

LeHIGHlights

News of Reformed University Fellowship at Lehigh University

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The Neglected Attribute

"...as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'" 1 Peter 1:15-16

With this verse we opened our Ministry Team retreat last week. Twenty-four Lehigh students returned to Bethlehem four days before the second semester for prayer, Bible study, and planning to prepare for the RUF ministry coming up.

Holiness is an attribute of God that is increasingly neglected today. We noted that retreats such as this typically focus on outreach, worship, growth, and evangelism – but seldom do we hear a call to holy living. We read verses from all parts of scripture which make clear God's holy requirement and concluded with Hebrews 12:14, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord". If it's true that no one will see the Lord without holiness, we had better pay attention to this aspect of our lives!



This year's Ministry Team retreat

I wondered if the students would think holiness is not a "leadership" topic, or if they would think the topic too legalistic, but I was pleased to see how eagerly they dived into the discussion. The 45 minute small group time stretched into 1½ hours, and they had to be pried

out of the Bible studies in Romans 12-14. I taught what holiness is and how to avoid legalism and licentiousness. Then we discussed issues of holiness on campus, such as godly speech, music theft, and of course sexual purity.

I think this was the best Ministry Team retreat ever. The students continue to grow in taking responsibility for ministry to the Lehigh campus and are increasingly skilled to do so. Three of our Bible study leaders-in-training led very impressive Bible studies. Peter led an excellent session to refocus our vision for ministry. Two sophomores handled all the meal preparation for us. I'm excited about the future of this group!

Please pray for the Ministry Team. A total of 35 students are involved in serving this group. Pray that they remain focused on our vision, continue developing the skills for ministry, and of course keep growing in holiness.

Spring Semester Plans

I will be teaching Ephesians this semester. Many of our students need a solid grounding in Biblical theology, and a study of Ephesians is one of the best ways to accomplish this goal. The nine Bible studies will continue, each studying different books. Next month we will be breaking new ground at our spring training conference as we introduce a track on evangelism. At the Ministry Team retreat we agreed one of our greatest weaknesses is knowing how to explain the gospel, so I am developing this track to address this need. We are also excited that the other RUF groups in the Mid-Atlantic area will be joining us for this training.

After a break last year we are organizing another mission trip for this spring break. We will be going to Mexico again to minister to the children in the orphanage Casa Hogar, "House of Hope". Our trip two years ago was instrumental in developing our ministry, and we expect the same this time.

The other big project this semester is getting new Bible study leaders ready for next year. Three current leaders will be leaving, but we have five or six people in training. We need to help them hone their skills so they can jump out of the starting gate in August.

Funding Progress

In the past few *LeHIGHLIGHTS* I have mentioned our need for additional funding. This is an issue that has been building for years, but the ministry has consumed all my available time and funding has been neglected. We have reached the point where that cannot continue. There is good news. Income in 2004 was up \$10,000 from a year ago. Last January we needed to raise \$27,000 per year and that need has been brought down to \$20,000, so we are making progress. But our expenses are still \$20,000 higher than our income.

I am continuing to work on raising these funds. We recently produced the enclosed brochure to promote the ministry at Lehigh University. We have a long-term ministry plan and a plan for seeking the extra funds. I will explain some of this in our next letter. For now, though, I desperately need your prayers. Humanly speaking there is no time for me to locate the funding we need without seriously impairing the ministry here. We need God's supernatural help. I need you to intercede at the throne of grace for the provision to continue the ministry to Lehigh University. Will you pray for God to meet our funding need?

The Homefront

We have almost settled back into a routine of school and ... well, school takes most of our time. Ruth's family visited us over a week around Christmas, then we visited my family. This month Ruth was the opening speaker at the RUF wives retreat. I think that weekend was very profitable for the women.

Ruth is teaching again at the Master's Academy of the Fine Arts, teaching her online AP English class, and grading papers for the Covenant Home Curriculum. Daniel is hoping to move to a new division of his company and work on software development – his real interest. He is preparing to teach the track at our training conferences on how to study the Bible. He will be working with Tom Becker this semester and will be on his own in the fall. Peter continues as president of Lehigh RUF. He asked how to get a form to apply for the good scholar discount on our auto insurance, so I guess his studies are going well.

Christopher was not accepted to Yale early decision, but we are still hoping he will get in with the regular admissions. He is beginning rehearsals this week for the play he is directing based on Agatha Christie's book, *Ten*

Little Indians. Stephen is marching along in his ninth grade curriculum and spending hours IM-ing his friends. Benjamin used some of his Christmas money to buy a kids' version of a paintball gun, which has given him much excitement.

Personal Reflections

I tried for several months to find a speaker for the Ministry Team retreat, but without success. So I did it myself. In looking back, I am convinced that was the best plan after all. In telling Steven Badorf this he commended me for finally learning to trust in God's providence!

Whether or not trusting God is my biggest growth area, this is another illustration that any good that comes from RUF is by God's grace. Our theology, our training, our diligence and skill – even our holiness – are no guarantee of success. We may plant and water, but only God produces fruit. In fact, our ability to plant and water comes from God, too. So we are left with a deep conviction of God's immeasurable grace, and a profound thankfulness for His love.

One of the important ways God communicates His love to us is through your support of our ministry. Thank you for your care and support of us and your dedication to the work of God's Kingdom.

P.S. I periodically send prayer requests by email. If you would like to be on this list, send an email to Anna Barshinger (Anna@ruf-lu.org), and she will see that you are included.