

“ Winter term of junior year (1993), some friends got the vision after we had been meeting and **praying for outreach** to bring a nationally known Christian band (The 77’s) to put on a **concert** in Sayles Hill Great Space. ”

Authentic, bold, sacrificial

Going hard after God in the '90s



Students gathered at a Northfield home for a retreat, 1993.

*We commit to this covenant on this Thursday
4/8/93 at dawn.
Covenant: pray daily
read the Bible daily
witness to one new person each day
listen to and obey the Holy spirit
confess our sins & temptations
pray through the night every Wednesday.*

This is the covenant that was signed by seven students, 1993.

Will Craig '94

I arrived on campus in the fall of 1990 with a clearly defined set of ideas about the person I would become over the next four years: wise, worldly, popular and sophisticated. I did not see that there would be much of a conflict between my goals and my faith—except perhaps in the “worldly” activities category—but even there, God is forgiving and I’d only be a college student once. I figured it would all work out in the end.

As I settled into the academic, social and athletic routines of a Carleton student-athlete, I became aware of the need for disambiguation in my faith. I had been raised in the church, had assented to belief in Christ at an early age, and felt sufficiently “Christian” to accede to my mother’s request that I “check out” the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship on campus. There and at Fellowship of Christian Athletes, I met people who also considered

themselves Christians, but whose faith seemed very different from mine, a perception I shared with the rest of campus.

It was these Christians whose social barometer was measured on the “Humor Page” of the Carletonian, where specific Christians I knew were often mocked and ridiculed for living out their faith. Seeing this seemingly harsh persecution (obviously not so in the context of the worldwide persecuted church!) aimed not at me made me ask, “Why not me?” I began to understand that these Christians had a direct relationship with God (I did not) and that they put that relationship to work in their everyday relationships—often causing conflict with the “worldly” and “sophisticated” people I was trying to emulate.

It seemed that God was bringing me to a decision point. Which person would I become: a worldly and

successful person, or a broken and dependent person? After an InterVarsity meeting in Sayles 251, I told God that my faith life was no longer a matter of assenting to belief, but of surrendering everything I was and will be to Him.

My sophomore year, I was praying with a friend on Monument Hill one night and I had a vision of a cross on the hill facing the monument. My friend encouraged me to get the wood, and he’d round up the people to put it up. I didn’t have much of a plan when I got on my bike and rode off toward the lumberyard south of town the following Saturday, but God put one of the handful of Northfield residents who knew me at the hardware store at the same time (he said his wife sent him there, but I knew better). His car fit the wood and my bike perfectly, with less than a half-inch to spare.

Winter term of junior year (1993), some friends got the vision after we had

been meeting and praying for outreach to bring a nationally known Christian band (The 77’s) to put on a concert in Sayles Hill Great Space. We had a clear notion that someone needed to get up on stage afterward and present the gospel, but even up to the evening of the concert (April 23, 1993) we didn’t hear God telling one of us to do it—and then we met a pastor, Andy Boyer, who was waiting for the band when we arrived from the airport. He did a remarkable spontaneous presentation, inviting students to look into the claims of the historical Jesus for themselves, and not just rely on what the culture tells them about Jesus.

Andy was in the process of planting a church among the Gen-Xers in Uptown Minneapolis and had toured with the band as their unofficial chaplain. After he presented that night to a room full of Carls, Oles and others, we kept in touch and it was at his

church-plant that I met my future wife, Cully, in 1995. When the costs for the concert were deducted from the funds raised from campus sources and other donations—thousands of dollars—we had exactly ten cents left over.

The first week of spring term 1993 we witnessed a miracle in Sayles 251, when a student who had chronic fatigue syndrome was healed through prayer. Seven of us prayed all that night in the Watson basement study lounge and made a covenant together for the rest of the term. We would pray together every day (in those days there were prayer groups that met daily); read the Bible every day (reading more than a few verses, and reading for detail rather than skimming); pray all night one night per week (Wednesdays from 10:30 p.m. to 6:30 a.m.); confess our sins and temptations to each other; and each witness to one new/different person each day for the entire term.

God was faithful throughout the entire term, letting us see our prayers answered, sometimes in dramatic ways.

Wise, worldly, popular, sophisticated. That’s not exactly what my time at Carleton delivered. But if I had been looking for bold adventures, friendships that would continue for a lifetime and many experiences of God’s love and faithfulness, I could not have asked for more. ♦

Will Craig '94 lives in Northfield, MN, where he serves as a volunteer with SOul ZONE and as adviser to Carleton’s Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He works as a principal technology consultant with Elert & Associates, designing large and complex projects across the country, including Carleton’s new Weitz Center for Creativity (a.k.a. the Arts Union). He is married to Cully Craig, and they have two sons, James proto-'22 and Liam proto-'23.

