

Campus Principles

(Prepared by Don Looper for the Church in Austin)

What follows are principles that we have experienced and go by in our campus work. These principles would not always perfectly apply to another locality's campus work. By design, many obvious and crucial matters are not touched. Principles concerning the qualities of a worker, living or housing matters, details of vital groups, content and goals of various meetings, as well as very practical matters concerning how to meet people and distribute the Truth, are hardly touched.

There does seem to be some gap, however, where laboring ones come to important matters but are not confident about what course to take. For this reason, we put these limited points of experience down, hoping that they will be of some benefit.

1. Being a committed person for the campus burden

All other matters organically depend on this. Whether it is one person (or a group of people), nothing can really happen unless he is consumed with this burden. Absoluteness breeds absoluteness and thus the circle of committed ones can be enlarged. Since this is a matter of the heart, it does not create a conflict in the normal participation of the church life.

2. A serving one must always maintain a personal life and walk as a priority

Fruit is the overflow of life and all work must be rooted in life. To compromise this will only mean that we will eventually lose our testimony and impact. Discouragement then sets in as well as doubts as to whether the burden was really of the Lord.

3. Having a definite and scheduled time during which serving ones can coordinate

To bear one piece of fruit requires contributions from many saints, with a variety of needs being met. Therefore, coordination is indispensable. A scheduled time enhances corporate prayer and fellowship to handle the fruit with proper timing, accuracy, and personal touch. As a by-product, a fruit-bearing prayer life can be developed over time in this way for the serving ones.

4. Having a weekly time of campus prayer and fellowship for all burdened ones

Without meeting regularly to pray in spirit and even "fellowship unto the gospel," the burden will die. The principle of spiritual things is to fan the fire into flame. Because of the degradation on a campus, this is critical. Prevailing prayer is the key and fellowshiping positively about others "stirs the blood" to fight the battle. This also allows us to know about others vicariously through saints who have a linkage with them. We begin to feel that we are not alone on campus, but part of the Body that is fighting for God's interests.

5. Serving ones must labor and coordinate to bring the other burdened campus saints into function

This is crucial. The vessel, in a general way, must be able to contain the young fruit. If not, we will catch many but retain only a few. The thought of "waiting" until one graduates to go to the training and not be active now is a real defeat. To a large extent these "little shepherds" are the ones who know and meet people. Therefore, we encourage the serving ones to be 50-50, that is 50% laboring on the new ones and 50% "shepherding the shepherds."

6. The campus work being subservient to the church

There should never be a conflict in any way. The church alone is God's eternal purpose. If any conflict arises, the church takes precedence, even if we have to give up the campus burden altogether.

7. The church is the unique goal of the campus work

If these two do not seem to be together, we must stop and make whatever adjustments necessary. All fruit goes to the building up of the Body, as we have clearly seen through the Lord's ministry. It is better not to have a campus work than for a state of tension to exist here.

8 A harmony between the church and the campus work

This harmony can make a church incredibly strong; conversely, the lack of it produces discord and death. It is a great thing when young students are brought along to honor and respect the older saints in the church. Eventually the new ones' fellowship will overlap into the houses of the saints. It is hard to say who gets the biggest blessing, but it is definitely substantial and mutual.

9. The church and the campus work being in the same weekly ministry

To do this provides a concentration of prophesying on the Lord's Day, and eliminates the debilitating feeling that someone is left out of something. With few exceptions, all campus meetings can stay in the same ministry, even if they need to tailor it a little to meet specific needs. This uplifts the prophesying meeting and eliminates the conflict of what aspect of ministry to give oneself to.

10. Realizing the importance of the other saints in the church life

While it is a very big item to have other campus saints to go on together with, it is also important to know and observe saints who are older in the church. A young campus saint needs to "see himself" in the church life ten, twenty, or thirty years from now. He spontaneously observes the older ones in the church life and, inspired by that, is less tempted to compromise with the world's way or, worse, to feel he has no future here.

11. Maintaining a strong separation between the brothers and sisters

This point is critical, especially for saints of this age, often grouped together, and under the influence of today's age. If compromise occurs and goes unchecked, it will increase and ruin the work. A little leaven can leaven the whole lump.

12. The serving ones need a clear and thorough vision of what "shepherding" is

Without light from the Word through the ministry, it is nearly impossible to realize the scope of what shepherding means. It really defines everything we are doing on the campus: from preaching the gospel initially to much more advanced matters of life, growth, truth, and all other things. Though the kind or "level" of shepherding undergoes progressive changes, the need for it seems to stretch on for many years.

13. Individualizing or "customizing" care for each new one

It is a real danger to group all new ones together and assume that what is good for one is good for all. We must know a person to the extent that we develop a "feeling" as to how to care for any given

person. Many needs are general; others are highly personal.

14. Being invisible on campus

Because we represent God and His purpose on a campus, it is logical that we would be persecuted. If other Christian groups, or even some individuals, know little or nothing of what we are doing, it benefits our work. To have a strong confrontation with any other group, etc., causes much distraction to our labor and can also discourage new ones among us who are not ready for this warfare. If we work in a hidden way, even if one person is attacked, it usually remains isolated at that point.

15. The serving ones learning to fellowship in a healthy way concerning the new ones

In having mutual fellowship to ascertain the best way to proceed with new ones, some personal fellowship is necessary. This must be done with much caution, touching only the relevant matters and always with a positive spirit. Too much talk, and little prayer, can really become just gossip. The element of shepherding is love, not a common analysis or veiled criticism. Above all, we must remember that any needs that are mentioned are, in some degree or another, the same needs that we have as well. A shepherd, especially being so young, desperately needs an attitude of humility.

16. Pushing the new ones, according to their capacity, to fight against the pressure of schoolwork and the great pressures of this age

Most students come to a campus with a substantial vacuum. It will be filled by something. We want to provide an atmosphere that these new ones can lose themselves in, feel that they need nothing else, and are persuaded that it is normal to put Christ and the church before schoolwork and other campus related items. "According to their capacity" is crucial, as new ones progress along this track at different speeds.

17. Maintain a high standard in all things, that seekers may have a chance to climb as high as possible

The lifespan of a student can be a time of being rather passive in his spiritual experience. We should reverse this, pointing out that this is the best time, the most opportune chance in his life to grow and develop in his Christian life. If carefully analyzed, most students (with a very few exceptions) have plenty of time to do the necessary things to grow and make much progress in the Lord's Recovery.

18. Having an atmosphere of being "home" or acceptance in love

While we have the responsibility to have an atmosphere for a potential overcomer to flourish in, this must be balanced with an atmosphere of acceptance in love for all the young saints, regardless of their maturity or even their unwillingness. To lose this basic atmosphere is to ultimately fail, just as to bring a person to a premature dealing can damage them for what could happen later in reality. Rates of "blossoming" run a large spectrum of time.

19. In the campus prayer-life we must learn to enjoy the Lord first, that is, "pray ourselves into God," before praying for people, burdens, etc.

It has always seemed expedient to us to spend roughly 50% of our time to simply enjoy the Lord and be in the "flow." From this position we are more able to know the Lord's heart and thus to pray out the Lord's feeling with much strength. It is better to pray for a few things in a prevailing way than to

mechanically pray for so many items, persons, etc.

20. Learn to labor in life without concern for time and outward manifestations

Some fruit comes fast and some much slower. Indeed, some seems to be delayed a few years. As long as we have the Lord's leading, we should labor according to obedience and not outward things. If we do this over a number of years, the build-up of fruit will be reaped; any other way will be short-lived and unstable. We are creatures of the clock and, therefore, we often make unwise comparisons between the pieces of fruit. We must rise above this and be in a higher life.

21. Serving ones should labor according to a genuine "comfort zone" that allows a serving one to go for the long run

The nature of campus work has cycles and seasons in a general sense. Therefore, there are certain times of the year when a real "crunch" is felt. Otherwise, one needs to labor in a consistent rhythm, not frustrated by the inability to take care of everything that is realized as a need. In the long run this will pay off. Also, it necessitates the need to raise up others, especially while they are still students, to share the burden.

22. Establish a "vital link" with new ones before being concerned with inviting them to meetings, etc.

For a new one to get vitally linked with one or two saints is a huge step forward. This accentuates true shepherding and causes each saint to be a minister of Christ. It is much harder to minister Christ to specific needs than merely inviting people to a meeting. One way emphasizes the Body and the other the clergy-laity. Also, if a problem arises, it can be met and dealt with quickly and personally. Nevertheless, one should not wait beyond the appropriate time to invite them to corporate meetings.

23. Promote preaching the gospel regularly

The gospel should be preached for the sake of increase and, no less, for the sake of exercise. Like all skills, practice is required to be perfected. By going out with more experienced saints, one can learn much and the fear of being alone in an awkward situation can be overcome. By having a few successes in going out, the inward desire and driving burden to preach the gospel is gained.

24. Learn to inoculate new ones wisely and properly

In some cases, inoculation is not very critical. That is, they have a long and un-harassed period of time to experience Christ and learn the Truth. Thus, they are self-inoculated. For those who encounter opposition or one about to, we must be ready to help them get through the difficulty. No two inoculations are identical. By being vitally linked to one in difficulty, we are positioned to give a timely and measured dose. Over-inoculation can actually enhance the problem.

25. Have a good "variety" of meetings that new ones can attend

The backbone of meeting with a new one is one-on-one. This is for obvious reasons. But Bible studies, home meetings, prayer meetings, church meetings, outings, conferences, and trainings all must be applied at the right time. All the meetings serve unique needs and enhance the vision of God's purpose. Often it is a new one going to a new level of meeting that becomes the big turning point in his going on, even in seeing the vision of the Lord's Recovery.

26. Develop fruit that is good for the universal church

Fruit may be gained in your locality but is destined for some other locality. If our motive is right in this matter, then the Lord's blessing is enhanced. Also, the "loss" we seem to sustain is made up by our being the recipient of fruit from elsewhere that we did not labor on. The fruit born in any locality should be perfected in a way that they can fit in any church life anywhere.

27. Bring new ones to read the Word and key basic ministry books

To develop this habit with the Word is vital. Soon the new ones will realize that the life and atmosphere the Word provides is a big factor in going on. Consistency rather than quantity should be stressed. The Word needs to be accompanied by appropriate ministry books. These books will "crack" the Word open and expedite all labor in the Word. A pattern is thus set for their entire life.

28. Develop an atmosphere, without pressure, to go to the full-time training

An atmosphere is a prevailing thing, much more so than mere instruction. It becomes a gentle speaking, always there, that a certain thing is normal. This convinces the most people the fastest way and has more lasting results. Conversely, if a person is unduly pressured, the conflict within him may grow larger and quench him, whereas he might have broken through under normal conditions. When a newly graduated one has a personal burden to go, the possibility of success is high.

29. The synergy of the three-fold cord

A synergy occurs when the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This does not seem logical, but the three-fold cord is a true synergy. Through many years and experiences we have found that all three cords are not only necessary but also that each is strengthened by the others. The students are cord one, the object and target of the labor. The full-timers are cord two, the shepherding and laboring ones who also function as a bridge between the students and families. The families are the third cord and occupy a critical role. They not only shepherd and care, but also tie the work strongly to the church. When all three cords are working harmoniously, a spiritual synergy is produced.

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August 1993