



The Lowedown

An update on the life and ministry of Dave & Jennifer Lowe

27456 Limones
Mission Viejo, CA 92691
dave.lowe@cru.org
jennifer.lowe@cru.org
h. 949-951-5693
c. 949-391-3356

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Rocky Mountain High in Colorado

Our whirlwind summer travel schedule is finally coming to a close. A definite highlight was our staff conference in Fort Collins, Colorado, where over 5000 U.S. staff with Cru gather every other summer for encouragement, training and vision for ministry. Even though this year's conference was shortened from about 10 days to seven, there were still a ton of great speakers and seminars to challenge our thinking and motivate and encourage us we continue to our ministry efforts.



One of my favorite speakers was a man named Skye Jethani (middle picture on the left), who serves as the senior editor for Leadership Journal. Skye was part of a series of speakers who spoke on issues related to culture. The question being addressed is how can we better engage our culture and more effectively reach people today for Christ.

Skye's talk really resonated with me because he was able to articulate an idea that I have thought about for a long time but had never synthesized or communicated in the way that he did. He talked about the role of consumerism in our society and how consumerism is actually a worldview where we are at the center and everything exists to satisfy my desires.

Consumerism doesn't just affect those whom we're trying to reach. It affects us in the church too. It affects our view of God and of ourselves. Consumerism affects our evangelism when we present Jesus simply by the gifts He will give us.

Skye shared an interesting perspective on the story of the prodigal son. He said that both sons were looking for what they could get from the Father. The younger son did it in a socially unacceptable way while the older son did it in a socially acceptable way. Both sons missed the joy of simply experiencing the presence of their father, which is really the whole point. Too often in the church, we as Christians are guilty of trying to make older sons out of younger sons.

We live in paradoxical times in that today's generation of students and young adults is the most self-absorbed generation ever (thanks to consumerism), yet they are also the most activist oriented generation ever. They want to make a difference in the world.

Our goal often is to tap into that activism and get them to be a part of the mission. But according to Skye, the solution to Christian consumerism is not Christian activism (mission); it's our presence with the Father. Christian mission isn't bad, but it needs to be placed in the right order. We need to ensure

that we are helping others experience the presence of the Father before we seek to employ them in the mission of Christ.

Skye's talk was a reminder to me to beware of falling into the consumerism trap that puts me at the center of the universe while everyone, including God, exists to satisfy my needs, wants and desires. Please pray with us and for us that we would be experiencing the Father's presence first and foremost in our lives and that we would be drawing others to the Father as well.

Thanks so much for partnering with us as we seek to help others who do not know Jesus understand how they can know Him and experience the greatest treasure of all - knowing and experiencing God! We are very grateful for you!



Top:
Over 5000 staff members with Cru gather for a main session.

Bottom: Skye Jethani, editor of Leadership Journal talks about "Christian consumerism".