



Autumn: Grace On Campus

November 2020

“My brother committed suicide. So I came to see you.”

In August Dr. Reemer* began his engineering class as he always does, letting students know facts about him and his family -- including that he is a Christ-follower. He also told the class of losing a student named Celeste to suicide six years earlier when he had taught at another university. “I know life can be painful... and sometimes you need someone to listen.. and my office door is open to talk about anything you want if it would help,” he told them.

Last week a student named Joel came to Dr. Reemer’s office, asking for an extension on an upcoming exam. Joel explained that his brother had ended his life. It was quiet for a moment.

Dr. Reemer responded by saying that not only would he delay Joel’s exam– he would contact all of Joel’s other professors and ask them to delay any exams. “I will take care of this; you don’t need to stay on campus – your family needs you back home now,” he told Joel.

Dr. Reemer asked if he could pray for Joel. “Well, that’s why I came to you first today,” Joel replied. “I know you are a Christian, because you said so on the first day of class. I am a Christian and I really need your prayers.”

Showing grace is remembered. This week Dr. Reemer discovered a letter in his departmental mailbox. It was from the parents of Celeste, the student who had died six years earlier. They were thanking him for a gracious letter he has sent to them so many years ago, talking about their daughter and expressing his sorrow.

Her parents letter this week said, “Thank you for that letter and your gracious, caring words about Celeste... we kept it and still read it over every year.”

** names changed to protect identities*

Showing Grace

“I could tell you are a Christian by how you have treated us,” students have told professors. This fall Christian professors are repeatedly finding ways to show grace to students.. asking how they are doing, talking about learning styles, most of all by letting them know that as a Christian, they care.

We have three weekly Bible studies for professors by Zoom. This semester we are studying the book of Acts, and looking at ways to be more intentional as Christians on campus – what does it look like to be a witness in the workplace of the university?

Giving Gifts

Dr. John Lennox retired recently as a professor of mathematics at Oxford University. When the pandemic began, he wrote this booklet as a response: *Where is God in a CoronaVirus World?* This summer I worked with the publisher of the booklet so that Faculty Commons could offer an e-book version free to professors.

Each day I receive confirmation of professors across the country downloading the e-book to read and share with others. It is our prayer that it ministers to them so that they in turn can minister to others.

Thanks for allowing us to represent you on America’s campuses.

