

College, Faith & Leadership Podcast

Episode 02: Best Practices for Starting New Campus Ministries with Delvin Pikes

[00:00:00] **Dave:** [00:00:35] Well, I am here with Delvin Pikes, Delvin, and I have known each other for a long time. Delvin. Great to be with you today.

[00:00:45] **Delvin:** [00:00:45] Yeah. Yeah. Thanks for having me all day.

[00:00:48] **Dave:** [00:00:48] Well, for those of you that may not know Delvin, first of all, you're, you're missing out cause he's a pretty great guy, but beyond that Delvin and I have known each other for probably about 10 or 15 years now, [00:01:00] and really primarily through our ministry organization, Every Nation Campus. Delvin is a former college athlete, played football at middle Tennessee state university.

[00:01:11] **Delvin:** [00:01:11] Yeah. Go Blue Raiders!

[00:01:13] **Dave:** [00:01:13] Oh, yeah. And he has, really since graduation been serving in campus ministry first at MTS U and then for the past five or so years, he has been serving as the area director for, Every Nation Campus in the Nashville area. So, Delvin, great to have you on the podcast today.

[00:01:33] **Delvin:** [00:01:33] Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Thanks for having me on, Dave. I'm super excited about this podcast and, the students and the people that are gonna get to hear this. So this is great.

[00:01:43] **Dave:** [00:01:43] Yeah, well, Delvin, there are a number of things I'm excited to talk to you about today that I think are going to be really helpful to this audience. And in particular, I know you've, you've done some research. You actually just completed your doctorate in ministry, Asbury [00:02:00] theological seminary with a really interesting focus of your research being best practices for starting new college campus ministries.

[00:02:09] And so I'm excited to hear about that in just a little bit. But, if you would, Delvin, tell us just a little bit about your background and how it is that you came to be a follower of Jesus. And even beyond that, how you got involved in college campus ministry.

[00:02:26] **Delvin:** [00:02:26] Yeah. Yeah. Thanks. You know, for me, I, I grew up, my, my short story is I grew up, really, I would say I knew that a lot about the church of God. grew up in a, Catholic tradition and, you know, really it's funny cause we actually were in a white, kind of, I'll say more traditional Roman Catholic church.

[00:02:44] And then, we found an African American, you know, all black, Catholic church. And so I had these different church experiences, but again, I felt like I knew a lot about the church of God, but not like really deeply knowing, the God of the church and, going away to college my first year. [00:03:00] really getting out, so to speak from under my parents, eyes and, and, you know, rules that I say and really, living and doing whatever I want to do for a whole year.

[00:03:09] And there left me in a super dark place. whether it be just, the choices that I made of sin and the choices that others were making around me, it just, really didn't find myself in a healthy place. And long story short, I was playing college football at a school in Indiana University Evansville.

[00:03:26] And, they called us in, right before the four response to start spring practice. We had been working out and getting ready and they said, guys, we got some news for you. We're dropping the football program. And so a long story short that precipitated my transfer to middle Tennessee state. I didn't know, maybe six months before I got there, that, in every nation church was starting.

[00:03:46] And, the lead pastor who used to play at Florida State, come on now. He was, he used to play football there. He was reaching out to, and was going to be there, our team chaplain for the year. And so, through his ministry, I mean, he would minister to us before [00:04:00] games and throughout the week and have Bible studies and different things.

[00:04:03] And, through his invitation. I really finally came to that new church plant and it was thoroughly unimpressed. And, we'll never forget, one of the guys in the congregation offering after church coming up, shaking my hand said, Hey, I'm doing a Bible study in the bottom of a dorm with some of your teammates.

[00:04:19] Would you like to be a part? And I was at such a dark place that, you know, again, in that. Period of time and really just try my best to make all of my idols, you know, satisfy me and really trying to find peace and joy and a purpose , in my own doing and, really was falling so short. And I, I leaped at the chance when he invited me to that Bible study.

[00:04:44] And through that, I came to know Christ, just simple Bible study, reading the words of Jesus and, yeah, Jesus made itself known to me. And, that fall I gave my life to Christ. It was, a lot of other stories I could share with it, but, yeah, I gave my life to Christ, got baptized, my sophomore year [00:05:00] and man things were not the same in my heart.

[00:05:02] I certainly cared about my teammates, which was shocking me. And, yeah, we, me and a couple of other teammates that actually, they wound up coming to Christ around the same time. We just started having a real heart and a burden. For our team and, and really, hope to share the gospel with all of our teammates.

[00:05:18] And we, by God's grace, we were able to, in those years that we were there and, see a Bible study, become a campus ministry. And, through that whole process, God made it really clear. by the time I got down my eligibility, he wanted me to do campus ministry. And so, after I finished my eligibility and the NFL didn't draft me, I knew that was God's way of saying, Hey, don't chase this football dream, you know, tastes my dream. And so, his dream is that, all the nations would know and worship him. And, and so I spent, you know, the last bit of my time as an undergraduate, and then after graduation, coming on staff full time with every nation reaching out there at MTSS.

[00:05:58] **Dave:** [00:05:58] Well, that is [00:06:00] fantastic. Such a great story. I love just one of the things that you said at the very beginning of, of sharing your story of how you as a college student, that you knew a lot about, the church of God, you know, involvement in church, but you really didn't know. The God of the church. and so just such a key thing, and Delvin like you, I grew up going to church as well.

[00:06:22] But I think that's just something that a lot of us that grew up in church experiencing that, you know, we can know a lot more about church activity, than about God. And that's not to speak negatively about church involvement. My kids go to church, you know, but, but even as a parent, my hope for them is not just that they are regular church attenders, but that they really know the Lord, that they know him in a personal way and have a relationship with him and live for him.

[00:06:48] So really, really great. appreciate you sharing that with us. Well, Delvin. I know there's so much that we could talk about. but in particular, I'm really [00:07:00] excited to hear more about this research that you've recently done. At Asbury, this idea of really taking more of a research perspective on best practices for starting new campus ministries.

[00:07:15] could you just talk a little bit about why you selected that as a topic and a focus for your research?

[00:07:23] **Delvin:** [00:07:23] Yeah, great question. I took me, several months, probably about a year to really actually develop, what I did want to do my research on. I love education. And so education for education's sake is a bit empty. And so that's what attracted me to a Doctorate of Ministry program because it's applied research.

[00:07:40] So you're literally working on a ministry problem. And so that was that first year in the program. That's what all I was wrestling with is what is my problem or what is a problem in our ministry that I just want to solve and work on for a few years. And, what I arrived at at the time I had a. Kind of dual hats.

[00:07:54] I was helping to lead our campus ministries in Nashville, which are on several different campuses, [00:08:00] in partnership with our local church, Bethel world outreach. And I was also wearing the hat of regional director, and, and really to help coordinate within our region, which has several States, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, even.

[00:08:15] And, helping to just, you know, again, fan of flames and, and see, students reached on these campuses. and, I think the biggest thing for me was I took a look at all of our chapters that we had in the region. And I realized, man, we're just re staffing the same. Chapters a we're getting the people to come on staff and, and, and again, the Lord's grace was, was kind of obviously the one that's directing people in that way, but, we were having a focus and we're praying for more staff, more staff.

[00:08:43] But I felt like, you know, we had these wristbands at the time that we had handed out to everyone and said every nation, every campus, that was our, been our motto for over 10 years. One of our founders kind of gave us that phrase, that catchphrase, and, really started thinking about man, there's literally thousands of campuses in these [00:09:00] states, hundreds and hundreds of thousands of students.

[00:09:04] And, how are we going to get to them? How are we going to reach them? Is there a mechanism? One quick story was, we had a conference, probably four years ago now. And, one of the students that came to the conference was from another university in a state. We don't even have an Every Nation church or any ministry work there.

[00:09:21] And he was so excited, so fired up. He goes back to his campus and, he, he literally says, Hey man, what, how, when are we going to start every nation campus here on

my campus? And, That really burdened me because I, as I was trying to answer his question and how can we do this in our models and different things.

[00:09:40] I realized, man, we really don't have a clear, on ramp or a clear, runway for, for that to really take off and really happen. And so, you know, so I thought organizationally process was system-wise. I, I, I tried to really think about this. How can we, as a ministry. Actually act and [00:10:00] plan and prepare ourselves to go and start new campus ministries in our region and beyond.

[00:10:07] And so that was really the heart of the research was trying to see, okay, who has started campus ministries. and you know, again, all of these worst started, you know, but a lot of ours were in the last, I'll say 15 to 20 years here in our region. And so, just trying to fan those flames of evangelistic activity and, moving towards campuses, but then also, doing it from a research base. So that, that was a hard amount as well as, okay. This is an opportunity to actually discover. And so, the research, just a little bit about it, wound up getting a really diverse range of people, that were involved in starting the new campus ministries on, different campuses across the country.

[00:10:48] There was 10 different, states that were represented. So, Hawaii to California, to, the East coast, even Boston Philly, Minnesota, Arkansas. Texas [00:11:00] as well. And, and again, these participants, just to talk a little bit about it. it was fascinating because they all not just had started a campus ministry, but they helped that campus ministry, be sustained past two years.

[00:11:12] And so I had seen, over the years, a lot of. Attempted starts or, Hey, we're going to do a Bible study for a semester or we'll, you know, kind of just do a little something out there, but no real commitment in terms of timeframe. But these that I got a chance to talk with and really, engage, in this research.

[00:11:30] they had all been. Foundational pieces and stayed, you know, some of them even longer than those, those two year window. And so, it was, it was great. I got to interact with those from inside our ministry outside, those, that man, they, they, they had smaller ministries let's say, and maybe it didn't have a, a huge student body presence in involved in it.

[00:11:51] Community colleges, public, private, Christian schools even. And, it, again, it gave, it gave a bit of a range. Of the different [00:12:00] types of campuses that are out there, but yet, through the research was able to discover a few of the things that were common.

[00:12:06] **Dave:** [00:12:06] Well, Delvin. That's really interesting. and, and so just to be clear, so this research that you recently completed, obviously both you and I are a part of the, every nation campus ministry. but are you saying that this research included a wider range than that? That it was,

[00:12:25] **Delvin:** [00:12:25] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, that was so, as well as the one I didn't mention was, there were a pair church, workers, there were church based workers in it that they were maybe assigned as a college minister for local church. and then there's every nation which has kind of a hybrid model we use, of being church-based campus ministry.

[00:12:41] There was, like I said, a variety of different, types of ministry kind of expressing that, that group of people that we, that I got the interview.

[00:12:48] **Dave:** [00:12:48] So, so is your feeling that this research it's it's, even though maybe a little, angle that you had in mind was how to benefit, our particular organization, but that sounds like this [00:13:00] really is something that would be more broadly useful to anybody in any organization that has an interest in really planting new campus ministries.

[00:13:09] Is that

[00:13:09] **Delvin:** [00:13:09] Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm hopeful. I'm hopeful with that, that, again, this, this can help extend campus ministries, whether it be, a student taking this and running with it, whether it be a volunteer or just a young adult, or even a, you know, You know, someone who's second career and they're coming out of maybe the, the workforce and saying God's called me to reach college students.

[00:13:29] I hope this is helpful. Cause I feel like, you know, Benson Heinz had a book about 10 years ago. He wrote on, reaching campus tribes and, it's a free ebook. You can find it, online. And, one of the things he said in there is campus ministry suffers, and a lot of ways because. The people who do the ministry, there's such a turnover rate.

[00:13:50] They never get to share the experience that they had with others. And so for me, that was part of this discovery process of realizing not just how much or how little [00:14:00] research has been done on campus ministry, in the recent past. but also how often, what is gained. Through experience through what didn't work with, struggles or problems or our issues, barriers, people hit up against, it's not handed down to it to other generations.

[00:14:16] So that's my hope with this, that we can learn from one another. We can glean. this is, to me, this, I felt like it was just a small. Piece of a, of a larger contribute, contribution, and that more research and more work needs to be done, investigating campus ministry. What is effective and, what is helpful in reaching students?

[00:14:34] Again, because it's a critical age, I think, let me just say that, you know, as, as. someone who's been in campus ministry for years now was impacted by campus ministry. Like you, Dave, you and I both know, not just the power of the gospel, but the, the power of that timeframe in your life of really trying to figure out who you are settle for at least some season, you know, it might, it might be reiterations, or reinventions of yourself, but at [00:15:00] least for a season, you're setting a course for your life and you're making decisions.

[00:15:04] That are going to really affect an impact, you know, probably the rest of your life and, you know, for good or bad. And so again, to me, campus ministry is, is essential. It's it's, wherever there's young people in this season, outside of I'll say high school, and before they're kind of mature and married and, with kids.

[00:15:23] This is a critical, critical time. And it's, it's one of the largest groups missing from our local churches. And so in front of the body of Christ, as far as actively involved, engaged, in spiritual disciplines and, reaching others and learning how to become ministers of the gospel themselves. So, for me, it's, it's a key time.

[00:15:43] **Dave:** [00:15:43] Well, Delvin, a hundred percent agree. Campus ministry wasn't even something that I'd ever even heard of. Even though, as I said, I did grow up in the church. I'd never heard of campus ministry until I was. On a campus myself as a, a wayward college student. but I completely [00:16:00] agree. And that's one of the big reasons is some of the things even touched on there is, is one of, some of the reasons why I was even, inspired and motivated to launch this podcast is to, help tell those stories, help capture those stories, help encourage current student leaders as well as, staff members or even.

[00:16:18] Pastors that are wanting to, help their church better engage college students outside. Just think there's such a need for this kind of thing. Delvin, I'm excited though, to hear some of your key research findings, if you would just go into that and break down some of the key insights that you arrived at through your research.

[00:16:37] **Delvin:** [00:16:37] Yeah, yeah. You know what I found as I talked with these individuals who were. Hands on and on the ground, looking to start ministry, you know, again, I'm looking for, not just common things that they're saying, but trying to get a, a vision into their vision. And it's trying to see things the way that they saw things as they got that ministry started in, you know, first off the [00:17:00] bat, I noticed everyone that I talked with not just had a passion for Christ and for students, but they saw the difference it made in their own life.

[00:17:08] And they also saw the difference it would make as they did this in their own personal spiritual walk with Christ themselves. And so I think, I think that's just number one for me is that, you know, that these, individuals, these, people, they, they actually, that helped to lead that work, that God put it on their heart, or they felt this burden to go and start a new ministry.

[00:17:30] They saw this intersection. Between their love for Jesus, their relationship with Jesus and God's love for students. And I think that's powerful. I think a, you know, maybe that gets overlooked or just assumed that the people that are going to go start are just the people with experience are people with, you know, again, who, who they've done it the longest, or they, they know the most or whatever, but the passion has to be there for Christ.

[00:17:56] The other thing I noticed was almost all of them. [00:18:00] Did not try to do it alone. I think that, you know, again, a lot of times, I know as, as a campus minister walking out on campus, whether I was the only staff person or a, you know, again, working just primarily representing a ministry by myself, or if I was, even had other team members, it always feels lonely.

[00:18:21] It always feels like, man, I, you know, I had a hard time looking in the Bible and finding something to compare it to, you know, cause most of the stories in the Bible is not one person going it's everyone, you know, maybe Dave David and Goliath. but that was like every day, you know, even Gideon had 300, he's like, okay, at least 300 verse thousands, you know, feels a lot better, but it always feels like the odds are against you.

[00:18:42] And what I noticed is all of these, no matter how anointed or just naturally gifted there were, or, maybe their preaching gift was super strong or, or their ability to gather people or organize or, you know, mentor students preach the gospel. it didn't matter [00:19:00] that for them, they saw weaknesses as well in their life.

[00:19:03] And they also saw, again, I think just the overwhelming numbers of a lot of our campuses is, Hey, even if you have five people, 10 people on your staff, it's going to feel like, man, that's not, it's a drop in the bucket with thousands of students, that are walking around and, and in need of, guidance.

[00:19:21] And, and so, you know, to me, those were two of the top ones. I think there's some others, as far as, the questions. Funding, you know, having some of that settled and, and, and at least discovered or thought about, different participants, shared about, you know, just the importance of that and whether it be, you know, A plan on the front end, or even, you know, what I realized too is if you don't have a plan that is a plan.

[00:19:45] And so, you know, just, just realizing that ministry costs money and that there are real expenses, especially I had one participant share, Hey, I, you know, we started one year within a few years time, we had. As an event that we had done the very first [00:20:00] year that had grown from, a handful, 10 to 22, we have 600 people at this event.

[00:20:05] And I, you know that was my next question is, okay, how did you pay for that? and so the, these, these are, these are important things because along the way, as, as ministries getting started, and you do, and, and you see God, you do what God's told you to do, and you see him move. you actually have.

[00:20:21] More responsibility. That's what he said. If you're faithful a little bit and trust you with much. And so, for me, that was a very helpful, discovery. there were several other findings that, that I could, I could go into, I'll say kind of my most, to me, largest takeaway. and, and I think most significant was, was really breaking down involvement.

[00:20:40] And by that, I mean, a lot of us, if you're already in campus ministry, or you've, you've served in a campus ministry before, oftentimes we're looking either for future staff or future leaders and, you know, again, we're, we're trying to build up people who will, shoulder the load. like we would.

[00:20:57] And with care and concern about, we care about reaching [00:21:00] students like we do. And, so you're looking for those, those, those students to pour into invest into and what I found is what often gets left out is how much time it actually takes to do that. And, as I did this, I actually, you know, one of my, light bulb moments was hearing and going back through the data on how long these were involved in campus ministry before they came on staff, And, or, or into a leadership ministry, kind of a role position.

[00:21:29] And then the time it took them before they actually went and started a new campus ministry, because most, most of those that I, that I talked with these participants, they had been involved in campus ministry as a student, most of them, or a volunteer then they came on staff or had an official title role in the ministry outside of just being a student leader.

[00:21:52] And they had a period of time that they were maybe again, they were full time in ministry or they, you know, were intern or they were, they, they were a [00:22:00] step beyond being a student and then they went and started the ministry. And so there was this, this, these two gaps that I wound up kind of digging deeper into the data and finding and, yeah, came up with some actual numbers.

[00:22:13] I know it's shocking. in interviews, you're thinking, man, I'm just going to hear, phrases and, you know, insights into vocabulary, but, for me, part of it was numerical data. And, what, what came about the, the average number of years that either a volunteer or a student was involved before they came on, staff even was three years.

[00:22:34] And, for all of those surveys in every nation, it was about two, 2.3 years. So, you know, cause some of my participants were within every nation. And so, so that helped me, that helped me to, to begin to let at least we can start looking at now leadership development, and in a, in a, in a time span, not just in a content span.

[00:22:56] And, and then, as well as number of years on staff, I found the [00:23:00] average, being about 5.6 years, that someone was on staff before they went and started a new campus ministry. And those that I surveyed, in this research and, and within every nation, it was about five years. And so, again, A lot of times we're thinking in shorter time span, Hey, why don't we just go start something?

[00:23:16] Why don't we just go do something, not knowing that God has a preparation process. And, we, we maybe miss look what we want to do in terms of, you know, looking at the future instead of looking at, Hey, what have we been doing and who are those people that have been through these, these other that's self?

[00:23:35] so that again, that was a powerful finding for me. And to begin to, to, Think now as, you know, kind of coming out of this research and saying, okay, how can we now use the developmentally, and approach developing students, preparing them for staff and then also preparing them, to move on.

[00:23:52] Because for me, if a, if a staff member it's about five years, maybe this is the timeframe that we begin to [00:24:00] talk with staff and prepare them and encourage them year three. And say, Hey, you've been on staff for a few years. Why don't you begin to pray or think about some campuses that are in your heart.

[00:24:10] And, and so anyway, these are some of the findings and, yeah, I'm excited to even discover those things.

[00:24:17] **Dave:** [00:24:17] Wow. Well, Delvin. Yeah, this is really interesting. And what I love so much about it, as you said, even earlier, is that you've really done the work. You know, this, isn't just an idea that you had that now you're just kind of running with, but this is based off of, of actual. Data, this is based off of actual , experiences collectively, aggregated , to really come out with some concrete information to build off of.

[00:24:46] And I liked that, one of my top strength finders themes actually is strategic. And so I love to, to be strategic and to do things, not just that are ambitious or [00:25:00] well-intentioned or zealous, but to try to do things in a way that are going to really build towards a bigger goal in a way that is constructive.

[00:25:08] So I love that. Well, if you would share a little bit more about how long a student is typically involved in the ministry before they then come on staff.

[00:25:19] **Delvin:** [00:25:19] You know, I think again, we were, if we're to, to actually think about starting new ministries, Xs, start with the students. And, I think we oftentimes short

change their desire or even the impact it can have on them to, think about another campus, to think about reaching other students to go somewhere new, you know?

[00:25:41] The, the kind of mission and trip idea to another, place and, begin to see them, I think, in terms of having a vision for the world. And I think, you know, yes, it, it, you know, again, in my findings, I found that it was three years, four, four, just overall, all the participants. to me, [00:26:00] this, this is key because now as I reach, let's say a freshmen, or let's say a sophomore, I know I have a timeframe to work with and like, we all know that, Hey, these students are gonna graduate. but a lot of times when they come into our ministry, We act as if we have them from the moment we get them to the moment they walk across the stage. Sometimes that's not the case.

[00:26:19] Sometimes you have them, you know, their senior year, they're doing an internship or they're going to go study abroad their junior year. You know, there's so much flux in what students choose to do year to year. But I think it, it forces us as campus ministers to think, like you said, strategically, and I think.

[00:26:35] You know, I love this quote that, in one of my readings for, from this research, w it was a great book by rolling Allen. I mean, he, you talk about a classic in the missionary world, but he wrote a book called missionary methods, and, he was a, a missionary overseas and in China, and, he really, challenged the church, even at the time, they were thinking incorrectly about how to build [00:27:00] mission centers, mission agencies.

[00:27:02] And, in his mind we were drift, he, they were drifting away at the time from how Paul did missions. And one of, you know, one of the things he said was, Hey, Paul did not stay in a place very long usually. And when he did great things happen, but you know, he was, his challenge was how can we help people?

[00:27:25] Not just get the gospel, but they begin to, in this case, you know, plant churches and make disciples. And, one of the quotes I had, I had pulled out for my first presentation on this was from him and it says it is not enough for the church to be established in a place where many are coming and going.

[00:27:43] Unless the people who come and go, not only learn the gospel, but learning in such a way that they can propagate it. Basically that everyone that is coming into our campus ministries, we should see them as potentially being church planners, campus ministers, missionaries [00:28:00] to, the legal world and to business and to politics and to, you know, you fill in the blank education.

[00:28:06] These are all missionaries. Everybody that's coming into our ministry is not, we're not just coddling them, trying to get them through a season. But we're preparing all of them to be launched. And I think that that to me was, was very powerful. the fact that my ministry on campus isn't just to get people who, are Christians, just make it through a tough time of life.

[00:28:28] My job is to prepare them to go into a dark world and that's, you know, to me that, that's what I began to ask myself. Are we preparing them? The best we can. We don't have, we can't teach them everything. All right. We can't do everything for them and with them, but we can do the most important things.

[00:28:46] And that's what we try to do is , lay biblical foundations really see these students become solid believers, develop spiritual discipline habits. Really receive the Holy Spirit's power and learn how to listen to him and follow him, as, as he's [00:29:00] leading them to do things. And, I think through all of these, these different kinds of aspects, we, we can build a foundation that, and again, hopefully some of these will last in terms of God will speak to them and they will go to other campuses, even if it's just to go to graduate school, even if it's to, you know, I'm going to law school, they'll take.

[00:29:18]DNA and the, the gospel with them, and actually start new things there.

[00:29:25] **Dave:** [00:29:25] Wow. Well, Delvin, this is so helpful. thank you for doing this research and for sharing it with the community of believers. Delvin, one other question for you, just cause I know among those that are listening to this right now, probably many have a vision for reaching their campus, whether student leader or a campus ministry staff worker of some sort, or, or just, you know, pastor or church planter.

[00:29:55]I know that one of the biggest things that. People in [00:30:00] campus ministry struggle with is a sense of discouragement. Is there anything that you would say just as we conclude that might be a source of encouragement or perspective to those that, they're trying to do the very things that you're talking about of making disciples on campus and even thinking about it strategically, but just the fact is that students don't take these significant steps of discipleship overnight. And so what would you say to the person that is involved in the mission, but is really trying to just stay on for the duration and battling some discouragement.

[00:30:39] **Delvin:** [00:30:39] Yeah, that's great. A great question, Dave. Cause I think we don't talk about that very much. Right. you know, a lot of students even they'll see us do ministry things and they. us preaching or teaching and encouraging and praying. And, you know, again, you don't see the work.

[00:30:53] And I think that's part of what I was mentioning earlier. We want the fruit, but maybe we don't want to dig and plant the roots [00:31:00] and water. And, and, and again, of, of seeing new campus ministry started, it takes all of that. Right. And so I think the same for, you know, anyone that's, that's trying to start a new endeavor.

[00:31:11] You're going to face discouraging moments. There's going to be days you wake up and you don't think anything's going to happen. There's going to be a lot of opposition, spiritually, emotionally, mentally. there, there's going to be people who literally will you think you can depend on and you think, man, this, this is, this is the greatest, you know, student I met from, you know, whatever the president of the best organization on campus.

[00:31:37] And they, they flake out. There's just going to be those moments. And, every, let me encourage all the listeners. I myself, have, have gone through that and fight, fight through that, often. And everyone that I interviewed for this research, had a similar, story to tell this was, that was one of the barriers was how to, work through discouragement, [00:32:00] how to work through, you know, fear, how to work through indecision and confusion. Although those things, may sound as different, but they're all connected. And, my encouragement to everybody is Acts 19. as I was doing this research, part of it, wasn't just to read a bunch of books and, study and do interviews. it was also to kind of read the Bible and say, what does the Bible have to say about this?

[00:32:23] And I think the biggest encouragement I would say to everyone, is in Acts 19. Paul had, been going out, doing ministries on his second missionary journey. And, he'd been starting churches. He'd had, he had had good and bad and just, just a couple of chapters before. I mean, he's, he had been in jail.

[00:32:41] He had been run out of cities. He had been to intellectual places and debated people and not with a lot of fruit. I mean, he had some churches, but again, he was going from place to place to place. And when I think of apostle Paul, I almost think of him as a rolling stone, but I found like Acts 19 was actually where [00:33:00] the rolling stone stopped for awhile.

[00:33:02] And, in the first few verses he's encouraging really redirecting, 12 men who, they had heard about Jesus, but their, their theology was off their, their, their foundation was shaky. they, they hadn't even heard of Jesus is back to the baptism of water. they, they would have been baptized under John the Baptist.

[00:33:21] And so they, they were confused. They had bits of the story, not whole parts. I always think of it like just the average freshmen, you know, just kind of just, I think I've heard some stuff. And, and when Paul is able to do with, with those that are with him is, building them, clarity, building them a conviction, and he prays within the receive the Holy spirit.

[00:33:39] This is important too, because the Holy Spirit put into this point, we had Pentecost, we had Peter's moment. and, and for, for Paul, this was important moment. Cause he's seeing people get filled, the Holy spirit and spiritual gifts be given. and again, another Pentecost moment. The cool thing about Ephesus, and this is where he was.

[00:33:58] He had been there before, but this [00:34:00] time he's and he wound up staying for three years, and this is what it says here. And, he did what he usually does. He goes to the synagogue, he preaches, on a Saturday and then anybody wants to stick around. He talks and, and this is what it says though. And in 19 Acts, 19 verse eight, I'm reading from the NIV, says Paul entered the synagogue and he spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God.

[00:34:20] But some of them became obstinate. They refuse to believe in publicly maligned the way. So Paul left him and he took the disciples with him and he had discussions daily and the lecture hall of Tyrannus. And this went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia, heard the word of the Lord.

[00:34:37] And here's the thing about emphasis that, I got to study and, and, and realize this was much like our college campuses. This was a key city of people coming and going. It was a capital city in that time, but it was also that he went to the lecture hall that he went to the space of education. We don't know a whole, whole lot about this hall of Tyrannus, but man, in a lot of ways, I [00:35:00] read this and began to study it.

[00:35:01] And I realized that this is our vision for campus ministry. Out of Ephesus, Paul actually planted several churches. Throughout the, the Roman empire, a lot of the letters that he wrote in the new Testament, this was out of his time and emphasis. that verse said he was there for two years later on. It says that he was there total three years and they're weeping and crying when he leaves.

[00:35:21] And I believe in a lot of ways, he had built such a culture of discipleship, of discussions, of, of wrestling with truth, of, of, of prayer of the Holy spirit. Of of God's power. And, it, it, it was a real community that was healthy and thriving. That's why, you know, again, he writes back later to the church at Ephesus and, it's a beautiful letter that we all to this day refer to.

[00:35:45] And so, my encouragement to you is stay the course.

[00:35:47] **Dave:** [00:35:47] Wow. Well, Delvin. This has been so helpful. I'm sure that, those collegiate leaders that are listening to this are really going to be helped [00:36:00] by what you shared here today. And so thank you so much for being so generous with your time and for sharing some of these research findings with us here. And, just want to let people know where they could find you.

[00:36:13] Cause I imagine some listening to this, you know, they may want to get in contact with you. I'm hoping we can even get access to some of these research reports and things and, and, and circulate that. But, Delvin, how, how can people get in contact with you?

[00:36:29] **Delvin:** [00:36:29] Yeah. Yeah, my I'm pretty easy to find. My name is a unique enough Delvin Pikes @DelvinPikes. I'm on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. those are probably the easiest, quickest ways to get in touch with me. and yeah, feel free to reach out and I'd love to help anyone. I can.

[00:36:47] **Dave:** [00:36:47] well, Delvin, thanks again. So much.

[00:36:50] **Delvin:** [00:36:50] Alright. Thanks Dave, for having me on today.

[00:36:52] **Dave:** [00:36:52] Well, I don't know about you, but I am so grateful for men like [00:37:00] Delvin taking the time to really study, do the research, do the work. And figure out how we together. as a community of believers can move forward and helping to extend the gospel through multiplying campus ministries, going and launching things that are sustainable.

[00:37:20] And, one of the particular takeaways that I thought was just so important and so helpful is this emphasis, that he discovered. These. successful new campus ministry starts actually, really focusing on the process -- that it wasn't something that was just don't on a whim, but really was something that was a buildup over time. And, you know, certainly you see so many metaphors, even in Jesus's teaching, using agriculture and you know, whether it's vines or harvest that these are things that don't just happen overnight. They take place. over a period of [00:38:00] time of planting and watering . And so just such a great reminder to really embrace the process.

[00:38:06] Well, I wanted just to let you know about a resource that I have available, it's a great resource called 15 tips to help you grow your college campus ministry. And so whether you're a student looking to focus in on some foundational pieces of leadership or whether you're a seasoned college ministry veteran, looking to just check foundational elements of your ministry. This is a great tool. And it's available free. If you go to my website, davehess.com/15tips, or if you just go to the main page, you can also find links there at the bottom of the homepage. I want to encourage you to check that out and that'll also get you looped in with, my email list where I share other reminders about podcast episodes that are

coming up or being released as well as [00:39:00] other articles that I am sharing. So hope you check that out.

[00:39:04] Hey, also, if you enjoyed this episode, I want to encourage you to share it. This is a brand new podcast and hoping to get the word out.

[00:39:12] I hope you found today's episode helpful. And we've got some other great interviews coming up, going to be hearing from Tom Breckwoldt, a great guy who has really established a strong culture of discipleship and leadership and his high school ministry and college ministry. going to be just inspiring to hear his personal journey to faith, as well as some of the things that God has been doing through his ministry.

[00:39:38] All that said, I am looking forward to another great episode and being back with you all soon. Until then, stay encouraged!

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