

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	iv
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ESSENTIALS

1 WORD: Christ is the message.....	3
2 BE: The WORD in us.....	19
3 COME: The community of Christ on campus.....	27
4 GO: Ministry of, by, for students	37
5 WITH: Partnering with others for Christ’s mission.....	45
6 NEW: Adapting ministries for a changing campus	55
7 GIFT: Sharing the story of Jesus	63
8 KNOW: Recommending Jesus with humble confidence.....	75
9 NOW: Communicating Christ in culture	85
10 ALL: Honoring the inclusive invitation of Jesus	93

PRACTICES

11 START: Launching public college ministry	105
12 PLAN: Growing and sustaining campus ministry.....	121
13 STUDENTS: Understanding and empowering students for leadership.....	141
14 CHURCH: Connecting church and campus.....	155
15 CAMPUS: Responding to the personality and climate of the campus	165

Introduction

I (Ron) will never forget the day I arrived on campus with our moving truck, car in tow, and my wife Carolyn following with the family van close behind. Taking the wrong exit, I ventured off Interstate 40 onto Cumberland Ave, the main strip of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville campus. We were late in our transition to campus, and the fall 1985 semester was already underway. Students were crawling along as thick as ants looking for good deals on dorm room carpets and textbooks. It was "Welcome Week," but I felt completely out of place—like being thrown out on stage without a script. What was I thinking? How could I have ever felt that I belonged here? My wife made it worse with "Ron! Who do you think you are—the Apostle Paul?"

In fact I felt nothing like Paul; I felt more like the disciples gazing into the clouds after Jesus' ascension. They were given the simple instruction of "Go into all the world and make disciples." "Make disciples—here in this place?" I thought. Like the bewildered followers of Jesus, I stood gazing over a sea of students who were more interested in room decorations than God's sovereignty. I was younger then, but the students were even younger and there were 26,000 of them and just one of me.

This book is designed to be a guide for those finding themselves thrust into ministry on a secular campus where faith in God is ignored, ridiculed, or at best relegated to a brief weekly extracurricular activity. Much of the information in this book is drawn from our own journeys of privileged ministry among college students over the years. That includes my (Ron's) sixteen years as campus chaplain and director of Advent House at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where I was immersed in campus life and a rich interaction with other campus leaders and hundreds of dedicated students. It includes my (Ron's) continued journey as a campus chaplain and local church pastor at the University of California, Berkeley for the past fourteen years. Also, concurrent with much of my time in Berkeley for the past decade, I have had the privilege of leading Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF), the official public campus ministry for the North American Division (NAD) of Seventh-day Adventists. During these years as coordinator of ACF/NAD, I have learned from numerous campus groups, students, pastors, church administrators and lay leaders. This second edition reflects the thoughts, questions and input of that interaction. The content in this book is also shaped by my (Kirk's) seventeen years as youth pastor in Pleasant Hill, California and Boulder, CO. The college students at Diablo Valley Community College in Pleasant Hill and

to a greater extent the students and ministry colleagues at the University of Colorado, Boulder, re-shaped my understanding of ministry and prepared me for a partnership with Ron that has included the process of creating a framework for ACF/NAD and a complete curriculum for public campus ministry leaders, including this book. Beyond the personal, this book is drawn from hundreds of students and other campus ministry colleagues who helped us think through and put into practice a philosophy of campus ministry that has guided us along the way. It is presented for all of those who will follow and take up not ours but Christ's challenge to share Jesus, the living Word of God, on secular campuses across our Division and around the world.

The word to Jeremiah while living and residing in Babylon was, Thrive! Jeremiah 29 makes it clear that surviving until God takes you back home is not good enough. Maintaining a distance and separation from the Babylonians because God is someday going to restore Jerusalem is not God's plan. This was God's word through Jeremiah to the exiles in Babylon:

Build houses and make yourself at home.

Put in gardens and what grows in that country.

Marry and have children. Encourage your children to marry and have children so that you will thrive in that country and not waste away.

Make yourselves at home there and work for the country's welfare.

Pray for Babylon's well-being. If things go well for Babylon, things will go well for you.

Jeremiah 29:4-7, The Message

Jeremiah in no way was diminishing the hope of restoration, in fact the rest of chapter 29 repeats God's promise that his plan would someday take them home. He is not saying to forget God, but in fact to live well as a follower of God in Babylon, and in the process fulfill his promise to Abraham that his descendants would be a blessing to the world. His call is to allow the blessings of friendship with God to spill over and bless the world around us.

A large university campus can be a Babylon-like experience for young college freshmen. So what is the key to life in this modern Babylon? Some students attempt to survive by isolating themselves with large walls of protection and doing all they can to maintain their Christian (Adventist) bubble, refusing to let others in and never venturing out. Others meld into the campus culture, set aside church and often lose their faith and witness completely. Still others bifurcate and live one way on campus and another way at church and home, failing to be true to themselves in both environments.

Jeremiah calls all students to thrive and to be the salt that flavors campus life with God's love. This is a call that echoes through the years to illuminate life by making friends with outsiders, keeping our Christ-centered beliefs and values on display, so that others may be drawn to and to be transformed by Jesus.

David Kinnaman, President of the Barna Group, describes the challenge facing those who are called to ministry on the public college and university campuses of the twenty-first century on page 28 of the book, *You Lost Me*, "Like a Geiger counter under a mushroom cloud, the next generation is reacting to the radioactive intensity of social, technological, and religious changes. And, for the most part, we are sending them into the world unprepared for the fallout. Too many are incapable of reasoning clearly about their faith and unwilling to take real risks for Christ's sake."

College age young adults today have unlimited access to knowledge, but are too often without access to experiences and communities that help them develop wisdom. This generation is connected to the world, but have few intimate friendships with people to walk with them through their world. Young men and women in the twenty-first century often find themselves in the bull's eye of cultural tension, pulled in one direction by their generation's openness to new ideas and in a seemingly opposite direction by their church. Left to themselves, most disengage from church or separate their lives into secular during the week and spiritual for their one day of worship.

Kinnaman refers to the college years as, "the black hole of church attendance." The Barna Group's research indicates a 43 percent drop-off of church engagement between the teen and early adult years. Other research demonstrates that as many as two-thirds of students stop attending church while in college. While this statistic may elicit fear for the future of the church, hopefully it will also evoke action on behalf of the young men and women who desperately need to understand God's love for them in Jesus, and to be challenged with the task of communicating that love to their generation.

There is no shortage of research on this generation. Numerous books and articles have been written to help them develop faith that engages their culture for Christ and to challenge their church communities to support them. So it is truly humbling to be charged with the task of writing a book on the subject of public college ministry. We, the authors, make no claims to having all the answers, and we are continually made aware of the constantly changing nature of ministry with this demographic. Still, we are compelled to share what we have learned from others, from our personal experience and primarily from our study of Christ's methods.

This second edition of the *Word on Campus* follows the same basic chapter format as the first, though a good deal of content has been updated and improved.

The first section, *ESSENTIALS*, are guiding principles for campus ministry. They are to be used and applied as appropriate in each ministry's unique context. These principles are drawn, as we noted, from our years of personal experience and numerous hours of research and reflection. They also reflect our examination of Christ's ministry, our interaction with others doing campus ministry and our own experience with students on the public campuses where we have served. Our hope and prayer is that each reader will carefully consider these ministry principles, but that every campus ministry leader will be inspired to develop their own philosophy of campus ministry to guide them to purposeful action for Christ on campus.

The second section, *PRACTICES*, is a practical how to guide on creating and growing a public campus ministry, either from a congregation or as a group of students on campus. While every chapter in this edition has been re-worked, some more than others, we have completely re-written the first two chapters of this section for the second edition to provide a cohesive plan for starting and running a local campus ministry.

We removed the last section from the second edition, which was a description of various successful Adventist based public campus ministry models, because we discovered that much of the information was outdated by the time the book was published and because up to date information was available about currently active campus ministries on the internet at individual ministry web sites. Many of those sites can be linked through www.acflink.org, the official website for ACF NAD.

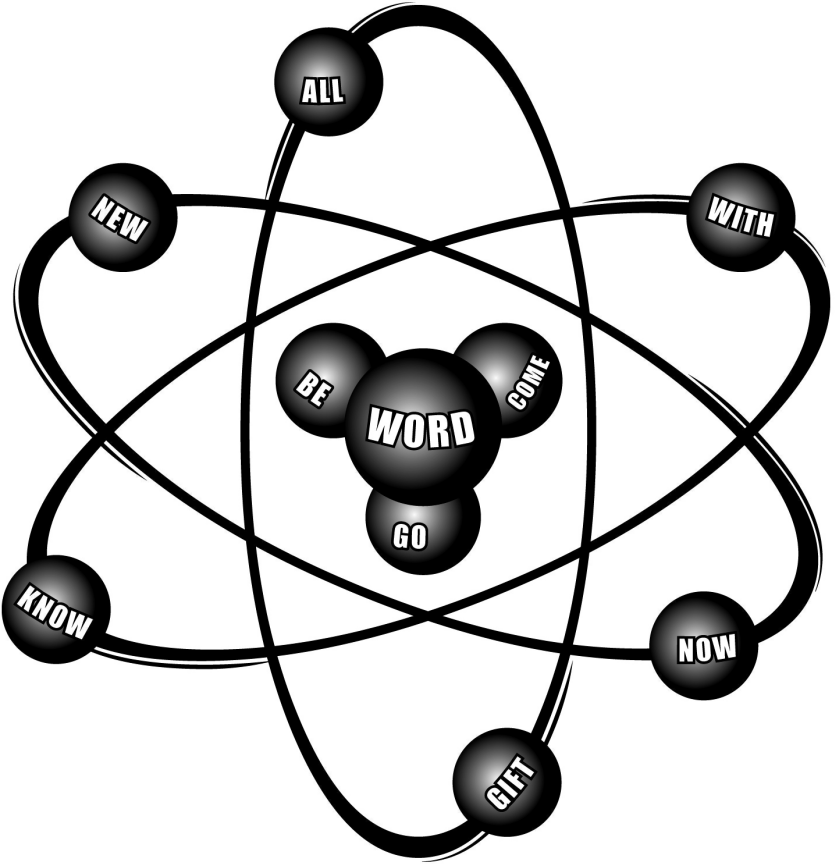
Much has been written about the influence and power of college students to change the world. Many of our most political and cultural tectonic shifts erupted first on college campuses, from the fall of the Berlin Wall in Eastern Europe to the recent protests of police brutality in the United States. Even more importantly, the four major great revivals of American history all began on a college campus.

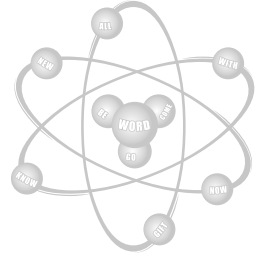
What can a new Christian ministry on campus like ACF do to extend the witness of Christ on campus? What unique expression of the Christian faith do Adventists have to contribute to the mission of Christ on campus? While current spiritual trends indicate that students are less interested in organized religion and institutional faith, according to a 2010 UCLA study on college spirituality students are very spiritually motivated. This means that while traditional churches have their work cut out for them in engaging students in the mission of the local church, interest in God, spirituality and a life of faith has never been higher. We have enormous hope and expectation for the kingdom of God and the message of Jesus among students today. It is our prayer that the *Word on Campus* will continue to help shape ministries and communicate the gospel to students in this most significant time of change and transition into adult life. We believe

that the Adventist church has an approach and unique perspective on the gospel that students may in fact be ready to hear; and before Jesus can be the hope of the world, he must first be the hope of students. We also contend that His life in and among students is how the campus and the world will hear, experience and follow Jesus today. Along with Stephen Lutz, who wrote in the book, *College Ministry in a Post-Christian Culture*, we contend that “college ministry is the most strategic of all mission fields today.” This is the reason for this book, the reason for its revision and the reason we are so hopeful and committed to the witness of those who dare to follow Jesus on campus!

All For Christ and Campus,
Ron Pickell/Kirk King

ESSENTIALS





Chapter One

WORD

*I am He, said Jesus, you don't have to wait any longer
or look any further. John 4:26*

Aiko,¹ a young woman from Japan, was a student at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and a resident at Advent House, the Christian student center where I (Ron) was the director at the time. She was a friend of a student who was a part of the Advent House community, and she slowly became a regular at gatherings herself.

Aiko's mother was a Christian, her father was not. She was familiar with the Bible but was more knowledgeable with the teachings of Buddha. I could tell by her approach to life and truth that she had been nurtured in an Eastern world view. She approached life and spirituality more philosophically than spiritually. Religion was about living a balanced life instead of being in relationship with a personal God.

I met her and studied the Bible with her for over a year. It was really part mentoring, part therapy and part Bible study. We spent a good deal of the time discussing life issues, especially dating relationships. We were going through the book of John, and I continued to bring the conversation back to Jesus. It seemed like Aiko was grasping everything but was just not able to embrace Jesus as a personal Savior. I struggled to figure out what was keeping her from accepting Christ and experiencing the Gospel.

One day something struck her, and she said, "Wait a minute. Are you telling me that this is really true, that Jesus really existed? That he was a real person and that everything we are talking about really happened in history?" I was a bit confused that this had been the missing component in her understanding of Christ. She told me that the Buddhist worldview she had been taught used stories as metaphors of personal ethics and morality, but it never mattered if the stories were real. "I have been reading the stories about Jesus the same way," she said. There is a lot of crossover between the ethics of Buddha and Jesus.

I assured Aiko that Jesus was a real person and a historical figure. We examined Tacitus, the Roman historian, and the comments of Josephus, the

¹ Aiko in Japanese means beloved. We changed the name and thought this was appropriate in light of her being blessed with the insight that Jesus died for her personally.

Jewish historian. I tried to show her from other historical documents that Jesus was real and actually lived in history, that other people knew about him, and that these accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were also historical documents. We also examined Jesus' claim that he was more than a good teacher, that he was in fact God in the flesh. We reviewed in a fresh light his death and resurrection. We explored what that meant for her personally: forgiveness and eternal life. I will never forget her response. She said, "Wow! That changes everything!"

Though removed by time, background, religion and dozens of other factors, Aiko's story parallels the Samaritan woman's in at least one salient point: the realization that Jesus was real, that he was who he claimed to be, the promised Messiah, and that the reality of his presence changed everything. Understanding the impact that realization had on the lives of these two women is crucial to grasping the fundamental focus of campus ministry, this book and specifically this chapter. Jesus is as real today as at any point in history. The power of his presence will still transform everything about our lives. Christ is the message!

Christ is the message!

The stories of these two women are relevant because their encounter with Jesus can be the experience of any person at any time, and that includes students attending secular colleges in the twenty-first century. Like Aiko, many college students today have heard of Jesus but have been taught to put him on the shelf of moralistic mythology. Others see the historical Jesus as a good man in a class with transformational personalities like the Buddha or Gandhi, each having brought important change and valuable insight to our world. The Bible of course claims a great deal more for Jesus. A few may have never even heard of Jesus or at least never considered his significance for them. Many college age young adults view Jesus in a negative light, perhaps because they know people who claim to be his followers who have misrepresented him. Ultimately, many are afraid that Christians (and by extension, Jesus himself), are just out to control their lives, to stifle their lifestyle. Because these perceptions are so prevalent in campus culture, our singular goal must be to communicate the uniqueness of Christ as the very source and sustenance of life itself.

Some would say it is impossible to influence today's campus for Christ, because the culture is too entrenched in secularism, relativism and hedonistic behavior. Others note that it is difficult to break through walls created by the perception (or reality) of the self-righteous prejudice and theological clutter of modern Christianity. This reality could of course lead us to avoid the campus, or for those who find themselves studying on a secular campus, segment our lives, and use Sabbath and church as an escape from academia and campus culture. We could gather in our own enclaves with fellow believers and hope that one day of isolation might insulate us enough to the ways of the world, that we could survive the next six days without being integrated by the secular culture. On the other hand, we could boldly seek out the wells on campus and offer living water to thirsty students, and use every opportunity, including Sabbath and church to refill our own reservoirs, so we have something to give.

We use the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman as a springboard to illuminate, not only the first, but all ten essentials for campus ministry presented in this book. Within this story are valuable lessons we need to reach a secular college campus. We have already extracted the first essential, that Jesus, the water of life, is the message for a spiritually dry and thirsty campus. We will draw out of the depth of this story lessons that illustrate each of the ten essentials in each of the following chapters, and we encourage the reader to find other lessons in this and other Gospel stories for themselves. But for now we want to consider what Jesus did to draw the attention of this woman to himself, and in so doing, launch an exploration of how we can apply his lessons as we minister with students.

The Samaritan woman's story is a good example of a journey a college student today might take from skeptic to believer.² Right from the beginning she questioned Jesus' motives for breaking social norms by asking her for a drink of water. "What!" said the Samaritan woman. "You, a Jew, asking for a drink from me, a woman, and a Samaritan at that?" (Jews, you see, don't have any dealings with Samaritans).³ Considering the history of disagreement, distrust, and disdain between the Jews and Samaritans, it is understandable that the woman would wonder what was up. We should not be surprised if we encounter the same sort of skepticism on campuses today, for similar reasons. So, we see that Jesus was not affected by historical prejudices or fear of becoming polluted through contact with a Samaritan woman, and neither

2 Two campus pastors, Don Everts and Doug Schaupp, combined their experience leading skeptics to Christ in a book about how people come to Christ called, *I Once Was Lost: What Postmodern Skeptics Taught Us About Their Path to Jesus*. The book was published by InterVarsity Press in 2008. They describe five thresholds that mark the typical journey to Jesus, "Trusting a Christian, Becoming Curious, Opening Up to Change, Seeking after God, and Entering the Kingdom."

3 Wright, N. T. (2011-10-25). *The Kingdom New Testament: A Contemporary Translation* (Kindle Locations 4541-4542). HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.

should we. The campus, like Samaria, is often seen as “those other people,” to be ignored, avoided or even feared by Christians. John however said, “Jesus **had** to go through Samaria.”⁴ He said this not because there was no other way to Galilee, since most of the Jews traveled many miles out of their way to avoid Samaria, but because he needed to meet with this woman. Evidently her heart was ready for an encounter with the Messiah. Those same encounters await us on campus. We **MUST** go, even if going takes us completely out of our comfort zone. When we go, we will discover that Jesus is already there, eager for us to join him in the joy of seeing students come alive with the gift of his life.

Another lesson we can glean from this story is how Jesus approached and engaged the woman in conversation. He began with a question, a request for something she could give him, “Will you give me a drink?”⁵ He asked. He then effortlessly guided the conversation, using her own responses, until her curiosity and her heart were ready to grasp the meaning of his original offer of “living water.”⁶ By the time Jesus said, “I am he.”⁷ they had touched on history, theology, her personal life, and the nature of worship. At each diversion or detour Jesus drew her back to the only issue that mattered, that he was the Messiah, and because of that he could actually give her living water, eternal life. Campus life affords numerous opportunities to engage other students in conversation. Classes, labs, meals, dorms, sports, clubs, libraries, student centers, the quad, the walkways—all provide ample opening for discussions about the issues of life. While not all conversations will end with belief in Jesus, one never knows what seeds may be sown, or when the harvest is ripe.⁸ Our role is to be open to the possibilities, and to be ready to share when hearts become open to the Savior.

The water Jesus offered the woman at the well is a metaphor of every good thing he longs to give each of us. Jesus presented himself to the Samaritan woman as the one who was the answer to all questions about life, both personal and corporate. He presented himself as the solution to the misery of her lifestyle and to the religious differences that plagued their two cultures. “With his offer of living water, Jesus introduced a new beginning.”⁹ College is certainly a time for new beginnings, and Jesus is still the answer to life’s personal struggles and cultural dilemmas today. That is why it is so important that Jesus is the message we share on campus, where faculty and students study and seek solutions to the complex issues of life, culture, and

4 John 4:1 *NIV*

5 John 4:7

6 John 4:10

7 John 4:26

8 Note John 4:36-38

9 Stott, John (2013-07-10). *The Incomparable Christ* (Kindle Location 555). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

new beginnings. “There is a hunger in the human heart which none but Christ can satisfy, a thirst which none but he can quench.”¹⁰

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Since the first edition of this book quite a few studies have been done and numerous books written about the changing landscape in our culture’s perception of God and Christianity. One of those books, *The Next Christians: The Good News About The End of Christian America*, by Gabe Lyons, deals with a shift of emphasis by this generation of Christians. He says,

They no longer feel bound to wait for heaven or spend all of their time telling people what they should believe. Instead, they are participating with God in his restoration project for the whole world.

They recognize that Christ’s redemptive work is not the end or even the goal of our stories; redemption is the beginning of our participation in God’s work of restoration in our lives and in the world. Understanding that one idea literally changes everything.¹¹

Lyons is clear that this is not a movement designed to diminish the message of salvation from sin or to to distract attention from the promise of eternal life. Nor is he saying this is actually new. What he is saying is that young Christians realize that God in Christ came close and got his hands dirty in his effort to redeem mankind. As he says a few pages later, “God’s holiness did not prevent him from entering our messy depravity; it provoked him to show up.”¹²

When Jesus announced his mission from his hometown pulpit, he read from the prophet Isaiah,

Unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was written,

God’s Spirit is on me;

he’s chosen me to

preach the Message of good news to the poor,

Sent me to announce pardon to prisoners and

recovery of sight to the blind,

To set the burdened and battered free,

to announce, “This is God’s year to act!”¹³

10 Stott, John (2013-07-10). *The Incomparable Christ* (Kindle Locations 562-563). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

11 *The Next Christians: The Good News About the End of Christian America*, Gabe Lyons, 2010. Doubleday Press, New York. Page 53.

12 *The Next Christians: The Good News About the End of Christian America*, Gabe Lyons, 2010. Doubleday Press, New York. Page 79.

13 Luke 4:17-19, *The Message*