

What Do Students Worry about?

Campus ministry is a wonderful place for college students to talk about problems that worry them. The need to help them deal with these worries remains great.

One wonderful student who came into All Saints to talk is a Slippery Rock University student. He was so impressed by the sharing done by Pastor Jacob Deal and church members during the free student Labor Day meal that he came to the worship service the following Sunday and later in the week came in to talk some more. What did he talk about?

Although the student seemed to be well adjusted, and he is, he wanted to describe the pain he had experienced in elementary school. He had been so bullied that he almost lost hope that his parents and teachers would recognize his pain. Later they did recognize it. They realized that he had special needs.

The student said he has not forgotten how much he hurt, but he went on to say that he had been able to use his past pain to help others. He has worked at many youth camps where young people confided in him about their difficulties and he has helped them find answers.

School is still not easy for him, especially taking exams. He comes to worship, to student meals, and asks for our prayers that he can do his best on his exams. He is very appreciative of our prayers for him. He wants to do his best in his studies. He wants to comfort those who have experienced a difficult early childhood.

Another student seemed to have her life together. She accepted my invitation to have lunch. She didn't have a sign on her forehead saying "help needed." Instead, she described being adopted from Asia by a loving American Christian family. We happily enjoyed the lunch at the Thai restaurant in town, but most of all the softserve ice cream cone from another restaurant. She has a sweet tooth.

Before saying goodbye, she said she would come in for a Bible study the following week, which she did. We read the Book of Ruth. She enjoyed this book because she really wants to know what it will be like to be in love. She considered having another Bible class, but later she called to tell me she couldn't come because she'd signed up for too many other commitments so that she could not come. I told her that the door is always open.

But then she came back to talk again. She came to ask for advice on what is necessary to be a good Christian daughter. Her parents have placed many restrictions on her, even though she lives in a college dorm on campus. Her parents do not approve of her wearing hot pink lipstick, going to the mall to shop, or spending time on sports.

Should she disobey them? It bothers her when she disobeys them.

She related her deep conviction that her siblings are very much smarter and attractive than she is. She wonders what her worth is. We talked about her concerns by reading what the Bible says about them, as well as what the Bible says about worry.

As she left, she said she would return because she feels she needs mentoring. We will again search for answers from the Bible, and we are a go it doesn't yes okay will go out again for another delicious lunch. Like most college students she is usually hungry!

All Saints Campus Ministry realizes that times change, but the need for faith and friendship do not. Students need Christ-centered answers to their problems and worries. The need for campus ministry is as great as ever.

