

Cru at University of Florida Kicks Off School Year With 94 Salvations

Despite the swirling controversy of Campus Crusade for Christ's recent announcement of a name change, the ministry at the University of Florida is as strong as ever.

In the first UF Cru meeting of the school year last week, 94 people made decisions to follow Christ.

"It was just an amazing night really," says Allen Williams, campus director. "I definitely felt the Holy Spirit there moving in people's hearts and knew something special could take place there. It's exciting to be a part of it and get to witness that firsthand."

The Campus Crusade ministry at UF—which has been known as "Cru" for most of the last decade—invited preacher Clayton King to speak at its first meeting.

"He's a really powerful speaker who is willing to boldly proclaim the gospel to people," Williams explains.

Williams said he didn't even know if King would be able to make it until that morning, due to a family emergency. But God made it happen, and King delivered a powerful message to the attendees.

Many of the people who attend the first weekly meeting of the year are those who have been invited by friends and are just checking out Christianity. "It's a great opportunity for them to be invited to give their life to Christ, and Clayton does a really good job with that," Williams says.

At the end of his message, King offered an invitation to accept Christ. He asked the new believers to raise their hands

and counted up to 94.

"It's crazy to hear him count past 30, past 50, past 70 and then all the way up to 94," Williams exclaims. "Even by his own admission he couldn't see all that well in the back and probably missed a few hands."

Williams said the students will be followed up with through the people who invited and invitations to connect into one of Cru's 45 community groups.

"Our main goal is to get people plugged into one of our community groups and be able to sharpen them through that beginning," explains Williams.

Although many people have expressed concern at the name change to Cru—which will officially happen for the U.S. branch of Campus Crusade for Christ in 2012—Williams says he doesn't see it affecting the ministry at UF.

"I think most people on campus know us as Cru already," he says. "I don't think there's a big shift there for the people who already know us. For the people who are getting to know us, it's a good opportunity to explain what Cru means by our name and actions."

Williams is encouraged by the impressive start the ministry had to the school year, and looks forward to what is to come.

"It's really exciting to be a part of what God is doing here right now," Williams exclaims. Although he says people often ask him what Cru is doing differently, he thinks ultimately the ministry is successful "because God's chosen to redeem people and bring them back to life here at UF. Since He's doing the work not us, I would just invite people to pray and ask Him to continue to draw people to Himself and change lives."