



The Influence of BSU

Testimony of a Retired State Director

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I am a product of the Baptist Student Union at Morehead State. I was saved two years before entering the college but had never received follow-up or discipling prior to arriving on campus. The BSU was just one year-old and looking back, I'd say the small group was looking for any warm body that made himself/herself available to do anything. I was put to work!

My background is varied. I was raised in an orphanage in Louisville; I performed very well academically in high school and decided to major in chemistry and math. Growth as a Christian was not on my agenda simply because I didn't know what those words meant. I stuttered and experienced the embarrassment that accompanies that problem.

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In BSU I found friends who accepted me unconditionally. I was encouraged to be in Bible studies and to pray ALOUD. My gift of piano playing allowed me the benefit of being used in various situations without necessarily having to pray aloud and show my ignorance of the Bible. Even when I was called on to pray, read Scriptures, or have a devotional, I never sensed distance or being made fun of because of my speech impediment.

As I gained confidence through personal growth and discipleship, I became aware that God could do anything. I entrusted myself in His hands to enable me to overcome the stuttering which was a stumbling block. I cannot tell you when the fear of speaking or reading was overcome; it was gradual and the miracle took place.

I was pianist at First Baptist Church in Morehead throughout my college days. I was active in both Sunday School and Baptist Training Union, the discipling organization of the church. I loved B.T.U. because it introduced me to life applications for the Christian and taught me Baptist distinctives.

BSU is good at letting untested, raw talent take responsibilities. As a freshman I was put in charge of publicity (I have no artistic background). I served as the Social Chairman the next year and then as President the following year. Because of my spiritual growth I began to entertain the possibility that God wanted me to give Him one of my summers – rather than work in a chemical laboratory as I had for two consecutive summers. So, I applied for summer missions and the Kentucky BSU's sponsored me the summer of 1959 in Hawaii. While in Hawaii I felt God wanting me to serve Him in a Christian vocation and I surrendered to that. I returned to Morehead State to complete my degree in chemistry and math but with no intentions of using that degree.

As so often happens, I found the need to use my undergraduate degree in a chemical industry. While on my way to work at the company in May 1964, I was involved in a serious auto accident. My car was made into a convertible, I suffered a severe brain injury, and my glasses broke into my eyes. It was said that I would not live and that I would either have a complete loss of sight or permanent eye damage. If I lived it was said I would be a vegetable the rest of my life.

Such crossroads in life test one's faith. There were questions I asked of God and I was always aware of His Presence. He continued to perform miracles which began simply because I lived despite the accident. I am told I carry no indications of having had such an injury and my eyesight is still correctable for nearsightedness. God has used me over the years to encourage others who have faced the uncharted paths of serious head injuries and expectations that accompany them.

I was asked to serve as a volunteer director of the BSU at Marshall University in 1966. I was working as a shift chemist and did the campus ministry each week. When the Home Mission Board appointed someone as the first full-time director I returned to working in the laboratory. In a few years that director left and I was asked to serve as the volunteer once again. During that period I was encouraged to apply for the appointment with the Board and I felt God's leadership to do so.

I was appointed by the Board effective February 1, 1973 and was related to that agency until I retired effective July 1, 1999. I was the local campus director at Marshall and went on to serve as the state director of campus ministries in West Virginia. When we lost the local director at Marshall, I asked to return to the campus because I believe that is where lives are initially touched. That was granted and I served in that capacity until my retirement.

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Baptist Student Union taught me what being saved is about; what the Christian life can be; why gifts are given and why no one has all of them; the importance of the local church; that God is faithful and can be depended upon in all circumstances; that Christian growth is not static; and that far too many college students are missing out on the greatest adventure simply because they either don't know or won't entertain the possibility.

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