

Our view

Back new drive

It is common for us to take everything around us for granted. Some of us may have taken the phenomenal growth of this university for granted. Others think its growth was natural, like that of a tree in a forest.

The truth is that the growth of Uganda Christian University has been a result of the support it has got from the community in general and Christians in particular. This support has come in various forms, especially the sending of their sons and daughters to study here.

This support has come without us asking for it. That is why the move by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for External Relations and Development, Mr. David Mugawe, to sensitize Christians about the university is welcome and deserves support from everyone who cherishes this institution.

In addition to encouraging Christians to send their sons and daughters to study in this university, it is also important that we encourage UCU supporters to talk good about it. The general belief out there is that UCU is a very expensive university, far beyond the reach of most Christians. Some even allege that it is exploitative, contrary to what is expected of a Christian institution.

All these allegations are made without mention of the quality of education the university provides. In addition, those who malign our name do not mention the fact that UCU, unlike public universities, relies entirely on tuition fees to deliver high-quality education. They also do not mention the fact that the government has, through unjustified taxation stymied efforts by the university to provide affordable education.

The DVC-External Relations and Development and his team deserve a pat on the back for that innovation. We should all support the DVC and his team to spread the truth about Uganda Christian University and to assure the public that the relatively high tuition fees are a result of government policies, which leave privately-owned universities to fend for themselves to educate citizens whose parents contribute to the national coffers.

Above all, parents and other sponsors need to be educated that if they are to build a firm foundation for their sons and daughters, there is no better institution than UCU because it looks at university education from a holistic perspective. The university churns out graduates with a distinct character. This is not hot air, it is the truth that can be proven by employers.

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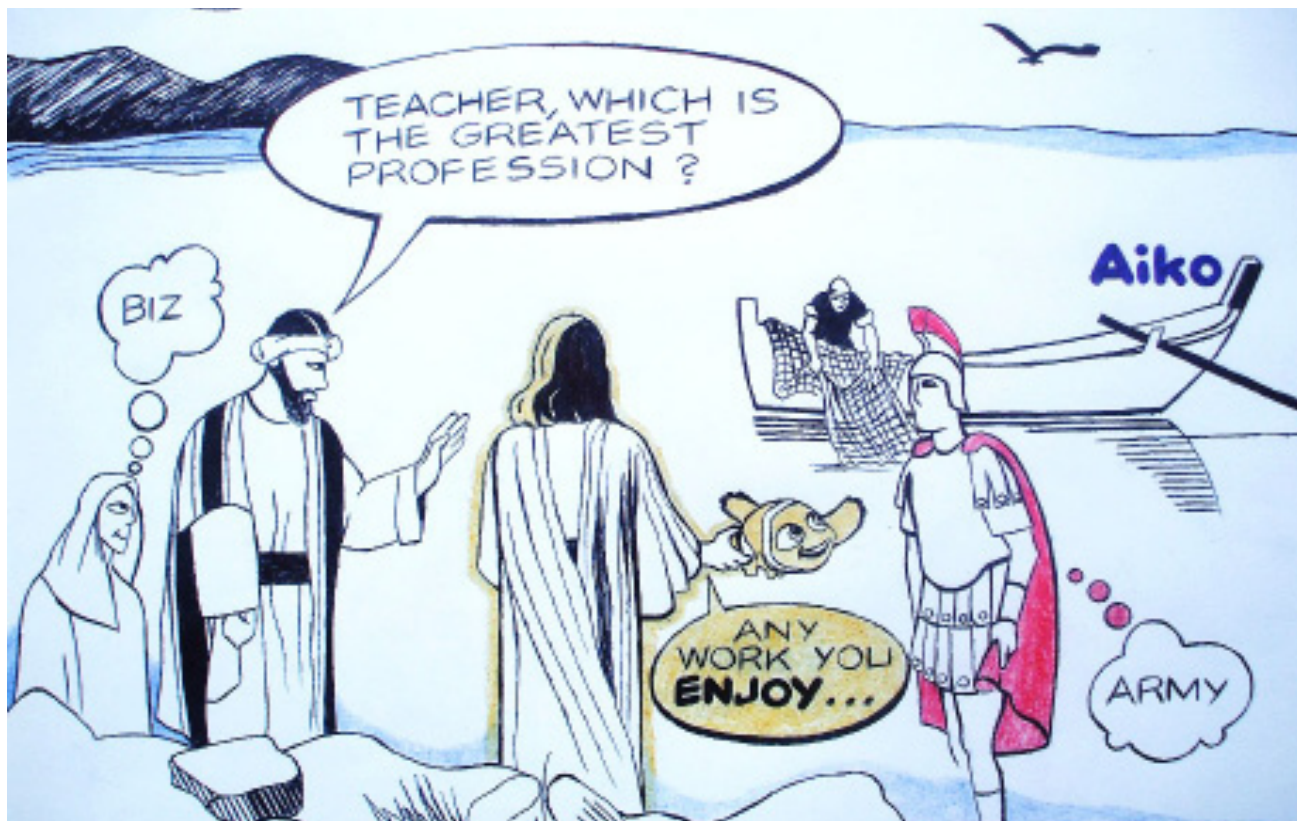
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Opinion Opinion Opinion Opinion Opinion Opinion Opinion



Successful careers are meant to be enjoyed, but even common work is of great value. and no work is ever the sum total of who you are as a human being.

Your life is far more than your career

THOMAS FROESE



The problem with university life is that it can bypass your heart and feed your mind directly with foolish notions about the work world, namely that some grand career will make you a personally large being.

"Hey, look at me! I have this job now. It's who I am!"

And maybe you'll win much of that war that's so well-known around the world, that is the war to get ahead.

This is a material world, after all, and it's natural to chase a good job and a nice home and car and food in the fridge and, sure, a satisfying relationship, those old, earthy lures of, for lack of better descriptions, money, sex and power.

But the world is full of people who work and even scheme hard for all this, people who wrap their identity in their career while neglecting other important things.

And in the end they often wind up disillusioned and driven and exhausted, maybe even ruthless and exploitive, full of one conflict or another.

This is because these gains are sometimes hopeless substitutes for what any of us really want, that is to become more fully human and to discover our deeper selfhood.

This means, among other things, discovering your capacity to give. And receive. It means knowing how to fully forgive. And, likewise, it

means knowing your own great need for forgiveness.

Being fully human also means – now that you're an adult – heading into this tottering world with the simple goal to leave it some day after you've taken more pain onto yourself than you've dished out to others.

This war for our humanity, our souls, really, is a very different sort of war from that war to get ahead. But it's what God, more than anything, wants for us.

The other misguided notion that universities, especially faith-based schools, might even non-purposefully fill your head with is the opposite idea, that there's something hopelessly wrong with the material world, that it's better, somehow more holy, to deny the physical and live more of so-called 'spiritual life.'

This is why some people are, as the saying goes, so heavenly-minded they're no earthly good.

The incarnation, God wrapping himself in flesh and bone and blood, says something different. It says our material world is good. Very good. So good and blessed that the Creator himself became part of it.

True, since the Garden, this world is fallen. You don't need to look far to see this. And, true, this world pales to the world that is still to come. That's the hope of believers through the ages.

But the Scriptures also tell us that just like God wrapped himself in human form, tomorrow's perfect heaven will somehow wrap itself in a vestige of today's sick earth.

This is why the resurrected Christ didn't appear as some ghost from some ether-world, but as a new man with a new body similar to what we already know, so much that he even cooked and ate that fish breakfast on the beach with his friends.

Other religions have other views. Our physical world is to be minimized, even denied. Christianity says no, what is plain and everyday and even broken is given to us for important reasons.

The good news, then, is that studying so much of what makes up this university – art, literature, music, business, science, law and the list goes on – is as spiritual as studying theology. It's all a form of gardening, that is cultivating our world and renewing culture. Gardening, after all, is that first job given in Eden.

This is also why even the most menial tasks – and menial workers – have great value. This must be what Christ meant when he said, "What you have done to the least of these, you have done to me."

Author and journalist Thomas Froese is a founding supervisor of The Standard. Read him at www.dailydad.net and www.thomasfroese.com