



## Motivation Matters

Paul Worcester

Founder and Director, Christian Challenge at Chico State University in Chico, CA

Let me encourage you to relax and trust God as you lead your ministry. The enemy will constantly be at work to distract and discourage you with setbacks and awkward moments when no one shows up to your events. Remember that in Christ you have nothing to lose and nothing to prove. "Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold," 2 Corinthians 3:12. Your ministry is not your identity.

Relax and trust God to multiply disciples through your life even if you don't see massive results right away. Multiplication takes time. I am encouraged by this statement by Robert Coleman in Master Plan of Evangelism "Making disciples will be slow, tedious, painful and probably unnoticed by people at first but the end result will be glorious even if we don't live to see it. We must decide where we want our ministry to count - in the momentary applause of popular recognition or in the reproduction of our lives in a few chosen people who will carry on the work when we have gone."

Keep plodding on and trust God to use you. "Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Corinthians 15:58

To be honest, I constantly struggle to relax and trust God. Most of my anxiety was rooted in prideful motivations to be successful, rather than love for God and others."

As a campus minister I have seen pride show its ugly head in the form of competitive attitudes, insecurity, envying others who are succeeding, and being overly concerned by how "successful" our ministry looks. 1 Peter 5:5 reminds me that "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." This verse scares me because my pride may be preventing God's grace in my life and my ministry.

Growing up my brothers and I competed over everything. We competed in sports, grades and even girls. After a conference in our freshman year, my twin brother and I began evangelistic dorm Bible studies, which consisted of us basically bribing everyone to come with free pizza. We started seeing 15-20 guys coming and several getting saved. We had a "successful" dorm ministry.

Before long I translated my competitiveness from the sports world into the ministry world. We just had a new way of keeping score. I remember mentally keeping stats about the number of people we led to Christ, who had the most people in their Bible study, and whose impact on campus was greater.

My motives are often mixed as God is developing a sincere love for Himself and the lost in my heart, but pride confuses my motivations. I'm tempted to take credit for the work God is doing in student's lives and grab a little glory for myself. I have been aware of this temptation for years now and my progress in this area has been slow.

This resource is available to all collegiate ministries. Please use it for your ministry but not for commercial purposes. We ask that you retain the BCNet header.



The Bible reminds us, "I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another." Isaiah 42:8 God will not share his glory with you or me. God hates pride. (Proverbs 8:13) God mocks proud mockers. (Proverbs 3:34) Pride goes before destruction (Proverbs 16:18) and a man's pride brings him low. (Proverbs 29:23) These verses motivate me to repent of my pride and seek pure motives when serving Jesus. I love the one liner "Be careful that you don't get too big for your britches or you will be exposed in the end."

God often limits his blessing in our lives because of pride. You may have heard about John Maxwell's concept called "The Leadership Cap" that teaches some leaders have a greater capacity for leadership than others. Every leader can grow in leadership so they can lead more people and increase their "leadership cap." I believe there is also a "Humility Cap." I believe God blesses our lives in direct proportion to how much we forsake pride and choose humility. A verse that helps put my gifts in perspective is 1 Corinthians 4:7 "Who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?" God is the one who has gifted me and I can't take credit for what he is doing through my life."

God promises to "bear much fruit" from your life if you abide in Christ. (John 15) You may not have hundreds of students at your large group meeting but students' lives are being changed for eternity. When defining the measure of our success let's build our ministries on the eternal.

I close with this challenge, read this passage prayerfully. Ask God to give you his vision and perspective on "success" in your ministry.

"What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? They are only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building...For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation...his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames." 1 Corinthians 3:5-15

### Reflection questions:

What are you most tempted to worry about as you lead your ministry? How will you trust God with that area? In what ways has your pride shown itself as you lead? How will you pursue humility in that area?

What is your definition of success in college ministry? How does that compare with God's definition?

*This post was adapted from Paul's free ebook "Tips for Starting A College Ministry"*

This resource is available to all collegiate ministries. Please use it for your ministry but not for commercial purposes. We ask that you retain the BCNet header.