Jesus Christ. They wanted to be “salt” in the university world.

John Alexander was a professor of economic geography when he was challenged: “Have you ever thought the Lord might want to give you a ministry to faculty?” The question frightened him. “I felt incompetent to attempt so difficult a task.” But he agreed to pray about it.

From the story of what followed, you will learn principles and goals that fit any university or college campus where at least one faculty member wants to make known the message “Jesus Christ is Lord.” The Wisconsin experiment has been repeated on many campuses since John Alexander and Ed Maibenco began praying together for their colleagues.

And God is still at work. If you wish you could be “faculty salt” on your campus, this book will help you get started.

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