

LeHIGHlights

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RUF Meets All Spring Goals

The third year of RUF at Lehigh University came to a wonderfully satisfying conclusion when all four of my goals for the semester were met. Praise God for His grace in using us to advance His Kingdom here!

◆ **1 Corinthians Bible Study** 1 Corinthians was the subject of our main meeting on Wednesday nights. This controversial book predictably sparked vigorous discussion and diverse opinions, but in the end there was a remarkable degree of agreement. Students really enjoyed grappling with the text and grew considerably as they dealt with the unpopular implications of some passages. Our two-man worship team really matured, and worship began to take its place as a vital part of our ministry.

Two years ago we never had more at our Bible studies than the five students who initially showed interest. This year we had new students coming out almost every week! It is a measure of the attractiveness of our group and our much higher campus profile that we are seeing so many visitors. Some have remained, but others have returned only a few times. The big challenge now is to retain most who come.

◆ **Second Bible Study** All fall semester I wondered whether to begin a new Bible study. Finally, after much prayer and thought we decided to plunge ahead in January. There were several dozen students on our email list who were not coming to our other meetings and we thought a new study on a different night might get them involved. As it turned out, four students were interested.

We chose to study Philippians and found it very applicable to the Lehigh campus. Paul's ringing call to live a life worthy of the gospel, even in difficult circumstances, hit home with students surrounded by immorality in the dorm and opposition in the classroom. Perhaps most moving was the study in chapter three, where Paul hammers home the truth that we are saved, not only because our sins are forgiven, but because we get the credit for Christ's righteousness.

Another bonus to the new Bible study was the involvement of a senior in leading it. I met with him three times each week to go over the material and prepare for the meeting. Eventually he felt ready to try his hand at leading the discussion and did very well! As a senior he will not be able to use this experience at Le-

high next year, but he will be a big asset to the church he joins. And after all, the purpose of RUF is to build the church!

◆ **Ministry Team Meetings** For several years I have been attempting a weekly meeting of student leaders. We made a solid effort in the fall, but had spotty success, mainly due to persistent scheduling problems. In the spring semester we moved the meetings to Sunday afternoon (which also promoted a Lord's Day mentality) and met every week!

Six students joined me for a brief Bible study related to ministry, which usually stimulated discussion on issues facing the group. Then we discussed the past week's events and upcoming activities. Finally we closed with prayer for individuals and future events. The result is a group of students with much stronger commitment to each other and our group.

◆ **Social Activities Abound** My fourth goal was to see regular social events – maybe biweekly. This is an effective way of building group identity and is an important ministry on a campus where so much social activity consists of drinking. The students were so motivated by this, they got the idea that we should do something every week! We went bowling, skating, eating – even skiing. One night we helped at a center for teenage children in the community. These activities were a success we will build on next year.

Trouble in the Office

It is hard to imagine how the semester could have been much better on the campus. But in the office it was another matter. Soon after Christmas our computer broke, and from then until April we suffered almost daily problems. Most of these were caused by the “repairs” done in early January by a formerly reliable shop. I use the computer constantly – for typing letters, Bible studies, etc; for email with the students; for storing addresses; and for maintaining our financial records.

We tried numerous solutions and sought expert advice, but with no success. The computer reminded me of the woman with the 12-year flow of blood. It suffered under many remedies, but only got worse! Finally, a different shop gave an accurate diagnosis and we were back on track. Unfortunately, it has taken until the pres-

ent to catch up on all the work that was pushed aside during that time. The one bright spot in all this – I take satisfaction that the campus work did not suffer.

What's Next?

Students are on campus for only 30 weeks each year, and during some of those they are preoccupied with exams, projects, and papers. Therefore one key to effective campus ministry is to make the most of that time, and that requires careful preparation. That is what makes the summer so vital.

So far I have sketched out the fall Bible studies in the Gospel of John, and a series in basic Christian doctrine. Next month there will be an important meeting with the Ministry Team to prepare further for the fall semester. Please pray for us as we spend a weekend in western Pennsylvania to study the scripture, pray, and discuss God's leading for the new year.

As always, I have several opportunities to preach, including a special service in Packer Chapel during Lehigh's Alumni Reunion Weekend. Much of the summer will be spent contacting supporters and firming up church support for our ministry.

The Homefront

We are missing Daniel this summer. He did not find a computer-related job here, so he decided to work on campus and take two summer courses at Johns Hopkins. Since last month his absence has been somewhat relieved by Ruth's parents who have been visiting us from Hawaii. They are always a pleasure to have around, and her mother has helped with some of the office work.

We always look forward to the summer "vacation", but we always find ourselves just as busy, only with different activities. Peter's soccer team is in a summer league and he is also looking for work. Just last week he got the family computer working after six-months of problems. (Could there be a jinx on *all* our computers?)

Christopher and Stephen will be attending the Vo-Tech summer program for a week, and will also spend a week at French Creek Bible camp. This year Christopher will be able to counsel for the first time. They have invested dozens of hours in varmint-proofing our yard so that Cinderella, Nutmeg, and Sage (our rabbit and two guinea pigs) can roam freely. This has been only partially successful, as the rabbit escapes every other day.

Benjamin's job is to provide full-time entertainment for the rest of us. Ruth's job is to keep track of Benjamin! Everyone will be employed in making our French exchange student feel welcome. We have often talked about having an exchange student, but this is the first time we signed up. It looks like an interesting summer!

Personal Note

Maybe I am unusually clueless, but I ordinarily am not much aware of what God is doing while it is happening. It is in looking back that I appreciate how much He has done. This semester certainly is a marvelous testimony to God's grace and power at work in my life and in the students. There were too many occasions to mention in which I had opportunity to minister to students in a variety of ways. Even in the problems with the computer, no data was lost, and God gave us patience to endure the frustration.

My deepest gratitude is reserved for you, who have kept supporting us in prayer and donations. Our ministry is your ministry, and our victories are your victories. Thanks for continuing to pray and give even when we were unable to communicate effectively. Thanks for making this a great semester.

P.S. How do you like the new format of this letter? We think it might be easier to read.