

‘The Chicago Agreement’ to Make Ministry More Effective

Most believers who have explored a large college campus in the United States have probably noticed the number of campus ministries there as well. From InterVarsity Christian Fellowship to Campus Crusade for Christ, there are several ministries reaching out to the expanding minds of college students.

“We’re all organizations that are focused on evangelism,” says InterVarsity’s Jim Lundgren of 17 college ministries in particular. “We’re all committed to discipleship and to advancing the world mission of the church. But we all have our distinctives in various ways which we feel God is using on campuses.”

As with any conglomerate of ministries, though, a similar purpose with just a few different ways of doing things could easily cause problems—even in the body of Christ. With this in mind, several campus ministries met decades ago to ensure that squabbles did not break out over disagreements.

Six years ago, a group of campus ministry directors began meeting to pray for each other’s ministries, igniting trust and friendship. Last year, leaders from Navigators, Campus Crusade and InterVarsity met to update the agreement that campus leaders had made in the past. The current leaders identified 14 other organizations that work on college campuses and who might want to participate.

As a result, 16 ministries met in Chicago recently to establish “The Chicago Agreement.” The agreement discusses how the groups will support each other and even unite their efforts when possible.

“We don’t want to compete with each other; we want to add to

what each other does and, together, serve the Kingdom,” explains Lundgren. At the end of the day, the ministries all desire to see the Kingdom grow and flourish.

Although 16 ministries attended the meeting, 17 signed the agreement. The ministry leaders prayed over the ministries and determined that the agreement would be passed effectively down the line to every member of their ministry. InterVarsity has already received wonderful feedback from staff who said this agreement was welcome and needed.

As the old song goes, “They will know we are Christians by our love.” The New Testament writers talk over and over about unity in the Church. When there is division in the Christian realm, the outside world easily dismisses it as hypocritical. Pray that this agreement would hold these ministries together in unity so that non-Christians might be even more attracted to Christ. Pray that outreach would thus be more effective by peace and friendship between these ministries.