

Simple Movements of Faith On Campus

Campus Crusade for Christ

*We're on a **mission**. The mission is to lead students to follow Christ. We're called to lead Christian students into a strong and passionate walk with Jesus. Our eyes are open to those around us people to be loved and served and we're engaging not-yet-Christians with the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. We're praying for student-led movements everywhere so everyone knows someone who's authentically following Jesus. Wanna come along?*

G3 Snapshot

How? By planting small student communities plant small student communities. This groups, usually just three people, keep a tight focus on relational evangelism and personal discipleship. By building networks of small communities the Message can reach every student. At the core, these groups are doing 3 simple things:

- praying (for each other and their campus)
- growing (in their walk with the Lord)
- sharing (the Gospel with their friends)

Simple Plan:

- **Quick Simple Meetings** Groups have a quick meeting, some are calling it a 'powerup', for 50-90 minutes about once a week. In their daily lives they are reaching out to those around them with the Gospel and working out obedience to Christ.
- **Plant Lots of Groups** Staff networkers and groups work together to plant other groups so there's a witness in every social corner and ethnic group of every campus.
- **Gather Everyone** All groups gather occasionally for broader fellowship, worship, outreaches, and community service.

Biblical Base:

- Discipleship – investing in people who will invest in others (II Tim 2:2)
- Interdependence – helping students stand together for Christ (Ecclesiastes 4:8-12)
- Spiritual Community – bringing fellowship beyond church walls to real life (Acts 2:42-47)
- Evangelism – reaching out with the story of God's love (Mat 28:18-20)
- Multiplication – the plan is simple so anyone can be involved in starting new communities

How You Can Be Involved:

- 1) Introduce us to college students who attend your church by sharing this article
- 2) Visit www.metamore.org to learn more and get an invitation to a group or training
- 3) Pray and Organize – we're training students and volunteers for campuses near you

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Imagine

Imagine meeting up with a few friends from school. There's some goofing off, but you've been getting together regularly for a deep purpose. Soon you're sharing with each other how your relationship with God has been going lately and what challenges He's put in front of you to trust Him more. You respond to your friends with real encouragement and prayer as they share about how they're reaching out with God's love to the lost people around them. Now think of someone who you'd love to see give their life to Christ? Imagine what it would be like to see

God work supernaturally in response to the consistent prayers from your group by placing a seed of new faith in their heart. Let's dream, you're growing and seeing God work around you, so it's natural to talk about the cool little group you're doing. So, once a month, you open your group for visitors. Since the plan is basic, a couple of the visitors decide to start their own little group with your simple format. You and your friends are still meeting up to encourage each other in spiritual life, to share experiences in reaching out, and to pray together. Does this sound like a power-up that you'd really like? If it does, read on, there's more.

Big Picture

Campuses are made up of many sub-groups of people, let's call them social networks. These are people with something in common like ethnicity, a sports team, a class, a high school, or a job. Imagine what it would be like if each of these social networks had at least a few people who were authentically living out the way of Christ. What if every social network had a group that was really letting their light shine with acts of Love and Service? What if there was a conspiracy of kindness going on that was reaching across cultural barriers and self-centeredness with the message of Christ's love?

Our dream is that there would be spiritual movements everywhere so that everyone would know someone who is authentically following Jesus. This is happening in three ways. First, shares the simple idea with other Christian friends and visitors, other groups will start on their own fresh group. Second, some visitors join in and the group grows. Eventually, the group sort of pops into two or three groups as schedules change and finding a meeting time for everyone becomes difficult. Third, when students have opened their hearts in prayer, and developed compassion for students who don't have access to the Gospel. Many student groups have been planted because a couple Christians intentionally chose to go as Gospel pioneers into new social networks. Sometimes they start up fresh, sometimes they pop, sometimes they're planted.

Now imagine if those simple movements of faith came together from different social networks on the campus. A crowd of Christ followers gathers on campus at lunch time. These people have a lot in common even though they are coming from many different social corners of the campus. What would they all do together? Sing, pray, go to the community for a service project, just hang out, host an evangelical lecture series relevant to student life? Dream it up!

Bigger Picture

God is raising up a network of student-led, staff-coached ministries at colleges across America and the world that really transform their campuses with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our desire is to develop a network of mini communities on every campus so that every student has the opportunity within easy reach to hear the gospel and see it lived out. We envision a transformational community where lost students are being transformed by the gospel of Christ (Col. 1:13-14); where Christians are being transformed in 'grace and truth relationships' (Eph. 4); and where there is a value for multiplication by birthing new groups that reach into every social network on campus and campuses across the world (Matt. 9:37-39).

Acts 2:42-47 describes the first transformational community. Everyone felt a sense of awe because they saw God at work. Believers were devoted to biblical teaching, prayer, and real koininia (fellowship). They were multiplying and God was adding to their number daily. That first community was a true movement of God's Spirit. While a few friends getting together to pray and reach out together is the basic building block for such a movement, we're praying for real contagious networks that expand to every corner of campus. All together that's hundreds of students who've embraced Christ's call to reach the world around them with His love. It will take dependency on Christ, really asking for His power and abiding with him moment by moment. We've seen God choose to use humble students to reach other students and start movements on campus. God can use you!

Salt and Light at Diablo Valley Community College

In the fall of 2004 Shay met Heather at Diablo Valley College in the East Bay. Heather was one of twenty students who were interested to hear more about starting a spiritual movement on campus. Shay met them all at a table in front of the student center where she was giving away some free materials. At the follow up meeting Shay realized that one of the girls, Kai, didn't know Christ yet. Kai was really curious about God and Jesus' offer of salvation. After hearing the gospel, she decided to follow Christ. Over the next few weeks several Groups of Three were starting up at all different times that were convenient for them – some guys were meeting early in the morning and other groups met up on campus later in the day. Heather played a central role in several of the little groups and really helped Kai understand the first steps of walking with Christ. By the end of the year party there was a lot to celebrate the overall size of the network had doubled, a couple new groups had started, and another student had decided to place faith in Christ.

Let's Go Small to Reach Them All

The Bay Area is a unique place that requires a special approach. When you think of a campus ministry the picture that comes to mind is usually a big group with a band and a speaker and a bunch of small group Bible studies. That's the approach we started with five years ago and it is a solid method God has blessed it thousands of times around the world. In the Bay Area, we've noticed some uniqueness that has led us to develop a different approach. Here are a few of our observations:

- Students are busy – with the high cost of living in the Bay Area students often work at least one job and have significant family responsibilities
- Students want intimacy – just being an observer in a big meeting is doesn't connect. It seems like students want to talk about their own stories and their perspectives.
- Students respond to their friend's faith – most new Christian students were friends with a Christian who was praying for them and talking about faith. Big outreaches play a part, but the trend is toward relationships.
- School administrations can be unfriendly – Christian groups have encountered hassles at several schools.
- The campus is segmented – even with a large student ministry (say 150 students) there are thousands of students in independent social networks who don't know that the ministry exists and aren't exposed to the gospel. Segmentation is connected to ethnicity, affinity, or simply class schedule and many don't feel that the group is for some students, but not for them.
- Students are transient – unlike four year universities back east, students often move from one school to another and sometimes sit out for a semester or more.
- Student organizations are short lived – this is related to the busy-ness, transience, and the generally short supply of student leaders. Once vibrant clubs have simply been unable to continue because there was no one available to lead.

With these observations in mind we've been encouraging brief intimate meetings that fit busy student's schedules. Our basic building block are these Groups of Three which are:

- Quick – this is a streamlined plan that fits busy student schedules
- Non-institutional – it's not heavy on administrative work or organizational structure
- Indigenous – it's easily adaptable to new social networks and can meet where they hang out naturally
- Easy to Imitate – the simplicity allows it to be learned quickly and passed on to young leaders who can start their own groups among unreached students
- Biblical – it's similar to what we see Paul planting in Acts. And, it encourages obedience to the Word, not just new head knowledge.
- Missional – Jesus sent us, just like the Father sent Him. (Jn 20:21) As followers of Christ we're on a mission to take the gospel to the unreached social networks around us. These are communities that start communities. Multiplication is in the DNA.

How Do Groups of Three Become Potent with the Gospel and Strong in Christ?

Prayer

First off, let's get empowered by Jesus Christ. In Mark 4, Jesus talked about the small mustard seed, which, when planted, grew into a huge tree. A few students committed to prayer, relational evangelism, and meeting together for mutual support is the simple beginning of a campus movement. That small mustard seed is enough to begin a network of transformational communities.

We're taking our cue from Paul in Colossians 4:2, he encourages the believers to "devote yourselves to prayer." We are engaged in spiritual warfare, and prayer is critical. E.M. Bounds wrote that there can be no devotion without prayer, and no prayer without devotion. A passion for God and His work is born in prayer. We can be creative here, asking God for the desires of our heart shouldn't be boring! Plan a Jericho walk where you walk around the campus seven times praying that God will cause the spiritual strongholds to come down. (Different variations of this can be applied to your campus. Read Joshua 5:13-6:21.)

It may seem incredible now that there could be someone living out an authentic walk with Christ in every corner of campus. But, since the Pentecost (Acts 2) the gospel has been spreading to every corner of the earth. If God can move the gospel across oceans and languages, He can move it from one classroom to another. This kind of revival starts with prayer, so dream big in your prayers for followers of Christ to gather, pray, and reach out everywhere. Pray specifically to meet key students you can inspire with the story about your group and your outreach.

Other suggestions you might try are morning prayer meetings for all groups, a 24 hour prayer chain, or a Friday prayer party. Prayer support from local churches is critical. Any way you look at it, prayer is essential for the advancement of the kingdom.

If you'd like more help on the prayer element of a Group of Three, check out "How to Lead Prayer in a Meeting" on www.metamore.org.

Evangelism

It is exciting to see how many doors God opened for Paul when he asked the Colossians to pray, "that God may open a door for our message so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ." (Col 4:2-6) After modeling his own commitment to reach out as God directs, he points out this lifestyle habit as the usual way of relating to outsiders for believers. Let's be real, evangelism can be scary. It's not something we do from our own strength. The key is to find ways of doing evangelism that are effective and student-friendly. We can modify the method and keep the message clear.

Unleashing the power of the believers' witness in their natural relationships is a key. There's a buzz on campus about movies, good cafés, and bad professors. There is space to include our own story of Christ's work and presence in our lives. Each of us have a natural relational network with students in classes, clubs, fraternities, sororities, from High School, and other places. Your network of these friends, as well as family, neighbors and co-workers provides the most natural and potentially powerful context for evangelism. Becoming aware of their existence as people God loves comes first. From there evangelism can look as simple as praying for them, caring for their practical needs, and sharing story and our faith with them.

We're excited about one particular relational evangelism tool called Student2Student, that prompted thousands of students to pray, care, and eventually share their faith with friends. Using Student2Student over 200 students made decisions for Christ in the Spring of 2005. Bring friends to your group by simply making the first meeting of the month your "visitor's meeting". can open a window into following Christ for friends you invite. And, we have a big stack of spiritually provocative gifts like easy to read Bibles, articles that connect Jesus to college life, and multimedia CD-Roms that are fun and thought provoking.

About once a semester we 'cast a big net' and move beyond our relational networks. Simple tools such as the Quest Survey, final exam packs and surveys, and Freshman Survival Kits (a giveaway of quality materials presenting Christ in multiple ways) and Every Student's Choice (media campaigns on significant campus issues). [materials available from www.metamore.org. Also, check out www.everystudent.com]

Another simple idea is to use the group meeting itself in evangelism. Some are taking one meeting a month for an open house. Several groups did this in '04 and the not-yet-Christians were interested to see what you usually do behind closed doors. It gave a great opportunity to explain the reason behind the hope they have. One tip, don't have open house every week or you'll miss the dept of connection you had. If there's that many interested people, start a four week seeker's Bible study. You can find materials for that and other outreaches on metamore.

Discipleship

Building transformational community requires more than just prayer and evangelism; it requires the spiritual growth and discipleship of both new and mature believers. At times, our view of discipleship is mistakenly limited to only using a one-on-one approach. However, much of the New Testament describes life change happening in the context of relationships and biblical community (Ephesians 4; Colossians 3:12-17). God uses a variety of means to transform a life, and this often occurs in small groups where there is an environment of grace and truth.

On campus groups shouldn't replace church involvement. An on campus group should provide easy access to Christian fellowship and a call to obedience to Christ right in the middle of real life with all of it's challenges. It is hard to maintain an effective witness when we are out of fellowship, running low on Biblical input, and feeling defeated and isolated by unsuccessful attempts to overcome sin. In small groups we can engage with where we really are and ask for needed prayer. Active devotional lives are critical. A wide use of spiritual disciplines to open up channels for us to hear from God and connect with His word. Bible reading plans play a key role in our spiritual formation.

Discipleship in Groups of Three focuses on applying what we've heard from God in our churches and through our personal devotions. It's easy to focus on always learning more instead of doing the hard work of being a good steward of the special words from God that we've already heard. It's easier to learn than obey. But, just learning is not the point. "If you love Me, you will keep my commandments.." (John 14:15) The close bond that forms in the groups provides a great place to find encouragement we need to move ahead and overcome tough issues that God is bringing up.

Biblical content is easily available. With the internet a wide range of discipleship resources are easily to access. Free copy-ready Bible study materials and Bible reading plans are available on www.godsquad.com and www.metamore.org. And, for deeper study the cru.com CD-Rom has thousands of Bible studies on topics Campus Crusade staff developed. Getting away for a break from the routine is always refreshing. Fall Retreat, Christmas Conference, and shorter get-a-ways through the year are a great place to connect with other Christians and hear their stories.

Beyond talking, get your faith in action. Serve It Up! is regular event we hold locally at a community service site near you. There is far more Biblical teaching about social justice and serving the poor than there is about evangelism. (James 1:27) Really, this is what many of non-Christian friends are asking, "Is your faith good? Are you making a difference?" Let's show them by inviting them along with us as we serve the poor and work for justice. Service it self is spiritually transforming, come see for yourself.

Planting your own group is an act of faith. One of the biggest ways we can experience God is through serving Him by stepping out in faith beyond our comfort zone. It's easy to think that waiting till you're equipped to serve by planting a new group is wise. You'll be waiting a very long time. It's God's plan to use us as we go humbly and even in brokenness and weakness to serve him (II Cor. 4:7) As we see God use our humble efforts to do amazing things two

wonderful things happen. First, we give Him the glory instead of ourselves. Second, our faith expands as we realize He's present and active in our lives. Often Groups of Three pop. As visitors and new believers add to the group, the group becomes overly large and people don't get a chance to share in the brief time they have available. To meet changing schedules and provide more relational space, new groups are formed. You might not feel ready to facilitate a group, but you are. Go for it and experience God's faithfulness.

Sending

In Matthew 9:37, Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." And in **Matthew 24:14** we see God's determination in reaching all people. "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as witness to all nations and then the end will come."

College students like you can be used by God to change the world. A global culture of common technology, mobility, and even language makes this a time of great urgency and potential for the worldwide spread of the gospel. Student led ministries often send laborers into the harvest. In the summer of 2005 nine Bay Area students traveled to ministry locations around the world for a short term mission trips. They came back with stories of being used by God to bring new followers into the Kingdom. They are part of a growing movement of students who want to follow Christ wherever He leads.

It's often easy to think of reaching the world as something we'll do someday in some far away place. In reality, we are just as 'sent' to our campuses and workplaces as we might be someday after a special church commissioning and a plane trip to a distant people. After his resurrection Jesus passed the baton to His disciples, So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." (John 20:21) Along with the rest of our identity as Children of God we are people who have been blessed to be a blessing to others. We are sent people on a mission to those around us. Embracing that adventure enriches life as we see God work through our humble efforts.

We have a sister city in Asia where we regularly send students for summer mission projects and short spring break trips. God is doing amazing mind-blowing things over there. Literally hundreds of students are deciding to follow Christ every semester and whole communities are being transformed. There are so many students responding that we're really struggling to do basic new believer follow-up. We'd love to have you come along to Asia or to many other destinations all over the world.

It Is Happening Now

Starting a Group of Three is simple. Visit www.metamore.org or send us an email at sfmetromin@uscm.org. We'll let you know if there's a group going on your campus you could visit. If there's not, we'll be thrilled to help you find other believers on your campus and get started.

Through the pioneering efforts of our student leaders and a few staff twenty five campus ministries have been planted in the Bay Area. In 1993 only 160 CCC campus ministries existed. Since then though God's power and the faith stretching efforts of student leaders across the country over two thousand new campus ministries have started. Still there are thirty unreached campuses in the Bay Area where we believe God has the resources waiting to see a student movement take off. Thinking in terms of Social Networks there are hundreds of thousands of students who have no one demonstrating an authentic life with Christ in front of them. Every campus needs multiple movements of faith. Even on the campuses where we have an established group there are thousands who are out of reach. We're trusting God to raise up leaders such as yourself, and we're committed to helping you launch a transformational community so that every student knows someone who's authentically following Christ. Please join in with us. It's fun, it's an adventure, the Lord has called each of us to follow Him to expand His Kingdom.

To get started email us at sfmetromin@uscm.org.