

To embrace, encourage and empower through a network of Christian educators.

ANU: Transforming students for leadership & service

Gregory Crofford

This is the first in a series of articles that will highlight some of our international schools in the Church of the Nazarene. The first schools will be in Africa. We will begin with the institution that produces many of the Nazarene educators—Africa Nazarene University in Nairobi, Kenya. This report comes from Dr. Gregory Crofford, Africa's Regional Education Coordinator.

Background History of Africa Nazarene University

In the early eighties, Kenyans who had attended Nazarene colleges in the United States and had joined the Church of the Nazarene invited Nazarenes to come to Kenya to explore its potential for the establishment of Nazarene institutions for higher education. Dr. Richard Zanner, the director for the Africa Region for the Church of the Nazarene, visited Kenya.

In 1984, Dr. Zanner approached veteran missionaries Harmon and Beverly Schmelzenbach, who were serving in Namibia. He challenged them to open a new field in East Africa, starting with the city of Nairobi. Harmon Schmelzenbach traveled to Kenya. He confirmed that Kenya was ready for quality education grounded in a Christian foundation.

In 1985, training for the church ministry was initiated and provided through two-week training and indoctrination courses called Intensives.

During the first Intensive, 27 prospective pastors attended the course. The initial intensive created a great demand, forcing the organizers to increase the frequency of the two- to three-week courses to be conducted every six months. The applications received were far beyond the capacity that could be accommodated, so a cut-off number had to be fixed at 120 students. Many of the trainees had a high school education, but their cry was for higher education and good



theological training. The need for the establishment of a graduate school for ministerial training was felt. A proposal was drafted

to the Board of General Superintendents of the Church of the Nazarene for the establishment of a graduate-level school to be called Africa Nazarene Seminary and to be located in Nairobi.

In 1985 the Nazarene General Assembly established an Education Commission to study Nazarene education around the world. The church leaders began the process of negotiation with the Commission for Higher Education in Kenya to start a degree-awarding institution. After consideration, the Kenyan Commission advised the Naza-

rene Church to open a liberal arts institution. This set the stage for the development of Africa Nazarene University (ANU).

Seventy acres of land were purchased and preparations for its development were made. A Board of Trustees was registered in January 1990. The next major step was the preparation of the proposal for the university. After three years, the Letter of Interim Authority to operate a university was granted by the Commission for Higher Education in September of 1993. This made ANU the first new institution for higher education to seek a charter under the University Act in Kenya.

ANU opened its doors to students in August 1994, offering Bachelor's degrees in Theology and Business Administration, and a Master of Arts Degree in Religion. It started with 63 students from eleven African countries. In August of 1995, a Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science was added with 42 students. In January of 1997, Professor Leah Marangu was installed as the University Vice-Chancellor and the first woman Vice-Chancellor in Kenya.

The student population has grown every year. ANU held its first graduation on May 23, 1998 during which 25 graduates were awarded bachelor's and master's degrees.

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His priorities instead of our balancing

Becky Ramsey

When the time is near for me to submit an article, I intentionally think—as I have my devotions, as I study new ideas in teaching, as I talk to other teachers—"Would this topic be one that would help other teachers?" I struggled because no topic jumped out as an idea that would be beneficial to other weary teachers grasping for a survival rope to get them to spring break or the end of another school year. I decided that I could not wait for a tremendous topic to topple into my lap. I went to my best go-to-Guy for these answers. I said, "Lord, you asked me to take this position, and therefore I need Your help with a topic that would minister to tired and overcommitted teachers like myself." I spoke out

of the frustration of trying to work into my schedule a workout at the gym that could only be accomplished by getting up very early on a Saturday morning before I faced the list of things I had written on my weekend-to-do list.

This serious "discussion" better known as "complaint in the form of a discussion" transpired while I was on the way to a very early trip to the gym. This early morning exercising could not be crossed off the list, because other visits to the gym that week had been preempted every single night. There was one exception when I squeezed in a trip to the gym between work and a conference call before finally arriving at the church for revival.

Oh, and I was really looking for-

ward to sitting at His feet during that service. Then, as I walked through the doors of the church, I remembered that I had agreed to be in the nursery one night of the revival services—and yes, this was the night. As I began this "discussion" with my Lord, I started in with thanksgiving. "Yes, Lord, I was very thankful for the message you gave me over the speaker system in the nursery, but there was not much sitting at Your feet when I was trying to entertain four toddlers. Now, could You please help me figure out a topic for the article I need to write. I have a few ideas, but none really have much pizzazz."

He heard my resentment-filled rehearsal of a busy week, and He overlooked my mental complaint in the form of "checking my calendar." My Lord lovingly replied, "How about the lesson that I am really trying to teach you?" He must have heard the quandary in my response when I replied, "Which lesson

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Has God placed something on your heart to say? Would you like to voice your opinion on an issue? Do you have questions that need to be answered? Put your thoughts into words and send them to the editor at mksauer13@gmail.com. We will choose the best articles and publish them in our newsletter! We can't wait to hear from you!

Obedience is better than sacrifice

Cindy Alsip

Public school is an amazing mission field. It brings together an entire community in support of something that most people hold dear—our children. Educators come in contact with opportunities to show Christ to others minute by minute. Ministers, missionaries, and church laypeople have to seek out opportunities that fall into our laps every day. When working with other people's children, we are invited into a very special place in their family's life. As marvelous and God-sent as this mission field is, it can also be an exacting place that draws lifeblood from a Christian educator. We must always be on our guard, be attentive to what God wants us to do, but also be careful to keep ourselves separate from what can surround us.

I have the privilege of working at an outstanding public high school, previously as a teacher and now as an administrator. I have worked with so many families over the years—some who have been grateful for my work and some who have fought me with all their might. Some days it feels like we do nothing but battle others—students, parents, other teachers, administrators. So what do you do when you feel mired in unending muck?

I worked with a family one year who fought every decision I made regarding their child. When the child was unhappy (which was often), the parents would flood the teachers with emails and phone calls telling us how we were mistreating the student. As the administrator, I reached a point where I instructed the family to communicate only through me because they had become so verbally abusive when they communicated with the teachers. This meant that I immediately became the focus of their anger, mistrust and accusations when the student complained about something that happened in the classroom.

I prayed for this family and asked God for love, patience, and compassion to share with them. But as the year went on and the angry communications did not ease

up even with clear boundaries set by me, I began to lose the reasons I had for endlessly showing Christ to them. My calm assistance with the student's academic issues combined with discipline failed to lessen the frequent angry communications, and they were wearing me down. It ate away at my energy, my time, and my peace.

One morning on my way to school, I was showing the Lord my tired heart. He spoke to me clearly and told me to meet with this family one more time to respond to their complaint to my supervisor about me and the



teachers. I could not see the point in investing in this family any more. I was looking to Him for a way through, a way to help this family see that they were wrong, that they needed to back away and leave me alone for a while. My Heavenly Father stopped my outpouring of frustration when He gently said to me, "Child, I am not giving you a reason or a way through. Remember that you belong to Me, and I want you to patiently face this family again. What they say or do cannot change what you have in Me. So go in, show them My love for them, and I will be there

with you."

I got quiet and pondered that. He simply wanted obedience, and I decided to give Him that. I wish I could tell you that it was a fabulous meeting that day and we came to a happy conclusion, but we did not. They did not change, and I realized as I continued to work with them for the rest of the year that sometimes God doesn't mean for us to be the catalyst for immediate change, sometimes He means for us to be the context of a family's journey. The student finished school a couple of years ago and I still sometimes wonder if I had any positive effect in their lives. I hope so. It was not a pleasant experience for me, but I take comfort from the fact that I was obedient. I chose to trust God, even though I didn't understand why and definitely needed His grace to remain obedient.

Maybe you are dealing with a student or a family you don't understand and can't seem to affect with your witness. If so, I want to pray for you:

- May you tap into God's grace to find the courage to continue providing a calm, loving, and patient presence in that family's life, even when they cause you to hurt.
- May you remain obedient to what God wants you to do, even when you don't understand why and it seems like it will take your last ounce of energy to do it.
- May you desire to do your Father's will, even when it requires your dependence upon His grace, not your own strength, to do it.
- May you trust that God has a plan for you and for this family, and understand that this family cannot take away the most precious thing you have: your relationship with your Heavenly Father.
- May you look to your Heavenly Father when you feel mired in the unending muck and feel His blessing on your obedience.

One school at a time

NCM Staff

Nazarene Compassionate Ministries plans to provide hope and healing to communities affected by war and natural disasters.

This article is from NCM Magazine, a publication of Nazarene Compassionate Ministries.

When a tsunami hit the northern coastline of Sri Lanka on December 26, 2004, it fell upon an area already strained by civil war. The tsunami destroyed everything in its path up to two miles inland. The war prevented the long-term rehabilitation the region needed. With the end of the 26-year war in 2009 came an opportunity to rebuild not only what was lost in the tsunami, but also the communities that had been scattered by the violence.

Significant reconstruction is already taking place in Northern Sri Lanka, according to Herman Gschwandtner, NCM South Asia regional coordinator. Roads are being built, and the government is collaborating with nongovernmental organizations for the next steps to rehabilitate the region. But there is a long way to go. People are still living without adequate housing and access to clean water. Piles of concrete and empty dilapidated buildings are scattered along roadsides. Signs throughout the region warn, "Beware of mines," a reminder that it is still dangerous for families to farm and children to play.

Soon after the war ended, Nazarene Compassionate Ministries in Sri Lanka began improving the lives of

children in the north through child development centers (CDCs). NCM had participated in disaster relief after the tsunami and helped to feed 25,000 refugees for almost half a year after the war. Because of their good work, the government has asked NCM to help them with the ambitious task of rebuilding 150 schools in the north. NCM staff in Sri Lanka plan to start a CDC at each school they rehabilitate.

NCM will begin the monumental task by developing CDCs in the two biggest cities in the north: Kilinochchi and Mullaittivu, areas touched heavily by the civil war.

In Mullaittivu, NCM has already started the planning of the rehabilitation process. Currently, the first school they will help is a thatched-roof building. After NCM helps to construct a better building, NCM staff will establish a CDC there. The CDC will operate after school hours, and enrolled children will receive food, tutoring, and mentorship in a loving environment. The program is designed to complement what the children are already doing in school and remove barriers to their success.

NCM's child development programs in Sri Lanka are a part of its comprehensive model of child-focused community development. The CDCs are the foundation for other projects, such as trauma counseling, skills training for parents, nutrition education, and home garden development.

The people of northern Sri Lanka have experienced overwhelming natural and human-made disaster, but that is not the end of the story. Nazarene child



development centers provide a chance for the smallest ones in the community to have a chance at a different life—one of hope and healing.

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His priorities instead of our balancing *Cont.*

would that be? I seem to see all these lessons surrounding me that I am really trying to learn, but I am not doing a very good job of balancing them right now. In fact, if I am totally honest with you, Lord, I am overwhelmed at the moment."

His gentle and understanding reply stopped the list of topics that had been on that revolving rolodex of ideas in my mind. I had actually thought we could discuss the ones that I had been scribbling down through the last weeks, and He could choose and revise the best one. But the spin of those feeble ideas abruptly screeched to a halt when I heard His response to my whining, "That is the lesson I am talking about...the one I am trying to get you to see. I do not want you to balance these things; I want you to learn to prioritize."

Oh, that comment brought up some fuel for this conversation because I was ready to explain that balancing and prioritizing were almost synonyms. Yes, they might both have a little different connotation, but they came from the same viewpoint, didn't they?

It was right in the middle of this discussion that the Lord and I began this study that I am willing to share with you. The lesson started right in the midst of my explaining to Him that my attempts to balance time for the Lord, my family, my church, and my job had reached a precarious pinnacle. (Teachers, you know our job does not get left in the classroom when the final bell rings, and the last student hurries out the door!) I also reminded Him that some of that former list included leadership responsibilities, and the feeling of being out-of-balance at the top of that high precipice could overwhelm even the most committed.

The Lord calmly, and with much patience, began the lesson by assuring me that He totally understood how I felt. He had been an overwhelmed teacher himself. He then revealed to me that the idea of balance never came from Him in the first place, but from the father of all lies, the one who gives us only an imitation of what our Loving Lord has in store for us. Satan first tells us that balance is the answer when it comes to sin. "If you just have more good than bad on the Lord's righteous scales, I am sure that your God will understand your intent." While our Savior is always willing to forgive those things that we would put on the "bad" side of the scales, He actually wants to remove them from our pattern of life and direct us to the path that only He can prepare. In 1 John 1:9 (NIV), the Apostle John reminds us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." Our Lord does not want us to struggle in this first aspect of balance versus priority. In fact, the priority is not to balance but to confess and forsake.

The second way that Satan sidelines us into seeking balance is to show us too many "good" choices. He thinks he is not going to get us out of the "game of faith"; therefore, he uses the tactic of showing us so many "good" options that we render ourselves ineffective on the "faith field." The deceiver does not have to get us to choose to sin; instead he just has to wear us out until we beg to be "put on the bench." Many disgruntled pew warmers came from a situation of being discouraged from too many "good"

opportunities that they never really asked the Lord if they should do. Even when Christ does call us to the tasks, if we do not prioritize those God-given responsibilities in the way He wants us to order them, we can quickly become the complaining Martha who whines, "Lord, can't you make Mary help me?"

I think Proverbs 14:10 (NIV) becomes more understandable when we learn the truth of giving God the bitterness. "Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy." That scripture sounds like a paradox. But the truth is that until we realize and "know" or recognize our bitterness enough to give it to the One who can fix it, we will not experience "joy." And when He does finally get us to realize that we need to surrender it to Him, we alone can appreciate the joy of its absence.

The ultimate answer to the priority practice of the Savior is found in His answer to the Pharisees who were weary from the hundreds of laws they had made out of the ten God had given them. They asked, "Which is the greatest commandment?" While I know that the intent of their question was not the same as the one that I posed to the Lord, His answer to my version of this question was the same. My question finally had surfaced, "If I cannot do all that I have assumed You put on my plate...which is the greatest? I will put it on the "good" side of the balance. If the task is the "greatest," it must weigh more than the others. It will offset all those "chores" that I feel I am not accomplishing so well."

His answer to me was the same as to the Pharisees: "Love God; love people." Busy teacher, look at the overwhelming list of things you have to do. Choose to accomplish them in the priority of which ones will help you to love our God more, and then select those that will show His love to people. All others must come after those in the "Love God; Love people" priority or be eliminated altogether.

I immediately took my "today's list" and did just that. His plan worked so well that I gave Him my "tomorrow's list" too. I love it when my God loves me enough to confront me in my bitter surrender and take me to a place of truly honest surrender. He clearly showed me His priority, and I have decided my list that I discuss with Him should just become His list. I saw the things He had never asked me to pick up, and His love filled my heart not for the "jobs" that He had asked me to do, but for the people behind those jobs.

If we are honest with ourselves, He and those people are all that will really matter in Eternity. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you..." (Matthew 11:28-29a, NIV) If we get into His yoke, and follow His lead instead of staying outside the yoke and dragging the yoke and Christ along our perceived plan of attack, we will learn from Him, and we will find rest for our SOULS.

When our souls are at rest, it is amazing how differently we will look at the path ahead of us. And when we travel with His priorities leading us down our path together, He not only makes the journey much easier, but also His prioritization plan is definitely more pleasurable!



Overcoming resistance with passion

Janine Wilkins

Most homeschoolers encounter resistance at one time or another. The fact is...we all resist work. At this very moment, I am happily typing away at my laptop and watching TV when there is a sink full of dishes I should be doing. According to Dictionary.com, work is defined as: "1. exertion or effort directed to produce or accomplish something; labor; toil. 2. something on which exertion or labor is expended; a task or undertaking; 3. productive or operative activity." Labor, toil, exertion. Not fun. Producing or accomplishing something IS fun. Convincing my child to accomplish something is my mission. I do not complete my mission every day. One reason is that my son resists. Resistance can be overcome with a little bit of creativity (which is also work).

My child stands in the way of my accomplishing my mission. I want to "finish school" every day. He absolutely does not care if we finish school. He lives in the moment. He wants to play, and he most certainly does not want to toil or labor or exert any energy being "productive".

Over the years I have handled resistance in a variety of ways. I asked my grown daughters what they remember I did when they resisted "doing school". (One thing we giggle about is how the girls' friends at college laugh when they say they "do school" while the other kids "go to school," but I digress).

My oldest immediately answered, "You didn't let me eat until I finished the lesson. No math, no lunch." My youngest said "Yeah, she still does that." She then said, "You bribed me." Yes, I still do that, but I call it "creative motivation," as in "finish your math and we can go skating." For example, my son does several speeches for tournaments. I consider this "extra curricular," but he has no choice. As his teacher I've decided this is part of his education, and I believe it is using the gifts the Lord has given him. However, it is a lot of work, so I pay him. It helps him to justify the work. I know someday he'll see the value, but for now, it gives him a way to earn money doing something that requires skill. Bribery or productive employment, you decide.

Back to overcoming resistance. My other daughter said I overcame her resistance with two words "threats and guilt." I've screamed and cried. Once, I opened the front door, pointed at the elementary school across the street and told my kindergartener to go ahead over there. (She sat on the front porch in her pj's for an hour until grandma came over with goodies.) Another time I wrote a letter and left it on the fridge telling my twins that they could take the rest of the year off, and that in September they'd be going to school. I then took care of the baby and didn't mention school. By the next day they were back on track and worked hard, begging me to please let them still be homeschooled.

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"Busy teacher, look at the overwhelming list of things you have to do. Choose to accomplish them in the priority of which ones will help you to love our God more, and then select those that will show His love to people."

Overcoming resistance with passion *Cont.*

Now that the air is clear, I'll give you a better idea. The BEST way to overcome resistance is to make the work FUN. The way you do that is figure out what your kid's passion is. Pay attention to what they always want to do that isn't total laziness. Lying around watching TV or playing video games doesn't count.

I heard about "flow" and this is what I found at Wikipedia: "Flow is the mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity. In essence, flow is characterized by complete absorption in what one does. Proposed by Mihály Csíkszentmihályi, the positive psychology concept has been widely referenced across a variety of fields. According to Csíkszentmihályi, flow is completely focused motivation. It is a single-minded immersion and represents perhaps the ultimate experience in harnessing the emotions in the service of performing and learning... Buzz terms for this or similar mental states include: to be in the moment, present, in the zone, on a roll, wired in, in the groove, on fire, in tune, centered, or singularly focused." (Citations of Csíkszentmihályi's 1990 book about flow on Google Scholar)

I can't say how many "flow" hours we've logged. But I have discovered that we get way more done when I go with my son's flow as opposed to following my LIST (as in what I wish/dream we could do each day). To figure out what motivates my son and what his passion is, I have to observe when he is in the flow. Then once you know what your student's passion is, you tailor his or her schoolwork to include that thing in every way you can.

My son loves animals. I always knew that. But one day I caught him in the flow. I was particularly frustrated. No matter what I did I could not capture his attention. He wasn't disobedient, but he was completely uninterested. I was at the end of my rope. I was sick of forcing my son to work. I was tired of trying to be a cheer leader. I was tired of dragging a heavy rock through the sand. So I woke him up by whispering in his ear "we're going to the zoo today." He jumped out of bed, got dressed, did chores and ate breakfast at top speed. At the zoo he was a different kid. He willingly read. He actually READ the signs. He was focused. He was interested. He made fascinating conversation. He was calm and enjoyable to talk to. We had an amazing day. Gone was the hyperactive Tasmanian devil that I had been trying to tie down. Moral of the story: overcome resistance with passion.

ANU: Transforming students for leadership & service *Cont.*

ANU's Vision

The vision and purpose of Africa Nazarene University is to be:

A light to the people of Africa through higher education grounded in the Wesleyan holiness tradition.

A university of choice for the Christians desiring academic excellence.

A community that will produce individuals of character and integrity of heart and

A place where lives will be transformed for service and leadership to make a difference in Africa and the world.

When representatives from Nazarene Educators Worldwide visited ANU in the summer of 2011, they saw first-hand the high regard of the community and the country for ANU. In the "ANU Graduation Ceremony 2011 Magazine," this information was given about students in the School of Education:

"Jasper Foundation is one of the mentoring groups at ANU. Mentoring at ANU has been taken to a whole new level because of the drive to serve that comes from within those students who selflessly dedicate their time and effort to make a difference in other peoples' lives. It is carried out with compassion and a Christian perspective to mold students into well-rounded individuals with a character to match their competence and at the same time offer services to the community.

"The Education Department has taken up mentoring in their school-based program and extended it to external mentoring when students are not in session. The mentors have formed groups to offer financial support to their members to strengthen their bonds. External mentoring is available to high schools and to groups such as Education For All Children Scholarship program (EFAC) and Global Education Fund (GEF). ANU is currently training leaders from high school to university education. This model has been adopted by other universities.

"In Martin Luther King Jr.'s words: 'We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied to a single garment of destiny.' To help others we must remember: coming

together is a beginning . . . keeping together is progress . . . working together is success. As Helen Keller says, 'The selfless effort to bring cheer to others will be the beginning of a happier life for ourselves.'"

Congratulations to ANU and the progress it has made.

THE NEW

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