



CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY: TRANSFORMATIONAL COMMUNITY

WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

BY MIKE TILLEY

A visionary article using the example of the first century church (in Acts Chapter 2) as the model for spiritual movements in the 21st century. A must-read for any new missional team member.

Transformational Community

What Will It Take

By Mike Tilley,

God is raising up a network of student-led, staff-coached Campus Crusade for Christ ministries at colleges across the U.S. Campus Crusade is working to help leaders like you build movements that will transform their campuses and make an impact around the world.

Our desire is to develop a ministry, on every campus, that is not merely a club but rather a **transformational community**. We envision a community where lost students are being transformed by the gospel of Christ (Colossians 1:13-14); where Christians are being transformed in 'grace and truth relationships' (Ephesians. 4); and where the campus and world are being transformed by laborers who are sent (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). And God was adding to their number daily those who were being saved.

That first community was a true movement of God's Spirit. **That is the kind of movement we are trusting God to create on every campus.** While a core or cell group is the foundation for such a movement, we'd like to see it grow to a size of 50 or more students. And when God moves, we often see that He uses students to reach students.

In the summer of 1996, the Atlanta Summer Project launched the ministry at Kennesaw State University, a commuter campus in Atlanta. Three years later, you would see 150 students at the (completely student-led) weekly meeting at noon on any given Thursday. Several students who first came to know Christ at Kennesaw State now held leadership positions. As part of the Atlanta Metro movement, these students were not only transforming their campus, they were influencing the city, with a view towards the world. And they had the opportunity to go to the world, through Atlanta's Worldwide Student Network (WSN) partnership.

What Is Your Dream?

As you look at your campus, ask yourself these questions: **"What would I like to see God do here?", "What is my dream?"** If you don't know the answer yet, it's OK. God will show you His desire for your campus as you continue to trust Him.

Vision develops and deepens as students like you pray and dream together, and reach out to others on campus. There is room to fill in the specifics of your vision over time to reflect the character and flavor of your unique campus.

What Is the Campus Like?

Another important question to ask is, **"What are students like on my campus?"** Kennesaw State has its weekly meeting during the lunch hour. This works best because its a commuter campus. Most campuses are so multifaceted that many transformational communities will be needed to reach them.



Ask yourself these questions about your campus: What is the level of spiritual interest? What keys will open doors for the gospel? What is the ethnic diversity on campus? What do people do for fun?

Answering these questions will help you tailor-make your ministry to your campus.

Who Are the Leaders?

A third question that must be answered is, “Who will lead the effort on campus?” **Within five miles of every campus, we believe God has already placed the people and resources to reach that campus for Christ.** We want to discover who that person is and help that key leader gather the essentials needed to get started. This is called assembling critical mass. In Mark 4, Jesus talked about the small mustard seed, which, when planted, grew into a huge tree. Critical mass is like the seed; it contains all the future elements needed to build a transformational community.

How do you know if you have critical mass on a campus?

One Campus Crusade metro director believes you have achieved critical mass on your campus when four things are in place: aligned leaders the mustard seed of community, prevailing prayer and students engaging the lost

In some cases, the best way to assemble critical mass is to partner with a church or lay volunteer. Whether you start with a key student (like yourself) or partnering church, you do not have critical mass unless a core group of students is poised to reach the campus.

How Do We Go from 10 to 50?

Ask yourself, “How will I go about it? **What will it take to turn my dreams into reality?**” There are at least four critical path steps for building a community to transform your campus for Christ.

Prayer

In Colossians 4:2, Paul encourages the believers to “devote yourselves to prayer.” We are engaged in spiritual warfare, and prayer is critical. E.M. Bounds wrote there could be no devotion without prayer, and no prayer without devotion. **A passion for God and His work is born in prayer.**

Be creative here. 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.)

Other suggestions:

- You might try are morning prayer meetings
- Prayer in cell groups
- You might want to contact local churches to ask them to pray for your campus.

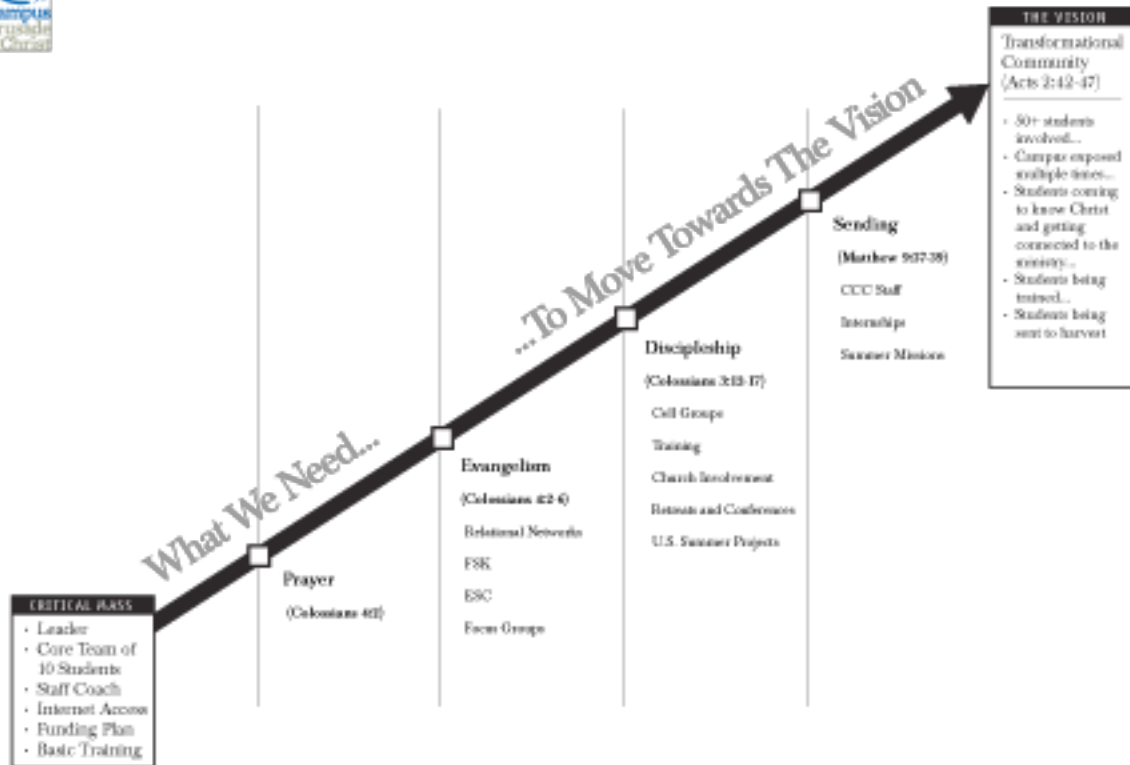


In any event, **prayer is essential for the advancement of the kingdom.**



CRITICAL PATH FOR THE STUDENT/VOLUNTEER LEADERS

The Catalytic Campus Ministry | Campus Crusade for Christ



Evangelism

Powerful **biblical motivations for evangelism** are found in Luke 15:1-6 and Colossians 4:2-6. It is to find ways of doing evangelism that are both effective and student-friendly.

We need to unleash the power of the **believers' witness in natural relationships**. You have a natural network with students in classes, clubs, fraternities, sororities, with students you meet where you live, 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.

You can also move well **outside of your relational networks** by using simple tools such as freshman surveys, which enable you to 'cast a big net' and gather critical mass (Christians) as well as spiritual seekers. Implementing a freshman strategy will enable you to build the base for a future transformational community.



Beyond that, you can literally **expose the entire campus** to the message of Christ through broad sowing strategies such as Freshman Survival Kits (a giveaway of quality materials presenting Christ in multiple ways) and Every Student's Choice (media campaigns on significant campus issues).

Several years ago, **a student in Boston named Steve Sawyer** was led to Christ by a guy who got involved in the ministry through a poster campaign at a campus with no Crusade staff. Even though he had AIDS, Steve traveled to campuses around the world, sharing Christ with large audiences. When he died in 1999, **he had led thousands of students to Christ**. And all of that started with a poster.

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.

In a student-led cell group, believers can **study the Bible, pray together, experience biblical fellowship and be trained** for outreach. The cell group should also be committed to church involvement. Training and vision can also happen as you bring students with you to **retreats, conferences, and summer projects**.

With the growth of the Internet, you, as a student leader, have immediate access to a wide range of discipleship resources. For example, a student anywhere in the world can download copy-ready Bible study from the GodSquad Web site.

In addition to the church, cell groups, and online resources, **student leaders can seek personalized discipleship from a Campus Crusade staff member**. If that's not possible in person, then students can receive discipleship over the phone by contacting the Student LINC (Leaders in New Campus) ministry, in Orlando.

Sending

In Matthew 9:37, Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." He went on to say that we need to ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers.

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. They are part of a growing movement of students who want to follow Christ wherever He leads.

At the 1997 Indianapolis Christmas Conference, more than 700 students signed **the Millennial Pledge**, a commitment to God to serve at least one year as a missionary between now and the end



of this century. At the Northeast Winter Conference in Springfield, MA, 120 students signed the pledge. **More than 1,500 students nationwide have signed the Millennial Pledge so far.**

With the increased opportunities available through **one-year internships** students now have more options to serve Christ and investigate using their skills in full-time ministry after college.

In Philadelphia, one staff member is taking students on a two-week mission trip to **Spain** to distribute the “JESUS” film. Students from the Portland Metro ministry joined with a local church to serve free coffee at the **Nagano Olympics**. Of course, their purpose was to share Christ with everyone they could, not just to serve coffee.

Student LINC has proven the effectiveness of long-distance ministry over the years. Their student-led ministries typically make a strong showing at Christmas conferences and The Big Break. And many of these students are now entering the mission field by joining the full-time staff of Campus Crusade due in part to the effectiveness of Student LINC.

In the summer of 1998, **the Worldwide Student Network** sponsored 74 projects to various parts of the world. As metro ministries and other Catalytic ministries mature, the growth of summer projects and STINT (a one-year mission overseas) will be dramatic.

Its happening now!

Through the pioneering efforts of metro teams, church partners, Student LINC, and other field Catalytic staff, **student-led ministries have been planted on hundreds of campuses since 1992**. Still there are hundreds of unreached campuses where we believe God has the resources in place to reach a campus.

Our dream is a student-led ministry team, not only for every campus, but also for every group on every campus. As we trust God to raise up leaders such as you, and as we help you develop transformational community, **we can imagine a day when every student will have the chance to be transformed by Jesus Christ.**



Thought Questions

1. How would we describe each component of a Transformational Community in our own words? (p. 1; ¶ 2)
2. What do we want to see God do on our campus? (p. 1; ¶ 6)
3. What is our campus like? (p. 1; ¶ 8)
 - What is the level of spiritual interest?
 - What keys will open doors for the gospel?
 - What is the ethnic diversity on campus?
 - What do people do for fun?
4. Who is going to lead this effort to transform our campus? (p. 2; ¶ 3)
5. Do we have critical mass yet for our campus? If not, what do we need to do to get it? (p. 2; ¶ 4)
6. What are the next appropriate steps to take in our ministry in the area of:

Prayer

Evangelism

Discipleship

Sending

