

I remember it like it was yesterday; I sat in Mrs. Gerhard's office in October 2009. Mrs. Gerhard asked me one very simple question, "What do you want to do when you get to college?" I told her I wanted to become an elementary education teacher. I remember she looked up a bunch of colleges to research, and Central Connecticut State University was one of the colleges on that list. I visited that college and loved it. My name is Daniel Donovan. I graduated from CCS in 2010, and I recently graduated from Central Connecticut State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in History with a focus in Elementary Education. I wanted to take a moment to let you know how God has shown His faithfulness to me throughout my college experience.

As I reflect on my college experience, God has been faithful to me in all of my collegiate endeavors. When I arrived at CCSU I had always dreamed of traveling to another country and experiencing other cultures. At the beginning of my junior year, I discovered a course abroad that would visit seven European Countries. The trip sounded incredible; however, I did not have the money to fund such a trip. To try to save up for the trip I worked long hours on the weekends while I was also taking six classes. Despite these obstacles I remember praying that, if it was in God's plan, I would be able to take this trip. Not only was I able to raise the money for the trip, but I also earned my highest grades at CCSU up until that time. In this one experience I saw that if I worked hard and was disciplined in my work that God would honor that and would help me achieve this goal.

One of my biggest challenges graduating from Cornerstone and going to a public university was trying to make strong Christian friends. During my freshman and sophomore years, I had made some friends. However, they were not Christians. At first everything was great! We hung out and had a lot of fun. However, over the course of those semesters things began to change. We became very distant from one another. Eventually, we stopped talking to each other. There was a period when I remember thinking to myself, "What had I done wrong? Why was this happening?" In those moments of loneliness, I remember God telling me that He was there for me and that He would provide for me. All I had to do was pursue Him. I pursued Him, and as a result, I met a group of very kind and accepting people. We became a very close group of friends offering each other support when the other needed it. God heard me and took me out of a bad situation and provided me with a group of amazing friends. He was faithful.

As an elementary education major at CCSU you are told that you are double-majoring. You are informed that you will take your elementary education course work but will also be taking at least thirteen classes in a content area. I often took eighteen credit hours per semester and also took several summer classes in order to ensure I would graduate in four and a half years. I remember talking to my friends who were not education majors, and they asked me why I was doing this. In addition, I remember sitting in the library by myself studying, taking notes and trying to stay caught up with the classes and in some cases planning for future classes. I remember asking myself, "Why am I doing this to myself?" I remember doubting what I was doing and fearing that I was not good enough. And in those moments of stress and exhaustion, God was always there to remind me that I was

following His plan. With His help, I would get through it. And every semester, God helped me through it.

As I reflect on these experiences, I realize that God has truly been faithful to me. He has helped me raise money to have incredible experiences both in my local area and also abroad. He has provided me with a group of friends who I have been able to support and who have also supported me. Further, He allowed me to pursue a career that I am incredibly passionate about. What I have learned from all of these experiences is this: if you pursue what God wants for your life, He will make a way. The road getting there may not be easy. There may be bumps in the road; there may be twists and turns that you did not see coming. But He will be there for you. All you need to remember is to stay focused on God, and He will help you get from where you are now to where He has planned for you to be.