

# 5 Leadership Principles for Collegiate Ministry

*Engage, Equip, and Empower Students*



by Paul Worcester and Shane Pruitt

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## A Strategic Mission Field

At 21, I (Shane) was completely lost in life. After graduating high school, I moved in and out of my parents' house, bounced from job to job and relationship to relationship, and almost failed out of junior college. Then, I heard the gospel at a collegiate event. God radically changed me that night, and leaders in my life disciplined me, gave me opportunities to serve, and helped me realize what God was calling me to do.

Paul and I love speaking to college students and equipping collegiate ministry leaders. We believe that collegiate ministry is strategic. Why? Because we're products of collegiate ministry ourselves! I came to know Jesus through collegiate ministry, and collegiate ministry likewise shaped some of Paul's most formative years.

Today, God is moving in powerful ways through the lives of college students across North America, and He is using a variety of collegiate ministry models and methods to do it. Our GenSend team at the North American Mission Board is thrilled to celebrate and come alongside these students and leaders. We believe that when God sends the next revival to our continent, college students will be on the frontlines of that movement.

In this eBook, Paul and I kick off the [\*Essentials for Collegiate Ministry\*](#) series and examine five principles to effectively engage, equip, and empower college students. The other eBooks in this series lean into practitioners from three approaches to collegiate ministry: campus-based collegiate ministry, church-based collegiate ministry, and collegiate-focused church planting. While the starting point for each model varies, we love to see collaboration and partnership between ministries.

As you read these eBooks with your team and discuss best practices to implement in your own ministry, we pray that God will inspire, encourage, and equip you to engage the strategic mission field of college students.

# Three Reasons to Reach College Students

Personally, if I (Paul) had a thousand lives, I would give them all to collegiate ministry. Why? Well, statistics tell us that there are about 19 million college students in North America.<sup>1</sup> The college campus is a bottleneck through which almost every leader of this generation will pass at some point. But the reality is that most college students are spiritually lost, broken, and searching for direction.

A whole library of books could be written on why college students are a strategic mission field, but here are three primary reasons.

## 1. College students are open to the gospel.

People often come to Christ in times of transition and trouble. College is typically the first major transition in a person's life, and many students find themselves increasingly troubled and depressed. By college, they realize that the world is broken and that they, too, are broken. They're searching for hope, truth, and answers.

In our experience, most college students are open to spiritual conversations if approached in a relational and intentional way. In fact, a Lifeway Research study found that 89% of non-churchgoing young adults would be willing to listen if someone wanted to tell them about Christianity.<sup>2</sup> That's when we have the opportunity to

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<sup>1</sup> "Back-to-School Statistics," National Center for Education Statistics, <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372#Postsecondary-enrollment>.

<sup>2</sup> "Unchurched Americans Turned Off by Church, Open to Christians," Lifeway Research, January 9, 2008, <https://research.lifeway.com/2008/01/09/unchurched-americans-turned-off-by-church-open-to-christians/>.

share that Hope has a name, that Truth has a name, and that the answer is the Name above all names—Jesus Christ!

During my 12 years of serving in collegiate ministry at Chico State, I (Paul) discovered that most college students are in search of two things: friends and fun. So, the best people to reach students are other students. For example, Jacob, Josh, and Kelton exemplified this approach. During their sophomore year, they opted to remain in a dorm room instead of moving to off-campus housing. While on-campus living was more expensive and restrictive, they felt called to engage new freshman and share Christ with them. Over the course of that year, God birthed a Bible study with 20 students in attendance, and 12 students professed faith in Jesus Christ!

## **2. College students have the time and desire for mentoring.**

College students desire to be mentored, and they have more time in their college years to do so than in most other seasons of life. They long to be trained and empowered. To hear the words “I am proud of you” coming from a mentor can profoundly impact a college student’s life in this pivotal stage of learning and growing.

I (Paul) started meeting with a student named Jon. He believed a lot of heretical theology and wasn’t very teachable, but he was a new believer and was excited to get connected to our ministry. While Jon would often say things that were off theologically, I would kindly disagree and then focus on teaching him some practical habits for following Christ. We talked through the importance of time alone with God, reading Scripture, and developing relationships in the church. Over time, Jon became more teachable and eventually served as a leader in our ministry, where he began leading other students to Christ and mentoring them as new disciples.

Recently, Jon texted me a picture of his newborn baby with the message, “His name is Paul.” As you can imagine, my heart felt



like it would explode with joy thinking about how this Paul would grow up in a godly family led by Jon! As 3 John 1:4 says, “I have no greater joy than this: to hear that my children are walking in truth.” When we mentor and disciple college students, their lives, and, often ours, are transformed.

We may feel so busy and stretched for time that we can’t imagine adding more things to our calendars. But here is a cheat code for mentoring and discipling young adults. Don’t add them to your calendar. Invite them into your calendar. Ask them to come alongside you in the things you’re already doing. Books, podcasts, and classroom lectures all play a part in learning, but hands-on experience is often the most valuable.

I (Shane) mentor a young man who feels called to ministry. I invited him into my calendar so he can travel with me and minister alongside me. His growth and maturity have soared. And guess what? I’ve learned a lot from him as well.

### **3. College students are kingdom multipliers.**

There is a tendency in ministry to focus on addition and growth. And while those things may be good and healthy, we encourage you to focus on kingdom multiplication. College students have their entire lives ahead of them. Not only can they reach their fellow peers now, but you may discover future pastors, ministry leaders, church planters, and missionaries among the college students you serve. Mentor them. Disciple them. Develop them. You must help them grow in Christlikeness to make a kingdom impact now and wherever else God calls them in the future.

Multiplication will look different, depending on your ministry context. The Summit Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, focuses on training and mobilizing college students within their congregation. They then plant churches in college towns to accelerate the multiplication of new churches. Cornerstone Church in Ames,

Iowa, started by primarily reaching college students but multiplied into a multi-generational church movement. Resonate Church in Pullman, Washington, is seeing rapid church multiplication as they send teams of recent graduates to plant new churches on college campuses. The Baptist Collegiate Ministry at the University of Oklahoma has helped start at least 100 new collegiate ministries.<sup>3</sup>

This generation is looking for a cause worth living and dying for, and we have the greatest cause on earth. God is calling many students to advance the kingdom as pastors, ministry leaders, church planters, missionaries, and lifelong disciple-makers. When they are mentored, discipled, and trained well, college students will multiply disciples around the world.

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## Reflection Questions

- Of the three reasons listed, what stood out to you? How can you begin to focus on the principles of that reason in your ministry?
- In your experience, what are other reasons that reaching college students is so strategic?

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Worcester, “5 Reasons Most Churches Don’t Reach College Students,” *Outreach Magazine*, July 4, 2018, <https://outreachmagazine.com/features/evangelism/31163-5-reasons-churches-dont-reach-college-students.html>.

## Mission Over Models

In 2015, Eric Geiger wrote an article about the uniqueness of each small group's starting point. While small groups often have the same goal of studying God's Word and building community, Geiger emphasized that by choosing the right starting point based on church strategy, context, and group dynamics, the experience would be more fruitful. Otherwise, the group experience would just be frustrating.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, collegiate ministries have the same purpose of helping college students know Jesus and make Him known, but each ministry must start with its own strategy, context, and available opportunities to be most effective. While every collegiate ministry is driving toward the same goal, each starting point is different.

### Collegiate Ministry Models

We have personally witnessed how the Lord is gathering, discipling, and sending college students on mission through a variety of models, including campus-based ministry, church-based ministry, and collegiate-focused church planting. Your ministry may even be a model that doesn't neatly fit into one of these three categories! But the most important aspect of any ministry is that the mission of Christ is being accomplished in the lives of college students. The mission comes first. The model comes second. And it takes all kinds of ministries to reach all kinds of students.

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<sup>4</sup> Eric Geiger, "What's the Best Starting Point for Your Church?" Lifeway Research, August 3, 2015, <https://research.lifeway.com/2015/08/03/different-groups-different-starting-points/>.

Here are just a few of many examples.

### **Campus-Based Collegiate Ministry**

God is raising up a growing number of Christian leaders through the University of Arkansas BCM, a campus-based ministry. They hold a regular gathering for students who are exploring a call to ministry leadership where various ministry leaders speak to students and answer questions. Many students have become pastors and ministry leaders in local churches after taking part in these gatherings.<sup>5</sup>

### **Church-Based Collegiate Ministry**

Central College 747 is a church-based ministry of Central Baptist in Jonesboro, Arkansas. Their ministry focuses on equipping students to live on mission. One year, they set a goal of having 747 gospel conversations, and they saw over 40 students profess Christ as Lord and get baptized as a result.

### **Collegiate-Focused Church Planting**

H2O is a collegiate-focused church planting network with a vision of reaching, discipling, and mobilizing college students in the Midwest. They strategically send out teams to plant collegiate-focused churches. They have embraced a model of personal support raising for staff who devote their time to reaching and discipling college students.

## **Five Principles of a Healthy Collegiate Ministry**

As you can see, God is doing great things through different collegiate ministry models, but these ministries didn't happen overnight. In our experience, we have discovered five principles that are common in each collegiate ministry that is consistently seeing movement and transformed lives.

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<sup>5</sup> For additional resources on discipling students who feel called to ministry leadership, check out the book, *Calling Out the Called* by Scott Pace and Shane Pruitt, along with other additional videos and discussion guides at [www.callingoutthecalled.com](http://www.callingoutthecalled.com).

1. Mobilizing Extraordinary Prayer
2. Bold and Broad Evangelism
3. Deep and Personal Disciple-Making
4. Intentional Leadership Development
5. Creating a Sending Culture

In the coming pages, we will explore why each principle is foundational to collegiate ministry, whatever your starting point may be.

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## Reflection Questions

- What are the strengths of your ministry model? Why does this work well?
- What are the weaknesses of your ministry model? How could you work toward greater health in these areas?
- How could principles from another model help strengthen your collegiate ministry?

# Principle 1: Mobilizing Extraordinary Prayer

The first and most important step in reaching college students with the gospel is prayer, and that starts with each of us! My (Shane's) pastor told me, "Before you ever talk to people about God, you need to talk to God about people." If we are not passionately praying to reach college students, we cannot mobilize others to pray for the same.

Being "persistent in prayer" takes discipline (Romans 12:12). There are seasons that I (Paul) have attempted to pray for an hour a day or over a specific prayer list, go prayer walking, or discipline myself in the area of fasting. But the truth is that the most productive time of your day is your time alone with God.

If you are struggling to know how to pray for college students in your ministry, use the following prompts as a guide.

- Pray for the growth of students (1 Peter 2:2). Pray that they would grow in their love for Jesus.
- Pray for students to engage boldly (Romans 1:16). Pray that they would engage unbelievers with the gospel.
- Pray for students to navigate well (Psalm 119:105). Pray that they would navigate this world with the truth of God's Word.
- Pray for the zeal of students (2 Chronicles 7:14). Pray that they would have a zeal for revival and spiritual awakening.<sup>6</sup>

As you discipline yourself in prayer, you can mobilize others to pray, too. Here are practical ideas to mobilize prayer in your collegiate ministry.

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<sup>6</sup> Adapted from "Prayers for Gen Z," GenSend, June 3, 2022, <https://www.gensend.org/resource/prayers-for-gen-z/>.

## Email Prayer Letters

I (Paul) send an email prayer letter to over 400 people. This regular email gives updates, stories, and prayer requests for our collegiate ministry. Email is a great way to consistently share what God is doing and how people can pray for your ministry.

## Text-Message Prayer Team

Another way to mobilize prayer is through a group text message to your prayer team. This approach is more personal and usually more time-sensitive than email. You might even consider it similar to a livestream option, giving others real-time glimpses into your ministry. For example, if you are meeting with a student, send a group text to pray for that conversation. When someone makes a decision to follow Christ, share what happened so others can join you in celebration.

## Prayer Calendar

Take a calendar and add a Christ-follower from your ministry to each day of that month. Each day, reach out to the believer listed and ask how you can pray for them. You can also share this calendar with others. When 30 people pray for five minutes, that is over two hours of prayer each day for a student in your ministry.

## Pray-a-thons

Designate a day for your pray-a-thon and ask students, ministry leaders, and ministry supporters to sign up for a 30-minute time slot to pray for your ministry. You may hold a pray-a-thon leading up to a strategic ministry event, like the start of the semester or a weekend retreat. Another pray-a-thon approach might be to share a 21-day emphasis with prayer prompts for each day. Whatever you choose, pray-a-thons are a great way to involve people both near and far in praying for your ministry.

## 72-Hour Prayer Tent

Set up a tent on your campus or near your church and ask students to sign up for one-hour slots. They can pray for your ministry during that time or engage with those who walk by and ask to pray for their specific requests. Be sure to receive the required permissions before setting up your tent!

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### Reflection Questions

- How can you personally grow in your prayer life?
- How are you currently communicating your ministry's prayer needs and inviting others to pray for your ministry?
- How can you better mobilize others to pray for God to bring revival and awakening in the lives of your students?



## Principle 2: Bold and Broad Evangelism

Our (Paul's) ministry team at Chico State set a goal of having 1,000 gospel conversations with students in one school year. While we fell way short of our goal, we still engaged in 600 gospel conversations and saw over 200 students make decisions for Christ.

When collegiate ministries engage in bold and broad evangelism, students surrender to Christ! When your ministry encourages and equips students to sacrifice time and resources to reach their peers now, it sets a pace for them to continue doing so throughout their lives.

Here are three types of evangelism to consider for your collegiate ministry.

### Ministry-Mode Evangelism

In Matthew 4:19, Jesus said, "Follow me ... and I will make you fish for people." The most common form of fishing in the New Testament was net fishing. A fisherman would cast his net far and wide to gather a large amount of fish.

In the same way, ministry-mode evangelism may lead you to some "net fishing." Large-group preaching events, fall or spring outreach events, social gatherings, social media pushes, and other opportunities may draw a large crowd. Intentional large-group outreach during specific seasons can be strategic. For example, a large-group preaching event at the beginning of the school year allows new students to check out your ministry and connect with students who are already engaged. Whatever the event or opportunity, be sure to proclaim the gospel and invite students to respond.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Shane Pruitt, "Giving an Effective Gospel Invitation with Integrity," North American Mission Board, February 14, 2023, <https://www.namb.net/resource/giving-an-effective-gospel-invitation-with-integrity/>.

## Initiative Evangelism

Equip students to engage others in gospel conversations. Train them with conversation starters and verses to share the gospel. Some helpful tools may be the [Life on Mission App](#), [3 Circles](#), and [The God Test App](#). After you have provided students with training, plan weekly times for them to go out in pairs to start spiritual conversations with others in a low-pressure, relational way. This approach helps students grow in boldness. While some may say this type of evangelism doesn't work anymore, we are still seeing students reached through initiative evangelism.

## Relational Evangelism

College students belong to a variety of affinity groups. Athletic teams, fraternities, sororities, clubs, and so on provide opportunities for relational evangelism. Help students think about their personal spheres of influence or walk through our GenSend [Personal Ministry Impact Worksheet](#). Encourage and equip students to share the gospel with those they regularly see.

Another form of relational evangelism is a [gospel appointment](#), which is exactly like it sounds: an appointment to share the gospel! This intentional time focuses on establishing a relationship with people, building trust, and then sharing the gospel with them. Be on the lookout for new faces in your ministry and encourage your students to do the same. When you meet a new student, set up a time to get together for coffee or a meal. During the meeting, ask about the individual's spiritual background and share your personal testimony, as well as a gospel presentation. This approach is low pressure and permission-based.

So, how many college students will hear the gospel because of your ministry's broad and bold evangelism this year? How can you double that number next year?

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## Reflection Questions:

- What evangelistic goals have you set for your collegiate ministry?
- How are you equipping students to share the gospel with others?  
What opportunities are you providing, and how are you encouraging them to do so?

## Principle 3: Deep and Personal Disciple-Making

Programs don't make disciples. Disciples make disciples! Through deep and personal disciple-making, we help students learn to live like Jesus and then reach others to do the same.

Fruitful collegiate ministries are engaged in personal discipleship, and your ministry should equip and unleash students to make disciples. When students are engaged in ongoing discipleship, you are less likely to feel the urge to start a new program, class, or training for every question or issue that arises in your ministry. Why? Because most things will be addressed through personal disciple-making! Both the discipler and the disciple grow and mature along the way.

In our (Paul's) ministry, we desire to see students go from lost to laborers in one year. This goal is a driving force of our ministry. We focus discipleship on training objectives that we want every disciple to know and live out: the gospel, lordship of Christ, daily time alone with God, Scripture memorization, prayer, evangelism, world vision, and fellowship.<sup>8</sup> When we help students learn to share the gospel and disciple others, the chances of their lifelong discipleship exponentially increase.

Notice we used the phrase "training objectives" instead of lessons. This is because we want these concepts integrated into every disciple's life, not simply learned once and then forgotten. As LeRoy Eims wrote in *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*, "In helping a young Christian grow, you need a step-by-step building program in mind. You

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<sup>8</sup> For more information on discipleship, see Paul Worcester's "The Big 5: Foundational Habits for Discipleship," GenSend, September 14, 2017, <https://www.gensend.org/resource/the-big-5-foundational-habits-for-discipleship/>.

can develop certain objectives you want him to attain before he undertakes others. You want to see him go from taking in spiritual milk to partaking of spiritual meat.”<sup>9</sup> Some concepts may take longer than others. That’s okay! The important thing is continued spiritual growth and maturity.

As 2 Timothy 2:2 tells us, “What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” When we make disciples who make disciples, we will see the impact of kingdom multiplication all around us because healthy discipleship leads to multiplication. And this isn’t something that just happens when students are part of our ministry. Discipleship is something they will take with them beyond their college years and into the rest of their lives, making a kingdom impact in their marriages, families, workplaces, and whatever God else calls them into.

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## Reflection Questions

- How are you discipling students in your ministry? What topics or training objectives do you focus on?
- How are you equipping students to disciple fellow students?

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<sup>9</sup> LeRoy Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978).

## Principle 4: Intentional Leadership Development

In addition to prayer, evangelism, and discipleship, one of the most strategic ways to spend your time is developing leaders. Just like we want to make disciples who make disciples, we want to develop leaders who develop leaders. Think about the examples we have in Scripture of those who invested in the development of others: Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Jesus and the Twelve, and Paul and Timothy. The list goes on.

As we noted earlier, this season is one in which students will likely have more time for mentoring and leadership development than any other time. Some may go on to become pastors, ministry leaders, church planters, and missionaries. Some may not feel called to full-time vocational ministry but desire to grow in their leadership abilities to serve wherever God calls them next. Some may even take on greater responsibility now as student leaders in your ministry.

For students who are motivated and committed to leadership growth, be steadfast in investing in their development. Spend intentional time with them. Focus on those who are regularly sharing the gospel and who are actively engaged in discipling others. I (Paul) like to say it this way, “Move with the movers.” Don’t be afraid to ask students who desire more opportunities and responsibilities for a higher level of commitment.

On average, student leaders at Chico State invest 10–15 hours each week leading and laboring on campus. These students lead small groups, share the gospel, disciple new believers, and serve in ministry roles within their collegiate ministry, as well as in a local

church. This commitment may sound like a lot, but again, don't shy away from a big ask!

Consistency and intentionality in students' development will lead to kingdom multiplication both now and in years to come. While investing deeply in the development of students may be difficult at times, it will also be rewarding as you watch them learn and grow as leaders.

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## Reflection Questions

- How much time do you spend developing student leaders or future leaders? How can you invite students into your calendar to help them learn and grow in their leadership abilities?
- What ministry responsibilities could you equip a student leader to oversee? Who is ready and able to take on that responsibility now?

## Principle 5: Creating a Sending Culture

When I (Paul) began to grasp God's heart for the nations and the urgency of reaching the unreached, the Lord showed me that the most strategic role I could play was in mobilization. Mobilization is helping other believers see what it means to be a follower of Christ, along with their role in God's grand story of redemption.

College students are only in your ministry for a brief season, so make the most of the opportunity you have to help them know Christ and make Him known. Just as a local church sends out church planters for kingdom impact and multiplication, you send out disciples every time a student graduates and moves on from your ministry. Collegiate ministries are sending cultures!

Prayer, evangelism, discipleship, and development all contribute toward the mobilization of students wherever God is calling them, both now and for years to come. But what are practical ways to create a sending culture? Make mobilization part of your teaching and discipleship strategy. Use large-group gatherings to cast vision for reaching those who are far from Christ, both locally and globally. You could bring in pastors, ministry leaders, church planters, missionaries, and marketplace leaders to discuss their experiences with reaching others for Christ.

Provide opportunities for missions experiences over breaks so students can serve and share the gospel in another setting. We recommend sending students to the same locations each year to build momentum and establish ministry partnerships. [GenSend Summer](#) is one option to consider.

Engage in intentional conversations with those who may feel called to full-time missions work or with those nearing graduation who may



be wondering where God is calling them next. Whether a student is called to serve somewhere across the globe or just across the street, be intentional to mobilize your students for kingdom impact now.

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## Reflection Questions

- How do prayer, evangelism, discipleship, and development help students in mobilization? Why are each of these five principles essential to your collegiate ministry?
- What are you doing now to help students become lifelong disciples, no matter where God calls them in the future?

# The Revival Generation

When college students get serious about the calling of God upon their lives, campuses change, churches change, communities change, and nations change. We need a revival. We need an awakening. We need another Jesus movement. We don't care what you call it, but we need it. God has done it before, and we believe He can and will do it again.

I (Shane) put it this way in *Revival Generation*, “Many people think that revival is a feeling where your emotions are stirred ... but true revival is God's people getting serious about worshiping Him above all and living out their true purpose of knowing Him and making Him known.”<sup>10</sup>

So, how can we practically seek revival in our collegiate ministries? Here are three ways to partner in what God is doing.

## 1. Pursue God for personal revival.

Before God brings revival to a church, ministry, or nation, He often brings it to an individual. Consider your prayer life. If we are being honest, our Bible intake and prayer lives have needed revival at times. For us, this often means blocking out an unhurried time to be alone in God's presence. We have learned to put our phones on airplane mode and to set an hour-long timer. This ensures that we will not be distracted, and it gives us some much needed structure. We encourage you to use a Bible reading plan, memorize Scripture, and pray for the specific requests that God has placed on your heart.

In addition to greater discipline in our Bible intake and prayer lives,

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<sup>10</sup> Shane Pruitt, *Revival Generation: Awakening to a Movement of God* (Brentwood, TN: Lifeway Press, 2023), 12.

we also seek to be filled with and to walk in step with the Holy Spirit by continually confessing our sins. Personal revival is the moment-by-moment experience of putting aside our own agendas and allowing the Holy Spirit to love others through us. Anne Graham Lotz said it this way, “Revival begins when you draw a circle around yourself and make sure everything in the circle is right with God.”<sup>11</sup>

## 2. Pursue prayer in unity with others.

I (Paul) have studied revival history since college. It is amazing to mark the different people, places, and ways through which God has moved in power. One common theme in revival is united and passionate prayer. This can be as simple as meeting up with a friend to pray before work. My mentor has a daily phone call with a friend where they pray together for about an hour. Whether it’s a phone call or a community gathering, the important thing is that you are praying together. As Henry Blackaby puts it, “All revival begins, and continues, in the prayer meeting.”<sup>12</sup>

One of my spiritual heroes is Dawson Trotman, founder of The Navigators. In the early days of his ministry, Dawson gathered a couple of his disciples at 4:30 a.m. on a mountain that overlooked southern California. During their two hours together, they prayed for people in their Bible studies, for the cities where they worked, and for the cities that surrounded their own.

Eventually, someone brought a world map to their prayer gathering. As they prayed over it, Dawson recalled, “What exciting days as we covered the world in our intercession, praying by name for each

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<sup>11</sup> Anne Graham Lotz (@AGLotz), “Revival begins when you draw a circle around yourself and make sure everything in that circle is right with God,” Twitter, July 25, 2014, <https://twitter.com/AGLotz/status/492608973397557248?lang=en>.

<sup>12</sup> Henry Blackaby, *Revival Scenes* (International Awakening Ministries, 1998), quoted in Paul Worcester, “How Can We Seek Revival?” *Outreach Magazine*, January 14, 2021, <https://outreachmagazine.com/features/discipleship/62887-how-can-we-seek-revival.html>.

nation and asking, ‘God, allow us to serve You some day in each of these places and enable us to reach men for You in every one of these continents of the world.’”<sup>13</sup>

They continued for 40 days, and a movement was birthed through their ministry. God answered their prayers, as they now have “spiritual grandchildren” in almost every country in the world. The ripple effect of that 40-day prayer meeting is still being felt today. I am an answer to their prayers because Dawson disciplined the man who disciplined the man who would one day disciple me.

Your college students hunger to experience God and to be used by Him to bring revival. Student leaders at Chico State pray together in small student-led prayer groups. Most groups meet at 6:00 a.m. (which is a miracle itself if you know anything about college students!). They pray specifically and persistently and track answers to their prayers. In one semester, they recorded 48 answers to prayer and that over 50 students indicated a decision to follow Christ. We must pray with others.

### **3. Pursue obedience in the face of opposition.**

Revival is birthed and sustained in prayer, but it must be coupled with obedience to the Great Commission. Many people will pray, but fewer people will share the gospel. As A.W. Tozer once said, “I believe the problem is that we have been trying to substitute praying for obeying, and it simply will not work.”<sup>14</sup> If a revival does not lead to sacrificial obedience in the mission of Jesus, then it is not genuine revival.

The example set by the early church challenges us. After being

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<sup>13</sup> Betty Lee Skinner, *Daws: The Story of Dawson Trotman, Founder of the Navigators* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1974).

<sup>14</sup> A.W. Tozer, *Of God and Men* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2015), 55, quoted in Paul Worcester, “The Revival We Need,” *Think Eternity*, January 2, 2021, <https://thinke.org/blog/the-revival-we-need-paul-worcester>.

filled with the Holy Spirit, the disciples boldly and broadly spread the gospel across the known world. They were not selective with who and how they shared the good news but shared it with all who would listen.

Even when they faced threats and persecution, they proclaimed, “We are unable to stop speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20). They also prayed for boldness in their obedience, and God answered their prayer as “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly” (Acts 4:31). Acts 5:42 further tells us, “Every day in the temple, and in various homes, they continued teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.”

What will it take for students to rise up and proclaim the truth about Jesus?

Salomon is a college football player who has a passion to share Christ with the players on his team. When he joined, he didn’t know any other believers on the team, but he was open with his teammates about his relationship with Jesus from day one. I (Paul) challenged Salomon to see his team the way a missionary sees an unreached people group. If he didn’t share Christ with his teammates, who would?

Others often made fun of Salomon for his beliefs, but he stood strong and boldly continued sharing his faith and inviting his teammates to the large-group gathering of our ministry. Fifteen of them came, and six made decisions to follow Christ! While Salomon endured ongoing mockery for his faith, he persevered. The result has been a squad of new believers who are now helping spread the message of Christ to athletes on campus.

## **What’s Next?**

Is this the Revival Generation? We pray it is! We are seeing God at work among college students and believe this generation is ripe for

another great movement of faith. The question is this: When God moves in the lives of your college students, will you be ready for it?

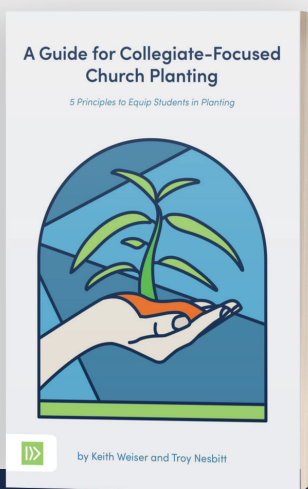
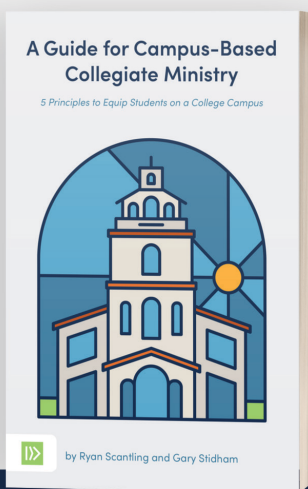
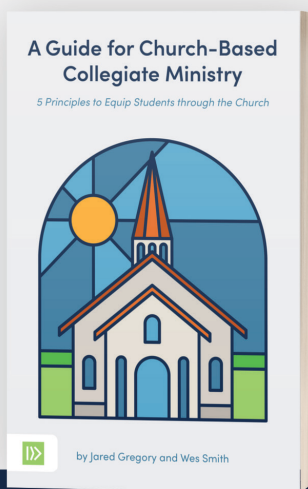
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## Reflection Questions

- Do you need a personal revival? If so, how can you better pursue it?
- If God brought revival through your college students, would you be ready for it? What do you need to do now in order to prepare for that?

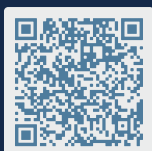
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