

Feed the Future

Inspired by Mark 4:26-34

Franklin said to the crowd of college students: “This is how it is with the real world after you graduate; it is as if a team were to hand out flyers for a new business everywhere they go for one week, and would sleep and rise night and day and through it all the excitement would spread and grow, they know not how. Of its own accord, the products catch on and everyone wants what they are selling.

So, we are here today to discern how to spread the Word of God wherever life brings you. Every one in this room has a vocation. Every one is about to launch into a new career. Your main job may not be selling Christianity, but as Christians that is part of every job we do. How can you, in your new positions and new communities, scatter seed across the land that will sprout and grow more disciples as you sleep and rise night and day? We know not how the Holy Spirit yields the fruit. The crowd cheered with shouts of “Come Holy Spirit” and “Thank You Jesus!” from every corner of the auditorium.

Franklin looked out at the eager, ambitious faces. It seems as if everyone on campus, and then some, had turned out for today’s rally. The annual event is called, “Feed the Future.” They provide free food, music, and inspiring messages to hold onto and promulgate the Faith when out on their own embarking on adulthood. It’s certainly much easier in a controlled setting of like-minded people who have grown to be supportive friends, than when you enter the workforce where you may be surrounded by people who are more interested in profits P-R-O-F-I-T-S, than P-R-O-P-H-E-T-S.

So, the idea behind these “Feed the Future” rallies is to present practical examples with the same underlying message. Then, when they head out on their own into the professional world, the seeds planted this day will sprout and grow throughout the rest of their lives as they sleep and rise night and day. These young people will yield much fruit in their jobs, families, and communities. First, the message reaches them on the surface through the food and music, then something tickles their ears to begin a deeper experience, then their minds are triggered to bring wisdom affecting their lives and their relationships, then the full meaning soaks into their hearts giving courage to make an

impact on the world. Franklin's team members were scattered throughout the crowd watching the process and looking for the ones who appear ready for the harvest.

He said, "To what shall we compare the Kingdom of God, or what story can I use for it? It is like whispering to that special someone for the first time that you love them. You don't start the relationship that way. It starts with a tiny spark when you meet them. It can be the smallest thing — the way their eyes sparkle in the sunlight, the way their head tilts and the corner of their mouth smiles when they hear your voice, or the slightest skip of a heartbeat when you get a text from them. But, once the friendship is nurtured, more feelings spring up and can grow into the most meaningful relationship of your lives, putting forth such joy that other people flock to be around you and hope to be invited to all your parties.

With many varied stories, he spoke of evangelization to them as they were able to understand it. He didn't speak to them with step-by-step commands to build up the Kingdom of God, but to his own team he explained everything in private. So, as Franklin addressed and energized the crowd, his team met with individuals who seemed ready and hungry for more.

Bradley was at the rally that day. He wasn't very energetic about it all. Rather, he seemed a little reserved and stayed to the side mostly observing the others. Janet spotted him and something about his demeanor drew her to him. She started with small talk, introducing herself as a team member. She asked if he was enjoying the rally and the message.

He said he was enjoying the day. One thing had especially caught his attention — the story of the whispered love. He shared with Janet that a friend brought him to the rally. That guy had made his way to the front of the crowd and was leading the chants and the cheers. His buddy never whispered, he laughed. Before arriving, Bradley was certain he would be out of place here and overlooked, he hoped. This type of thing just isn't for him. But, the story of the whisper had caught his ear, then the full message entered his heart.

"I think I can tell people about Christ, one-on-one," he told Janet. "I never before realized that was a way to serve God and advance the Kingdom." After the rally, Janet brought Bradley and his buddy to meet Franklin and the rest of the team. They were ripe for the harvest, and both became valuable additions to the ministry!

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