

Oral History Interview of Dane Emerick

Date of Interview: September 14, 2011

Location of Interview: Recording Studio of the Student Radio Station, 90.9 The Light

Name of Interviewee: Dane Emerick

Name of Interviewers: Randy Miller, Lowell Walters

Transcriber: Grace Peterson

Interview Length: (1:40:44)

Notes:

Miller: (0:01) Welcome to this interview in the oral history project of the Liberty University archives. This interview is being conducted on September 14, 2011. It's the third in a three part series interviewing Dane Emerick. My name is Randy Miller, and I'll be conducting this interview today along with Lowell Walters, greetings Dane.

Emerick: (0:22) Greetings.

Miller: (0:23) And Lowell.

Walters: (0:24) Good Afternoon Randy.

Miller: (0:26) Well our first question today here let's talk about the connection between Thomas Road Baptist Church and Liberty University. It certainly was I don't know whether if it was more it was tighter I mean they actually meet in the church building in those early years. Were you there when they were still meeting in the old Thomas Road facility?

Emerick: (0:50) Oh yes, we used to have our chapels in the auditorium there. I remember doing evangelism class there in the auditorium. The educational building where the senior high would meet on Sunday's we had classrooms there. So basically most of our classes were at the church. We had a few buildings in town and we would meet there. I remember J.O. Grooms who taught evangelism and I remember he would teach us how to witness to people and he would sit on the stage and they had a telephone there, and he would call people and witness to them, so we could hear him witnessing to them. I don't know if the people would have enjoyed if they knew a bunch of students were listening. But he would witness and share with them the gospel. So that we would could see it firsthand. So he was there so most of our classes were at Thomas Road and definitely the university well the college at that point in time was really apart of Thomas Road Baptist church. So was LCA [Lynchburg Christian Academy] and as LCA grew I know Dr. Falwell had shared with us that he started LCA because his children and they wanted them in a

Christian school and they kept adding on to the years at LCA until they got to twelfth grade. And then he moved on to starting the college now the kids were younger then but his goal was to start the college. So eventually as his kids finished LCA they would have a Christian school to go to.

Miller: (2:31) College was available to them

Emerick: (2:32) Yeah, and the kids lived right around the church.

Miller: (2:35) So now in those early years every student had to go to Thomas Road unless so if you were a student pastor going to the seminary you could go to Thomas Terrace Baptist Church or something like that. But otherwise did everybody have to go or when did we start seeing people going to Heritage Baptist or Berean Baptist or some of the other ones?

Emerick: (2:56) Yeah you were required to go. I remember standing at the door you'd have to check in with us, you sat by your dorm everybody had to go everybody had to be dressed properly with a suit and tie or a sports coat and tie. Girls had to be dressed properly. I remember standing at the door in the balcony and if a kid would get up to have to go the bathroom we would say no or if you go you got to check back in that way we know you're here. We would get them up in the mornings Sunday morning and everybody had to be dressed and ready to go to church so church was required then. I think it wasn't until when we moved towards getting some state what would we say? Help for the students not that we were getting any.

Miller: (3:48) Financial aid

Emerick: (3:49) Financial aid. That there was a question about that and of course at that point in time we saw so many churches getting started and we also saw that for Christian service even though we were large we had such a large amount of students needing Christian service that wanted to go to other churches. And so you went and you had to have a thing signed saying that you know I'm working at the church, I'm just saying I'm not going to this church and maybe one Sunday I go and next Sunday I just go somewhere else. No you had to be involved in the church and you got graded then. Now its Christian service and community service, so it's not just working at churches it's working in the community and community projects.

Walters: (4:32) How many of the current churches around Lynchburg would you perceive as having budded off Thomas Road's membership with either someone coming through seminary and starting up a new church locally or that sort of thing. Do we have any son's [laughter] of Thomas Road, so to speak?

Miller: (4:54) Usually they call them sister churches.

Walters: (4:56) Yes sister churches.

Emerick: (4:58) I believe that a lot of the churches even the ones that were here at that time you know verily small churches have grown because of our students I know Blue Ridge has a lot of

our students and staff working there. Hyland Heights even though it was here yet we saw it grow though the years with once we opened it up for our students and staff to go it started to grow. Brentwood, I remember when Brentwood got started I know it was a Wesleyan church, small Wesleyan church and when their pastor who is a graduate from Liberty, took it over it started to grow and of course it's grown into sort of a independent bible church. And Blue Ridge oh not Blue Ridge but uh when I went to my gosh, the name of the church

Miller: (5:56) Heritage?

Emerick: (5:57) No, no

Walters: (5:58) Thomas Terrace Temple?

Emerick: (5:59) Thomas Terrace. Thomas Terrace was started by J.O.'s son, in matter of fact we have two churches in the area started by J.O Grooms' boys. But Brentwood I was talking about Brentwood. I remember when I first went they started to have it out at Brookeville High school. When I walked in it was like the second campus church service. Because everybody there were was Liberty students. And of course now it's grown where its pulled in locals so that in the summer time when kids go home for break the church isn't empty you know it's growing. And we see it growing and we see the ministry that's there. So I think we've seen a lot of ministries get started because of Thomas Road.

Miller: (6:41) I think I recall Dr. Falwell using the figure one time of around 60 within a twenty five mile radius or so and that wouldn't surprise me if that was the case.

Emerick: (6:50) Smith Mountain Lake, Charlottesville we have churches that were sort of started because of our young people going out and started the churches so. And especially now our pastor, Jonathon that's his goal, is to see us send, be senders and not only in foreign countries but also in Virginia and in other states and getting churches established.

Walters: (7:14) Well and he has established a formal church transplant over in Danville.

Emerick: (7:17) Yes, yes, yes. [*Phone ringing*] I'm sorry. Yeah and one or two in Roanoke now, and so it's just amazing to see what God is doing through our church, I know a lot of people say well is Thomas Road just wanting a mega church? No, we want to reach out and we're doing it we've done it through the years.

Miller: (7:41) Now was there ever an official campus church that's kind of its own church? If someone is a Liberty student and they want to be baptized does the campus church do baptisms or is that a Thomas Road Baptist Church Function?

Emerick: (7:59) If you're baptized like we baptize students and we a number of you know once or twice a semester and we'll baptize up to maybe fifty, sixty kids. And but I am one of the associate pastors at the church each one of the pastors that are at Liberty University also are

connected with Thomas Road. So if you you'll get a baptismal certificate but it's a baptismal certificate from Thomas Road Baptist Church and then we sign it and then Jonathon signs it. I am so sorry [*phone ringing*] so Jonathon signs it and we go from there.

Walters: (8:43) And then do those take place in the baptismal pool at Thomas Road or have you ever done any in a lake or stream baptisms here for any special event or?

Emerick: (8:54) We used to baptize in the Vine's Center. And we used to bring in like a trough

Miller: (9:00) Okay

Emerick: (9:01) And we baptized students in the trough, in the Vines Center for quite a few years. And then finally

Miller: (9:09) Even those would have been Thomas Road Baptist Church Baptismal.

Emerick: (9:13) Yeah we still would have signed it as Thomas Road Baptist Church. But now we've moved over on Wednesday nights and Wednesday nights we meet at Thomas Road Baptist Church and our church service is there and so we we can we use the baptismal pool there. And the last time we baptized last semester we had I think fifty seven kids that we baptized.

Miller: (9:34) And so was there ever a formal evangelistic requirement you know you have to pass out so many tracts or is there was that ever a class requirement or a Liberty requirement? I know that some schools do that. Liberty never had that, that you were required to go soul winning?

Emerick: (10:00) Well what we did in those days for Christian service you did fill out a Christian service form on Mondays of what you know what church you're working at or what ministry you we're involved with you know. And you'd write down some of the things you've experienced, so basically you were reporting that you did a Christian service and it wasn't just like I did a Christian service. No, what did you do?

Miller: (10:26) Did you teach a Sunday school class or whatever it be?

Emerick: (10:27) Yes, yes, yes

Miller: (10:28) And so you had a piece of paper and when did they stop doing those?

Emerick: (10:32) I'm not sure, when they stopped doing those. I know you still have to do a Christian service, you don't hand in per week, like I have a number of young people that help me with LFL [*lust free living*] groups and my pre-marital workshop's and stuff. And missions I take kids on mission trips, and that's counted as Christian service. So they have to fill out how many hours you have to have so many hours of Christian service you write out some of your experiences and then I grade you if you're under me and then I write out you know the progress

that I've seen in the person's life, how involved they were, things like that. So really at the end of the year is that report comes in not weekly like we used to have it way back.

Miller: (11:24) Now you had mentioned in an earlier interview that way back in the days that you had been kind of involved in the Jesus people movement and that movement is has a great deal of charismatic people in. I guess I'd like to just ask you the question here at Liberty it seems to me that at one time they were anti-charismatic and they kind of moved from being anti-charismatic to what I would call non charismatic. That's not our official position but we have an awful lot of charismatic students here. Could you talk about the charismatic movement and Liberty for just a moment?

Emerick: (12:02) Oh my gosh, thinking back yeah there was the we were so much against it that you know if you were involved in the charismatic movement Pentecost you basically could not attend, you could attend Liberty, you could not promote the gifts of the Spirit as tongues and things like that. But also at the time if that's what you were involved in this sounds awful but you couldn't graduate with a degree from here with that.

Miller: (12:39) Did they have a final doctrinal review or something like that that everybody that graduated pass this doctrinal review?

Emerick: (12:45) No

Walters: (12:44) How would you not graduate if you had gone through and taken all the courses?

Emerick: (12:49) Because these students came in and said this what I am and this is, I know this. I know I can't graduate from Liberty. But that changed quickly, which we were glad to see happen. Yet still we would say you cannot promote the gift of tongues or.

Miller: (13:08) So if somebody is a prayer leader today they couldn't lead the group in teaching them how to speak in tongues or something?

Emerick: (13:13) No, no, no, no and they make the commit not to do that. The basic fundamentals yes but not we cannot go there you can't promote it in the dorm. And because that's who we are and but you know we have a lot of kids that graduate that are charismatic and you know we don't definitely they are brothers and sisters in Christ. And even in our pastor said you know I get invited to a church, I'm going to speak there, and they are our brothers and sisters in Christ. But we don't agree with that aspect of doctrine or what they believe, we believe that's an apostolic gift and that it ended.

Miller: (14:01) Well I think when the whole thing with the Jim and Tammie Baker thing there were some charismatic's saying well Jerry Falwell he's not one of us and that and that was kind of an issue in those days.

Emerick: (14:10) Well we've brought people in like Carman to sing and to do concerts and others that we would say you know who are charismatic, but I think we've grown to a point where we see the body of Christ and we say okay the fundamentals of the faith, the strong doctrine's that we believe, yet there are certain things that maybe you agree with and we disagree with. But yet we can have that fellowship.

Miller: (14:41) Well then can you mention any specific names. Right now a student could do their Christian service in a local Assembly of God church or something like that. But I have seen through the years that we're not permitting our students to go to x church or y church over here. What causes a church to be kind of on the banned list? Is it have to do with doctrinal problems or?

Emerick: (15:07) It's, it's doctrine it's doctrine you know. I'm not mentioning churches but I know there's a few churches here that we look at and we say that they border on a cult we see heresy and definitely what they call doctrine and we go no. Where are you getting that from? And so you know yes say no you know you cannot go. I mean the kids may go, we may not know but yet at the same time you know we say no you know that's not what you should go.

Miller: (15:41) We're not going to cooperate with them for the Christian service here

Emerick: (15:43) No, no, no, no

Miller: (15:44) Back in those early days of Thomas Road, if they had B.R Lakin in for a week, evangelistic meetings for the church were the church meetings the school meetings and vice versa or did the church do some activities that Liberty students didn't go to ?

Emerick: (16:03) Back in those days since we were connected to the church what the church did was we were involved in as a school. You know super conference's we had to be there. If B.R Lakin was doing a series we had to be there. I remember in those days we asked the professors not to give homework for Wednesday night because students had to be at church at Wednesday for the service and we said don't put anything on your students but they weren't, faculty were not allowed to give exams or tests on Thursday because we wanted the kids at church. So you know that was part of the past and it was neat during that period of time, really neat.

Walters: (16:48) We were talking about the charismatic movement and cooperation with other churches locally and doctrine. How would the dean of men's office or whomever would address this, how would they work with kids who would show up here of a totally different faith then would try to practice that in the dorm room or something. I mean

Emerick: (17:10) Well students you know when we would say you cannot you cannot promote this and you cannot and if they did that was going on against direct obedience and direct disobedience would be reprimands. And you know and they could accumulate reprimands so

what we would do we'd sit down and say no you cannot this, you knew that when you came. And you know first time warning, second time you know we give you reprimands.

Miller: (17:40) But now today we do have some students for instance I was talking to a Muslim student and he said I went to a Baptist Christian school for high school and he said out of all I wanted to go to school in America and he said I like the fact that you don't have pre marital sex, you don't have alcohol and drugs, this fits along with, they said I can't promote [*clears throat*] the faith of Islam but he said as far as just attending here I'm allowed now I don't think that was always allowed I don't think that was always the case here at Liberty. But at some point in our history there are students from other faiths.

Emerick: (18:19) Oh, I think Dr. Falwell was very much interested in it, I know that he had shared a testimony with the kids over at Randolph- Macon, that when he was over in Israel and then met with one of the Palestinian leaders and they guy was saying well you know you don't do anything for our kids. And he said ok give me to a year and I'll give them a scholarship and they can come to Liberty.

Miller: (18:49) When we had Duke Westover we did an interview with him he mentioned that he even Yasser Arafat

Emerick: (18:56) That's who he was talking to him.

Miller: (18:56) Okay

Emerick: (18:57) It was Yasser that confronted him and I think it was to a semester could have been to a year or two semesters and they would come over. But he told them in he is testimony when we were talking with the girls there, he said but they're going to hear the gospel, they're going to hear the gospel. We're not changing anything because they're at Liberty; they're going to hear the gospel. And it's amazing how many kids that we've seen come to Liberty that were Muslim when they came and Christian when they left.

Miller: (19:31) We want to talk with you a little bit about your mission trip's where you've gone out. But let's not leave that point quiet yet, could you talk a little bit about international students and some of what we've done for especially from the dean of student's perspective as far as these international students coming to Liberty?

Emerick: (19:49) I you know in the past of course we didn't have an international student office at the time so our office worked a lot with the international students. Helping them get adjusted to the school and to life in the United States. I remember there was one young man who was in the nursing program and he was Muslim and he wanted to meet with me once a week. And so we would meet and we'd never get into arguments I would not argue with him but I would share you know my faith and he would share things and. I remember one night I was speaking in the dorm, at a hall meeting. And I was talking about the love of Christ and the fact of him dying on the

cross, which they do not believe it was Jesus that died on the cross. And he started weeping and he came in the next day and he said I believe with all my heart that Jesus did come and most Muslims believe that, but now I believe that Jesus died for my sins and we got on our knees and he asked Christ into his heart. And someone said oh what did you do to lead him to the Lord? I just loved him, I just loved him. And let him see the love of Christ and he accepted the Lord. But we you know we had a lot of kids at one time come over from Romania, right after the communism fell in Romania. We brought I don't know how many, I guess thirty forty kids over from Romania, some are still here working on staff today.

Miller: (21:26) Did they come because we provided scholarships or?

Emerick: (21:29) Yeah we helped them, we provided scholarships for them we knew that they were Christians that they had gone through persecution, their families had gone through persecution, and so we opened up a door so we could bring them over, and they came over. And were very successful and many of them we see again here today as staff and teachers.

Miller: (21:50) We've interviewed Dr. C. Daniel Kim but could you speak to particularly to Koreans students and some the interactions there?

Emerick: (21:57) Well I think our Korean population is large and it's due to the fact of Dr. Kim. I remember having Dr. Kim in seminary, I really had to get used to his accent you know I tell you it was difficult, but the man had such a heart to bring Koreans over here to go to school to train to go back to Korea and carry the gospel. I Dr. Kim it was amazing as Dean I and I also did housing and I started to house Koreans together and I remember Dr. Kim meet with me and he goes no, no, no. No, I don't want them living together; I want them to be with other people especially Americans. First of all to learn English, but secondly to have fellowship with others, other than Koreans and the man just is phenomenal. And I saw Koreans come over and that population has grown. If you go over to Thomas Road on Sunday's they fill the auditorium up and it's tremendous, and his goal to win North Korea with believers from the South.

Miller: (23:11) Now have you actually gone out? Now he went out and brought Korean students in. Have you had much efforts in actually promoting either TRBC or Liberty to the outside?

Emerick: (23:24) Outside the country?

Miller: (23:25) Either outside the country or you know outside the community here?

Emerick: (23:29) Oh, I do high school camps in the summer time you know I this year someone was saying you know well have you ever outgrown that now? And no I haven't outgrown it. We do high school camps I get invited back. Love the kids; we promote Liberty University you know during camp. I've been to a number of places where you know I've been asked to come and speak at youth conferences, we promote Liberty. Now as far as outside the country definitely I share about the school. I've been to India I spoken at Grace College there for their graduation

in India. And we share about the ministry here, but in turn what we do is we're supporting these schools in India as they train pastors to go out, where maybe some of them because of education wouldn't qualify to come to the United States to go to an university or a college in the United States. But they have a heart for ministry, and so basically we've set up bible institutes where we send people and we work with local missions to train pastors to go, M.A. Thomas and his college there, where he brings orphans and Christians and trains them to win India for Christ. My wife and I are connected in working with a school in Navapur, India and starting a bible institute there or basically a bible college, but to train pastors.

Miller: (25:10) We'd like to talk to you some more about your mission trips here, one thought before we do that is, do you have a thought or an opinion on some say it's good for them to come over here, they just don't have the training back in their native land so bring them here and we'll train them for the ministry. Others say you know they come over here they become more westernized some of them don't end up going back to their people they'll perhaps minister in a church that's speaks their language here in the United States. Do you have a thought one way or another as far as national training verses United States training to go back?

Emerick: (25:55) You know when they come to the United States and they train its very prestigious to come back and say I got a degree from the United States so that benefits. A lot of the schools that we've started overseas are training people who would not and could not qualify to come to our universities and our college's or even college's in Russia or other places because how they've grown up and the lack of education. So you know I understand that but I also understand that we bring people over and you're finding very sharp individuals maybe at one time you didn't but you're finding very sharp individuals that come here and train. If God leads them to stay here great, praise God you know if he's lead them to like I know a gentlemen who is from Indonesia and he went back and served there for the longest time. Cause he's from Indonesia, married an American women and she just died of cancer but he's in the United States reaching Muslims in the in our capital, Washington DC. So I think it depends on how the Lord's leading you know. I think at one time people wanted to come here so they wouldn't have to go back to their country and I saw that at the beginning with some of the students we brought over from Haiti and other places. They were looking at this as an avenue to get into the United States and meet an American and get married to an American and wound up staying. I don't find that as much anymore, I'm finding such quality kids coming from all these countries and many of them have a desire to go back to their country some of them see that they will benefit more from working here with the degree that they have. So, no I it doesn't bother me I just feel if they're sensitive to Gods leading and God leads them to stay here praise God if he leads them to go back to the country they'll be very effective in their own country.

Walters: (28:05) So you've been obviously well travel and you've done some overseas missions trips with both Thomas Road youth and Liberty students can you tell us about those experiences as many as you cared to? Where all you've been and what've done both with the TRBC youth and Liberty?

Emerick: (28:29) Well TRBC youth you know I remember I coached drama and taught drama for the high school department. And I remember one of the groups or one of the mission's trips we took we went to the Ukraine and my daughter was with us. And I remember we took not just only Thomas Road youth but other youth from other churches, and we had 150 youth. And we went to the Ukraine and it was

Walters: (29:02) That was post Soviet Union?

Emerick: (29:04) Yes. And you know the things that kids learn you know we had a drama team and I coached drama I wrote plays and mimes because you didn't want words because you weren't speaking their language they could understand all the mimes. We had a music team we had a martial arts team we had a gymnastics team, we did all kinds of crazy things. We would do things where somebody would walk on glass and walk across the glass and then my daughter would walk on the glass, she'd go to the other side and then somebody would be there and he would lift her onto his shoulders and he would walk across. And we'd use that as saying you know a lot of times we're walking through rough times in our lives and it's really rough when we're alone but Christ can carry us through those times. And so we had all these, we had a bed of nails we had all kinds of crazy things. Just one story that always sticks with me is we went to a park there and our kids were tired and understand high school student's high school students get tired easily. And they wanted to go back to the place we were staying. And we were at this park and there was hardly anybody there and we went through our programs and everything and a storm was coming up a storm and we got everybody we got all the sound equipment down and everything we got in the bus. And I'll never forget standing there in the front of the bus and I said guys I said let's pray because we have one more performance but if it rains we can't go back and do it but pray that God will take the clouds away. So I said okay I want two of you to pray and I'll close in prayer, I said let's pray. I bowed my head complete silence I finally looked out and I said guys you didn't hear what I said I want a couple of you to pray that God would take the clouds away so that we could you know perform okay? So let's pray, we bowed our heads, no one prayed. I looked up and said guys you're not understanding what I'm saying, yeah they were understanding what I was saying, they wanted to go back to the place we were staying. And finally I called on Dr. Freerksen's son and I said you know would you open us in prayer and he prayed and when I started to pray and when I did I could feel something warm on my hand and I opened up my eyes and the sun the clouds had moved and the sun came in and I said we're going to do our last group and the kids were going ugh I'm tired. So we got out and not realizing it was the time that businesses were closing and all of a sudden the park filled up I mean we had probably way over a thousand people in the park and we started to minister and we went down and I gave a message with my interpreter and all of a sudden we saw a car coming up a police car. And you could see everybody looking at that police car because they were used to being under communism. And I'll never forget I finished preaching they got out of the car they listened to what I was saying, and I said let's pray. And I shared about the sinners prayer and when they were done I said how many here prayed to ask Jesus into their heart and everybody's watching

these police officers and all of a sudden the one police officer put his hand up, and we saw hundreds of hands going up. We didn't even have enough interpreters we gathered them in groups and our kids went out witnessing and I'll never forget I went over to talk to two young people that were sitting there and I started talking and I said you raised hand do you want to ask Christ into your heart? And I said let me get my interpreter and they go oh no we're from the United States. I said you are? And they said yes we came over as Mormon missionaries. And that day they asked Christ into their hearts. And we stayed in touch with them and the one boy wound up coming here to Liberty University. Guys it the things that God has taught us it's just been amazing and those kids came back changed. We've taken them to the South Pacific to minister; we've taken them to different places that's, Thomas Road Baptist Church. Liberty University a lot of good trips that we've gone on; we've gone to India, we went to Nigeria and got arrested there because we were trying to get visa to go into the country and they kept dragging their feet and dragging their feet and the day we were to catch the flight out we went to Washington DC and we still hadn't gotten visa's to get into the country and so we went over to the Embassy and we had a lawyer and the lawyer was Nigerian in the United States and we went over to find out you know why we had gotten visa's could we get visa's and the secretary said oh he's not here and the lawyer goes yes he is, his car is right there. So she went upstairs and she came down and she said well he said go ahead and go without a visa and he would fax something. He wasn't going to fax anything cause he knew that they wouldn't allow us on the airplane's. Well in those days they didn't check as much, we went over and I had everybody's passports and the girl at the desk says oh your late your late your late. I'm just going to call these names and you can pick up your passports. She never looked to see if we had a visa. We got on the airplane and we were late flying into Paris, France so instead of going in and having to go through customs we they had a bus waiting for us and took us to the airplane, we flew in without visa's. We got to Nigeria guess what? We went to go in and they go where's your visa's? And we said oh you have a fax from the ambassador and we never got anything, and they held us and took us and said you're under arrest for coming in to the country without visas. And but what was unique about that whole thing was the fact that when we were there the fellow who was in charge of immigration and who was in charge of these things was a Christian. Because all the Muslim's were off that day because it was a Muslim holiday. So they took us and held us under city arrest. How God works, we were to go to the interior of Nigeria to Benghazi, not Benghazi now I can't forget the, I forget the name of the city but we wound up in the capital. It was amazing because we were held under city arrest but we were welcomed to go and minister in the city. And I'll never forget next door was this was this building and it had a wall around it with glass in the walls so no one could get in. And this lady came over heard her singing and she said my husband has a birthday party would you guys come and entertain? And we said yes we'll go and entertain. And we walk in and we're singing and her husband comes in all these people in robes and she said this is my husband he's the secretary of interior, and this is the president's cabinet. What? We're singing Christian songs these we're all Muslims and they're clapping and saying more, more, more. The fellow came over and he talked to us and he says now where are you going? And we're going to

[Lagos] and he goes we'll when are you going? Well we have to leave because we didn't have we didn't have visas. He says well I'll take care of that. Let me tell you God just blesses and we wound up ministering in Nigeria, seeing people come to Christ. Just a story after story things we've seen and how God worked and I love taking kids on mission's trips because they learn.

Walters: (37:15) How young would you suggest or what's your experience been like with that? And how many you talked about being in the Ukraine with Thomas Road youth so that was not Liberty or Lynchburg Christian Academy that was anybody from the community that went to Thomas Road?

Emerick: (37:33) Thomas Road. Yes, we also now I'm connected and we have a ministry here called extreme impact. I don't know if you have heard of it, it's for high schoolers and I took thirty five high schoolers to Navipur, India this past summer. To minister and to work with an orphanage that was getting started. What we do is we look and say ok what countries are going into. To go to India we want kids that are going into their senior we will take some juniors if they're mature, or kids who have just graduated from high school because we're taking them into a location that isn't dangerous but could be dangerous and so we want more mature kids to go . Then we take a team to Italy and we take a team to Germany. Well maybe younger kids can go maybe high school high school students can go, maybe freshmen, sophomores and juniors and seniors if they want to go. We take a team to Thailand and God, God blesses their lives. Now I took a team of fifty four college students right now after the tsunami to Thailand. And when we got to Thailand and we worked on an island that was almost totally wiped out by the wave by the tsunami wave. It was it was the most fantastic time when we went there because we didn't go in to you to be preaching the gospel because everybody was saying oh Jerry, Jerry Falwell is sending a team in there to take advantage of what they've gone through.

Walters: (39:10) Deprostitatize

Emerick: (39:11) Deprostitatize. So we went in and said we don't say anything unless people ask us. And we got to this island and I'll never forget it every night every night I would have praise and worship and we would come together as a team well this monk this nun, I'm sorry. Hindu not Hindu, Buddhists nun could come over every night with a bunch of other nuns and she would she would sing with us and she would sit there and she would listen to us. And all of a sudden the next day we found out that there were a number of British people there working and she kicked them off the island. And she said all I want is these Americans here, these American young people from this college, Liberty University. And we had we worked in the island and people were getting saved and we started we didn't go to start a church, we started a church there and that church is thriving today.

Walters: (40:13) And so how does do you have a contact there in Thailand of someone who is baptistic in their doctrine and such? Or how does that follow up in that how do you organize these and how do you follow up with that that sort of thing?

Emerick: (40:26) Well with Thailand we work with an organization that was going into Christian organization to build buildings and of course the fellow we meet there his son was going to Liberty University so he hosted us on that island and so he was a Baptist minister. So that's how we had a lead there. Most places we are we are invited by mission boards we go with missions boards. Or we may have alumni there like Armando [Goosemon], Armando [Goosemon] is a graduate from Liberty seminary. Also is a doctor, he has his PhD in the area of theology, and he has a school training pastors. He pastors a church, he started seventeen churches, he has a number of jungle clinics that he has worked. And so we take nurses over we take people who are studying church planting or missions and we take them with us. My son usually goes along on these trips India we've connected with Paul [Paley] his son's all went to Liberty and so we connect there. Also M.A. Thomas and Samuel Thomas went to Liberty. And Samuel has an orphanage I believe up to almost 10,000 children and he has a college there. And so we work with missions boards we work with we connect with them. You know like the Southern Baptist mission board or maybe Sudan interior missions or things like that, we're connected with Vernon Brewer and his mission board. And we go there and we have a connection there.

Walters: (42:17) That's World Hope. We've been talking about Thomas Road youth department from the sense of you going with mission trips and such with the youth there. Can have you been involved in other ways with the youth group? And how can you comment in any way about the evolution of youth ministry at Thomas Road? How much were you involved with it and can you speak to that over the years?

Emerick: (42:44) You know I can see the different youth pastors that came along and different, when I was involved with Thomas Road and we were with the youth department I started out with middle school and I realized that I was not a middle school pastor. Their drama is how you define them you know middle schoolers are in love, and their boyfriends are always breaking up with them and things like that. I'm sitting here going oh man. I remember Jeff was the youth pastor and I remember every time I'd go in to quit the middle school department he would invite me in and he'd say Dane before you say anything I don't know what I'd do without you you're really, you know I'm sitting here thinking he knew exactly that I was coming in to quit. And then he'd say now why did you come to see me and I'd say oh Jeff it's because.

Walters: (43:38) Jeff...?

Emerick: (43:39) Oh my gosh don't, names. Oh my.

Walters: (43:44) About what years were you talking '80's or '70's

Emerick: (43:47) This was back probably in the early '80's. And I would always leave and he'd ask me why did you come in to see me and I'd say oh you I came in to tell you what a wonderful job you're doing you know. I'd leave and she'd say he knew why you were coming. But then Bryan [Belloy] he had the senior high department I got involved in the senior high department.

Well I go involved in senior high when Denise Henderson was there, Daniel Henderson's brother. And then we moved on and we had Bryan Belloy and I really got involved when Bryan was there. And in those days things were ministry teams and we had ministry teams. Almost every weekend we were out ministering, we'd go to different cities and we'd minister; we'd minister in detention centers, and orphanages and things in the area. That was the big thing the martial arts the drama, the singing teams, things like that; that was more big in those days. When Bryan left let's see we started to change, we started to pull away from ministry teams. And now you don't see as many minister teams. Even though they go on trips, do ministries we don't have the ministry teams like we did then. That was big, that was a

Walters: (45:07) How did you deal with the Christian education aspect of that? I mean ministry is a chunk that a lot of churches neglect but the other side of that, how are these kids brought into maturity in as far as content and doctrine and all that sort of thing?

Emerick: (45:26) Well on thing that we've found that really helped, cause all the kids wanted to be in ministry teams. Okay, you want to be in ministry team's sign a contract; you've got to be in church if you're missing church you're not on the team. You've got to be connected in Sunday school you know and your teacher evaluates you. Kids were coming and they were learning and on Sundays we would break up into Sunday schools and we'd meet in a main room and then we'd break up into smaller. Some of the worship services that we had were fantastic and then we used to do Sunday night live. And Sunday night live was just hilarious, we'd have funny things, but it always ended always always ended in the truth, and in the word of God, and teaching. And they were great days they were wonderful days. I loved it, I loved it. But then I pulled out and got and started to get more involved with the college kids on campus, teaching Sunday school here, leading ministries here, and doing groups to help guys get their lives straightened out.

Walters: (46:44) Now in one of the previous interviews either interview two or one we you had brought up SMIT. And SMIT was the pre runner to light, is that correct? Or how

Emerick: (46:58) Yeah

Walters: (46:59) How, tell us about the evolution of mission teams formally and

Miller: (47:05) And what those acronyms stand for.

Walters: (47:06) Yes.

Emerick: (47:07) SMIT, Student Missionary Intern Training, yeah. What it was is kids that were studying for missions. Of course we had a music team and they traveled in matter of fact I have some of their records. And for people who listen to this a record was a piece of plastic [laughter] with a hole in the middle and you could ah but they would travel and they were just as important as all the other ministry teams that we had and you got involved with missions, missions trips through SMIT it was headed up by Vernon Brewer, his brother or uncle headed it up in those

days. And it was great, but then as time changed Vernon left. And then Vernon came back and he had a team that was called Light, Light Ministries and he was brought back to Thomas Road or Liberty University to teach and to head up our mission's area and also head up student affairs. And he brought his team Light to Liberty University and of course we bought the rights to the name Light Ministries. And he started to build that area where he took hold with more mission's teams, traveling mission's teams, things like that. And then of course we had a singing group, we had two of them, Light Ministries singing team and they would travel.

Miller: (48:49) Was Light an acronym?

Emerick: (48:52) No.

Walters: (48:53) So SMITE just kind of died out and Light actually came back with Vernon Brewer and his

Emerick: (49:04) Roscoe Brewer was his who hit it up to start SMITE

Walters: (49:08) Okay. And his absence was caused by his health, was that when he

Emerick: (49:12) No, no, no

Walters: (49:13) doing

Emerick: (49:13) No, no, no

Walters: (49:13) No? Okay.

Emerick: (49:14) He traveled with Oh my gosh, it was that team that would go out youth work youth ministry. He traveled with this team

Miller: (49:24) Not Youth for Christ?

Emerick: (49:25) No, no.

Background: (49:25) [*mumbles*]

Emerick: (49:27) No sorry.

Miller: (49:28) Campus Crusade? No? [*Laughter*]

Emerick: (49:32) I can find it. It was before a lot of those really got but oh my gosh I'll think of it in a minute. But he traveled with them and then he pulled out from this organization and formed like a spin off, which was called Light. And then he came back. As far as Vernon's health that didn't happen until later on.

Walters: (49:55) Okay

Emerick: (49:56) When he was here I was Dean of Students.

Walters: (50:00) And then youth quest was that started in the '80's?

Emerick: (50:05) Oh, youth quest was back in the '80's. It was a youth ministry team.

Walters: (50:12) It was an urban ministry based or what?

Emerick: (50:15) Oh, they went from church to church, they ministered in different churches and it was more youth based. They would do dramas they would do music, just all kinds of crazy things.

Miller: (50:29) But now it seems like it's more intercity or? Is that a different youth quest then that, did they?

Emerick: (50:36) Yeah they have a youth quest now but it wasn't it wasn't really big then. Now it's just ministering you know to churches and.

Walters: (50:43) Now you've mentioned before for instance you've brought up the name Toby Mac and Michael Tate and DC Talk. I also seem to remember there was a group called Transformation Crusade. Do you remember them? How many, was there anybody else that came out of well I don't know if they probably weren't ever in those ministries, but anyhow any other peripheral organizations or bodies or groups of kids that come to mind that went out and did things even if it was temporarily after they left here, made a ripple?

Emerick: (51:20) Isn't it awful, today's one of these days I can't think of names but, I know we had Living Proof for high school but then there was a ministry started called Living Proof. And they were down in Branson and they traveled they also had bought what they what was called the "castle" in Branson. It was a theater and they ministered there were people could come in and see a show and they traveled. In matter of fact we offered scholarships to their kids. So they had two traveling teams and then they had the thing that performing at Branson. And it was called Living Proof. I think that it's still there but it's not as big as it was at one point in time.

Walters: (52:13) Now on the very earliest days the university when it was still Lynchburg Baptist I assume, offered trips to subtract the first two classes or so here to the Holy Land. They took them to the Holy Land. Did you ever go on just academic oriented overseas trips with?

Emerick: (52:35) We did one that I was involved in. And that was for new year students would come in you know people that wanted to come and all together I had 1500 students and what we did is our whole staff would work and we worked at putting this trip together and that was a mammoth task.

Miller: (52:59) Where did you go?

Emerick: (53:00) We went to Jerusalem, we flew to the Holy Land and you know I lined the I traveled with the first team, so I would be in Tel Aviv when they would fly in and I would check them there. We had people at Dallas airport, we had them flying out of Reagan and Dallas and we had 1500 students.

Walters: (53:27) And what was the point of this again?

Emerick: (53:29) This was any student a freshmen that came in could get a trip to the Holy Land's and

Miller: (53:37) About what year would that have been?

Emerick: (53:38) Oh my goodness that would have been about maybe about fifteen years ago, wasn't that long of go. In matter of fact my son was going to school then. And

Walters: (53:51) So the mid '90's, late '90's?

Emerick: (53:54) Yes. Because my son's thirty now so you know when he was a freshman that would have only been about

Miller: (54:02) Twelve years.

Emerick: (54:04) Yeah. Eleven years ago.

Walters: (54:05) So they paid a year tuition and finished their classes successful and then they got to go?

Emerick: (54:09) No, they went in, in January. So what it was is they finished a semester and then they went in January then they came back to go to school. And no come to think of it we went to New York, that's right we had buses going to New York and it was snowy it was all it was horrible. And we got there and Michelle Mathews was the Dean of Women and I was the Dean of Men. We got on the first plane on the flight over and I don't know if you've ever have gone through when you travel LL but you have to go through integration. So we would tell the kids you're going to be integrated don't get upset you know. You're going to feel safe when you get on the airplane after you you know. So we flew over on the first and then we would divide them up and get them to the right hotels and everything. And then I had a staff member come over and then Michelle. I went to Tiberius she went to Jerusalem and then we would check them in the hotel make sure everything was settled there. It was a mammoth task it was a mammoth task. We didn't see a whole lot okay, cause we were making sure people were on buses and stuff. And then they all flew back and then they told us we could stay a week and just the staff and just enjoy it, so we enjoyed it. We did. But it was amazing you know what we saw and how God blessed and keeping track you know Benhoudah Street we didn't want any student to go there. And then I had faculty that would count heads at night and they would come to my place and report it to me. Okay, you know all my guys are here or then I'd get you know I have one or two

missing. Oh my gosh I'm up all night trying to find these kids, where are you? And it was but it was a lot no it wasn't fun [*laughter*] it was fun for the week after they left. But it was an amazing watching these kids learn and to understand too how churches aren't really teaching like they should. Because my guide was Jewish and he wasn't a Christian and we would go to places where kids should know what went on at that location.

Miller: (56:23) Here's Capernaum, here's

Emerick: (56:26) Yes. And he would say you know do you know what happened here? And the kids would sit there and he'd go he'd look at me and he'd go is your church's teaching them? You know you know this is the place where Elijah built the alter and you know you're sitting there you know going [*groans*]. So really it really hit me that we need to work on really educating these kids and since the church isn't doing it, they're coming to Liberty and now all of a sudden we need to make sure that we got to take on the responsibility to teach. But that was that was an interesting trip. In matter of fact I had to learn to be so flexible that they had an award banquet for all those that put this thing together and I got a Gumby, and it's on my desk today, my Gumby.

Miller: (57:10) Now Dr. Falwell always had a great love for Israel. Did you have any comment on that, about the land of Israel, and just why they picked that?

Emerick: (57:22) I just know that when we went Doc of course Doc came over and meet with them and of course we baptized in the river and but we always would have times of lectures. And he did some teaching in his heart, and of course the president came, the president of Israel came, I guess it's the president or prime minister. Came and spoke to our students and then we had a time after the students left that we had a time that we could spend time with the president or the prime minister or Israel and talk to him. And it was just it was just really neat.

Miller: (58:00) Talking about missions trips I have had some missionaries that would be about our age who were not all that excited about missions trips, oh these kids just want to come over here and site see and they expect it to be like America, whereas I have had other ones that are very excited about it. Can you what are some of the benefits, why should an eighteen to twenty two years old should or even a fourteen to eighteen year old, why should they go overseas or to a different country and go on a mission trip? What do you see, obviously if you're going to have those trips you saw some benefit in doing it? Could you just go through some of those benefits?

Emerick: (58:40) I think I think one thing you know what my son and my daughter we had worked here to take a trip to Ecuador and the whole goal was to go down the Amazon and we were going to work with meet with the [*Wananee*] Indians and stuff and so what was amazing was all this kids you know go their support but a number of them are going with the wrong reason. You know oh we're going to go down the Amazon it's going to be you know an adventure and things like that. And I'll never forget when we got there Columbians had come into Ecuador and had kidnapped some Americans oil people and they threatened to execute them

and they wound up executing the one of the men and so we were forbidden, we could not go in to the interior. And it was amazing how God was working because you know I have a habit, I sit in the middle of the bus and I act like I'm sleeping so that I can hear what they're talking about. Well in the back of the bus these kids are complaining well this isn't what people you know supported me for, and everything and they were really doing a lot of complaining and I was expecting to go down the Amazon. And then the front of the bus the kids are singing and excited about what they're doing. And so we decided that we were going to take them to the dump in Ecuador. Now I don't know if you guys have ever been to a dump in a country where these people live there they live in filth and so we decided to take them to the dump to minister. I remember I got on the bus and the kids are all sitting there and I got up and I said look I said a lot of you have such a poor attitude and you want it your way but God has it a different way. So what I'm going to do is I'm going to have you pray, I'm going to get off the bus and I'm going to give you five minutes I'm going to have you pray. And then I'm going to get on the bus and if your attitude is still sour I want you to get off the bus, and the rest of us will go down and minister. Of course no one got off the bus, I'll never forget we went down and you could smell it before you got there, I mean blocks before you got there. We pulled in and here's all these people, these children. Whatever clothes they have they had everything on their backs. The children's stomachs were bloated we went out and we had a medical team with us to help. And my son had a de-licing station, my daughter interpreted for us. And these kids are seeing this now what did they want to do? They wanted to go for an adventure you know their minds weren't as much ministry. When we got back that night we had I always would do a debriefing in the evening and they started weeping and they going our attitude was so wrong and they started to say I'm sorry will you forgive us and you know I'm praying to God to forgive me because God knew exactly what I needed, and I needed this. So I say kids say maybe in the church you see a kid and you might think well he just wants to go for a vacation. But he gets there and it's not a vacation. These kids these kids learned and they came to the reality of missions. In matter of fact, towards the end of the week we had a village up in the mountains in the Andes, they heard about all these white kids that were doing drama's, and stuff. And they asked if we would come, and the a pastor came and he said he said they have not been reached with the gospel of Christ. It's a village up in the mountains he said there's no church no nothing there and they've asked for you to come, to do dramas, to do music. So we went up and we did dramas and we did music that night it started, we called them the cloud people because to get to where they are the clouds were down over the mountain. We went and we preached and the kids ministered and over forty nine people accepted Christ that night, and to this day there's a church now in that village. What did they learn? They learned that God's in control, he didn't intend for us to go and work with the [Wanabee] Indians. He intended for us to work in that dump and to work in that village. No, I think that kids, kid's lives change when they go, when they go on a mission's trip. And no I encourage it, I encourage you know high schoolers older high schoolers, college students you go. And maybe God's not leading you onto the mission field but it will give

you a mission mind that you will take into your church, and that your church will become mission minded, and we need that today.

Miller: (1:03:45) They're going to be the one's even if they stay here and get a good job they're going to be supporting missionaries and they need to know the third world, how the developing world is how it operates and functions. When they get back here have you had some problems with the debriefing, the kids just kind of go into a depression just having seen I never knew that people lived like that? Could you talk about that for a moment?

Emerick: (1:04:11) Well I you know a lot of teams would do that, they would have the debriefing at the end. I did debriefing every night, because I knew you know I mean when you go to some of these places you know like we were in India I took a team I take mostly every year a team to India. But my first time I took a team in Delhi we would go to catch a subway to minister and there was children along the highway begging and there was this little boy and we would give him an apple or we would give him something, and he was really sick. We got up one day and we were walking and as we were walking there he was there and we saw all these flies in his mouth, in his eyes. And I walked over and he had died. And I'm telling you, you talk about hitting our kid's you know some of them wanted to go back home, and some of them you know and we sat down, we had to have a long debriefing that night. Guys that didn't happen for you to go home, that happened for you to see the need of this country. I took another team down to the southern part of India where the people actually most of them beg for a living. And they will actually when their children are born will break their arms and break their legs so that they will be deformed, because you get more money if you have deformed children. Yes, it's a, and to me I have in my heart every night I got to do a debriefing go through it and go through it and go through it so that when they come back to the states that they're not going to come back you know I'm depressed this is, no I'm going back with a heart to get other people involved being either senders or goers and we got to do it. And then I always have like over at say Hibachi Grille or some of those places I do something in the back, where we all gather together and we eat and then we share what we learned on the trip. I believe that ministry teams that go need to have a debriefing every night.

Miller: (1:06:26) I could just imagine, you talk about the Hibachi Grille which is an all you can get place are there some, how can I, they waste more food here then these people eat in an entire month or something.

Emerick: (1:06:37) Oh it's a eye awakener. And it's good for them to see that, because all of a sudden they're sitting down thinking I'm getting ready to throw this away cause I don't like it but if I'd go down to the dump and handed this to somebody in the dump it'd be like it would be like a feast, a Thanksgiving meal to them. And I think that the learning that's why I said last year I took the high schoolers and there was a cistern that needed to be cleaned out and it was underground. And we opened up the cistern and all of a sudden you know two of our guys jump in and the other ones are going ugh you know Pastor Dane I you know these jeans are you know

I bought these jeans these are expensive jeans I don't want to get down in there. I was like you're on a mission's trip. I said okay, I said that's fine. So the old man jumps in, I jump in and I jumped in and we were down there cleaning and I think I shared with you guys maybe I didn't last time I found it easy to get in, I forgot I had to get out and the guys they had little Indians up there trying to pull me out, someone's behind me pushing me up out of the hole. But I'm telling you sat there and I sat them down and I go shame on you. You let an old man go in there, because you didn't want to get your jeans dirty. And it was a learning experience, not that I was tearing them apart but in a sense I was, I was trying to get them to see if you're going to serve the Lord, you're going to get down and you're going to get dirty. You know that was like when we were in the dump, my daughter brought in this little boy and my daughter said to the nurses, and I'm with her. And she said he tells me that he is hurting and they said where's he hurting? And she asked him and he goes all over. So he took his little shirt off and he was covered with sores, and he started to bleed through the ears and the nose and the doctor said he's full of parasites, there's nothing we can do, except maybe get him some medicine that will relieve some of the pain that he's going through. And he looked at my daughter and he said Kira he said that little boy's not going to make it. Well you talk about my daughter, what a learning experience, what a learning experience. She said I want to be a nurse you know and it changed her life. No, I believe you know a lot of people say you know I don't want to be a missionary. So what go somewhere, you know people go to Europe and they think oh wow you know it's going to be like a vacation, but yet you see how dark it is, especially like Czech Republic which is one of the most atheists' countries in the United States. We send a team to Italy and they came back amazed at the need for evangelizing in the country of Italy, they learn.

Walters: (1:09:40) Could you compare and contrasts those experiences with any type of stateside experience's that are inner city or dealing with particular ethnic groups. Have you done anything domestically?

Miller: (1:09:55) Appalachians or?

Walters: (1:09:56) Yeah Appalachians would be

Emerick: (1:09:56) We I haven't gone on many of those but we've taken, especially the high school department and teams from Liberty, were we go into the inner city in New York and we minister there and soup kitchens and reaching out. I know we have taken ministry teams to the Appalachians, Kentucky those areas, and to see the poverty that's here. Our ministry teams at Thomas Road in those days we did a lot of ministry in towns and in cities, where poverty level was very, very high, and reaching out to children and people in the United States.

Miller: (1:10:39) Now extreme impact, we talked a little bit about that, was that a Liberty thing or a Thomas Road?

Emerick: (1:10:47) About three four years ago Dr. Fanning had a vision to start a ministry experience offered through Liberty University for high schoolers. And so we started it, we had a

couple teams go out. And then Adam Bower and Jen Jennifer Bower came along and took it over, you know Don Fanny still overseas it. And we started and making it larger with more teams more locations like Brazil, Mexico, Germany, Italy, Thailand, India. There's a number of ministries. The kids come in for early they come in a week before they go so that we can orient them and teach them and tell them what they're going to be experience and people like me that have been to these countries can sit down and say this is what you're going to see, so that when you go in there you're not going to face a culture shock, you do but you're prepared for it. And it's just it's a neat ministry and it's not like just Thomas Road kids, it's opened to any kid and they can get on the internet and go to extreme impact, and find it and see what countries we offer for the kids. It's like teen mania, where they go out we sort of pattern ourselves after them, so that we have praise and worship teaching and things and week before, we go on the trip and then we come back for at least three or four days where it's not just debriefing with us, it's the whole group comes together. And kids get up from other countries and share what they learned and then our kids would come up and share what they learned. And it's just a neat experience and then again too we get a little bit of a side benefit, everybody on my team are now Liberty students. You don't have to be going to Liberty to go on these but it's amazing that we had a reunion to see how many kids from the year I took a team to India how many are here at Liberty. And I would say the majority of the kids that went on these teams who graduated from high school are here right now at Liberty University.

Miller: (1:13:14) Now as you look over your long career here at Liberty what would you like to be particularly remembered for? What is the most memorable to you and how would you like to be remembered? Dr. Falwell always talked about what he'd have put on his gravestone and that he wanted to be remembered as a father and an educator and a pastor. What would you like to be remembered for?

Emerick: (1:13:37) I guess I would want to be remembered as, I don't care about names, I don't care about titles, I don't get the titles, I'm just me. But I think I want to be remembered as a living instrument that God worked through me and the lives of men and women, especially men. To see and invest in their lives to see them growing into godly husbands and godly fathers. Now hopefully I'll see them going on the mission field and things like that, but if their godly husbands and godly dads the rest will fall into place. So my heart is men's ministry, of course I'm ministering to women if I see these men step up to what. So I just want to be known as someone that God worked through, God worked through me; to reach the lives of students, especially male students to step up to the plate and to make a difference.

Miller: (1:14:43) You've heard a lot of chapel speakers, convocation speakers when they made the switch there, Thomas Road special guest speakers. Who have been some that have impacted your life, that were particularly memorable to you, some that maybe stick out in your mind? Perhaps you have a mentor that didn't ever come here as a speaker but you've read him or heard him elsewhere, memorable speakers in your mind.

Emerick: (1:15:08) Chuck Millhuff from way back, his corncob message.

Miller: (1:15:17) What was the point I remember seeing the phonograph record with the corncob message. What was the basic point of the corncob message?

Emerick: (1:15:24) It was the aspect of giving, you can't out give God. Not that if you give you're doing it to get a lot back. But he talked about tithing but not just tithing money but tithing your life.

Miller: (1:15:41) And the idea was you put a few kernels of corn in and

Emerick: (1:15:45) Yes

Miller: (1:15:45) God gives you back an entire corncob,

Emerick: (1:15:46) Yes

Miller: (1:15:47) with hundred fold increase there.

Emerick: (1:15:48) Yes, yes, yes. B.R Lakin. Oh my gosh B.R Lakin and his testimonies and his stories. Listening to a man that is gone through the ministry for years. I think that one person that stands out to me is Elizabeth Elliot. I'll never forget the first time she came to speak and I saw some male students get up and walk out on her. And I called them in and I said what are you doing and he said oh the bible teaches us that we're not to be sitting and listening to women. I said that's a Grandma. That is a woman that went into the jungle's to reach a tribe of people that murdered her husband for Jesus Christ. How dare you? I gave them reprimands for disrespect. Elizabeth Elliot of course I said Chuck Millhuff. Missionaries that have come in to speak at conferences, one's that haven't been here yet; John Piper, I love John Piper I think he's fantastic. Mark Driscoll which I understand Mark is going to be coming John was going to come but he couldn't make it this year. Men that really, who did the Song of Solomon conference?

Miller: (1:17:16) Riken?

Emerick: (1:17:17) No. My goodness, let's see he's from Cali he's from Texas. Tremendous I can't think of his name

Walters: (1:17:26) You can't think of his name?

Emerick: (1:17:27) No I can't think of his name off the top of my head. Just a number of speakers, oh I mean even our own. Of course Dr. Falwell, Elmer Towns, one of the top theologians in our country, Dr. Wilmington, Harold Wilmington, Dr. Moon, Pastor Moon, Jim Moon I learned so much through him.

Walters: (1:17:54) So let me ask you this [*clears throat*] I've spent maybe close to six hours talking with you now and I don't sense an emphasis on political figures or politics. Can you

speak to that? I think that's interesting for a Liberty University personality, nothing wrong with it, not my opinion at all. But I just wanted to see you what's your view on our history in being involved with politics and that sort of thing?

Emerick: (1:18:29) I thank the Lord that we had an opportunity to make a difference in politics. I you know Ronald Reagan I think was in history will be best known as one of the top three, one of the top three presidents of our country. I enjoyed listening to him speak when he came, I didn't like most of his movies [*laughter*]. But I saw a heart that was a for everything that I stood for and. But I think that in my walk with the Lord I want to learn from men of God who are men of the word of God that can teach me that I can model my life after. Like the apostle Paul said you know as long as I'm an example of Christ you can follow me. And I look at these men and I look at men and then I say you know I pattern my life after Christ, but I can follow their example too, and these are men that have touched my heart. You know I think of Chuck Swindoll when he was here and Charles Stanley oh my gosh you know, I mean a man that I called one day because I wanted to get a verse of scripture. I knew I would never get in to talk to him because you know as important as he is. And his secretary said well you know I'll see what I can do. And I get a phone call and it's him and he talks to me. Humble men humble men, I've been around pastors that are celebrity pastors, they're great preachers but they're celebrities. And then I've been around pastors that you would say are celebrity but they're pastors and I see the humbleness and I can talk to them and they don't ignore me you know. Or ignore my son when we go in, they're the people I want to pattern my life after.

Miller: (1:20:48) You talk about your family here in Lynchburg if we can just talk about the community for a moment. How have you seen in the several decades that you've been here how is the town changed? Some people would say living in Lynchburg; it's kind of like living in a bubble. I mean if you just stood outside of a local store and just all the people, so many a very high percentage of Liberty folks that have come here and never move on. But talk about the Lynchburg city and how many changes you've seen through the years.

Emerick: (1:21:24) Well I remember when my wife and I first came here to work you know we own a house that when we were first here it was a field where they grazed cattle you know. And then my homes there now most of my neighborhood most of the people there somehow are connected with the ministry here or work. When we first came there was nothing, hardly anything here, I mean I was lucky that Lynchburg was on the map. And is it a bubble? I don't think it's a bubble, but I think you know if people don't want to live for the Lord there are definitely things here that can pull them and they can choose not to live for the Lord. I know at one time we always said and I think I mentioned it before if you mentioned the name of Jerry you either puckered up or ducked and but that's because Jerry was a statesmen. He stood strong for the word of God and he stood strong to see our nation stand and you know and I know that our president today says that we're not a Christian nation, almost apologizes for the fact that you know our very foundation and our principles were founded on Christian principles. But Doc was willing to make a stand and he was willing to have the pot shots thrown at him. But I think it's

almost like, like I look at it now and Moses when Moses led the children of Israel out of bondage. Moses' personality was different than Joshua's and Moses I mean I understood Moses a lot because I had a speech impediment, a very bad speech impediment. He felt that he could not be used by God, and God says now wait a minute and God got angry. And he said okay you know get your brother Aaron, he'll do the speaking for you but you're the one you're the man. And so with his personality he led the children of Israel. Dr. Falwell led us, and he led us in a way that we were making a stand in our country and said we need to get back to the fundamentals of where we were founded. And then God comes along and he said Jerry bless your heart I'm going to reward you, I'm going to take you home, it's time it's time. And now Jerry your son's going to step up but he's different, he's different. And so Jonathon has taken over and a lot of people say oh what's going to happen to the church, it's going to fall apart, it's it's you know. Just the opposite, we're growing and we're moving in directions that maybe you know at this point in time Jerry brought us to where we needed to be and now Joshua needs to take over, and that's Jonathon. Jonathon, Jonathon was voted the most respected man in the city of Lynchburg, now Jerry would have been voted the most prominent man in the city of Lynchburg, not saying we love him. But Jonathon comes along and he is the most respected man in the city of Lynchburg. Jonathon reaches out I mean you know when fireproof came we all went down to all the fire stations and we took them a meal a lunch and we gave them all tickets to fireproof. We've gone to the public schools to help rebuild their playgrounds; we've reached out to the community. It's different but it's exactly how God has laid it out, we needed Doc, the country needed Doc and he brought him up to here and he called him home and said okay. You know like people say well you know God punished Moses because he didn't let him go into the promise land. Wait a minute he let him go into heaven; I don't see that as a punishment I see that as a reward. And I think God says you know your time is ended, it's time to come home Jerry, and what I have here for you is so fantastic you know. And your son's going to take over the church and I'm proud of my pastor. I saw him grow up as the red headed little kid at LCA that was a character and grow up into a solid pastor whose heart is ministry, whose heart is not saying we have a mega church but that's not what we're saying, we're building we're building other churches, we're sending people out. And we're starting churches even in our own area. Like I'm afraid; we're going to back Blue Ridge, and we're going to back Brentwood, and we're going to be there for Hyland Heights, we're going to be there for other churches. You know it's not like us and them; it's us the body of Christ. So yeah I'm excited about what God is doing I'm excited about what we're getting involved in and the church is growing you know. I'll never forget that Jonathon was saying one day he says you know dad wanted a ten thousand seat auditorium and I said dad it's going to look awful on television. I mean all these empty seats and Jerry said no, no, no we need. And finally he compromised and said okay we'll go down to a five thousand seat auditorium Jonathon we'll do it. Jonathon said the other day he said oh me of little faith because our walls are poured concrete, how are we going to make it bigger you know. And it's just amazing. You know my wife and I came here and this is our home and this is where we settled you said ministry, our children's ministry nurtured and trained our children. We had the

opportunity at leading them to Christ but they came home from Sunday school asking us questions, it's the Sunday school teachers there that were faithful. My wife has handled the nursery at Thomas Road for over thirty years, one of the nursery departments. Two year olds what are they doing, they're telling bible stories, they're singing songs, and you're seeing these little kids leaving and singing the B-I-B-L-E, BIBLE and they can't say anything else and watching them grow and seeing our kids grow into the senior high department. My children walk with the Lord. Not that we haven't had our problems but they walk with the Lord.

Walters: (1:28:28) Now your kids came through LCA for their education?

Emerick: (1:28:30) My oldest daughter started at LCA and she wound up going to public school, Heritage high school. We just didn't have the money to send her and we had three other children that were home, and my wife had stopped teaching at LCA when my first daughter was born, because she was two months early, she had a bad heart, she had a lot of health problems and so Joan quit teaching at LCA.

Walters: (1:28:59) What did she teach?

Emerick: (1:29:04) She taught first grade and then so we didn't have the money to send her and so she went to Heritage. And then my son when he got to high school age he was being really made fun of because of his Christian stand, he was picked on at Heritage. He wore t-shirts that had Christian messages on them and he was called in and told he couldn't do that anymore. And he was giving out tracts and he got in trouble for giving out gospel tracts. And he was struggling; he was struggling with his grades he was struggling so we prayed and we said I don't know how we're going to do it but he's going to go to LCA, and so we put him into LCA and he blossomed. He had his last two years at LCA and we wished we could have had him there for all four years. You know if you go through with a high GPA (Grade Point Average) at LCA you get a special diploma and but it has to be four years. Well they made up a special diploma for him, for the two years that he was there. He played football, he loved the Lord he you know and then I saw him on the mission field serving the Lord, working with Gypsies in Slovakia. My other two daughters my second daughter wanted to go to LCA and so Joan prayed about it and Joan was enjoying hearing my stories about what I was doing here, and she said I'm not being fulfilled I just I want to serve the Lord. And the next day they called her from LCA, honest next day we prayed next day she got a call, Joan would you consider coming back and being our third grade teacher? And she came back to LCA which gave our other two daughters scholarships to go. And it was amazing you know whoever listens to this; my daughter you know kids who grow up in a Christian school like to complain about a Christian school. My daughter came home and when she had gone through public schools up to ninth grade, and then she went into LCA and she came home saying dad I'm just so upset. I said you know why are you upset about? She goes I'm sitting at the cafeteria at the table and all these kids are just tearing LCA apart, and she said I just got up and I said go to public school for awhile, and then you will learn to appreciate what you have here at LCA. And she said I love LCA, and we watched her grow and grow in Christ. And

my youngest daughter is teaching at LCA today, she teaches English and she went through it and now she's teaching there. And no I praise the Lord I praise the Lord for the ministry that God has here, it has had an impact on my children. My daughter is a single parent now, has gone through some really rough times in a marriage. And yet I see her standing strong in her faith and I see her pouring into her children to walk with the Lord, and you can make it guys, we can make it together. And I praise the Lord. Where does she get it from? Here.

Miller: (1:32:27) If the Lord should terry we've kind of taken a look back at what you wanted to be remembered for. What do you foresee for the future of the university? How would you predict how that's going to look in the future?

Emerick: (1:32:38) it's moving in a good direction. However, I think we always need to be aware that we can grow large to a point that we forget where we came from and who we are. And I think us old guys that are here and I think the church and I think that constantly we need to evaluate and say are we straying from what God is intended for us to be? And I think we always, always need to be evaluating; because how many Christian schools do we know that started strong and aren't there. And I know Doc was always worried about that and I love the fact that we're getting as big as we are, but I also know with being big we can easily stray.

Walters: (1:33:40) Why the size issue? Is it because we are spreading to thin with our ministry organization?

Emerick: (1:33:48) We're not now, we're not now. But we could we could I mean we want to connect so much with other secular schools. You know I mean why did these other Christian schools drift away? Well we're getting big, we're getting people from different walks of life we're getting kids from what different standards so we you know we want to maybe give a little bit. No, we can't you know we've got to stay where we're at, we've got to stand on the word of God, we've got to understand who we are and where our foundation is. I think we're doing a good job at it, but I'm saying that we need to constantly stop and evaluate are we are we moving in the direction that God wants us to move. As long as we keep God there in the center, yeah we can offer I see I see great things, I you know I see a medical school I see things happening I you know where what is needed most on the mission field; medical staff people going there. I see great things for Liberty University, and you know my prayers every day, I fast once a week for the school that and my prayer is that we stay Christ centered.

Miller: (1:35:12) One thing I sense from you is that you have the gift mercy and you are interested in individuals. I went to a little bitty bible college and Liberty was kind of that way when you first came here, what do you do and what do others do that have that small individual person contact even though you're in a sea of tens of thousands?

Emerick: (1:35:43) Probably like what I did last night. I came up at ten o' clock I was to speak on a hall, but the whole dorm wanted to hear me. So we went outside and they sat on the grass and I spoke to them. I'm up here probably every Tuesday night at ten o' clock doing hall

meetings and then I stay afterwards to talk to them. So they can get to know me, not in my office or not on stage in convocation. But they get to know me as a person. Again our groups our groups, accountability I mean my wife, I get phone calls constantly, Pastor Dane I'm struggling right now you know will you pray for me? I texted them back yes I'm praying for you. We've got to keep as much as we can that personal relationship with the kids or we're going to lose them. But that means we've got to do a lot more working and developing programs, then we can do that.

Miller: (1:36:51) As a dad and a grandfather if someone was listening to this what message would you have for a student in 2011 or 2018 or whenever someone might listen. What would you say to a young person today, a college age young person today? Is there some message that you would reach out across the recording medium here and what do you want them to hear?

Emerick: (1:37:17) I you know we were talking last night and you know I was giving the guys nine steps to victory over temptation, we got to number three [*laughter*]. Cause you could see here you know. And but I tell young people what is happening today is we're rolling out the older people, the older generation you know. We're bringing in a lot of great speakers but they're young and you know, they tell their jokes and but they get to the truth and it's great and sometimes they get a little silly and things. But young people need to sit at the feet of men and women of God that have lived it through the years. You know so often we stick them in nursing homes; no, no. I would encourage parents to get their kids to sit down with maybe older people in the church or maybe come here to Liberty and sit at the feet of Dr. Wilmington or Elmer Towns or maybe some people that aren't even here anymore to grow. I think we're losing it because we're not you know we feel that we need to entertain the kids and so our message's need to be entertaining. No, tell stories just like I'm telling stories. You know I told my kids I said once this is edited I want you guys I want a tape, I'll I want the kids to hear these stories. So that their children my grandchildren will hear these stories, and their children will hear this stories. You know the stories I have about Dr. Falwell and the memories that I had and to see a man of God who went against all the odds and went against even his own mentors saying do not go to Lynchburg, Virginia that little town. Go here go there and he went to Lynchburg, Virginia and they basically disowned the man. Well we're not going to help you. No, he went where he was called. Well that's one thing I hold on to, and I look at that. So I think we're forgetting you know like someone said the other day they said in convocation we need young people because it will hold the kids attention. Well I agree we need the young people but we need to bring in the old people in. The people that have gone through it you know the Elizabeth Elliott's and the Chuck Swindoll's and the people that I can sit and listen to and grow. And it's just there David Jeremiah, oh my gosh. Listen to these people you know so I guess that's the main message I would give.

Miller: (1:40:20) Listen to your elders.

Emerick: (1:40:21) Yes

Miller: (1:40:22) Those that have been through it and that have had to walk in the faith.

Emerick: (1:40:24) Yeah

Miller: (1:40:26) Well this has been some wonderful hours in talking with Dane Emerick and with that we'll conclude today's third part of a three part series with Dane Emerick. This interview has been conducted as part of the oral history project of the Liberty University archives.

[End of Interview]