

# 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 3:14

"With this goal in mind, I strive toward the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.." (NET)

## Be an "Alongsider"

Several of us have had the privilege of going through a workbook by Bill Mowry called "The Ways of the Alongsider" (Pub by The Navigators ©). It is a very encouraging 10-week course on the "how to" of walking with others in a discipling relationship.

I recently interviewed Bill for an upcoming podcast (to be released in August for 5 sessions) and he told me that his intent was to provide a resource that would encourage many more people to simply become "alongsiders" to others in their spiritual walk. Too often people look at discipling as something that is mysterious and best left to the "experts (pastors and teachers)." However, Bill shows that it is doable as he helps us change the picture hanging in our minds of a discipling maker – someone who simply comes alongside of someone else.

Elmo Joseph wrote in a review: "Excellent is all I can say. I have been doing one-on-one discipling for over 40 years and this workbook describes the relational process best of any tool I have encountered."

## Loving well by listening well

by David Dennis

In His earthly ministry, Jesus was asked by an expert in the law, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?" His answer was

to love God with every part of our being — heart, soul, mind. But the second commandment Jesus says was like it — "love your neighbor as yourself." There are many facets of loving our neighbor including helping them physically, encouraging them emotionally, perhaps mowing their yard or providing financial help if needed. But perhaps before all those things we need to step back and ask ourselves, "How do I know someone loves *me*?" The answer to that question gives us a clue as to how we can turn around and love someone else.

For our podcast Making Disciples Naturally I recently interviewed Christian marriage counselor and Founder of Pledgetalk, Mr. Mark Oelze. ([PLEDGETALK.COM](http://PLEDGETALK.COM)). Mark is a believer who has a real heart for seeing relationships healed and even more, to see people truly love each other in deep and meaningful ways.

I remember a friend years ago with whom I grew very close over the years. He was a fellow physician in the Air Force. Thinking back on that time I realize that he showed a sincere loving interest in me and my family by asking good questions, remembering my answers and then asking even more questions. I knew he really cared because he really listened.

Mark tells the story of when he and his wife Zerrin moved to Wichita and how they prayed and considered their neighborhood their mission field. However, instead of starting Bible studies, etc, they made a concerted effort to simply get to know their neighbors in deep and meaningful ways. (Continued on page three)





## Goads and Nails

*Excerpt from Goads and Nails,  
Volume 1, pages 89-91*

### *"Thoughts on Leadership"*

I was privileged ... to hear Lorne [Sanny] speak about leadership on numerous occasions. One of his messages was based on Psalm 78:72. Lorne later requested that small cards to be printed, capturing the key points of his message. They are but another example of how the Lord used Lorne to provide us with "goads" and "nails" for our spiritual journey. His thoughts contained on the cards are as follows: LEADERS BRING VISION, FAITH AND COURAGE TO COORDINATED EFFORT – vision to see what ought to be done, faith to believe it can be done [and] courage to persevere until it is done.

Like many of you, I spend time weekly with individuals and some small groups. I need to ask myself, "What is my vision for each individual/group? Do I have faith that the Lord will accomplish this vision in their lives? Am I persevering until it is done?"

– Richard Spann

## A Gift from the Father to the Son

### by Larry Beck

Most often when we give someone a gift, we consider their desires, preferences, needs, etc. If we want the gift to be really special, we may spend a considerable amount of money and time preparing, planning, creating or building, possibly including a surprise party. Our desire in doing so is to show the person that they are loved. Hopefully, with perhaps rare exception, no one gives someone they love a literal piece of junk unless that is what they truly want.



Some years ago, a dear friend and mentor of mine purchased a late 60's model Mustang, Mach I. It needed a complete mechanical overhaul, motor, transmission, etc., not to



mention a mostly new interior and exterior paint; unless restored – the car was a literal piece of junk. My friend knew his son was a gifted mechanic and loved cars, especially the Mustang that had been sitting idle in the garage. My friend's intent was to give the car to his son, but his son would

have to search for and purchase many of the parts necessary to restore it. He knew that restoration would take a significant amount of his son's time, test his skills, endurance and perhaps tempt him to give up on the project. But his son persevered, completed the restoration and in joy he drove, and still drives, that once dilapidated Mach I. Many of us who saw the original Mustang sitting useless in the garage have looked in amazement at its restored condition and grown in respect for the skill of its restorer.

So, what's the implication to the Christian life. Well...many of us have read John's Gospel several times, but some may have never considered the truth that as a Christian, you are a gift from God the Father to Christ the Son (in spite of all your sins). Jesus said in **John 6:37** - **"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.** Jesus repeats the same truth in verse **39**, again in **John 10:29** and 6 more times in **John 17** verses **2,6,9,11,12 & 24**. For the joy set before Him, Jesus came and paid the price of restoration, redeeming the Father's gifts to Him (initially - literal pieces of spiritual junk). (Continued on page three)

## A Gift ... (by Larry Beck) (Continued from page two)

As Christians, we were once spiritually worthless, like the unrestored Mustang, dead in our transgressions and sins and completely dysfunctional until Christ restored us. We see this truth in **II Corinthians 5:17 - Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.**

If the Spirit of God lives in you, you are a gift from the Father to the Son. This reality places great value on your life and purpose and you're encouraged to remember that Christ is in the process of completing the restoration He has begun in you (reference **Philippians 1:6**).

## Love well by listening well (Continued from page one)

They ultimately invited their entire neighborhood for a potluck dinner every Wednesday evening for a number of years as a standing invitation. There were no expectations and no pressure placed. They simply listened well and, in so doing, loved well. In the podcast, Mark tells the story of one elderly gentleman who was a neighbor and who eventually placed his faith in Jesus as a result of their relationship.



We sometimes think that “witnessing” and reaching out has to be mysterious or difficult. However, I urge each of us to consider simply developing sincere, loving relationships with the people whom God has placed in our paths. A big part of developing those relationships is learning to listen well. Mark has much more to say about the “how to” of listening well on the podcast series. (Go to our [website](#) or subscribe to “Making Disciples Naturally” on Apple podcasts, iTunes, Stitcher, Spotify and other platforms.)

What are some take home messages from our interview?

1. God will use us in natural ways to reach people as we relax and just get to know folks, including our neighbors. Be alert to whom God has naturally placed in our lives.
2. We don't need to rush or feel compelled to “close the deal” as far as the Gospel is concerned. God will open the person's heart and provide opportunity as He directs.
3. The concept of “listening well” in order to love well seems simple but it does take intentionality and thought. We need to be curious, be thoughtful and get outside of ourselves as we develop this skill. (See [pledgetalk.com](http://pledgetalk.com).)
4. We can implement listening well with all of our relationships including our spouses, our children, grandchildren and with those we are walking alongside to encourage spiritual growth.
5. Remember that people don't care how much we know until they know how much we care. We show we care by listening well and thus loving well.



## Spotlight on Online Resources

### ◆ *Discipleship Library:*

Gene Warr (1924-2006) was a great friend of the Kansas Navigators for years. He was born in Yukon, Oklahoma, served under General Patton in WW II and was a real estate developer. He was mightily used by God after coming to know the Lord in 1947. His self-described priorities were God first, family second and his business third. This [classic talk](#) about the Word Hand illustration will bless you and those you are helping. Read about his amazing life of obedience and service to our Lord in [this document](#).

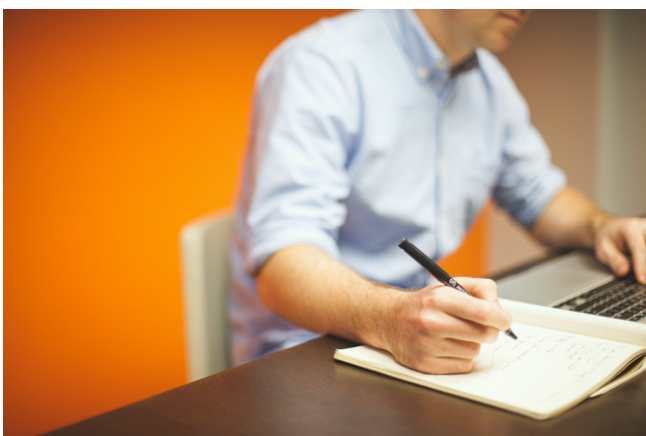


### ◆ *Kansas Navigators:*

Dr. Spann recently wrote about “Lessons to be learned from those who failed” in his [blog on our website](#). This interesting study relates the lives of three kings in the Old Testament, Amaziah, Jehoshaphat and Joash. Each of these seemed to start out well in obeying the Lord, but ultimately failed. Dr. Spann notes the tremendous importance of keeping God’s Word first in our lives, maintaining fellowship in a local church and continuing to walk with someone one-on-one. These blogs are outstanding resources to use for our own growth as well as sharing with others.

### ◆ *Podcast “Making Disciples Naturally”*

Mr. Eddie Broussard, International Vice President with The Navigators ©, was to be our speaker for the spring Men’s Retreat this year in Hesston. Unfortunately it was canceled due to the coronavirus. However, you can hear from Eddie in our six-part podcast interview at <https://kansasnavs.org/podcasts/>. You’ll be encouraged as you hear the passion in his voice for developing an ever-closer relationship with Jesus, plus you can get inspired to attend our retreat in Spring 2021!



## Calling All Writers!

Again, we encourage you to consider submit articles for this 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](mailto:newsletter@kansasnavs.org).