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October 2018 Vol. 10 No. 10

The Value of a Thoroughly Christian Education

By Dr. Ben Kilian, Dean of Agriculture



Thank you for praying!

I must begin with an expression of thanksgiving. I recognise many of you faithfully prayed for me and my family for several years as we laboured to join the faculty at ACU. It humbles me to know how much prayer was poured out on our behalf. I know I am wholly inadequate to the task, but by God's grace we will accomplish His will for us in Zambia. I am grateful to be part of the ACU team.



Why is ACU's educational approach so valuable?

Like many scientists who are Christians I have an assorted background in both secular and Christian academia. I attended a Christian university for my bachelor's degree but then I went to a secular institution for my PhD. The educational experience at ACU is different than what I experienced at either of those options. We are trying to do something different, develop a new model for Christian education. We are training students to approach every subject through a thoroughly integrated biblical framework. This approach has been attempted by many institutions, some more successfully than others. In my experience, practically this means little more than laying semi-

relevant Bible verses on top of the existing secular curriculum. The approach that ACU's leadership has envisioned and begun to implement is radically different. It involves rebuilding the curriculum from the ground up, changing the way the subjects are taught by integrating biblical principles into each layer of the curriculum. If you consider the classical education approach, there are *grammar* level principles that set the foundational facts for the subject matter. These facts must be mined by the student through diligent reading and placed in the appropriate context by the teacher. The teacher must not only know the facts, but how they fit into the larger picture of how God has ordered the universe. To me, an exciting thing about being in education is that I, as a teacher, am fallible and have much to learn myself, not only about the facts but how to rightly interpret them in light of God's Revelation. This means that I am humbly guiding my students, placing myself under God's authority, namely Scripture and discovering how the knowledge that I am accumulating fits into His story. All phases of a high quality and worthwhile education require this humility in recognising the Creature/Creator distinction and applying the principles found in Scripture to the chosen vocation.

What is the potential for Zambia?

The outcome of having educated students coming out of an education of this calibre at ACU could and should be revolutionary for Zambia. Businessmen and women who are thinking biblically will be visionaries and leaders, but will be making decisions with integrity based on principles of loving God and neighbour. Farmers will work heartily as to the Lord and not as to men labouring to enhance human flourishing through providing quality food products in a manner that follows the cultural mandate through stewarding our God-given resources. Doctors and nurses will see the value of serving and healing the sick and providing dignity for the dying all while seeking to preserve human life. Politicians will fight for the inherent God-given value of all human beings and not allow the influence of popular secular values to destroy a generation of humans through abortion in this country.

Pastors will be wise shepherds who deny self to protect and defend the flock from attacks without and within. Servant-leadership will characterise every individual in their chosen vocation as biblically minded men and women follow their Saviour in laying down their lives for the sake of the Kingdom.

At ACU, we are earnestly seeking to form a strong generation of biblical minded individuals. Will you join this effort?

Interview with Simbi Uwishaka



Why did you decide to attend the Bachelor Programme at ACU?

I decided to attend the Bachelor Programme at ACU mainly because of my experience in the Scholars Programme. I learnt so much about God, the world, and the Christian faith and I knew that the kind of education I'd be getting here would be like very few others, if at all. I also love and believe in the vision ACU has and wanted to be more a part of it.

What courses are you taking this term?

This term I am taking Theology, Worldview and Ethics, and African Literature as my core curriculum courses, and Chemistry as my major.

What has been the biggest challenge in this programme at ACU?

The biggest challenge in this programme at ACU, more so for the second year of the Bachelor Programme, I think, has been the lack of facilities and resources to maximise and expand the learning experience for courses such as Creative Arts as core curriculum course, and Chemistry for the Agriculture major.

What has been the biggest blessing in this programme at ACU?

The biggest blessing in this programme at ACU has been the wealth of knowledge and discipleship that students receive as well as the relationships formed and grown with faculty and staff through the mentoring sessions.

What are your thoughts regarding your interactions with the faculty and staff?

Over the years I have gotten to know the faculty and staff members quite well because of the intimate and brotherly atmosphere at ACU. All of them are strong believers of the Gospel and the reformed faith and through my interactions with them I have had the honour of learning from them in many ways and in many areas of life. There are very few days, if any at all, that I do not sense a deep care and concern from them towards me and my fellow students regarding our entire well-being.

How can we pray for you?

You can pray that I grow to be a disciplined and faithful steward of God wherever He puts me in, including my school and family; pray that I learn to constantly depend on God for strength and growth in all my endeavours; and pray that my love for and faith in Christ may grow immensely so that I may be courageous to live for Him and shine as a bright light in this fallen and darkened world.

MATTERS FOR PRAYER

- The interim Vice-Chancellor team as they integrate into their roles.
- More applicants and the application process for the 2019 intake.
- Planning for next year's academic calendar.
- Continual process of accreditation of our programmes, including the seminary scheduled to begin next year.

MATTERS FOR PRAISE

- Praise God for the successful completion of the 2018 academic calendar.
- Thank God for the 2018 Graduation held on 27 October 2018.
- Dr Ben Kilian and his family have settled down well so far.
- The faithful service of Dr Ken Turnbull and Mrs Lisa Turnbull during their time at ACU.