

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"

1 Corinthians 13:1

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but I do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal." (NET Bible, used by permission)

Evangelism

Paul states in Rom 15:18 "For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in order to bring about the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed," (NET Bible). It was from the overflow of what God had done in Paul's life that he was able to share the Good News with the Gentiles.

LeRoy Eims reminds us in his excellent book *The Lost Art of Disciplemaking* "Our fruitfulness is the result of abiding in Christ. So fellowship in Christ must come first, for witnessing is not overwork but overflow. It is Christ through people to other people." (p. 56, © 1978, Pub by Zondervan)

I can't give someone something I don't have. A close, real, vibrant, growing walk with Jesus is vital to my sharing of the gospel with others. It is truly "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

A Teachable Heart



Faithful. Available. Teachable. These three characteristics are important as we look for folks eager to learn and grow in the faith. The first two are fairly self-explanatory. One who is faithful is consistent, does what he/she is asked to do, etc. Available means ...

well ... available! But what about teachable? What exactly does that mean?

I've met with several men over the years who have been faithful and available but not teachable. That is, they seem to want to argue about everything. They think they know more than others about everything. They somehow are not "teachable."

Maybe we can consider the opposite of teachableness as a "hardness of heart." What does the Bible teach us about hardness of heart? Consider these verses: Psa 95:8-9 "He says, "Do not be stubborn like they were at Meribah, like they were that day at Massah in the wilderness, where your ancestors challenged my authority, and tried my patience, even though they had seen my work." Heb 3:7-8 "Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Oh, that today you would listen as he speaks! "Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of testing in the wilderness." Prov 28:14 "Blessed is the one who is always cautious, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into evil." And of course the well-known passage: Prov 16:18 "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Cont. on next page)

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Goads and Nails

*Excerpt from Goads and Nails,
Volume 1, pages 21-24*

God Doesn't Give Up on Us

*"Then the word of the LORD
came to Jonah a second time."*

"Jonah was a prophet of the Lord; a man whom God had prepared and set apart as His messenger. He was one in whom the Lord had placed His trust... He had been given a ministry, but he did not have a heart for the ministry... He was sent to speak to the people of Nineveh, but he had no heart for the people of Nineveh..."

God, in His Grace, has prepared each of us for the ministry which He has prepared in advance for us to do (Eph. 2:10)... Has a lack of having God's heart for the people to whom you were sent ever turned you away from following His will? It has in my life on several occasions.

The Lord's desire for us is the same that He had for Jonah... I have experienced His word coming a second time, giving opportunities to express His love to others..."

Richard Spann

A Teachable Heart (cont.)

If the opposite of teachableness is a hard heart, then what is a soft heart? How do we cultivate that? To me a soft heart speaks of humility, of being ... teachable.

The twelfth chapter of Numbers tells us "Now the man Moses was very humble, more so than any man on the face of the earth. (Numbers 12:3). In this story, Moses's two siblings, Miriam and Aaron complain against Moses, apparently because of his marriage to a Cushite woman. However, Miriam and Aaron complain, "Has the Lord spoken only through Moses? Has he not also spoken through us?" Here they were clearly jealous and demanded equal authority with the God-chosen leader, Moses. God immediately calls the three of them to the Tent of Meeting. God tells them that He speaks to prophets via visions and dreams, but Moses is different. With Moses, God speaks directly, face to face (vs. 7). I find this amazing. If anyone was justified in being prideful it looks like it would have been Moses, as God spoke very openly and directly with him, not like He spoke to others. However, instead of pride, we see *humility* being praised in Moses. He had a soft heart, a teachable heart and was obedient to the Lord.

Sometimes when we see a certain behavior with which we disagree (like a sin that someone else is involved in) and if it really bothers us, we need to take a look at ourselves. That with which we struggle is often what bothers us about others. So when I see people not being teachable (or humble or having a soft heart), I need to look at my own heart. Am I teachable? Am I humble? Do I have a soft heart?

How do I cultivate a soft heart? Proverbs 15:33 teaches us "The fear of the LORD provides wise instruction, and before honor comes humility." Walking with God daily, getting to know Him personally, fearing Him gives wisdom and ultimate humility. I need to remember my calling as well: Eph 4:1-2 "I, therefore, the prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live worthily of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love."

To encourage teachableness in others, I too need to cultivate a heart of humility and softness.

David Dennis