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Faithful Innovation and Mission Drift in Christian Parachurch Student Organizations

ABSTRACT

Faithful Innovation and Mission Drift in Christian Parachurch Student Organizations

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The purpose of this thesis is to explore the stories of three Christian student organizations in the United States—the Y.M.C.A., InterVarsity, and Campus Crusade—to better understand the interactions of the Christian faith and culture on the college campus and how these interactions may eventually expand upon the mission or lead to mission drift. Although these organizations have distinctive stories, they all initially shared an aim to evangelize and disciple students on American college campuses. The discussion of the history of these organizations is for the purpose of studying how these groups adapt to cultural changes or the needs of the student population and how particular changes lead to mission drift and possibly sanctification while others demonstrate faithful innovation.

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the stories of three Christian student movements in the United States—the YMCA, InterVarsity, and Campus Crusade—in order to evaluate the interactions of the Christian faith and culture on the college campus and how those interactions may creatively expand upon the mission or lead to mission drift. Although these organizations have distinctive stories, they all initially shared an aim to evangelize and disciple students on American college campuses. The discussion of the history of these organizations is for the purpose of analyzing how these groups adapt to cultural changes or the needs of the student population and how particular changes lead to mission drift and possibly secularization while others demonstrate faithful innovation.

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