

# CHI ALPHA

## Building a Community



# on Campus

Edited by Dennis Gaylor

Chi Alpha Campus Ministries, USA

**Chi Alpha's Biblical Framework and Strategy for Campus Ministry** is derived from our biblical commitment to being a "community on campus" of worship, prayer, fellowship, discipleship, and mission, originally introduced in 1977 as our four-fold Chi Alpha ministry philosophy by the "San Antonio Seven": C. David Gable, Dennis Gaylor, Harv Herman, Brady Bobbink, Jim Hall, Dave Argue, and Herschel Rosser. It was updated and being a "community of prayer" and the "reconciling students to Christ" vision statement added in 1993 by the "Colorado Seven": Dennis Gaylor, Mike Olejarz, Steve West, Harv Herman, Samuel Mathai, Joe Daltorio, and Bob Marks. Then it was referred to as Chi Alpha's five-fold mission statement. With the acceleration and emphasis on mobilizing Chi Alpha college students for global missions, "every student goes, gives, and prays," we revised and edited being a "community of witness" to being a "community of mission." This highlights our desire that every student become "missional." Special thanks to Vic Varis, Bryan Zielezenski, and E.Scott Martin, members of the mission task group, for writing and editing this section.

This booklet introduces a "Missiology for Chi Alpha," written by Glen Davis and Jerry Gibson.

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### **Contents**

Introduction to Campus Ministry.....	2
What Is Chi Alpha?.....	4
Why Does Chi Alpha Exist?.....	4
A Biblical Framework for Campus Ministry.....	4
Community of Worship.....	4
Community of Prayer.....	5
Community of Fellowship.....	5
Community of Discipleship.....	6
Community of Mission.....	6
A Strategy for Campus Ministry.....	8
Worship and the Campus.....	8
Prayer and the Campus.....	8
Fellowship and the Campus.....	9
Discipleship and the Campus.....	9
Mission and the Campus.....	10
Chi Alpha and the Church.....	11
Missiology of Chi Alpha.....	12
Understanding University Missions Terms.....	15
Understanding How Campus Ministry Works.....	16
Starting a Campus Ministry.....	17
Why Charter Your Group and Affiliate as a Leader.....	18
Appendix:	
Appendix A: Chi Alpha Statements.....	20
Appendix B: Core Values.....	20
Appendix C: AG Doctrine.....	22
Appendix D: XA Organization Chart.....	23



## INTRODUCTION TO CAMPUS MINISTRY

### **Strategicness**

The secular campus is one of the most strategic, specialized, and high-yield mission fields in our world. There are 17 million college students in the United States enrolled in more than 4,000 campuses. Today these students are learning. Tomorrow they will be leading in every area of life, including business, education, science, government, and entertainment. Also, the United States hosts the largest number of international students of any country in the world. Almost one million students and visiting scholars from 200 nations are on campuses throughout the United States. International students add to the strategic importance of the campus with the U.S. State Department estimating that 25 percent of the world's future political leaders are studying in the United States right now.

### **Students**

Today's students are referred to as "Millennials," having come of age at the time of the new millennium. Others use the term "Generation Y" following the generation ahead of them, referred to as "Generation X." Because this generation has grown up with the Internet, others have described them as the "Net Generation." Because this is the most diverse college generation, another pollster refers to them as Mosaics. Terms like "twentysomethings" and "emerging adults" is not limited to but includes this age group. Demographers are unable to agree on the exact parameters of this generation, so the birth dates range from 1978–2003, yet most agree this generation is in their mid-to-late teens and early 20s, and some suggest they are still being born. They are affluent, better educated, and ethnically diverse. They have an optimistic outlook on life, work, and the future. They are achievement oriented, modest, respectful, and interactive. They are a self-confident generation, and the first generation to come of age in a truly global society.

### **Unchurched**

Polls and research scientists report that two-thirds to four-fifths of today's students do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. On any given Sunday, most college students will not be in church. If you consider the entire collegiate population, you quickly recognize that millions of college students have no association with churches in their community. If we want to reach these students with the gospel we must take the Christian witness, influence and perspective into the world of the campus. When you step on the campus, you enter another world; but you must take this step to reach it.

## **Openness**

The basic need of every college man and woman for Jesus Christ has not changed; however, the culture and methods have. Spiritual hunger does exist. While most of today's students have not grown up in the church and lack biblical knowledge, many have a willingness to earnestly consider Jesus Christ in a way that is not present at other life stages. Often you must start at the very beginning when explaining who God is and how He is active in the world today.

Interestingly enough, today's post-modern students do not care if the Bible is true. They want to know if it works. They value relevance over truth. They want to see Christianity lived out. This generation hungers for and responds to loyalty, friendship, caring, acceptance, affirmation, integrity, and transparency. They will not care how much you know, until they know how much you care.

College students have crazy schedules and are accustomed to a world of choice. They want lots of options. Reaching college students will require a determined commitment. They will require a high degree of relational investment before any results are seen.

## **Process**

Many pre-Christian students are coming to large- and small-group meetings and special events and being drawn into the community long before they make any commitment to Christ. Coming to Christ for today's students is a process that begins by belonging to the group, then believing in Jesus Christ, then, as the Holy Spirit works in their lives, behaving in a way that reflects the new standards of their Heavenly Father. They need space and freedom to process new ideas and new experiences. They need to see that the faith you are sharing with them is a faith that works and makes a difference in their everyday lives.

## **WHAT IS CHI ALPHA?**

Chi Alpha is a national organization of students in higher education who unite to express the person and claims of Jesus Christ to their campus communities and call others into relationship with Him.

## **WHY DOES CHI ALPHA EXIST?**

Chi Alpha is a missions ministry of the Assemblies of God which exists to participate in the fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission on campus. Chi Alpha takes its name from *christou apostoloi*, "Christ's sent ones." We find our identity and task in Paul's words, "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors ... we implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

## **A BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK FOR CAMPUS MINISTRY**

As ministers of reconciliation, we are a community of some of God's college-age people: a community of worship, a community of prayer, a community of fellowship, a community of discipleship, and a community of mission. We include the concept of community in all these because of the high priority we put on coming together as a group for biblically commanded activity. We will use the phrase "gathered people of God on campus" to stress our position that we can be more visible and effective as a group than as isolated individuals.

### **Community of WORSHIP**

By "community of worship" we mean that as gathered people of God on campus, Chi Alpha must first establish ministry to God as the highest call of Christians. They must embody the following principles:

- A. we were created by and are now reconciled to God to bring glory to Him (Isaiah 43:7; Ephesians 1:11,12);
- B. the family of Christ is the dwelling place of God for the very purposes of ministry to Him as His priests, and for proclamation of His greatness to the world (Ephesians 1:10–22; I Peter 2:4–10);
- C. the presence of God is made real among men when Christians worship (Psalm 22:3).

Second, Chi Alpha expresses ministry to God by:

- A. directing adoration to His person in giving thanks for his acts of loving-kindness toward us in all ways possible (Psalm 100; 150);
- B. learning with Mary to sit at His feet and listen and respond to Him (Luke 10:38–42; John 10:4,5);

- C. allowing the charismata listed in 1 Corinthians 12 to flow through us to the Lord; and
- D. learning to worship Him in our actions (1 Corinthians 10:31; Hebrews 13:15,16).

Third, the community of worship expects other ministries to grow best when nurtured in an atmosphere of ministry to the Lord.

## **Community of PRAYER**

By “community of prayer” we mean that as a gathered people of God on campus, Chi Alpha must establish intimacy with God as the highest privilege of Christians. We recognize the importance of confession, affirming the lordship of Christ, the fatherhood of God, and the conviction by the Spirit (Philippians 2:9–11; John 16:8). We acknowledge to God sins that make us ineffective in our spiritual walk and pray for each other for forgiveness and restoration (Hebrews 12:1; James 5:13–16; Psalm 139:23–24).

In supplication we acknowledge God as our Source and Supplier (Philippians 4:6,7,19). We bring our requests to God, expecting Him to fully supply our needs. We look to God for daily guidance, open to His revelation.

In spiritual warfare we recognize we are spiritual beings in a battle that calls for spiritual weaponry (Ephesians 6:10–18). Prayer is a priority in breaking the strongholds on our campuses and in our society.

Through intercessory prayer we profess that God is the powerful healer and worker of miracles. We pray in faith that the sick may be restored. We stand in the gap praying His will may be accomplished on earth (1 Timothy 2:1; Ezekiel 22:30–31).

## **Community of FELLOWSHIP**

By “community of fellowship” we mean that as a gathered people of God on campus, we are in joint submission to Jesus’ command, “As I have loved you, so you must love one another” (John 13:34).

The permanent motivation to pursue fellowship is the command of Jesus to love one another. The permanent pattern of fellowship is the example of Jesus’ relationship with His disciples. “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers” (1 John 3:16).

By this we also know that the believer cannot live in





isolation, but as a member of the Body of the elect, joined together by the common life-source of the Holy Spirit. Because members of the Body are priests and servants, they follow Christ's example of self-sacrifice on behalf of one another. This entails assessing one another's needs and responding with intercessory prayer and deeds of caring – "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn" (Romans 12:15).

This flow of love is enabled and sustained by the Holy Spirit and His gifts (1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12; Ephesians 4). It produces harmony among the members that reflects the relationships within the Triune Godhead, testifies to the divinity of Jesus, and validates that community's claim to be disciples of Jesus.

### **Community of DISCIPLESHIP**

By "community of discipleship" we mean that as a gathered people of God on campus we are committed to pursue the fulfilling of the Great Commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ, to "disciple" all nations (Matthew 28:20). Our discipleship finds its directive in the authority of God's revelation, the Holy Scriptures. We are the people of the Book. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching in righteousness, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

It is our conviction that discipling is best accomplished in the relational context of the mature believer helping to nurture younger members of the community in small-group situations, even as Jesus disciplined the twelve, and as the disciples went from house to house. By this process each member is thus given the basic knowledge and skills necessary to grow toward maturity in Christ and is equipped for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16).

We desire to follow the instructions of Paul and Timothy: "The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2). In this way we perpetuate a continuous development of maturing leaders for the work of Christ in a collegiate community.

### **Community of MISSION**

By "community of mission" we mean that as gathered people of God on campus, Chi Alpha is committed to the task of completing the mission of