



IWU Leadership Team Meeting
July 9, 2013

REFLECTIONS ON A VISION FOR IWU'S FUTURE

A CALL TO BUILD A TRULY GREAT CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

A current CCCU President told me: "Whatever you do, please take care of IWU. We are all watching you."

An Indianapolis businessman told us: "IWU was the only partner we thought of pursuing, because of your mission and your entrepreneurial approach."

Ron Blue has said: "IWU is missional, professional, and entrepreneurial."

Friends, we cannot live in the past. One of the greatest threats to the survival of a great organization is its past success.

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We cannot live in the future. The future is not here yet. We must neither fear what the future may bring, nor fail to plan for the future we desire.

We must live in the present. What will we do with our present? What will we do with this moment in the life of Indiana Wesleyan University?

I am asking you today to join me in the pursuit, under God's providence, to create a truly great Christian university.

The pursuit of greatness requires time – greatness is not achieved quickly

The pursuit of greatness requires extraordinary commitment – greatness is not achieved easily

The pursuit of greatness requires single-minded devotion – greatness is not achieved in passing

The pursuit of greatness requires a team – greatness is not achieved alone

A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY'S TOUCHSTONE OF GREATNESS

A "touchstone" was a smooth stone used to test the purity of gold and silver by the color of the streak made on the stone by the metal – The touchstone allowed the assayer to immediately see the true value of the metal.

A touchstone of greatness would be that thing against which we test all of our pursuits in order to see their true value.

Jesus' measure of greatness:

"Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant . . . just as the Son of Man did not



come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:26,28)

If you want to be great, you must serve greatly.

The touchstone of IWU's greatness will be the greatness of our service.

THE SERVICE THAT A GREAT CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY PROVIDES

A great Christian university would be a community known for the honest, rigorous, and winsome pursuit of truth grounded in the central story of God's Word.

"From the very start, at the center of Christian faith was some version of the claim that God loved the sinful world and that Christ died for the ungodly, and that Christ's followers must love their enemies no less than they love themselves. Love doesn't mean agreement and approval; it means benevolence and beneficence . . . A combination of more clarity that does not shy away from calling evil by its proper name and of deep compassion toward evildoers that is willing to sacrifice one's own life on their behalf was one of the extraordinary features of early Christianity." (Volf)

A great Christian university would be a place where students (accomplished scholars and beginning undergrads alike) infuse the study of the arts, the sciences, business, health care, the humanities, economics, political science, education, with the moral vision and the selfless redeeming love of Jesus Christ.

A great Christian university would be a community fully dedicated to the gracious preparation of students for a lifetime of meaningful service in pursuit of God's calling on their lives.

A great Christian university would dedicate itself to the task of raising up a generation of Christians who are what Gabe Lyons calls "restorers."

Restorers are,

Provoked, not offended.
 Creators, not critics.
 Called, not employed.
 Grounded, not distracted.
 In community, not alone.
 Civil, not divisive.
 Countercultural, not 'relevant.'"

"Their mission is to infuse the world with beauty, grace, justice, and love. I call them restorers because they envision the world as it was meant to be and they work toward that vision. Restorers seek to mend earth's brokenness.

A great Christian university would be a place committed to cultivating the common good of communities by witnessing to and working for what is true, good, and noble in humanity and in human societies.



IWU is called to make the world a better place by preparing students, faculty, and staff to live out the truths and the example of Jesus Christ in this world. Everything we do at IWU is built on the foundation of God's truth as revealed in creation, in Scripture, and in Jesus Christ. Our aspiration is not for Christianity to recapture a place of dominating power in this world. Instead, at IWU we seek to prepare women and men to live in this world as the sign and portent of a different world – a world in which God's reign is welcomed, in which righteousness and fairness prevail, in which grace and mercy bless human relationships with peace, in which truth, ingenuity, and beauty are the greatest expressions of human creativity. As we do this, God will use us to make the world a better place.

SIX ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENTS I ASK OF THE IWU COMMUNITY

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST – IWU is a Christ-centered academic community. If this means anything more than words on our website, it means that Jesus is in the middle of all that we do. My greatest aspiration for IWU is that it will continue to be a community marked by the genuine presence of Jesus Christ on our Marion campus, at our regional centers, and in our online classrooms. The spiritual life of our university will be one of my highest priorities.

THE PRIORITY OF STUDENT SUCCESS – IWU was transformed and grew to be what it is today because it took the almost unprecedented step of putting the needs and interests of students at the heart of the institution. Today one of the greatest challenges that we must accept and master is the challenge to make an IWU education accessible and affordable. We will find creative, innovative, and appropriate ways to meet this challenge. We will continue to make our education affordable, prepare our students with excellence, help them find places of service, and support them as they pursue their callings.

THE PRACTICE OF EXCELLENCE – In order to serve students with distinction IWU must maintain an uncompromising commitment to excellence. This will mean excellence in the selection and care of our people, in our scholarship and teaching, in the services we offer, in our physical and digital infrastructures, and in the use of our financial resources.

THE PRINCIPLE OF ENGAGEMENT – IWU is called to the mission of making the world a better place by preparing students in character, scholarship, and leadership. We believe that the world will only become a truly better place when Jesus Christ is known and loved in this world, and when Biblical principles of truth, goodness, and right are brought to bear on the great challenges of this world. Therefore at its heart, IWU must be a community committed to the principle of engagement with the world around us. We will not withdraw into our own Christian communities. Instead we will prepare our students to go into the world as winsome ambassadors for Christ in their various disciplines and professions.

THE PRIORITY OF RELATIONSHIPS – IWU has reached the point in its development where we cannot become a truly great Christian university without building a much larger network of friends and supporters. One of my highest priorities would be to build stronger networks of friends who believe in and will support our mission through prayer, influence, and financial resources.

THE POWER OF A GLOBAL FOCUS – IWU has always had an open heart and a spirit willing to serve those most needy, and to go where the needs are greatest. Today we live in a highly interconnected world. Further, there is a great need for high quality Christian higher education all around the world.



One of my passions is to lead IWU to become a truly global learning community in which world leaders, regardless of their ethnicity or nationality, will be prepared to make the world a better place in the name and spirit of Christ.

FIVE DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

- Transform student accessibility and affordability
- Refocus on providing exceptional care for students
- Reestablish a pattern of enrollment growth
- Complete the Health Sciences Initiative
- Become a diverse and global learning community

With these reflections, let me return to where I began.

We cannot live in the past. One of the greatest threats to our future is the greatness of our past.

We cannot live in the future. We must neither fear what the future may bring, nor fail to plan for the future we desire.

We must live in the present. What will we do with this moment that belongs to us?

I ask us today to commit ourselves to the task, under God's leadership and provision, to make Indiana Wesleyan University a truly great Christian university.

Henry Ward Beecher, a great preacher in America's past, said something that I believe puts this Christ-like greatness into perspective.

"Greatness lies, not in being strong, but in the right using of strength; and strength is not used rightly when it serves only to carry a man above his fellows for his own solitary glory. He is the greatest whose strength carries up the most hearts by the attraction of his own." (Henry Ward Beecher)

My dream for Indiana Wesleyan University is that our touchstone of greatness will not be merely our great size, our great buildings, our financial strength, or even our reputation.

Our touchstone of greatness is the one that Jesus gave us.

Whoever want to be great, must serve.

May God help us to make Indiana Wesleyan University a Christ centered academic community whose faculty, staff, administrators, and students help to make this world a better place.