

# The Challenges of University Student Ministry Today

There is no doubt that university students are one of the most strategic groups. Christian student movements have made a huge difference for the Kingdom in Europe and globally, but it has become extremely difficult in most countries of Europe to communicate the gospel on university campuses. What are the greatest challenges and how should we respond to them? What are timeless principles that come directly from our Lord and his disciples and should not be changed, and what strategies and methods should change? How do we do evangelism if “big meetings” have stopped working? What do we do with the fruit of evangelism, and how do we “make disciples”? What does it take to develop a leader who can bring a Kingdom difference to society?

Come and explore these questions with the Integrity Life team, bring your own questions and ideas, and be encouraged with stories of grace and hope.

**Katka Blabolova** serves as a Regional Director of Integrity Life ministry in Prague. She studied fine art and English language and literature in Brno, Czech Republic. Her ministry and passion is to build young people in their walk with God and to train them to serve others in the same way. She believes that God can use anyone who is willing to give his or her life fully to Him to change the world we live in. That is why she likes to spend her time on university campuses and in student cafes sharing the gospel one-on-one with non-Christian students and discipling those who decide to follow Jesus.

**Rostislav Navratil** studied mechanical engineering at the Technical University in Ostrava and aerospace engineering at the University of Defense in Brno, Czech Republic. Together with his wife, Drahomira, they have been serving as full-time staff with Integrity Life since 1996. Between 1998 and 2002, they led the newly founded student ministry in the university town of Hradec Kralove. Now they live with their two teenage children, Lukas and Tereza, in Brno. Rostislav is the director of student ministry in Integrity Life, and his vision is the same as Integrity Life’s vision - to make a difference in Central European nations through fully committed disciples of Jesus Christ in every segment of society.

**Josef Pavlíňák** has been serving university students in the highly atheistic country of the Czech Republic for over 30 years with a ministry called Integrity Life, and he serves there as the director. His heart is to reach out to the students in Central Europe with the gospel, disciple those who become Christians, and develop leadership potential in those who are called to become leaders. Josef has a degree in civil engineering from Brno Technical University. He has lived in the Czech Republic all of his life and is married to his best friend and ministry partner Danka, and they have two adult children – Dominika and Daniel.

## I. Basics of university ministry

### A. Introduction - Josef

Brief introduction of those present

#### 1. Strategic importance of university student ministry

- a. Future influencers and leaders – potential Kingdom servant leaders, making spiritual difference (1Tim 2:1-4)
- b. Window of opportunity – unique time in personal life
- c. Willingness to explore new things, relative openness to the gospel
- d. Who they are spiritually: loved by God, lost in their sins, sheep without shepherd, with no hope, aiming to destruction

*Q: What is the greatest challenge in student ministry in Europe today?*

2. The story and milestones of Integrity Life
  3. The pillars of the university ministry (what does not change)
    - a. Scripture as the main authority
    - b. Over-arching purpose: To Glorify God
    - c. By loving Him and desiring Him - relationship
    - d. By inviting students to Him – evangelism
    - e. By helping them to reach full maturity in Christ – discipleship
    - f. By helping them to become leaders in expanding His Kingdom – leadership development
  4. What changes
    - a. Basic needs of the people are the same
    - b. Culture, society, worldview, beliefs keep changing
    - c. Methods, strategies, supportive structures, activities ... need to be changing too
    - d. Bottom line: people need to enter into and grow in relationship with their God through the gospel of the Son of God
- B. Evangelism – Rosta
1. The biggest challenge in evangelism ever
    - a. Fishermen's club
    - b. Statistics
    - c. Practical experience
  2. Biblical foundations
    - a. Romans 10:13-15
    - b. Mathew 28:18-20
  3. Useful principles in fulfilling Great Commission today
    - a. Solid biblical teaching on human sin and God's grace
    - b. Encouraging fellowship with a heart for lost people
    - c. Deep relationship with the Lord
    - d. Deep relationships among people
    - e. Authenticity
    - f. Fun and sense of humor
    - g. Even more closer – “one on one”
    - h. Leading students to evangelism since they come to Christ
    - i. Transferrable tools that can help
- C. Discipleship – Katka

## The Lord is an artist, personal testimony

1. Biblical grounding: The lives of Jesus and Paul, Proverbs 11:30
2. The importance of good setting - love, trust, spiritual nourishment, genuine relationships, challenges
3. The goal of discipleship – maturity
4. Helpful tools
5. Our struggles in discipleship
6. The impact of discipleship (VIDEO)

### *Questions, discussion*

## II. Starting and building a spiritual movement

### A. Seeing the big picture - Josef

1. Not only the eternal difference for the individual, but a better future for the nation / country (Mt 28:18 – 20; Acts 1:8)
2. Not only multiplication of individual disciples of Jesus, but also multiplication of campus ministries
  - a. There is no multiplication without dying to self
  - b. Do not get discouraged if it is difficult and slow – it is God's business, not ours
  - c. Stay faithful to biblical principles
3. Defining our part in God's plan with the country / nation;
  - a. Vision and core values
  - b. Setting BOUNDARIES of who we are, what we do, and what we are not and do not do:
    - In Theology
    - In Strategy
    - In Partnerships (who we work with)
    - In our way of communication
    - We cannot please everyone, so let us seek to please the One
4. We need to be concerned about what happens to and through our students AFTER they leave the student ministry, the overall impact of their life
5. It is not about the “know-how” and “how-to” (strategies, programs, materials, structures etc.) It is about the people, love, sacrifice, attitudes and first and foremost, about God and His Glory.

### *Questions*

### B. Example of starting a new campus ministry – Rosta

1. Story
  - a. Crucial steps
  - b. Challenges and benefits

*Q.: What is critical for starting and developing a new student ministry and spiritual movement? Leaders. Workers.*

#### C. Developing spiritual leaders - Josef

1. Defining “The Main Final Product” – our unique contribution to the body of Christ and His Kingdom growth
2. It is a certain kind of spiritual leader
  - a. Spirituality, identity
  - b. Character
  - c. Beliefs, convictions, and attitudes (multiplication etc.)
  - d. Developed skills and aware of unique gifts
3. Dangers in leadership development
  - a. Mistaking worldly (secular) for spiritual
  - b. Skills and giftedness for character
  - c. Willingness for maturity
  - d. Going too quickly
4. The process: How do we develop such a leader
  - a. Being such leaders ourselves (being a model)
  - b. Creating a healthy environment that enables them to grow
  - c. Personal investment into his life: discipling and mentoring
  - d. Provide appropriate ministry opportunities all the time with support and feedback (evangelism, discipleship and leadership development can not be separated)
  - e. Using simple, transferable tools
  - f. Challenging them to next level of relationship with and commitment to Christ
  - g. Providing a special intensive training for the most potential leaders
5. In-Life Academy – Katka
  - a. Why In Life Academy?
  - b. What is the goal?
  - c. What is the content?
  - d. How do we do it practically?
  - e. The fruit of the Academy (VIDEO)

#### D. Facing the spiritual opposition (Eph 6:10-17)

- E. Never underestimate the value of humor, fun, and friendliness
  - 1. VIDEO Superman
  - 2. It can and must be cool!

*Questions, final discussion*

Personal application

***Suggested Readings:***

*More Than a Carpenter*, Josh McDowell  
*Disciples Are Made – Not Born*, Walter Henrichsen  
*Master Plan of Evangelism*, Robert Coleman  
*PLAN A*, Dwight Roberson  
*Quiet Time*, Dwight Roberson  
*Living in Light* (study guide by Serge)  
Sonship studies (series of 36 studies by Serge)  
4 Spiritual Laws