

August 17, 2020

Hey Jim. I was thinking today that as we look at new students starting school this fall and plan for university students to worship with us on some level (virtual or physical), it is easy to get caught up in the details - especially this year - and forget about the people that are integral to the success of the program. Therefore, I thought I would take a moment to let you know how much I appreciate you, and our friendship.

First, a few words of thanks for your help in the University class. Your passion for the students and God's word is evident. You have been such a life saver with your willingness to teach even at the drop of the hat. And it is so nice to have someone else who can navigate difficult topics, and very eloquently I might add. Having someone in class who can open the bible and have this warm, inviting conversation about it is such a pleasure. What I really enjoy is seeing you bring academia and christianity together though. I see too many people undermine christianity by being uneducated, or worse a denier, about certain topics. Our students need to be able to have intelligent conversations when they are in the world talking about science, and our faith. So it is such a blessing to have someone of your caliber in class speaking truth with love.

Second, it is so easy to see the positive influence you have with the students. When I was a math student at ACU, one thing that influenced me greatly was how every time I met with my advisor (Dr. Green), he would ask me how my spiritual life was doing, and where I was worshipping. Dr. Green wasn't just concerned about my grades, but he was also concerned about my spiritual walk. I see that same influence on the kids you teach at ACU. Your interest in them is genuine and they know it.

Lastly, thanks for being an honest friend. It has been a blessing getting to know you and your family. For instance, it's great to run into you in the parking lot and have a frank conversation about life. There was one afternoon, though, that I wish we had parked under a tree so we didn't bake as much as we did in the afternoon sun. I felt badly that I may have kept you too long, but those types of experiences just turn out to be all the more memorable.

So with all that being said, could you pick up where you left off in the book of Romans and teach next quarter? Just kidding! Seriously though, thanks again for being who you are, and being a christian example at work, at church, at home, and in the world! May this next semester be a great one!

In Him,



Robert Forkner