



Reaching Campuses, Building a Church

May 17, 2011

Dear College Park Family,

Before the end of this month, an exciting new chapter will begin for our family and ministry. Let me give you the full story: A little over a year ago I attended a conference on science and faith at Westminster Theological Seminary (just outside of Philadelphia). The president of the seminary began the conference by announcing that a generous grant had been made to provide full scholarships for a divinity degree for select individuals who: 1) had a background in mathematics or the sciences; 2) had a strong interest in apologetics; and 3) wanted to share the fruits of their study with those in both the church and the public square. (If only I knew someone who fit this description!) Soon after, I put in an application.

Upon receiving the award, I was able to defer it for a year to finish my Ph.D. at Rutgers and see what direction God would lead our family.

About a year before this (the summer of 2009), I had met the pastor of a small, young church plant in Philadelphia—a church plant affiliated with our ministry and directly overseen by the church we were connected with in New York. “There are so many students here in Philadelphia. Would you ever consider coming to help us reach them?” he asked me one day at a Starbucks. The timing was not right then, but last summer, when we were needing to sell our house near Rutgers, crazy thoughts (according to Jennifer) began to circle around in my head.

“What if we moved to South Jersey and started helping this young church reach students? We

could give the region a ‘test-drive’ and perhaps I would go on to study apologetics at Westminster. What if the pastor of the church even moved on and **we** led this young church?!”

It’s funny how things work out sometimes. ***After defending my Ph.D. thesis on April 12, and graduating this past Sunday, I will now be assuming the leadership of a young church plant, Freedom Church Philadelphia, on May 29. In September, I will begin studying apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary.***

It’s the same vision, but a new chapter. Our hearts continue to burn for college students, graduate students and faculty. And now we have the opportunity to lead a young church that will reach out to this demographic. Your prayer and financial support are as essential as ever as we work to establish this young church that is not yet financially self-sustaining. In the days to come, we believe that God will take the seeds you’ve sown into us and will launch scores of young campus missionaries onto the universities in our region.

Your support has been a constant encouragement to us through many seasons of life and ministry. May God multiply His blessings back to you one hundred-fold!

May God be glorified,

Gabe and Jennifer