

Oral History Interview of Dane Emerick

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Name of Interviewee: Dane Emerick

Name of Interviewers: Randy Miller, Lowell Walters

Transcriber: Grace Peterson

Interview Length: (1:37:41)

Notes: Editing on this transcript was done by Abigail Sattler.

Miller: (0:01) Welcome to this interview in the oral history project of the Liberty University archive. This interview is being conducted on September 7, 2011. Today we are interviewing Dane Emerick. My name is Randy Miller and I'll be conducting the interview today along with Lowell Walters.

Walters: (0:17) Greetings. Hello Randy.

Emerick: (0:20) [*Chuckles*] Hello Randy

Miller: (0:23) So let's begin here. Dane Emerick would you tell us a little bit about when you were born, where you grew up, and a little bit about your family history?

Emerick: (0:31) Well let's see I was born in Altoona Pennsylvania a rear road town, small town, well not so small, but a medium sized town. And out in Pennsylvania, central Pennsylvania, we lived in, in a German community of the city and it was a German town. Most of the railroaders come in from Ireland, Poland, Italy, and Germany. And the city at that time was pretty much divided in the different areas of where you came from in the old country. And we were German and God blessed, and I grew up in a home, and the one thing that always hit me and I always tell the students here at Liberty University, is sometimes you hafta allow God to define you. I had a very bad speech impediment. I remember going to school and I remember times in school that ah, ah, people would get on me for my speech impediment. In matter of fact, I was pretty much a loner. I remember in third grade that I had a teacher there that she thought that in order to stop me from stuttering she would slam the ruler on my desk and she'd say, "Stop it." And of course it just caused me to stutter that much more. But I grew up in a home and ah, where God had blessed at the beginning and then my dad fell lame and became an alcoholic. And ah, so this uh is the type of home I, I grew up in, in a German home ah, ah, German home that liked to drink their beer and at the age of sixteen God got a hold of my life and I gave my life over to Jesus

Christ. I'll never forget the first time I went to church, after I accepted Christ I walked into church ah church , that was called Calvary Baptist Church and I saw a bunch of young people and I thought oh wow you know they're going to accept me you know I'm not going to be a loner anymore. I'll never forget they waved and I thought they were waving at me and I walked over and when I walked over I said c-c-c-a-a-n-n I s-s-s-i-i-t-t here, and they said sure I'll never forget I sat down and they got up and walked away. So life was pretty much me and my, and my, big ole dog. We spent a lot of times walking the trails up in the mountains. Uh, my brother was an athlete uh, he was popular in school, I wasn't. I remember once I was sitting in the cafeteria and as we were sitting in the cafeteria I was with all these girls and they kept looking at me and they said, "Dane Emerick... Dane Emerick?" They said, "Is Clarke Emerick your brother?" And I said yes he is. And they said, "Oh my, he is so good looking." And then they looked at me and they go, "You know you don't look at all like him." So I'm sitting here thinking Oh my, gosh, you know? But I'll never forget my uh, at school I tried out for a play and when I tried out for the play, I waited to read my part and I left. I thought nobody wants a stutterer on stage. No one wants someone with a speech impediment on stage. And I went down the next day and here the teacher had put me in a part. I'll never forget, I walked over to her and I said what are you doing? You know, I'm going to look like a fool up on stage. She goes, "No you're going to be ok. It's a small part." Never forgot I got up on stage and I didn't stutter. And all the therapy I had ever went through just didn't help, but every time I get up on stage I would take a part and I wouldn't stutter, and she helped me through that. But next thing I know I was in the Navy I graduated and went in the Navy. And God worked in my life there, just to go back a little bit, I remember my, my, guidance counselor sitting down and talking to me. Uh, I have a learning disability, I'm ADD [*attention deficit disorder*], and there I was with a stutter. And I remember my guidance counselor sat down with me and he looked at me and said, "Dane I want to tell you you're not college material. You need to understand that." And uh, I just sat there and I listened to him, and I accepted what he said. And I joined the Navy. And while I was in the Navy some things happened, I had a friend die in front of me, and during that time God got a hold of my life, and I yielded to him, I yielded to the ministry. I wasn't living for Him at the time and I yielded, and then I yielded to ministry. And uh, but then I sat there and thought God I can't go in ministry, I'm not college material. And God you know just said yeah I want you to go to college, I want you to minister, I want you to serve me. And I'm kept thinking Lord; you need to talk to my guidance counselor, because he knows more than you do about me. And I'll never forget, I, I, got out of the Navy and I wound up cooking at a restaurant. And I had applied to some bible college, and I had applied to Washington Bible College. I had been accepted under probation but I didn't go, I didn't have the money, my parents didn't have the money. And I remember I was working at Family Host Cafeteria, back in Altoona Pennsylvania, and the people that owned that owned different stores. And I remember my boss came in and he said "Dane, he said, you don't seem too happy." And they had me in a culinary school; I was working and a going to school at the time, to be a better cook. And I said no, I said, I'm not. And he said, "What's wrong?" And I said God called me in ministry "So then why aren't you in school?" I said I don't have that

money. "It's ok" he said, "Was there any schools you applied to?" And I said yeah Washington Bible College, Philadelphia Bible College, and Lancaster Bible College; it was Philadelphia school of the bible. And a month later he comes in and he looked at me and said, "We meet with the board and we called Washington Bible College and we paid for your first two years at college, and your G.I. bill will pick up the rest." I couldn't argue with God anymore.

Walters: (6:27) About what year was that?

Emerick: (6:28) Oh my gosh, that was back in uh,

Walters: (6:31) '60's?

Emerick: (6:32) Yeah that was 60's, about '67. And then I went off to Washington Bible College. And God just blessed and I went through school there and I majored in biblical studies uh, minored in Christian education. And I came out and wound up being a youth pastor at uh, a church in Altoona, Pennsylvania, I was a youth pastor. And what was weird was ah, I was single, and I remember this a girl that one of my youth brought in, now this youth was he had just worked on an associate degree, just finished that, and this young lady had a finished a degree at ah, where was it?, ah, Penn State. And he brought her to church and she had just given her life over to Christ. And I'll never forget, she started asking me questions about the Word of God and what was so neat was, well maybe it wasn't so neat, he decided to come to Lynchburg, ok? And what was so strange about it was when he left he said, "Pastor Dane, can you keep an eye on Joan for me?" And I said yes, and I have been keeping an eye on her ever since. Cause I remember [*chuckles*] I asked her to marry me, and I called him, and in those days you had a phone in the halls, a pay phone, and I called and I said Kenny I got some good news and I've got some bad news. And he said, "Well what's the good news?" I said uh well it's all one in the same, I said I fell in love with Joan and I asked her to marry me, and she said yes. And I'll never forget his response, he said, "If I was going to lose her to anybody, pastor you're the one to lose her to." And so God blessed and I was there, until 1975, almost '76. And God brought us down here to Lynchburg and we came to go into seminary, and then the rest is history, here at Liberty. It's just phenomenal how God has blessed.

Walters: (8:35) How did you hear about the seminary here then? Through, through uh, people up in Altoona, or?

Emerick: (8:53) Well what it was uh, I'll never forget in 1962 Dr. Falwell, Dr. Towns had a rally in Baltimore. And what they were doing was uh, they were sharing about a new school that was starting in Lynchburg, Virginia. And uh I was invited to the rally by Diane Susek and Ron Susek. Ron was an evangelist, Diane was a singer. And she was going to be singing at the rally and Doug Oldham was going to be singing. I wanted to meet Doug, I didn't know much about Jerry Falwell, the only thing I knew about Jerry Falwell is the fun we made of him in Bible College, because we always had jokes about him and Jack Hyles, and their buses. And all the stories came out you know, Jack was coming out with his bus, and Jerry with his bus and they

would crash in Florida, so they were that far away. So we sort of thought you know, oh, I don't want any part of that, you know. And I didn't know Jerry was going to be speaking that night and I wanted to hear Doug because Doug used to sing in the group called Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians, and that was a long time ago, it was a secular group, but not secular as we think about it. It was really good just down to earth country, country music. And I wanted to hear Doug and I went over and Doug sang and Diane sang and she brought me in the back and I meet Doug, and then Doug introduced me to Dr. Falwell, and Elmer Towns. And it was amazing, it was the first time I had heard of ah, you know, the school and what was going to be starting here in Lynchburg, Virginia and it just caught my attention, I thought wow! So I wound up being a youth pastor and I found that they were having a youth rally here. So I got the church behind me and we brought the youth down to it and I just fell in love with the school. And then I came down to what they called super conference, and they had a youth section of it and I wanted to go to that, and the church paid. And next thing I knew my kids from the youth group started to come here. And, and you know, I was a little bit of a radical, I was always in trouble. Excuse me, for my music, and ah I did some concerts and the church sorta just asked me to resign, you know. And so we knew God was leading us and we packed up our um our maverick, and we had a U-Haul in the back. And we decided to come to Lynchburg, Virginia. To Lynchburg Baptist College in seminary, and we packed up and we traveled down here. We got about two miles away from the house and back my both back tires blew out my car. And we fixed those, and then we came down here. And I started to go to school here, uh I meet John Baker, who was the dean of men. A semester into the year I became a supervisor RD.

Walters: (11:39) And that was 1970, what do you think?

Emerick: (11:41) That would be '76. And uh I we moved on campus, with the students, and my goodness, I haven't left.

Walters: (11:54) They were living on the mountain at that time?

Emerick: (11:57) No

Walters: (11:57) The hotels?

Emerick: (11:58) No

Walters: (11:58) Or downtown?

Emerick: (11:59) No, no we didn't have the mountain then. We had, had Treasure Island and then we had a hotel downtown that was called the Stuart Arms Hotel. And when they brought me in as a RD [Residential Director], my wife was teaching at LCA, Lynchburg Christian Academy. She had just gotten a job there and my first semester here I cooked at the hotel.

Walters: (12:21) [*Umm*]

Emerick: (12: 22) And uh and then I moved in. uh I, I meet John Baker, Dean Baker, and he took a liking to me. And he worked and worked to get me in to work full time for the school. And we lived at the hotel, my wife and I lived. When we first were hired, I'll never forget we didn't have enough apartments down there; now understand, you know it's amazing uh we had a few students we didn't have a large student body but I remember they were working to get an apartment for us so they put my wife and I into a storage room. And we lived in the storage room for a couple months, and uh that storage room had a lot of mice in it, and a lot of cockroaches in it. And I remember I came home one day and my wife was crying and she goes, "I didn't think it was going to be like this!" But God just opened up a door and we moved on the third floor, of the hotel. And it was just amazing we were with Dave Pantana, Rod Earls, and they were RD's there, supervisors, at the time we called them supervisors, and then they hired me. Uh what was so amazing was at that time a couple floors were co-ed, now what I meant by co-ed is that; girls lived on one side of the hall, guys lived on the other side of the hall, and we had a blanket [laughter] in between. And then we had we marked with duct tape how close you could get to the curtain. If you stepped over that duct tape, you were in hot water, you were in trouble. And uh so [chuckles] we had the duct tape there and everybody watched to make sure nobody stepped over that duct tape. And uh but it was good times, you know it was really good times. I was talking to a hall last night and I said you guys, you guys have no, no idea what it was like back in those days. Our hotel, the hotel was really ah, unique place we had an elevator and sometimes elevators would break loose and drop a floor, and it was just like going to an amusement park. You just never knew when the elevator was going. You know Tower of Terror in Disney, well that was the hotel that we lived in. But you know the unity there was so awesome. And then we had the island and I remember catching the bus and we couldn't take the bus over the bridge with students in it because students have to get off because the bridge was well with all the students in there the bridge could collapse into the James River. [Laughter] so we would off and have to walk over.

Walters: (14:53) So what was a typical day like? Why would you go to the island when did you go to Thomas Road, where would you go to classes? Can you? You're really clear on that compared to some of our interviewees so I would like to expand on that, if you could.

Emerick: (15:06) It was amazing back in those days because you know as we started to grow, we started to buy houses in the area.

Miller: (15:15) Adjacent to Thomas Road?

Emerick: (15:17) No, no, we had houses downtown.

Miller: (15:19) Ok.

Emerick: (15:20) Uh, uh, probably in locations that probably weren't the most favorable places to have.

Miller: (15:25) Where was this Stuart Arms hotel? Where was the actual building? Is there something there today?

Emerick: (15:30) Yes, they have taken Stuart Arms have made it into a home for the elderly. The Stuart Arms was uh one of the top hotels in Lynchburg. In matter of fact, it had a big ballroom, and at one time the big bands would in you know, Jimmy Dorsey, all those would come in and perform at this hotel. And there would be dancing there and everything. And when Jerry bought the hotel it had been emptied pretty much out except for three women; Mrs. Cochrane, Mrs. Williams, and then we brought a lady in from Altoona, Pennsylvania. Her husband had been an Lutheran pastor and he had died, then of course Jerry, you know Dr. Falwell is one of these; I need to find a place to stay, ok then come on in. And so we called her momma Lyn. And momma Lyn lived at the hotel. Uh but we inherited the other two little ole ladies uh Mrs. Williams, and Mrs. Cochrane. And Jerry bought the hotel and so we started to move the students in there and uh it was just it was just a neat place. Uh Mrs. Cochrane [chuckles] bless her heart uh she was she was couldn't hear, she was pretty deaf. And I remember I remember when we would have fire drills she'd never come out of her apartment and usually she's the one, well it wasn't fire drills they'd actually go off. Cause when she would cook she was so old things would burn on the stove. So we would have to almost break in her door and say Mrs. Cochrane, you have to leave. And she couldn't hear you, and you are screaming at the top of your voice. So we'd have to carry her out. And she'd be fighting us and everthing. Well, Mrs Cochrane you have to leave, and uh but we inherited these little old ladies and uh the kids loved loved them, the kids loved them. Ok what was the unique about the hotel was in the front when you first come in there was like a grand staircase; the girls could walk up and down that staircase and then up to the girls floors. The boys had to walk down the back staircases, that was the boys' area. And the girls' area was there. There was a place in the front that was the we used as the where the telephone operator was, and my office was there. And if students wanted to check out they'd have to come to me. Like if they were going to go to the library, and the library, was the old fire station downtown. I don't know if anybody ever told you that? But it was the old fire station downtown and we still had the doors in the front but we had our library in there and then the top floor was the seminary. And that's where I went to seminary. If you were a student and you wanted to go after hours. Now understand kid's can come and go pretty much what they want now, but in those days we had study hours. Study hours started at 7 o' clock. You had to be in your room at 7 o' clock and you were there until 10:30. You had to get permission to be out of the room.

Miller: (18:29) When were dating hours then?

Emerick: (18:31) What dating? [Chuckles] Dating I should brought one of my old Liberty way's. If you were a freshman and you wanted to date another freshman you had to double date, ok? You were allowed two hours either Friday or Saturday, to date, no longer. You had to come and get permission from me. Then I would look and I would say well who else were going, where are you going, what time are you going to get back, ok? Upper classmen got some extra

hours but if they were dating a freshman they had to go by the freshman hours. But there were so many opportunities because when the buses came, no one drove. You rode on the bus, to and from church. I'll never forget standing on the corner waiting for the bus to come down and you could hear this singing before it got there. I mean kids would just start singing hymns, and it was just awesome. Now during study hours if you wanting to study at the library you'd come to me and you'd say, you know, Dean Emerick I want to go to the library to study. So I'd look at my watch and I'd see what time you'd leave and say you are leaving at 7:30. I mark 7:30 down. Then you would go to the library and you have to check in there. We knew exactly how long it took to walk from the hotel to the library. Then they would mark down you know 7:40 you know ok that works. Know you'd leave the library and you have to check out, then you'd check in with me and at the end of the day the librarians would bring down their sign in sheets and sign out sheets, and I'd lay them and I'd go wait a minute, wait a minute you were gone a half an hour where were you? [Chuckles] You know? But you know what? I look back now and there wasn't nothing wrong with that. Kids learning discipline; they learned to study. Uh quiet hours were quiet hours. You couldn't be having music on, you couldn't you had quiet hours. And uh our RA's would sit in the hall to make sure. We have hall meetings once a week. We had hall meetings on Monday night, Tuesday night, and Thursday night. Wednesday night was church and Sunday was church. And uh

Walters: (20:42) How many of those rules back at that time, were, were based on a Christians living sort of principal? And how many of them were based on pragmatics? And how much grace were you allowed to give kids if they got in trouble? Umm where did, or is that too

Emerick: (21:04) No, no, no, no, no, no, no.

Walters: (21:06) Too long ago to remember? [Chuckles]

Emerick: (21:07) No, oh no, I'm not that old.

Miller and Walters: (21:08) [laughing]

Emerick: (21:10) I'm only 66, almost 67 but no there was. Most kids wanted to see me cause my gift is the gift of mercy, which is really rough. You know? When it comes to discipline, you know. Kids would come in the office and they'd say well you need to go see dean so and so, and they'd say oh please let me see dean Emerick, you know, if I go in and cry a little bit, you know, he'll show mercy. We knew that a number of our rules were definitely based on scripture, others were based on preference, others were based on the fact because we realized we were getting a young group of kids that were coming from home and they pretty much were the rules were there the guidelines were there. You know, students would say well my parents don't have curfew on me at home and I'd say well what would happen if you were still out at midnight or after midnight? Oh my dad would be waiting on the porch. Well then you did, and here what it was we wanted to know where our students were and if they didn't show up, you know we were there to start looking for them. And so we were, a lot of the rules were for their safety a lot of them

were preference. It was you know. Dr. Falwell didn't like long hair on boys', you know. And so we had a hair code, there's nothing wrong with long hair. Long hair doesn't keep you out of out of heaven, you know. But that was our preference, and we would explain that before students came. We just didn't *boom*, there it is. But we would say there are some rules that are definitely biblically based there are other rules that are preferences as a university. Now you know, as time has gone by we've pulled back on a lot of rules. You know at one time you couldn't wear jeans; guys couldn't wear jeans outside of the dorm. You could wear jeans in the dorm, or if you are working on your car, but you had to get permission, to wear jeans to work on your car.

Miller: (23:14) Now one thing Elmer Towns told us is we really did need to have a lot of rules in those days. Basically the students were coming from places that were more conservative then we were. And so there really wasn't a lot of questioning about the rules. Everything was just kind of accepted.

Emerick: (23:30) Well you may had you know there may have been a few students that rebelled but, no most of the kids were used to going to church on Wednesdays and Sunday school and Sunday morning's and Sunday night.

Miller: (23:44) So to require church attendance wasn't a big issue for them?

Emerick: (23:46) The only that I would notice with many of the students was they were falling within the boundaries of the rules because these were the things that were set at home. But the idea of saying rules or policies, so we would sit down and students would come to me and I'd say you know your attitude is so important because because we have boundaries but these are the same boundaries your parents had. You're concentrating on the boundaries instead of the freedoms that are inside. And I remember talking to students about that and saying let's look at all the freedoms you have as a student and understand we care enough, secular school doesn't. Secular school says you do whatever you want to do. We love you; we're here to prepare you to be champions for Christ. And so you know, it would have been a lot easier for us if we said ok let's get rid of the rules, let's just get rid of these and just operate as a secular school. No, our concern was the students, our concern was the idea that most of these kids were coming straight out of high school, and a lot of them didn't know how to handle the freedoms. And so as they continue to go from a freshman on up to upperclassmen, rules became a little bit more lax for them. So we wanted to see them grow. You know, even today we don't have some of the rules we had then but I see that our students today. I see our freshman you know, I look and say you know a student will try and get off campus as a freshman and I'm sitting there thinking you're just not ready to be on your own, almost there, almost there, but not quite right ready.

Walters: (25:35) We asked Dr. Towns a question about evangelism through the decades. Could we ask you perhaps, maybe you could respond to this? Tell us about the makeup of the student body over the each decade, have you seen uh in the student the type of student we attracted and

the issues that they bring we might be getting ahead of ourselves here but as conversation lends itself to that, do you think you could comment on that?

Emerick: (26:07) I would say the majority of the students that came back in those days were kids that wanted to come to a bible college. They were interested in ministry we didn't have all the different areas of study in different colleges as we do today. We'd hit a few that would be a little rebellious and we always had a few that come and I remember going forward and accepting Jesus Christ as their savior. I would say in those days you have a few but most of the kids were pretty much on fire. I mean like I said, you know the buses, you know. You always knew where Lynchburg Baptist College students were on a bus cause as soon as they got together man they would just start singing, and you'd hear hymns and um but we have a different student body now. I mean like at convocation today we had over one hundred kids accept Jesus Christ as their savior. We have in our evangelism class in the last week, and I've taught some of the classes and we've had probably close to about twenty kids accept Jesus Christ as their savior. Probably in this week will probably have as many if not more kids get saved then we had students back in those days. So I believe there's been a real change.

Walters: (27:28) What were the issues you addressed to the decades? Did you have a lot of homosexuality back in the '70's to deal with? Or was that the past twenty year's thing?

Emerick: (27:40) I don't you probably would have. But in those days there's no way a kid was going to come and say I'm struggling with this. You know and I hate saying this back in those days if a student came and said they were struggling in this area if they came more than likely they would be sent home. Today you have where we are so opened to students, I mean I have groups on campus I have a group for guys who are struggling with same sex attraction, I have lust free living groups. Now understand, understand we didn't have laptops we didn't have computers, the kids didn't have it so readily available to them. So what was really neat was we weren't I mean what kind of magazine I mean you got playboy magazine and things like that back in those days but you know and every so often you'd be talking to a student and all of a sudden you see something sticking out from the bottom of his mattress and there would something. And sure you would hit you know off and on, things like that. But through the years you're finding a whole different it's just there. Satan is just pulling kids in right and left, you know if you do it if you do a survey if you do a survey here on campus to see how many young men are struggling with sexual addiction and pornography I would say and I'm being really gracious, I'm saying maybe 80%, and my minds thinking maybe more. It's amazing where our kids are today, that's why our ministries are so different, you know did I ever think of having a lust free living group back in those days? No, we talked about purity, I remember Ed Hindson doing a message on it, but then I look at today and I realize I mean just in the last week I've had almost over 200 guys sign up for our groups in the evening for lust free living and saying it has caught me I want to break it, and I want to get victory. So you know times have changed and Satan has more of a weapon to sneak into the lives of our young people.

Miller: (29:54) There was a time when you required a salvation testimony for admission to the school and also a pastoral recommendation, if I remember correctly. Do you have any idea when did you start getting away from that? And can you talk just a little bit about Dr. Falwell's attitude towards are we here for Christian kids or are we you know anybody that wants to come, come and then we will deal with them from wherever they are. If that's unsaved we will try to get them saved if they're saved we'll try to get them to grow in the Lord. Can you address those two issues?

Emerick: (30:26) Ok, I am trying to think of when it started to change, you know. I liked that, I liked the fact a testimony, I like the fact of a pastor's recommendation. But I think our primary what would I say, our where we wanted to reach the students we wanted to bring in were Christian kids. To help Christian kids grow and grow in Christ and send them back out. Almost like we were saying this is a boot camp for Christian young people. See I was living I was I was at a trailer up here next to 31 and 32; they'd put me in up there. It was a place where the soccer players used to change and everything. So they moved me up there. That was my office. And I'm trying to think what year that was, that was about maybe ten years ago, fifteen. And that's when they started to pull away from the testimony. I think the more areas of study we opened up they were more finding a cross section of young people coming in so many already on fire for Christ that are here for a Christian education and then you have others that are looking in and saying Liberty University is grown into a quality university and I want to get a degree from there. And so we're

Miller: (32:01) And they have a Christian atmosphere

Emerick: (32:02) Yes.

Miller: (32:03) But rather then we're necessarily training people for Christian service, that was some of the idea in those early days but that hasn't been as much the emphasis.

Emerick: (32:17) I would say not. Maybe not as much, but at the same time that is what we want to do. We want to train young people to carry out the great commission, and the great commission is to go out into every walk of life. And now how do you do that? We do that by producing nurses and doctors, lawyers, school teacher's, psychologists, and just all the gamut; you know police officers, things like that. But you're finding and you're finding I would say probably in the majority of the kids somewhere along the line has had some kind of Christian background. And maybe like what Clayton King said today you know said well you know I'm a Christian. But really are you? You know and when they come here we don't hide the fact that we are Christian, we don't hide the fact that they have to take bible, and things like that. And so they come and I think you're finding a lot of young people I speak you know in a hall last night and I went up at about 10 o' clock, that's when I went up to speak, and I didn't get out of the hall until around 12:30, 1 o' clock. And kids coming up and saying you know Pastor Dane I, I remember asking Christ into my heart but I just don't live it, and sitting down and talking to them. And I

think we are getting a lot of kid like that. That's coming in and their saying you know I'm operating on the faith of my parents but it's not really mine. So you know my life just isn't reflecting it. There's a challenge here and there's a challenge for us to stay strong in the area of us being having a scriptural foundation so that every kid that comes to Liberty will have an opportunity to turn their lives over to Christ. And as long as I'm here that's my desire and I think that was Dr. Falwell's too.

Miller: (34: 18) Talk a little bit more about how he felt about students and retention. And I heard him say one time we're not here to kick you out; we want to kick you up, so to speak. Now there comes a time when if you just really don't want to be here you know we'll cooperate with you on that, but if you want to be here our goal isn't to get you out of this place or to have you rack up enough reprimands in that. Can you address his attitude towards students and behavior and that?

Emerick: (34:47) Doc had such a big heart and you know in the Dean's office of course we had to you know support the Liberty Way. And in the process you know there were times that I would have to ask students to go home and you know and they'd say are you kicking me out? And you know share with him no, you forfeited the right to be a student here by your behavior, you knew what you were doing. And they would appeal but they would try to get to Doc before they would come to the committee the appeals committee and we would do our best to say you know, hey Doc, *[laughing]* you know this kids going to try to get to you. Ah don't worry don't worry. Next thing we know I'd get a call. Ah Dane? Yea, Doc? You think those kids are worth keeping here? Ah yea? But he wouldn't call the other deans, he'd call me cause he knew I had the gift of mercy. And I'd say well yea I'm willing to take the time to work with them. Well let's give him a chance let's give him a chance. And so we'd go through the review board and everything and then Dr. Falwell would call and say well we're not kicking him out, were going to work with him and Dane said he would work with them you know. So I always had all these kids that would just come to the office about the third time they'd get in trouble he'd call me and go Dane , it's the third time, he said do you think we could salvage him. And I'd say sir, three strikes; I think he needs to go home. And he would always say you know I agree I agree. I'd like to keep, but let's try to get him back, let's try and get him back. You know we'll send him home but we won't forget him and we'll keep writing. And it's amazing how many kids that we had dismissed from school that wound up coming back, and wound up being leaders on this campus.

Walters: (36:43) Can you mention in any of those that have made their record public or any great success stories that you're allowed to talk to?

Emerick: (36:51) Well I you know I confidentiality but I was in a movie and it was a movie produced by D.C Talk. And so they interviewed me on the movie so I guess I'm free to share this because in the movie Toby never got in trouble, but Toby always told me that he knew how to not get into trouble. I remember Kevin I had to dismiss him from school, and then Michael was one of these kids that wouldn't move back on campus, and I had to tell him he had to move and if he didn't I was going to have to let go. And so I had to let him go but here's kids that came

back. And wound up you know ministering, and being godly influence. Now I know that Toby's the one that finished but the other ones came close to finishing. But God had used them in a might way. I had a student that had gotten involved in the area of homosexuality and we had to leave him let him go and I kept working with him and he wound up coming back to Liberty. And next thing I knew he was a RA [*Residential Assistant*] and there was a brother sister dorm and they would meet as brother and sister dorm and all of a sudden he saw this other RA and she was beautiful and he's all of a sudden and he looked at her and thought wow, I like her. And I remember he started to date her I performed their wedding, he's in full time ministry today and he has about I think there is he has five boys. And God has just really blessed, I mean I could go on and on with a lot of students that had to face dismissal that wound up coming back and becoming just leaders in the community, leaders on campus and it's just been a blessing.

Miller: (38:55) One thing that you just said reminded me to ask you this question, is, were students always allowed to live off campus, if they were an upper classmen? Because of crowding and everything would did that become a necessity early on or was that a more recent requirement just because we have more students then we have beds to put them in?

Emerick: (39:20) When I first came here if you were single and I think I could be wrong but I'm thinking if you were 28 or younger you had to live on campus. And then they pulled that back and then they pulled it to if you were a senior you could live off campus. Freshmen definitely had to live on campus, and I think it was because of the overcrowding. You know you could move off if you had allergies or anything like that. But you had to prove it and of course people at home would get a doctor to send an excuse we wouldn't accept that. You had to go through our doctor to be excused to live off campus. Cause you know everyone has allergies you know and it hasn't been till just recently that we've allowed some younger students.

Miller: (40:11) What is the cut off now? Is it something like 25 or?

Emerick: (40:17) Um

Miller: (40:18) We'd have to look in the rule book.

Emerick: (40:20) no, no, no, no, I think its 21 but I know kids are getting off at 18, 19 years old.

Walters: (40:30) Right, let's go I kind of track in a couple ways here but let's go back to the '70's again. You're here as a student, you're working at in residence halls what was the seminary experience like for you as a student? And who were some of your classmates? And what was a typical day like? I mean you talked a little bit to the social. Why would you go to the island and such?

Emerick: (40:53) Well I went to the island because I was a supervisor I was a RD so you know I was in the workings in the school. I remember having classes with Danny Lovett, Daniel Henderson, oh no, no, no, Daniel was one of my students, forget that. Gary Aldridge, Mark Hine

was starting in the seminary at that time. And I had hired him to be my assistant Dean, and Eleanor Henderson, some of the people that were down there. The seminary was as I said was in the second floor the third floor of the fire station. And Dr. Hawkins was one of my professors, Dr. Hughes was the Dean of the seminary, and you're talking about a man who was such a godly man. I mean I would just loved his class. He would teach and as he would be teaching he would be getting in the word of God and he would just start weeping. He'd just start weeping and I remember at that time Dr. Hughes had taken a heart attack and he and I would go to the Y, and we would swim downtown, we would lap the pool. And Dr. Hughes came in and after he had been to the hospital and you know they worked with him, and he was doing ok. And he came back and he said I was so excited that I was going to go home, to be with the Lord and I just held on to my bible and here I am. *[Laughing]* you know, I remember during that period of time I mean my wife and I lived at the hotel, Charles Hughes, his son, had been in a car accident. He was an evangelist and they were a team with Mark Lowry, and David Musselman. David played the piano; Mark of course sang and Charles sang, not sang he preached. He was the evangelists. And we were living in the hotel and my wife had gone into labor and she was two months early. And we went to the hospital and as I was at the hospital they called and said there was a serious accident. The van that they were in crossed in front of a tractor trailer and Charles is in a coma, Dave Musselman's pretty broken up and they say he's going to be ok. Mark had a number of broken bones, and I'll never forget they when all this was happening Dr. Hughes would fly up to Philadelphia to be with his son and he would fly back in here. And you know you talk about a man of God you know I mean this man I never wanted to quit seminary because of a teacher like this a professor like this. And he would fly back and he would come and my daughter my daughter was in an neonatal intensive care and they told us that if she would live she would probably be severely retarded, he told us that she would be a partially or totally blind and it was just Joan and I and were there and Dr. Hughes would fly back from Philadelphia and he would come to the hospital where they would say well only you know relatives could go in or immediate family. And we said well he's her spiritual granddad you know. And he would come and sit with us and then I remember one time he was sitting with us and he said that they want to take Charles's organs cause he said he is brain dead. His quality of life is gone. And I remember sitting there and I said well Doc I said what do you feel? And he said I know God is going to let us keep Charles, I know he is. And then he flew back and they were working to talk to him and Charles's wife and Dr. Hughes looked and said his eyes moved and they said no, no they didn't that's just a fathers love seeing that. And Cassie said you know I didn't see it but no you can't harvest his organs. And look at Charles, Charles is our prayer pastor here on campus.

Miller: (45:18) I just got a message from him, I've been praying for you and you know, are there any special requests that you have?

Emerick: (45:24) Yea, the man is phenomenal, he's phenomenal. He had to go through a lot or rehabilitation a lot, but God kept him and but the thing is I saw the faith in Dr. Hughes and I saw how he walked with the Lord. I think the thing that encouraged me and helped me grow in my

walk with Christ was seeing these godly men here at Liberty University. And people like Dr. Hughes and Dr. Diemer and those that taught us and we realized that they taught us but they didn't look at it just being academic, it was real to them. And you know I wish you guys could have meet Dr. Hughes, he just when he walked you could see in his walked that he loved Jesus and it was just really neat. But those were times that were just neat down at the hotel.

Walters: (46:23) And so you have a small community there. How does that translate to today with our large community, and the teaching process, the whole you know learning by mentoring sort of things that goes on?

Emerick: (46:41) Of course it's on a larger scale now. Back in those days I was in charge of the hotel, and then I moved up here to the campus. My wife and I lived in dorm 2, and that's when my son was born. And but I remember I would have RA meetings, leadership meetings in the living room of my apartment, ok. That's how many we had. Now we use the vines center or we have a number of meetings with them at a hundred at a time. But we started the prayer, I remember we started the prayer leaders program when I was at the hotel and we saw the fact that we wanted a prayer leader for every five students we wanted a prayer leader. And so we had RA's and then we started the Prayer Leader program while we were there. And then of course as we've grown we have continued to do that. Now we have SLD's, prayer leaders SLD's, RA's, and people like that.

Miller: (47:48) So the SLD's didn't come until later on then?

Emerick: (47:51) No, no we had prayer leaders and prayer leaders were under the RA's. The RA's were basically DSLD's of that time and naturally they made sure that conduct was right but they were also in charge of the spiritual aspect of the floor.

Miller: (48:14) Well now you were telling us before we started recording about the year the students bought you a car. How did that work?

Emerick: (48:21) There was a year uh there was a number of years that financially we were struggling. And I remember one year we had to let a number of staff go not because we wanted to its just you know so. That year I was the dean of men but I was also the dean of student activities, ok. And that was the first year I brought Carmen to Liberty. And uh but I'll never forget, and that year I was taking a ministry team to Jamaica, and so I started to work with the students down at the student center, well it was David's Place, and we were working there and I got to know the students and ministering in the dorms and everything. And I drove this old car and it was like I can't remember what it was but it had an oil leak in it and I'd have to keep putting oil in it. And you know I was just enjoying the students and I think they were enjoying me. And I came back from taking a missions trip to Jamaica and I was calling back and forth setting up Carmen into coming and it was just right when the Vines Center had opened up. And when I came back I didn't know that the kids had started a project, let's save our highways and keep oil off and let's get pastor or Dean Emerick a car [*laughing*], you know. And I they asked

me to get up and speak, I didn't know and they had me they asked me to get up and share about my ministry to Jamaica, the team that I took, not knowing. So I got up and I started to share and they said oh wait a minute you know your car has been so dangerous for the students here on campus, so we as a student body have something for you. And I remember in the tunnel coming into Vines Center, I heard a car starting, and they drove a car out part way not onto the court but out to the edge of the court. And they said as students here at Liberty University we all got together and we got you a car to drive, a new car. And they gave me the keys and it was just so neat I it was a blessing, and of course I cried you know. *[Laughing]*

Walters: (50:33) So that would have been the early '90's then if it was after Vines so.

Emerick: (50:38) *[sighs]* Was it then? It might have been the early yeah it was towards the end of the 80's.

Walters: (50:45) Ok.

Emerick: (50:46) Going in because I'll never forget the time the first time I had a concert in the Vines. I called Carmen and asked Carmen I asked Doc I said can I bring Carmen in? And he said yeah, yeah I would love to have him come. So I remember I called Carmen up and I said we'd like to book you to come and do a concert for Liberty. And he said you know brother Dane he said I can't believe you guys waited this long to have me, he said sure I'd love to come. So he said I'll send my setup men and so some guys came and they said where's it going to be? And I said well it's going to be in the Vines Center. And they looked and they said well you don't have enough power for a concert, you know our unit down there wasn't that powerful, it was enough to light up the place for a basketball game, but not enough for a concert. So I got a call from Carmen and Carmen said you know brother Dane what we're going to is we're going to rent a tractor and trailer with a

Miller: (51:48) Generator

Emerick: (51:49) Generator on the back and I said oh ok that would be great. So next thing I know I got a phone call from Carmen and Carmen said brother Dane he said we were looking at this and he said I really feel like God's told me; why waste money for a generator, just to be there temporarily. God told me to put a generator in the Vines Center for the students. And he paid for a generator and put it and upped the power. Then he called and he said now he said are the kids going to be sitting on the floor? And you know I said no, we don't have a floor covering. And he said why? And I said I hate saying this but we don't have the money for a floor covering. So next thing I know he calls me and he goes, do you know any colleges in the area that have a floor covering so we can find out where we can purchase a floor covering. That man bought a floor covering for the Vines Center and I'm telling you God just blessed, you know and he didn't even take up an offering. Oh no, he took up an offering but he didn't charge tickets. And you can imagine how much this cost him to come, but God lead him to do that. I respect this man, but let

me tell you about the concert. Oh, I'm sorry. The concert came along and I'll never forget he was here and who was the group that Charles was with?

Background: (53:18) Newsong

Emerick: (53:19) Newsong. Newsong was to open and Carmen was to sing, ok. But we hadn't used the Vines Center with a lot of people in it so here what it was was people would flush the commode, there was so many people there they didn't have the plumbing right. So Carmen's singing or Newsong's out there singing and were in the back and all this sewage is coming up in the back of the Vines Center. So I have this squeegee and a bunch of us had squeegees and were pushing all the stuff out the back door and they're out there singing and then they would get off the stage and going we're going to keep on singing we don't want to go back in there with that stuff there, you know. And I remember Mrs. Falwell came down and she goes what's going on, you know? *[Laughing]* And it was crazy but it was just an experience that was just neat and to see this man of God. And I'll never forget Dr. Falwell spent an evening in his bus just talking to him. And the unity that was there knowing that Carmen was charismatic. And seeing Doc and him together and seeing them sharing and I remember Doc was saying to him he says you know Carmen, he said, you can reach people I can't reach; with your music and your ministry. And it was just neat.

Walters: (54:34) Well now that was one of the things that Dr. Falwell always emphasized, was you reach the youth through the music and sports correct?

Emerick: (54:42) Um hum

Walters: (54:43) Well let's talk about that. Okay now Dr. Falwell I believe, correct me if I'm wrong, he made the statement many times that you reach youth through music and sports. Can you speak specifically to the evolution of tolerance for contemporary music here at Liberty, and how that all progressed over the decades and concerts and whatever you want to offer us there?

Emerick: (55:12) I think um I think one of the things that really encouraged us too to come here was our chorals and our music groups. But I remember when I first came here I was more into contemporary music. When I came here Larry Norman and some of the old contemporary musicians of the day was really put down by you know ultra-conservative churches, or legalistic churches. In matter of fact that's what got me into trouble at my church, was my music. But I remember when I first came here you know we look at truth today and we couldn't bring truth in we couldn't bring any singing that was contemporary, you know. You know even though we did a lot of the music like similar music that they did.

Miller: (56:03) And we couldn't do that because of?

Emerick: (56:04) I think, I think you know and I can't speak for Doc but I don't think Doc had a problem with it. But you gotta understand that when we started our university or our college, at

that time, we were we were supported by strong evangelical very, very conservative, legalistic churches. Now I'm not putting them down but, but that was our constituents that supported us. So I think we were very aware of, of the fact that we didn't want to offend anybody and so we patterned a lot of what we did through Bob Jones, and through some of the other Tennessee Temple, down in Florida um...

Miller: (56:53) Bob Grace Church, Jacksonville?

Emerick: (56:55) Pensacola. And that's where we were. And you know I remember we had a concert we had a senior junior senior banquet and I remember we brought a music team in, and it was the Palermo brothers and their dummy. And I'll never forget we're sitting there and the Palermo brothers and their singing and their dummies singing, you know. And I remember Eddy Dobson got up and he Eddy walked behind, Eddy was our Dean of students, which is equivalent to Vice President today, he was right under Doc. And he walked in the back and Dr. Guillermin, our President was sitting there and I remember how Eddy goes come with me. So we went in the back and all of a sudden Eddy goes, "This is God, let my people go." *[laughing]* And but we just and I remember we brought in Dallas Holm and I think I was sharing with you guys. We brought Dallas Holm in and it was one of our first contemporary and today you wouldn't even consider him, he was contemporary and such but great singer. And I remember sitting down with Dallas before he would go out on the platform and we were doing it in the Vines Center, not the Vine good grief, we didn't have the Vine by then. The Schilling Center, which was the gym then, and we sat down with Dallas and we had to tell him now when you get up on the platform do not move and draw attention to yourself. Your music is to draw attention to the Lord. Oh boy, ok, so he got out and I remember Dallas goes don't worry you know I my whole ministry is to bring attention to the Lord. And then we brought Steve Green in, and Steve was the next contemporary, and then when I was doing the Dean's position and handling concerts and student activities I brought in Steve Camp. And Steve did such a fantastic job and then we brought in Michael W. Smith, and Michael was just getting started and we started to grow and we started to change. And I think that Doc saw that as support changed and as churches became more tolerant to music and contemporary Christian music cause I remember we, we were in a meeting once and I remember Doc was saying about there was a time that he wouldn't let his kids listen to you know contemporary music and he said you know if I had to do it again over again he said I would let them. You know we had Jars of Clay then and then we had of course DC Talk, was our homegrown boys. And then we started to bring in other contemporary music and our concert and our venue changed for students and they started to pack out. I remember when I brought Lincoln Brewster in I had called Doc and I said look we don't have a concert lined up and we're getting towards finals week and I'd loved to have just an evening of praise and worship. If I can get him is it ok if I brought him in? And he said you know you do what you want to do you know definitely I'll stand behind you. And we brought Lincoln Brewster in and it was a fantastic evening. And so our concerts changed and as you see I mean to the point that we had a concert

over at Thomas Road and ah let's see he writes a lot of Christian music um praise and worship he's going to be here in

Background: (1:00:33) Chris Tomlin?

Emerick: (1:00:54) Who? No, no I can't...

Background: (1:00:37) David Crowder?

Emerick: (1:00:37) David Crowder. David Crowder came over and David is just fantastic and just loves the Lord. And we had him at Thomas Road. And I'll never forget that night, Doc was still around and the balcony over Thomas Road started moving. And I'll never forget that and we're sitting there and were watching the screen and the screen kept shaking and then all of a sudden it dawned on us that we're in the balcony it's not the screen it's us. And we were bouncing up and down and we put a crack in the wall over at the church. But we opened up to praise and worship and we opened up to contemporary Christian music and then we're seeing kids you know come to the Lord. Jars of Clay oh my gosh the words and the things of their songs and Doc was seeing that and Doc was saying you know let's bring in this group and let's bring in this group. And it was just you know, the only group that we never had that I wanted to have but in those days was Petra. I loved Petra, and but I think today we would have definitely had them in, but now their old people.

Walters: (1:01:48) Well I remember a Striper concert over at Roanoke with all the kids trying to leak out to go to that when I was a student here but.

Emerick: (1:01:55) Well you know Striper had come to E.C. Glass too.

Walters: (1:01:59) Oh ok

Emerick: (1:02:00) And I snuck over *[laughing]* and I excuse me I hope I don't get into trouble. I snuck over and I asked if I could go in the back to talk to them, and I remember talking to them. I wasn't a real fan on the way they were dressing *[laughing]*. I thought that definitely

Miller: (1:02:17) How did you develop your taste for or your like for contemporary Christian music?

Emerick: (1:02:24) I think I think I've always loved music and I loved more contemporary more upbeat and like I said I always got me in trouble with the church. In matter of fact the thing that really was the straw that broke the camel's back was at in my church there was a parade and I had in the parade I had a float and I had a rock band on it, Christian rock band. And it just that's when they asked me to leave the church, because they said I was embarrassing them not the youth. And when we started at the church we had twelve in senior high and they asked me to leave I was averaging 250 in senior high alone. And we were reaching kids and I think when I went to Bible College I was part. Ok, I was part of the Jesus movement, I had a certain set of

clothes that I wore when I was in class at Bible College and I had a certain set of clothes that I wore outside of class. I wore a top hat I had stove pipe pants or bell bottoms I wore a cross I had a Nehru jacket. And we would down to DuPont's circle in Washington D.C. And you know I would set up a canvas and I would start painting and we would have kids with guitars and we would sing until we got a crowd. And then when we got a crowd I'd start preaching and I would finish my painting as I was preaching. And if anybody got saved we would take them into the fountain in DuPont's circle and we baptized them. I'll tell you during that period of time it was wonderful, the Jesus movement was just I mean that's what brought me to a point of being totally, totally sold out for Jesus Christ.

Walters: (1:04:09) Did the group Glad come out of that movement?

Emerick: (1:04:11) Yeah

Walters: (1:04:11) Did you have contact with them?

Emerick: (1:04:13) I was at a couple of their concerts and backstage with them you know.

Miller: (1:04:17) And now so there was a time though, getting back to Liberty, so you're the Dean of Men here students in the early days tell me, I don't know whether you had music check but there was some music that just wasn't allowed. You can't physically own this record, could you talk about that?

Emerick: (1:04:33) When this radio station was starting and it was of course you could only get it here on campus,

Walters: (1:04:40) It was WLBU wasn't it?

Emerick: (1:04:42) Yeah you could only get it I guess in a couple dorms but every record, record

Miller: (1:04:48) Phonograph record

Emerick: (1:04:49) For those who don't know what a record is, I had to listen to every song and I had to put a label on it what songs they could play and what songs they could not play, which was really hard for me because I like contemporary Christian music

Miller: (1:05:05) We actually put splicing tape on the ones you couldn't play in my

Emerick: (1:05:08) Yeah, yeah and

Walters: (1:05:11) So what was your criteria? How did you evaluate that?

Emerick: (1:05:16) The beat.

Walters: (1:05:17) Too fast?

Emerick: (1:05:17) Too fast.

Walters: (1:05:18) Too loud?

Miller: (1:05:19) Too much drums?

Emerick: (1:05:19) Yes, yes it was, excuse me but it was crazy. I mean I mean I had to cut out music that you know I really liked and the records they wanted to get rid of I took them home. [Laughing] But it was just amazing how things changed and again I think it was still down to the fact that of who was supporting our university.

Miller: (1:05:45) A core constituently?

Emerick: (1:05:46) Yes, and I think as time went on Doc he just opened up. I mean to his likes you know and I would sit in his car and he would play you know country western and you know and he would play you know

Miller: (1:06:04) Southern gospel.

Emerick: (1:06:05) Southern gospel and you know and so you know I looked at him and I knew, I knew he you know you pick your battles wisely, and he did.

Walters: (1:06:18) Well then how did that support evolve? I mean some churches changed with LU and the times others did not. How did Dr. Falwell choose to cut his losses or not to with some of the support and how did that sometimes we seem to think that you know that Bob Jones was kind of an ally at one point but then they kind of became a competitor perhaps. And that those types of organizations or institutions how did that

Emerick: (1:06:55) It you know I don't know what his thinking was I think I understand. I think it was to a point where in the support we were seeing the support we were seeing changes and not in doctrine, we never ever, ever changed in doctrine, but in method. And when we started to move in saying okay like Doc said sports and music is what communicates to the kids and sitting there saying okay we gotta be real in who we are and so we opened up more to more contemporary music, music kids loved and I would never say you know yeah we had a partnership with these schools, and their great schools and I love them and I love what they do but I don't think we ever form what I see ok it's just me I don't think we ever pulled away from them, I think they pulled away from us. And we stepped back and said you know if that's the direction you want to go or if you want to pull away that's totally up to you

Walters: (1:08:06) Well, let's talk about movies. I know that in my own home all of a sudden we couldn't go to theaters but when VHS [*Video Home System*] came out, we could buy movies and things. Can you speak to the evolution of movie viewing here, when I was a student in the late 80's they had a movie of the week and it would get edited and it'd would be shown in DeMoss 160-161 and then it was down in David's Place and then my senior year they made it legal by

'91 it was legal to go over here to Movies 10. Can you speak to that and that evolution and how did it just become too hard to discipline, or?

Emerick: (1:08:44) You know again I think that was the old, the old stance that you don't go into a movies, you know. I remember my Aunt used to tell me when I would go to a movie she'd say what if the Lord came when you were sitting there? And I would say well I would be in a movie then I would be fine I would have no problem. Yeah I remember the times I'd used to do the editing where we would splice, you know or we wouldn't splice, I would watch a movie and if it had maybe if it had a swear word in it and I'd be sitting there and I would watch it and watch it, you know technology wasn't that great here, you know and I'd turn it down and it was so funny [*chuckling*] because I always missed it. I would turn it down and it would get really quite and I'd turn it up and there would be the [*laughing*] word. I'm going oh no, no and I remember we showed Star Wars and in Star Wars Leia was dancing in front of the

Walters: (1:09:41) Juba the hut

Emerick: (1:09:42) Juba the hut and she was sort of not clothed properly so I had a stick with a piece of cardboard on it and I'd have to watch and try to keep it in front of her [*laughing*] and she was dancing and she always I'd put it here and she'd dance over there and I'd get my stick over there to block her and but I think that we got to a place where. I remember when Dr. Falwell gave his permission cause I remember going to the movie theaters and taking license plate numbers and we'd call the kids in and then say you're not allowed to go to movies and then there was another thing that Dr. Falwell looked at and he said you know I think these kids you know hopefully their choosing wisely in what they're going to see. And so we started out with PG [*Parental Guidance*] movies and oh my gosh I remember bless his heart Jack Wyrzten oh my goodness he thought we were just abandoning our walk and our faith because we allowed movies and but we have to understand that if we are training our young people we have to give them the opportunity to choose wisely and we try to help them on that and of course we say no R [*Restricted*] rated movies. But I'm telling you there's some PG-13 [*some material may be inappropriate for children under 13*] they shouldn't go to. So we're looking at saying ok Cedarville does not have a code where ok or whatever you can't go to. What they do they have on their for their students they evaluate or look at the movies that are out there and saying you know which ones should go, it's almost like focus on the family does. But yea it was crazy, I remember the time Doc had came back from California and they had gotten him to watch Gladiator, they brought him over and they had a theater there and he came back and he said well you know I'm not you know endorsing movies but it was really a good movie, very clean and of course in the original before they edited the thing they had a scene in there where they brought the Christians out into the arena. And showing their faith and everything and Doc said it was really good. Well here it turned out to be an R rated movie, which there was nothing, nothing wrong with that movie. There's no immorality no but there was the fighting in the arena. So I think we just have changed with the times and said ok you know.

Walters: (1:12:18) Well it seems like you have done that with even in areas, like I know my freshman year my upperclassmen roommate's said we were so lucky because in the fall of '87 you could hold hands at PDA [*Public Display of Affection*] anything with that. You know you went from double dating with freshman and sophomores and that sort of thing to single dating. Is it just a matter of common sense to a degree too?

Emerick: (1:12:52) I think so I think we grew I mean there was a 6-inch rule you know.

Walters: (1:12:57) There was a literal 6-inch rule?

Emerick: (1:12:58) Yeah you had to sit so far away from a girl, a girl had to sit so far away from you. There couldn't be any hand holding or anything like that. And yeah those were the days and I think we just evolved as we went along. And we looked at things and we said ok what will hurt our Christian stance and what was something that was just a preference that maybe we can you know preference we can pull back on. And I think I think we've done well with that.

Miller: (1:13:31) So are there groups that we still, Christian groups that we wouldn't have today for whatever reason for music groups?

Emerick: (1:13:40) I, I can't think of any. I can't think of any. I you know I think maybe there are some groups that are total heavy metal very alternative that we probably would not have come. But the majority of the groups that come in you know Skillet, and some of those groups you know that are pretty heavy but yet still you know communicate and are great with our people the what we have on New Years

Background: (1:14:16) Winterfest

Emerick: (1:14:16) Winterfest, and see what groups we have.

Miller: (1:14:20) Let's Kind of take a direction here I'd like to talk about this structure of the whole student life department. And so you were a Dean of Men at one point. Ok so there is the Dean of Men, Dean of Women what do you do verses what the Dean of students does? In my little Bible College the Dean of Men was an all around thing that if you wanted to talk about your girlfriend and you know problems that you were having with just relationships in that you'd go talk to the Dean of Men but if you were in trouble for having done something wrong you know it covered both of what we have as care and conduct. Can you talk a little bit about just how the office is structured and how that's evolved?

Emerick: (1:15:07) I you know again we were probably like your little Bible College, that you went to, back in those days. Back when I started we had a Dean of Students and then we had the Dean of Men, and Dean of Women. And basically the Dean of Men Dean of Women student affairs handled both discipline and spiritual aspects or the area of counseling or biblical counseling. So basically we were pastors and the same time

Miller: (1:15:35) Police Men

Emerick: (1:15:36) Disciplinarians. And so I think that we were small then but as we started to grow I remember the women's area started to grow faster than the guys. The Dean of Women had two assistant deans and she had a secretary and then the dean's area was me I was everything. And yet we would say look at the discipline the guys are facing, we had more discipline with guys then we do with girls. So then we started to grow and we started to develop the deans of men's area and we started to bring in assistant deans I finally had a secretary. And yet we were still doing pastoral counseling as well as handling the discipline. But I think as we started to progress we started to say ok, we need, we need to start cause the prayer leaders were under us and SLD's are under us we were doing that program too. And I remember we pulled that and said you know we need to develop that sort of separate because these guys can't be doing all of this. And I remember we brought Gary Aldridge in and Gary started the prayer leader program and really worked the developing that program. When ah when Vernon Brewer was here I had an assistant working for me Rob Jackson and I had brought Rob in from being a security officer, he had graduated and I brought him on as an assistant dean. And then when Vernon took over they had talked about starting a pastor ah pastor staff. And so I, I sat down and it was so funny cause I sent a letter out to Dr. Falwell and Rob helped me write the letter and two days later Rob was hired as the campus pastor. But Rob came in as campus pastor and then he was sort of overseeing the spiritual aspect and then each one of us were dealing with, with disciplinarian and conduct and things like that, even though my heart was still pastor. I think that as the years have progressed it got to a place where they decided to just have a pastor's office and more pastors and Rob Jackson wanted to hire some people on as campus pastors. And of course Gary not Gary um let's see who was doing it then ah oh Dwayne Carson was brought on. And he was handling that program and building that program. Johnnie was there.

Miller: (1:18:27) Johnnie Moore?

Emerick: (1:18:28) Yeah and before Rob it was it was Danny Lovett then Danny moved on and then they brought Rob back. And then Rob called me and said Doc wants me to ask you if you want to come over as campus pastor. And I said well yea I'd love to and I said why. And he said cause he knows your heart and he knows that you've been disciplining kids and dismissing kids and its killing you, and he wants you to come over and I said oh yea, you know I'll be there. So we ran that department for awhile and then all of a sudden there was a change that happened. Rob was moved as Vice President of spiritual life and we developed that area and then Rob was moved out of the department and they did away at that time with the campus pastor's office, the name. And came up with student care and so we had student care and we had student conduct, the titles deans were gone, the only person in student care that had a pastors title was me and Charles Hughes. And then about a year ago Jerry had said you know we need campus pastor's office back.

Miller: (1:19:47) This would be Jerry Jr.

Emerick: (1:19:48) Yes, and so they did a campus pastors office and it was Dwayne and me and Debbie and we were working with students and then.

Miller: (1:20:00) Debbie who?

Emerick: (1:20:01) Debbie Rogers. Debbie used to sing with Youth Quest a long time a long time ago. And she came back to work with the women's side and also be our office manager and budget controller. Then all of a sudden it changed back and now it's under student affairs and so you have campus pastor and you have student care, now understand student care is more in the area of counseling, you know. It handles more the professional type of counseling that we have a licensed counselor that's over that area. My area is pastor and pastoral counseling and biblical counseling and we're there and we do groups and we do premarital workshops and we do weddings and we do things like that. And then the conduct handles the conduct in the dorm of the students

Walters: (1:20:53) So would I be somewhat in the ball park if I said that the pastors office does preventive spiritual growth and the counseling side does restorative or how what are the missions of the different divisions? And how do they interwork?

Emerick: (1:21:14) I think when you when we get into an area where you know like maybe you say a student is into cutting and things like that, you know I will work with them but I try to get them into student care. Because they have the avenues and the directions and counselors off campus and counselors that can work, and so what it is is you know I will work with a student but I'll say you know this is a problem that's much deeper then what I can handle, psychologically. And so I want to move them over to student care and then student care will work them, as much as they can, you know hopefully we can keep them without getting them home. And that's not dismissal that be saying you know we need to get them under parental care again. So I yeah I guess I guess in a way yes but yet but in a way we work hand and hand and we deal with similar things.

Miller: (1:22:09) Are you seeing a lot more broken homes today then you did back in the '70's? I would guess that back in that day that most of them came from Christian two family you know two parent homes and what is the makeup of the student body today? Has that changed significantly?

Emerick: (1:22:30) oh, oh, oh my yes it's amazing how many kids will come in and you know and the way it changed back when I first started if a student got in trouble we called the parents called the parents right away and we were *in loco parentis* their parents away from home but when a lot of policies came along for accreditation and stuff and we fell under policies that we can't unless we talk to a student and say you know will you give me the right to talk to your parents but I'm amazed when I call, most of the times I'll call the mom and her last name is different than the students last name. I think with divorce rate and with what's going on a lot of the kids I deal with come from broken homes. And I think it's we're in a crisis right now, in our

churches and in our society. And a lot of these kids are struggling you know and I know one thing that when I was reading and some of the things that you might ask me or be interested in. And you'll find that a mother, we call them helicopter parents, that will hover over their children but we but then we find out when we talk to the children that both mom and dad worked, they were never home when the child was growing up and really needed the help. And now all of a sudden they're in school and it's almost like I want to try I'm doing my best to come back into my child's life again. So I'm going to you know defend you when you're in trouble instead of saying you know what we believe in the school and we believe in the disciplinary actions that are heading towards my child. It's like we'll fight it, we'll fight it. And a lot of times I think they're doing it because they want to get that relationship back with they're child that they had forgotten through the years. You know I always tell I do premarital counseling here and last semester I had 65 couples in the group. And the one thing that I press on people if at all possible you know my wife had a career but when our children were born she put the career aside and she raised our you know was home with the children. When they got older she can go back to her career. But I think that my kids are very stable and it's of course because of the Lord but secondly because of mom always being there. And I think these kids are being raised by babysitters and child care and parents aren't really investing and you see it in when they come here.

Miller: (1:25:19) The pastor's or they were campus pastors were these Liberty University pastors or was there a connection intrinsic with Thomas Road Baptist Church? Can you talk about the interrelation or go way back in the seventies then what was the connection between Thomas Road Baptist Church and Liberty College you know Lynchburg Baptist College and then Liberty University what was it then and what is it today? If you have the title pastor are you a Thomas Road pastor or are you a Liberty University pastor?

Emerick: (1:25:52) when I first started as a dean I had to go to the pastors meetings at the church. I we were basically considered part of the church staff and I remember going up to Eagle Erie with meetings with Dr. Falwell and we would have training meetings and working. So basically when I first came the church had a lot to do with the university and the university was very much connected to Thomas Road Baptist Church. But through the years as we grew that sort of split. Right now we have within our department a number of pastors and Johnnie and Keith Anderson, myself and some of the other younger ones we are connected with the church as well as the university. Now we get paid by the university, but I'll never forget Dr. Falwell we had a meeting and he goes I remember we were sitting there and he goes hey give them a little stipend so they can say that they're truly under the church, you know pastors of the church. So we go to pastors meetings and we share our ministries what we're doing on campus. My premarital, it's advertised at the church as well as on campus. Jonathon comes in and I have a panel with a couple that's been married over fifty years on down and I always have Jonathon and Sherry up on the panel. I think we're trying to try to mesh us back together, you know we look at Sunday night service now is at Thomas Road Baptist Church and we're seeing a lot of youth from the church coming we're seeing younger couples, married couples coming to the church

service on Sunday nights, kids from other Colleges and Universities. So I you know I look at and I'm glad that we're coming again back together. But when I first started to work here we basically answered to the church.

Walters: (1:28:16) How is that coming together? It seems like you've mentioned a lot of youth there from you know the high school age I guess through young married. How's that working out for the older generations at Thomas Road?

Emerick: (1:28:34) I think you know it's.

Walters: (1:28:40) How has that worked over the years?

Emerick: (1:28:42) I think at one time you know we were very cautious about integrating contemporary Christian music inside the church because of the older, older people but you know I think we have balanced at the church so well that at 5 o' clock of course we're starting it really early but we have it I think at 5 o' clock 5-6. We have a service for those who just want to come. Dr. Wilmington teaches, and he's teaching the book of Psalms and it's amazing how the older people go to that service, and some younger ones that come to that and then stay for the contemporary. And you know at first some of the older people they even still now you know I do counseling in Sunday mornings at Thomas Road when they give an invitation to the two services I'm up front as one of the pastors and then go in the back and some of the older deacons go how can you stand in that? Do you have earplugs in? And I say you know Sunday night and you know they're expecting me cause I'm old to say oh isn't it awful? And I go I love it, I love it it's just awesome you know. But, but they've become very much what would we say tolerant of it but understanding that we're really reaching out and reaching the community, and in so connecting the university with the church at this point.

Miller: (1:30:10) We've just got a little bit of time today, we're going to extend over into another interview. Just because we have a lot more questions we'd like to ask you. I noticed that you had a list of some of the previous Dean of Men and Dean of Women, if you could just kind of go through and in the few minutes we have left today and maybe mention a name so we have it for the historical record, and if you have a particular memory or something that you'd like to share about that individual?

Emerick: (1:30:37) You know I think the thing is as I look at this you know I mean the more recent ones you know like I hired a young man by the name of David Thew. Here's the thing about Dr. Falwell. Dr. Falwell would call me up and he would say hey Dane I have this young man and he's a great young man, but he needs somebody to mentor him. And the best way to mentor him is to have him work for you. He said would you mind bringing him on? Like I'm going to say no? And I remember I brought David on and this was not too long ago. And David was just a kid that just loved Jesus and he was musical and he but he had worked at the airport and he had gotten to a place that he just became you know my faith you know; where's God working, what is God doing and just really you know sort of discouraged and he come on the

staff. And we watched him grow, and I knew that David wasn't going to stay with us. And David grew and grew and now he's pasturing a church down in Georgia and the thing is just taking off it's just growing like crazy. I remember when he left, he called me dad, and I remember when he left we saw him off we're crying and he takes off and he drives about five minutes down the road and I get a phone call, you know we have cell phones now, and he'd say I just called dad to tell you that I'm going to miss you. I'm going to miss you too David, ok, ok you just get going. Half an hour later my phone rings and I'm thinking you know oh my gosh, but I see him like Michael Bryan I brought Michael Bryan on, he was one of my assistants, and now Mike pastor's what used to be Old Forest Road Baptist Church, he pastor's there and teaches Greek here. Bruce Traeger, John Purple, Brad Smith, they were all assistants and some of them moved up, over me, where they worked under me. Someone goes well how do you like that? I liked the rung of the ladder I was on, I didn't everyone says unless you moving up your not successful. No, I like where I'm at, that's where I feel successful. But all three of these guys now are at Cedarville; Brad is the Dean of Men, each one of them work with students up there and we've seen them leave. Matt Rollins Matt Rollins was one of my assistants and Matt now works in the center for Global Ministries. You know we could just go on and on with all these individuals that God had brought into our lives. Let's see Greg Dale Greg Dale worked for me as an assistant and wound up becoming the Dean of Students and now he pastors here. He left here to work with one of the companies in the area and he was making really good money and he left because of that and you know I would pray with him and say are you sure that's what you want to do? And because the company he worked with he flew out to California to they wanted him to preview a bunch of people to preview the Passion of the Christ. And I get a call from he and he said he said I just previewed the Passion of the Christ I just now got up off the floor. And God called me to pastor and God said what are you doing Greg? Now Greg pastors at an Afro American church in the city and is bringing in the community where it's not just Afro Americans but bringing it together a family and he's doing a great job. The women, bless their hearts they you know someone says well why was there so many women and just you? Well the women got married and their husbands moved and God called them and they went with their husbands and I think that's why there had been so many changes. John Baker, John Baker and Ed Dobson were a team and John was a tremendous man, and he loved the Lord and three years ago I did his funeral and it was amazing to hear the testimonies at his funeral, what God had done. Gary passed away a few years back too. And so I you know we've seen a lot of people come and we've seen a lot of them go. But so many of the guys went because God called them into other areas of ministry and it wasn't that they were abandoning the ministry it was the fact that God was calling them into even greater, greater work that he had planned for them.

Miller: (1:35:01) God was moving his furniture around.

Emerick: (1:35:03) Oh my gosh, yes.

Miller: (1:35:04) Did you have a list of some of the women there?

Emerick: (1:35:06) Yes, let me see I wrote them down here. Let's see there was Eleanor Henderson. Eleanor went to seminary with me and she served as the Dean of Women and just, just a neat lady, she loved the students. Joanne Sigmund, Jane McKanney, Danny McKanney's wife, she was the Dean of Women for a while. Michelle Matthews, Michelle works at the church now and Michelle was the Dean of Women and I think she was the last one before they moved into conduct officers or things like that. Dean Woods was the first one that was here when I came and just the lady was crazy, you know, students just loved her. I think the thing is Michelle Matthews, if you ever go to Thomas Road Baptist Church and you see any of the paintings or any of the artwork over there Michelle is one of the ones that does the artwork at the church and she handles all the things and weddings and things at Thomas Road. Kathy Rusk, Kathy was here from the beginning and she was the secretary and she is still here, she is Jonathon's secretary and she's just like a sister to us. I think the thing that was neat about being here is being a part of a family and not just a staff. And we were a family Ed Dobson oh my gosh Ed was Ed was just something else. You talk about a man who could just preach the word of God. Eddie could communicate with kids. Vernon Brewer, Vernon was Vernon it was just amazing to see what he could do and his mission mindedness and he brought with him Light Ministries and I worked for Vernon and then Vernon went on to establish a mission board and is doing great, so a lot of great men that I've had the opportunity to work with and to serve with.

Miller: (1:37:10) Well we're out of time for today and with that we will conclude this part of our interview with Dane Emerick. This interview has been conducted as part of the oral history project of the Liberty University Archive.

[End of Interview]