

KANSAS COMMUNITIES MINISTRY UPDATE

"My objective is to know Christ in my own life in ever-increasing depth and to make disciples and develop laborers at all times, under any conditions, in every place I go"

Philippians 2:9-11

"As a result God exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow - in heaven and on earth and under the earth - and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." (NET)

Loving God

I'm reading a book now called *Start with Why* by Simon Sinek. I have found it helpful as I ask myself, "Why do we as Kansas Navigators do what we do?" Rather than focusing on what we do - memorizing Scripture, reading and studying His Word, helping others do the same— all of which are very appropriate, I have been asking myself the "why" question.

That could be answered many different ways (all valid): Because God commands us to do these things. Because He loves us and we want to serve Him. Because this is the best way to truly love someone else.

However, if we go back to basics, meaning the Great Commandment in Matthew 22:36-38, we learn that first and foremost we are to love God with all we have. That is primary. And that, for me, is the "why."

Trusting God — Even when life hurts

by Larry Beck



In chapter 1 of his book "Trusting God", Jerry Bridges poses a question, "Can you trust God?" Well...depending on which word is emphasized, there are two possible meanings. Consider the first - "Can you trust God?" Questioning - is He trustworthy or dependable, especially in times of adversity. The second is "Can you trust God?" Questioning whether our relationship with God is such that we are confident that He has a loving purpose in our adversities and can help us in our time of need.

He also notes that "Obeying God is worked out within well-defined boundaries of God's revealed will. Trusting God is worked out in an arena that has no boundaries. We do not know the extent, the duration, or the frequency of the painful, adverse circumstances in which we must frequently trust God. We are always coping with the unknown."

Jerry categorically compiles the theological principles necessary to aid readers toward their growth in learning to trust God.

Consider the following quote: "God in His love always wills what is best for us. In His wisdom He always know what is best, and in His sovereignty, He has the power to bring it about". This one succinct statement encapsulates the theological elements of God's perfect love, infinite wisdom and absolute sovereignty; all three truths are inseparable for the Christian struggling to trust God.

These truths are likened to a three-legged stool, if you remove any one the stool doesn't function as needed. Accordingly, consider that if we remove God's perfect love, it's possible He could be indifferent toward us in our struggles. If we remove His infinite wisdom, it's possible He could make a mistake in our lives, or if we remove His absolute sovereignty, it's possible He is limited in ability to help us in our time of need. But with God there are no such questions of possibility. (Continued on page 3)



Goads and Nails

*Excerpt from Goads and Nails,
Volume 1, pages 83-87*

"My objective is to know Christ in my own life in ever increasing depth."

The above phrase is the first part of the objective of the Kansas Navigators team. It is taken from ... Philippians 3:10, "That I may know Him..." What does this process look like? It can be described as a response to the call of God in the Garden of Eden. His lamenting call to Adam, "Where are you?" echoes through the centuries to each one of us with His Divine nature imprinted on our hearts (Romans 1:20). To know Him, then, is a desire in our hearts which is initiated by God Himself.

This was made possible only by the "lamb slain before the foundation of the world." In the written Word we see His testimony concerning the Living Word in John 20:31 ... It is by this belief, this act of dependence, this transfer of trust to Him to make us righteous in His sight that we begin to know Him.

– Richard Spann



An "Aha" moment

by Phil Buechner

Our Pastor started leading us through the study of Mark a few Sunday evenings ago. I was studying ahead and had one of those "aha" moments in Scripture that fires my pistons. It was the story in Mark chapter two, verses two to twelve, about four men bringing their paralytic friend to Jesus for

healing. You may remember the story. When they came to the house in Capernaum where Jesus was teaching the house was so crammed with people they couldn't get in. That's when they got dramatic. Determined to get their friend to Jesus, they climbed on the roof of the house, dug through the ceiling, and began to lower their friend's bed with ropes into the room where Jesus was.

In the CSB verse 5 begins with the phrase, "Seeing their faith ...," but in the NKJV it reads as, "When Jesus saw their faith ..." The account goes on to tell us that then Jesus forgave the paralytic of his sins and healed his paralysis. The "aha" moment for me with the realization that faith is something that can be seen, more importantly, something Jesus can see, and that when He sees it He responds.

I had to examine my heart and ask myself if I'm giving Jesus something worth looking at, something He can see and bless?

Yes, I know God can see everything all the time, but there is something more personal about miracles like this in the Bible. Consider the following points. First, Jesus was at work doing what He does, teaching, healing, and changing lives. Second, the four men were convinced Jesus could heal their friend and gave feet to their faith. Third, they didn't give up easily when they were blocked. Fourth, WHEN He could SEE they were fully committed (the roof damaged and the paralytic before Him) He acted.

When people commit to get involved with Jesus and His work, exciting things happen (see 2 Cor 4:6-7).

In these strange times, Jesus is still in the business of saving people from their sins and teaching them to walk in His ways. We can partner with Him by bringing our friends to Him like the four men in Mark's account. There are other things we can do that Jesus can see and bless as well. Grab and memorize a key verse of Scripture and ask God to help you understand and apply it to your life. Put an arm around a new believer and help them learn how to have a quiet time. There are many other things Jesus would probably like to see us doing and would be willing to bless when He sees us involved.

Get with the program.

Trusting God ... (by Larry Beck) (Continued from page one)

Jerry writes, "Our lives are cluttered with a lot of "if only's." "If only I had done this," or "if only that had not happened." But God, has no "if only's". God never makes a mistake and has no regrets, "**As for God, His way is perfect.**" (Ps 18:30)

The book references **Psalm 139:16**, which states in part that "**the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be**". God has used this verse repeatedly in my life, in situations like the ER and Intensive care units with family members, while waiting for critical medical test results to be returned, beside the bed of the dying, being treated unjustly and experiencing the need for God's provision when there were no apparent resources to rely on. I needed a truth to quell my anxieties – helping me reason that God knew of these situations before I was born, they were no surprise to Him and He had a wise and loving purpose in bringing them.

Most of us will not learn to trust God until we have to, thus times of adversity are required for our faith in God to grow. Trusting God is a choice, requiring His Word be understood and applied to our minds, despite our emotions or perceptions of what God is doing.

In the Garden by Marvin Soliah

There has always been a special blessing from being in a garden. Even a simple vegetable garden with some flowers and a few shrubs inspires wonderful memories from my farm days. It is a place of quiet transformation for creative thoughts about our earthly life. It is the place where we feel so much *at home* with God's creation — even while we are still here on earth. We all need a special place to be **reassured**



that somehow, all will be well – as in **Romans 8 : 28** "*All things work together for good – for those who love God and are called according to his purpose.*" In fact it feels like a little of Heaven on earth. "**Oh what a foretaste of glory divine!**" – to quote from the **Blessed Assurance** hymn. The Garden of Eden was where God first communicated with us as His creation.

Remember those comforting and encouraging words in the beautiful *hymn* written by a pharmacist-turned-hymn writer (Austin Miles) in 1912 "**In The Garden**" - **I come to the garden alone, While the dew is still on the roses; - "He walks with me, and he talks with and tells me that I am his own ... and the joy we**

share as we tarry there - none other has ever known." And in verse 3 - **I'd stay in the garden with Him.** Yes, the garden is that perfect place where you want to stay forever.

We think of the Bible **beginning with a garden...** and I like to think of the Bible **ending with garden** - although in Revelation - the scene is described as a city. From **Rev. 22 : 1 - 5** ...There is a glorious river of water of life - sparkling like a clear crystal coming from the throne of God - flowing through the city with trees on each side of the river - that yields fruit in season. .. and the leaves of these trees are for healing of the nations. Oh what a beautiful **eternal perfect garden that will be !**

We are His servants who worship Him here and now ... and for all eternity. There will be no need for the sun or moon, for He is the Light and the Lamb of God is that perfect Light for ever and ever. In **John 14:3** He promises that He will go to **prepare a place** for us so that we can be in **that place** for those who personally know the Savior.

Isn't it a wonderful thought to ponder that place being an **eternal garden home**. This **glorious place** is our eternal home. Just think of being ***In the garden forever with the glorious river flowing from the throne of God!*** **Friend - Shall we gather at the river The Glorious River?**

Spotlight on Online Resources

◆ *Discipleship Library:*

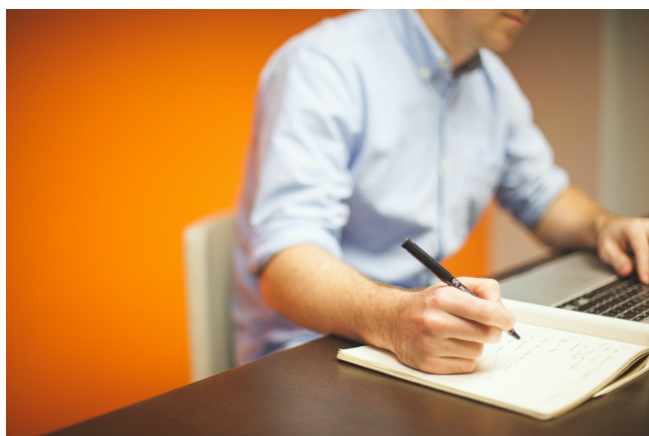
Bob Boardman (1924-2009), US Marine and long-time Navigator came to know the Lord in 1941 after he was involved in a drunken brawl with an Australian sailor. He was injured in the Battle of Okinawa, June 17, 1945 when his throat was pierced with a sniper's bullet, resulting in Bob's husky voice the rest of his life. Here is his talk on "Being a Disciple" which has many helpful insights: <http://turret2.discipleshiplibrary.com/A134.mp3>

◆ *Kansas Navigators:*

Have you checked out Dr. Spann's newest blogs on our website (<https://kansasnavs.org/blog/>)? A recent posting is entitled "Walking in Darkness" which is very pertinent to our current situation with the coronavirus. Sometimes it seems that things are bleak and we have difficulty hearing from God or understanding what He is up to. This blog points us to the fact that we are to trust in His Name and rely on Him (Isaiah 50:10). <https://kansasnavs.org/walking-in-darkness>

◆ *Podcast "Making Disciples Naturally"*

Our current podcasts feature Mr. Mark Oelze, marriage counselor and communication specialist, about how to "love well." This points us to the second of the Great Commandments (Matthew 22:39). We've had over 360 downloads since we started the podcast a few months ago! You can subscribe via Apple Podcasts or Stitcher or many other podcast platforms or simply go to <https://kansasnavs.org/podcasts/>



Calling All Writers!

You'll see in this issue several articles contributed by our friends Larry Beck, Phil Buechner and Marvin Soliah. Dr. Dennis Finley contributed to a prior issue. Would you be willing to share *your* thoughts with others via this Kansas Navigators Newsletter? We are looking for articles that would be an encouragement to fellow believers. Each article should be around 500 words or less and we reserve the right to edit! Consider topics such

as personal testimonies (salvation or other stories of how God has worked in your life), brief devotionals or Bible studies, book or article reviews, etc. Practical helps are great! The topic needs to focus on evangelism, discipleship or spiritual growth. Won't you consider sharing your insight? It would be such an encouragement to many people! Thanks. Email us at newsletter@kansasnavs.org.