

University of Valley Forge Surges Ahead in Christian Education

Congratulations to Dr. Don Meyer and everyone at the University of Valley Forge for recently reaching university status. For years it was called Valley Forge Christian College, and we featured the school in *Charisma* magazine in 1978. The college had received some surplus government land that no other entity wanted, and it began to develop and expand at that time.

The school was challenged in court. The case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of the college. The article I wrote in *Charisma* actually won a first-place prize from the Evangelical Press Association on the historic battle.

Years later, I reconnected with Valley Forge and visited the campus. I was very impressed with the progress it had made, and now the school has more than 1,100 students, 67 undergraduate programs and is a new university, as *Charisma News* reported in September.

Dr. Meyer is a prolific writer who blogs and then publishes the blogs in a book. When he asked me to speak to his students, he included a blog about my speech, which I am sharing here. I was impressed with how well he articulated what I told the students. I hope you enjoy it.

Also, I would recommend the University of Valley Forge to any students who are seeking an excellent education from a Christian worldview. You can also check out its website, which can be found in *Charisma's Best Colleges and Universities*. We recently published our third print issue, which is included in our package containing the November issue of *Charisma*. Plus,

there is an online component that can be viewed here.

Here is what Dr. Meyer wrote, reprinted with his kind permission. The verbatim excerpt of my speech comes from Dr. Meyer's book, *Think About It*.

Practical Advice From a Wise CEO

"Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions." –*Albert Einstein*

I don't know of any student at Valley Forge Christian College who wants to be mediocre, or even just a little above average. Within each heart is a quest to excel ... to make a difference ... to change the world.

Why else would someone submit themselves to a rigorous academic program and be willing to spend a considerable amount of money and remain focused for at least four years to achieve a degree? Something inside stirs the heart of every student to reach for the stars.

We would love to bring before our students role models who can help them on this quest and answer from personal experience the question, "What do I need to do to be successful?" These models motivate and inspire us to realize our fullest potential. And Dr. Steve Strang is one such person.

Dr. Strang is the founder of Charisma Media in Florida. Best known for *Charisma* magazine, the company publishes other magazines, has many digital products and publishes more than 200 books a year in English and Spanish. Eleven of those books have become *New York Times* bestsellers, the most recent being *The Harbinger*.

Dr. Strang recently addressed our students and shared five of his leadership secrets:

1. Start reading. While he was still in his 20s, he picked up books by Zig Ziglar and Robert Schuller. From them he learned

that life sometimes comes at us with enormous negatives. Sometimes things are so bad you should feel bad. But don't wallow in that. Give yourself a deadline. Have yourself a pity party and then let it go. Take personal responsibility for your future.

2. Find mentors. Jamie Buckingham was his mentor. When Strang was young, this almost-larger-than-life author and international leader got behind him. Because it took his publishing effort 10 years to break even, he needed that kind of support. Buckingham said to him:

- "The truth will set you free, but first it will make you miserable."
- "Attempt something so big that unless God comes through it will be a disaster."
- "What would you do if you knew you would not fail?"

3. Find your passion and pursue it. "The University of Florida journalism school prepared me for my first job as a reporter," Strang said. "But no one there talked about starting a business. I was very unprepared to start something ... to create something." But Strang went on to talk about his passion and how, out of that passion, Charisma Media was born.

4. Be of service. Strang confessed that it was Earl Nightingale who revealed in the 1950s *The Strangest Secret*, in which he wrote, "You've got to be of service before you can expect money." Most people will struggle to pay their bills, but even with a small business you have income and you have expenses, and if you have any money left over, that is your profit. It is that simple. And if you provide a service that produces that profit today and you do it again tomorrow, you will thrive.

5. Leave something. "Life cannot only be about accumulating

things,” he said. “Everyone must be willing to leave something.” He spoke of the influence of the founder of Chick-fil-A, Truett Cathy; the founder of Hobby Lobby, David Green; and even Phil Robertson of *Duck Dynasty*. They all started with nothing, but they decided to leave something. That desire to leave something can create a timeless legacy in each of our lives. We must leave the world a better place than when we found it.

Several years ago, *Time* magazine recognized Strang as one of the America’s 25 most influential evangelical leaders. His mission—and that of Charisma Media—is to inspire people to radically change their world. Over the years, he has been doing just that.

If we follow his advice, it could certainly happen to any one of us.

Think about it.

Steve Strang is the founding editor and publisher of Charisma. Follow him on Twitter @sstrang or Facebook (stephenestrang).