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Faculty Interview with Scott Petersen

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Professor Q+A

with

SCOTT PETERSEN

By Jacob Thorpe

Scott Petersen is the Executive Director of the Rollins Center for Entrepreneurship & Technology at BYU, a program which he ran as the Managing Director between 2010-2015. He is also the Founder and Chairman of Omadi, Inc., a venture backed SaaS mobile CRM platform for workforce management, serving the towing/transportation markets. The BYU entrepreneurship program was ranked in the top 5 of all university Entrepreneurship Centers each of those years. Scott is a long time entrepreneur having co-founded or partnered in building 7 companies (harvesting 4), including several current ventures. Additionally, he serves on several business and private foundation boards. In 2005 Scott published a significant work, titled "Where Have All The Prophets Gone?", a historical, theological book on early Christianity using the Bible, the Pseudepigrapha, the Apocrypha, the Dead Seas Scrolls, the Nag Hammadi Library, and all of the extant early Christian writings. In 2014 Scott published his second book, "Do the Mormons Have a Leg to Stand On?: a Critical Look at LDS Doctrines in the Light of the Bible and the Teachings of the Early Christian Church."

Scott has served as a mentor and role model for me for the better part of 10 years. His lessons and influence have been vital in my personal development. So, when deciding on which faculty member we should interview, I knew that I wanted others to be able to get to know Scott. I gave Scott a call, not knowing that at the time, he was in the wake of a very busy and stressful

period. Nonetheless, in true Scott Petersen form, he enthusiastically agreed to an interview, inviting me to his home, and dedicating an hour of his time for this interview. And this is Scott to a T: Selfless, balanced, and caring.

Q. In your words what is the most important quality in a budding entrepreneur?

A: There are many. I am not sure if there is just one. One of the most important parts of being an entrepreneur is being resilient and having a high EQ. Good entrepreneurs can deal well with the adversities of life. Entrepreneurship is tough. It is the person that can push through that opposition, being emotionally resilient, and carry on that will be successful

Q: If you could give one piece of advice to a new BYU students, what would it be?

A: Honestly, if I could give only one piece of advice, it would be to stay true to the holy habits and righteous routines that you know you should have. Build the Kingdom of the Lord first, and all else will fall into place.

Q. What do you view to be your greatest success?

A: By far my family. I call my family my greatest entrepreneurial venture. You get married young, you have no idea what's ahead of you. Nonetheless, you move forward in faith staying

true to your principles. I have been blessed with 5 incredible children that all graduated from BYU and were sealed in my temple. That is my greatest success.

Q: What are some goals you have for the rest of your life?

A: To continue to take the program we built into a top-5 National program global. To be the most impactful entrepreneurship program in the world. I don't want to build people of wealth. I'm trying to build people of character that love the Lord, so that when they become wealthy, they will know how to use their wealth to bless their family and the Kingdom of God.

Q: I've noticed that there is very little separations between the different areas in your life such as familial, spiritual, professional, and physical. Is that something that you have done consciously?

A: It's funny you should say that. This is a quote that I use frequently by L.P Jacks, "the master in the art of living makes very little distinction between his work and his play, his labor and his leisure, his mind and his body, his education and his recreation, his love and his religion. He hardly knows which is which. He simply pursues his vision of excellence at whatever he does, leaving others to decide whether he is working or playing. To him he is always doing both." I think that life isn't necessarily balanced, but it can be in harmony.

That quote is particularly poignant when examining the way that Scott lives his life. While he would deny being a "master of living," he lives a harmonious life, demonstrating that if we will simply keep our priorities in the proper order, all else will fall into place.



Photo courtesy of BYU Marriott School of Business