

## ACU's Student Labour Programme by Dr. Ken Turnbull, ACU Vice-Chancellor



The Student Labour Programme (SLP) is a significant part of the whole-life education approach of ACU. Setting Christian worldview development as a goal of higher education requires the work of God's Spirit in the life of each student. This invokes the role of prayer and God's Word (Ephesians 6:18, 1 Timothy 4:4-5) as critical components of ACU's educational endeavours. The SLP is the hands-on, practical experience of the Christian worldview where intensive discipleship occurs supplementing the classroom and other extra-curricular expressions of the Christian worldview at ACU. The following is a brief overview of the philosophy undergirding the SLP.

ACU intends that students *experience* the Christian worldview throughout their education. This includes the intellectual and discernment aspects of the Christian worldview, the emotional and spiritual expressions, as well as the practical "living out" of the Christian worldview. Many practical aspects of the Christian worldview may run contrary to the cultural experience of the students. The principles of subduing the earth as God's image bearer (Genesis 1:26-28) and of cultivating (nourishing, promoting or advancing) and keeping (maintaining, sustaining and controlling) the earth's resources over which God has made us His stewards (Genesis 2:15 and 1:26-28) are critical aspects of living out a Christian worldview for God's glory. The motivation for the hard work required in fulfilling God's mandates as His stewards over His creation require that each student learns to "work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men" in whatever he or she does (Colossians 3:23). We're commanded that "whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). These principles are largely developed as the discipling efforts through the SLP at ACU.

Africa has not developed according to this Christian worldview. There is need to develop this worldview as the motivation for hard work and an other-oriented, service mentality exemplifying that by serving God through our labours (where our labour in itself is the way we glorify God and please Him through our obedience) we are showing love to one another for their good and not solely for our own benefit. Work must be done conscientiously, with the highest levels of excellence possible (as unto the Lord), expressing integrity and honesty to garner an environment of trust and honour so that God is glorified in all that is done. This creates an environment for the highest productivity where trust in one another opens the way for the superior levels of productivity through quality and efficiency in reliance upon each other's expertise and assured responsibility.

Along with this, the Christian worldview uniquely teaches us our purpose as God's stewards. We are stewards of the gifts He has given us in our talents and through most wisely utilising His natural resources. The Christian worldview teaches us that we were created to find our dignity in our labour as we bear God's image through our work. The Christian worldview teaches us that, in the image of God, we are creative; we are designed to innovate and develop His creation to most glorify Him as we bring His creativity to fruition in our works. This develops a Christian who will create culture imitating God's beauty; create technology, products and goods that will benefit humanity to glorify God; create businesses that will provide work for others and improve living standards. This is the proven outcome of the Christian worldview in cultures. This will develop a true, God-glorifying,



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Christ-like character in the ACU graduate. This is the discipleship purpose of the SLP. And, this is the reason why ACU is seeking individuals who have fully experienced working from these Christian worldview principles to come and help us by serving God's kingdom in these roles as Student Labour Disciplers.

The SLP is further intended to exemplify many other aspects of the Christian worldview. ACU desires that every student experience a missional lifestyle that purposes the growth of the kingdom of God through His church. Students are being equipped as ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20) in every academic discipline for their vocational service to God. It is desired that to the extent possible, some of the SLP disciplers will demonstrate the tent-making, missionary approach of the apostle Paul for the students to experience. For this purpose, the SLP is meant to incorporate a variety of functioning businesses under the ACU umbrella. ACU development requires construction, production of furnishings, maintenance, administration, farming, health care and a variety of such offered services. All of these are intended to be opportunities to develop businesses and professional services that meet the growing and functional needs of the campus and the surrounding communities. Every business development is an environment in which students can labour and be disciplined in the application of God's Word in practical life. All of these developments are further opportunities for outreach to the community-at-large, and further, to bring Christ to the world in displaying the gospel in the lifestyle and demonstration of love through products and services provided. The stake holding churches supporting the development of ACU are filled with sympathetic government officials and workers, professionals, business people, service providers, educators, consultants and entrepreneurs of all types who will be a significant part of, and assist greatly in, the development of businesses, service providers, organisations and ministries for the tent-making developments of ACU. This significant body of Christians growing from over 40 Reformed Baptist Churches in



Zambia, and the larger global body who are fully on-board with the vision of ACU, offers a significant and sympathetic base supportive of all business, commercial and ministry developments growing from ACU. Students experiencing this type of "business as missions" environment during their higher education will be best equipped to view their vocation, in whatever field the Lord is equipping them to serve Him, as a means to bring the gospel to a lost and darkened world. This promotes a missional lifestyle with an entrepreneurial mindset where all that is done is done to the glory of God and the growth of His kingdom through the church.

For further description of the actual practice of discipleship through the SLP, please see the document on *ACU Mentors and Disciplers*.